

Assessing The Impact Of Product Quality, Price, And Electronic Word Of Mouth On Trust And Consumer Satisfaction In Online Fashion Products In Batam City

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims to examine the influence of product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on consumer satisfaction, with trust serving as a mediating variable among online fashion consumers in Batam City. The rapid growth of e-commerce has intensified competition among online fashion sellers, making consumer satisfaction a crucial determinant of long-term business success. A quantitative research approach was employed using a survey method. Data were collected from 270 respondents who had purchased fashion products through e-commerce platforms in Batam City and were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The insights reveal that product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth have positive and notable effects on both trust and consumer satisfaction. Trust also has a positive and notable impact on consumer satisfaction and serves as a partial mediator in the relationships between product quality, price, electronic word of mouth, and consumer satisfaction. Among all variables examined, trust demonstrates the strongest direct influence on consumer satisfaction, highlighting its critical role in reducing perceived risk and strengthening consumers' confidence in online transactions. These insights suggest that online fashion businesses should prioritize maintaining consistent product quality, implementing transparent pricing strategies, encouraging authentic customer reviews, and strengthening consumer trust through reliable service and transparent communication to enhance consumer satisfaction and sustain long-term competitiveness in the digital marketplace.

Keywords: *Product Quality; Price; Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM); Trust; Consumer Satisfaction.*

A. Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has notably transformed consumer purchasing behavior, particularly through the expansion of e-commerce platforms. In Indonesia, e-commerce has become one of the primary drivers of the national digital economy, supported by increasing

internet penetration, widespread smartphone adoption, and the rapid development of digital payment systems. According to Google, Temasek, and Brain & Company (2025), Indonesia's digital economy is projected to reach US\$220 billion by 2026, with the e-commerce sector contributing more than 55% of its total value (Hidayatulloh, 2025).

Furthermore, Indonesia represents the largest e-commerce market in Southeast Asia, with its online shopping market expected to reach US\$65 billion in 2025 and continue growing to approximately US\$150 billion by 2030 (Statesman, 2025). These developments indicate that online shopping has become an integral part of consumers' daily lives while simultaneously creating substantial opportunities for businesses operating in digital marketplaces.

Among the various sectors experiencing rapid growth, the online fashion industry has emerged as one of the largest contributors to Indonesia's e-commerce transactions. Statista (2025) reported that fashion accounts for approximately 26% of the country's total e-commerce transactions, making it the largest product category in the digital marketplace. Likewise, Foresights (2025) projected that Indonesia's online fashion market will increase from US\$73.8 billion in 2025 to US\$167.5 billion by 2031, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.6%. The continuous expansion of the online fashion industry has intensified competition among sellers,

requiring businesses not only to offer attractive products but also to deliver superior customer experiences capable of maintaining long-term consumer satisfaction.

The increasing intensity of competition has also been accompanied by notable changes in consumer purchasing behavior. Consumers, particularly Generation Z, tend to compare products from multiple sellers before making purchasing decisions by evaluating product quality, price, and reviews shared by previous purchasers. Unlike conventional shopping, online consumers cannot directly examine products before purchasing, making them more dependent on digital information provided by sellers and fellow consumers. Consequently, perceived product quality, reasonable pricing, and credible electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) become important considerations influencing consumers' evaluations of online sellers.

Despite the remarkable growth of Indonesia's online fashion market, several challenges continue to affect consumers' shopping experiences. Data released by the Indonesian Ministry of Trade indicated that 5,771

consumer complaints were recorded by September 2025, of which approximately 1,200 complaints were related to e-commerce transactions. The majority of complaints concerned products that did not match online descriptions, unsatisfactory product quality, delayed deliveries, and difficulties in after-sales services and refund processes (Ayuningrum, 2025). Similarly, Statista (2025) reported that concerns regarding product quality and transaction security remain among the primary barriers preventing consumers from fully trusting online shopping platforms. These insights suggest that establishing consumer trust and satisfaction remains a critical challenge for businesses operating in Indonesia's digital marketplace.

Consumer satisfaction has long been recognized as one of the principal indicators of business success because pleased consumers are more likely to make repeat purchases, recommend products to others, and maintain long-term relationships with sellers. According to Consumer Behavior Theory, consumers evaluate products and services by comparing their expectations with actual performance

before determining their level of satisfaction (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In online shopping environments, this evaluation process becomes increasingly complex because consumers must rely on product descriptions, pricing information, seller credibility, and online reviews rather than direct physical inspection. Consequently, trust becomes an essential mechanism that reduces uncertainty and facilitates positive purchase experiences.

Product quality represents one of the primary determinants of buyer satisfaction because it reflects the extent to which products meet or exceed consumer expectations. High-quality products increase consumers' perceived value while reducing dissatisfaction after purchase. Previous research by Ayesha & Indradewa (2024) demonstrated that product quality positively and notably influences buyer satisfaction in online shopping environments. Similarly, Nofrizal et al. (2023) reported that superior product quality enhances consumers' trust toward online sellers by reducing uncertainty regarding product performance.

Besides product quality, price plays a fundamental role in shaping consumers' purchasing evaluations. Consumers generally compare the monetary sacrifice they make with the benefits received from purchased products. Fair and competitive pricing not only influences purchasing decisions but also contributes to consumers' perceptions of value and fairness, which subsequently enhance satisfaction. Utomo et al. (2024) confirmed that price has a positive and notable impact on buyer satisfaction, suggesting that transparent and reasonable pricing strategies contribute positively to consumers' overall shopping experiences.

Another important determinant in digital commerce is electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), which refers to positive or negative information shared by consumers through internet-based platforms, including online reviews, ratings, discussion forums, and social media. Compared with traditional word of mouth, e-WOM reaches a wider audience and remains accessible for extended periods, allowing prospective consumers to evaluate product quality and seller credibility before making

purchasing decisions. Positive online reviews reduce uncertainty and strengthen consumer confidence in online sellers. Almi (2026) found that electronic word of mouth notably improves brand trust, indicating that consumers tend to trust sellers more when receiving positive recommendations from previous buyers.

Previous empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth positively influence consumer trust and post-purchase outcomes. Ramadhan & Besra (2023) confirmed the notable effects of product quality, price, and e-WOM on consumer trust, while Ginting & Yusriadi (2023) found that trust positively affects buyer satisfaction. Similar insights were reported by Ruslim (2025), who concluded that improvements in consumers' service evaluations notably enhance customer satisfaction and strengthen long-term behavioral intentions. These insights collectively indicate that trust plays an important mediating role in translating consumers' evaluations of products and services into higher satisfaction.

Although previous studies have provided valuable insights, several research gaps remain. First, most existing studies have focused primarily on purchase intention or purchase decision as dependent variables, whereas studies investigating buyer satisfaction remain relatively limited. Second, previous research generally examined the effects of product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth separately rather than integrating these variables into a comprehensive research model with trust serving as a mediating variable. Third, empirical evidence focusing specifically on online fashion consumers in Batam City remains scarce despite the city's rapid digital transformation and intensive e-commerce activities.

Batam City provides an appropriate empirical setting for this research because it has experienced rapid digital development during recent years. According to Batambisnis.com (2026), internet penetration in Batam has reached approximately 89%, the highest in the Riau Islands Province. The widespread adoption of smartphones, digital payment systems, and various

e-commerce platforms has encouraged consumers to increasingly rely on online shopping for their daily needs, particularly fashion products. Nevertheless, despite the city's favorable digital ecosystem, consumer concerns regarding transaction security, product quality, and seller credibility continue to present challenges for online businesses. These characteristics make Batam an appropriate location for investigating the determinants of buyer satisfaction in online fashion shopping.

The novelty of the current study lies in proposing an integrated research framework that simultaneously examines the effects of product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth on buyer satisfaction through the mediating role of trust among online fashion consumers in Batam City. Unlike most previous studies that emphasized purchase intention or purchase decision, the current study positions buyer satisfaction as the primary outcome variable while extending empirical evidence from one of Indonesia's emerging digital markets.

Based on these considerations, the current study aims to analyze the effects of product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth on buyer satisfaction through the mediating role of trust among online fashion consumers in Batam City. The insights are expected to contribute to the literature on consumer behavior and digital marketing while providing practical recommendations for online fashion businesses to strengthen consumer trust, improve customer satisfaction, encourage repeat purchases, and enhance long-term competitiveness in Indonesia's rapidly growing digital economy.

B. Research Methodology

This research applies a quantitative approach based on a survey design to test how product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) shape consumer trust and satisfaction toward fashion products bought online in Batam City. A statistical standpoint was adopted so that the relationships between variables could be examined objectively and the findings generalized to the wider population (Sekaran & Bouigie, 2025).

Two categories of data were used, namely primary and secondary. Primary data came straight from respondents who completed a distributed questionnaire, whereas secondary data were drawn from various references such as books, academic journals, research reports, and other publications connected to the subject being studied (Sugiyono, 2020). The population covered every individual residing in Batam City who had ever bought fashion products online. Since the exact population figure could not be determined, respondents were selected through a non-probability approach, specifically purposive sampling, in which participants are chosen according to criteria that fit the research objective (Sekaran & Bouigie, 2025).

The criteria for respondents included being domiciled in Batam City, being at least 17 years old, and having purchased fashion products through e-commerce or online marketplace platforms, such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, TikTok Shop, or similar platforms, at least twice within the last six months. The slovin formula was employed to establish the appropriate sample size guidelines of Hair et al. (2019), that

SEM-PLS analyses require between five and ten respondents for each indicator. Because this research involved 27 indicators, a total of 270 respondents (27×10) formed the final sample..

Data were gathered through an online form built on Google Forms, with every item rated on a five-point Likert scale running from 1 (strongly disagree) up to 5 (strongly agree). This scale was chosen for its effectiveness in capturing how respondents perceive, feel about, and judge the variables under investigation (Sekaran & Bouigie, 2025).

The analysis relied on Structural Equation Modeling with the Partial Least Squares approach (SEM-PLS), processed in SmartPLS. At the measurement (outer) model stage, convergent validity was judged acceptable when indicators reached a loading of 0.70 or higher together with an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) above 0.50; discriminant validity was verified through the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) staying under 0.90; and reliability was confirmed once both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability passed 0.70. The structural (inner) model was then assessed through its coefficient of

determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2 above 0). Finally, the hypotheses and mediating effects were examined using a bootstrapping procedure, treating results as significant when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value fell below 0.05 (Hair et al., 2022; Haryono, 2016).

C. Research Results and Discussion

C.1 Results

The characteristics of respondents in the current study are described based on the frequency of online fashion product purchases during the past month, age, and educational level to provide an overview of the research sample. A total of 270 respondents who had purchased online fashion products in Batam City participated in the current study. Regarding purchasing frequency, the majority of respondents reported purchasing online fashion products twice during the previous month, accounting for 162 respondents (60%), followed by those who made purchases more than twice (73 respondents; 27%) and those who purchased once (35 respondents; 13%). These insights indicate that online fashion shopping has become a

relatively frequent activity among the respondents. In terms of age distribution, most respondents were between 25 and 30 years old (141 respondents; 52.2%), followed by those aged 20–25 years (102 respondents; 37.8%), 17–20 years (23 respondents; 8.5%), and over 30 years old (4 respondents; 1.5%). Regarding educational background, the largest proportion of respondents had completed senior high school or vocational high school (136 respondents; 50.4%), followed by bachelor's degree holders (102 respondents; 37.8%), diploma graduates (25 respondents; 9.3%), postgraduate degree holders (6 respondents; 2.2%), and junior high school graduates (1 respondent; 0.4%). Overall, these demographic characteristics indicate that the respondents were predominantly young adults with secondary to higher educational backgrounds and relatively active online shopping behavior for fashion products.

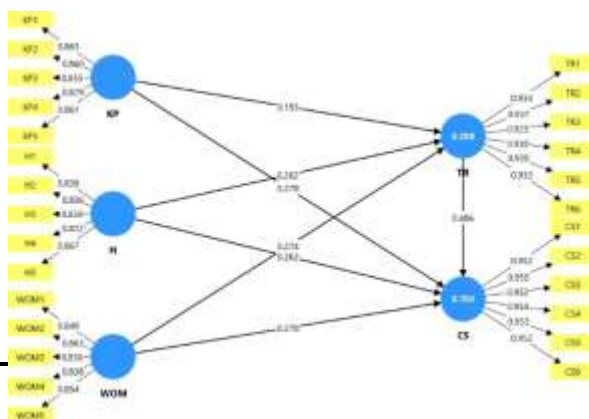


Fig 1. Convergent Validity Results

Table 1. Convergent Validity Assessment (Outer Loading)

Construct	Indicator	Loading Factor
PQ	PQ1	0,863
	PQ2	0,860
	PQ3	0,855
	PQ4	0,879
	PQ5	0,861
PR	PR1	0,839
	PR2	0,836
	PR3	0,859
	PR4	0,872
	PR5	0,867
EWOM	EWOM1	0,849
	EWOM2	0,863
	EWOM3	0,856
	EWOM4	0,838
	EWOM5	0,854
TR	TR1	0,934
	TR2	0,937
	TR3	0,925
	TR4	0,930
	TR5	0,930
	TR6	0,933
CS	CS1	0,952
	CS2	0,955
	CS3	0,952
	CS4	0,954
	CS5	0,953
	CS6	0,952

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.11

Table 2. Convergent Validity Assessment (AVE)

Construct	AVE
PQ	0,908
PR	0,730
EWOM	0,746
TR	0,868
CS	0,726

Referring to Figure 1 and Tables 1 and 2, convergent validity was

assessed by examining the outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. The purpose of this test is to ensure that each indicator accurately represents the construct being measured. The evidences indicate that all indicators have outer loading values ranging from 0.836 to 0.955, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Furthermore, the AVE values for Buyer satisfaction (0.908), Price (0.730), Product Quality (0.746), Trust (0.868), and Electronic Word of Mouth (0.726) are all above the minimum criterion of 0.50. These insights indicate that all indicators adequately represent their respective constructs and demonstrate satisfactory convergent validity. Therefore, all constructs in the current study meet the convergent validity criteria recommended by Hair et al. (2022), indicating that the measurement model is valid and suitable for further structural model analysis.

Table 3. HTMT

	CS	PR	PQ	TR	EWOM
CS					
PR	0,559				
PQ	0,503	0,171			
TR	0,754	0,324	0,272		

E-WOM	0,586	0,289	0,133	0,373
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Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.11

As shown in Table 3, the validity of discrimination in the current study was examined using the *Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio* (HTMT) approach. Based on the test evidences, all confirmed HTMT coefficient values remain below the required maximum threshold of 0.90. This indicates that each construct is unique and can be clearly differentiated from other constructs. Thus, the study model meets the criteria for discriminant validity and is considered suitable for application in the next stage of analysis.

Table 4. Reliability Assessment

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability
CS	0,980	0,980	0,983
PR	0,907	0,909	0,931
PQ	0,915	0,918	0,936
TR	0,970	0,970	0,975
EWOM	0,908	0,907	0,930

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.11

Referring to Table 4, the construct reliability test was performed by reviewing the *Cronbach's Alpha* and *Composite Reliability* values on each variable. From the test evidences, the entire construct had Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70. Based on these insights, each construct

meets the required reliability standards, indicating that the study instrument has adequate internal consistency for further analysis (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

	<i>R-square</i>	<i>R-square adjusted</i>
CS	0,783	0,779
TR	0,208	0,199

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.11

Referring to Table 7, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is used as an indicator of the proportion of variation in the endogenous variables explained by the exogenous variables in the study model, and based on the calculation evidences, Price, Product Quality, and Electronic Word of Mouth collectively explained 20.8% of the variance in Trust ($R^2 = 0.208$). In comparison, the remaining 79.2% was explained by external factors not included in the model. This figure indicates that the model's predictive capacity for the Trust variable is in the weak-to-moderate range. Furthermore, the four predictor variables, namely Price, Product Quality, Electronic Word of Mouth, and Trust, explained 78.3% of the variation in Buyer satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.783$), with the remaining 21.7% explained by

other variables outside the scope of the study. These evidence confirm that the model has excellent predictive power on *Buyer satisfaction*.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing Evidence

	β	T	P
PR -> CS	0,262	7,756	0,000
PR -> TR	0,202	3,582	0,000
PQ -> CS	0,278	8,794	0,000
PQ -> TR	0,193	3,288	0,001
TR -> CS	0,486	14,654	0,000
EWOM -> CS	0,278	8,017	0,000
EWOM -> TR	0,274	4,868	0,000

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.11

Based on Table 10, the hypothesis testing evidence indicate the relationships among the variables in the research model, as reflected by the path coefficients (β), t-statistics, and p-values. The evidence show that all hypothesized relationships are statistically notable, with t-values greater than 1.96 and p-values less than 0.05; therefore, all proposed hypotheses are supported. Price has a notable positive impact on Consumer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.262$; $p < 0.001$) and Trust ($\beta = 0.202$; $p < 0.001$). Product Quality also has a notable positive impact on Consumer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.278$; $p < 0.001$) and Trust ($\beta = 0.193$; $p = 0.001$). Furthermore, Electronic Word of Mouth has a notable positive impact on Consumer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.278$; $p < 0.001$) and Trust ($\beta = 0.274$;

$p < 0.001$). Trust, in turn, has a notable positive impact on Consumer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.486$; $p < 0.001$). These insights indicate that appropriate pricing, high product quality, and positive electronic word of mouth contribute to strengthening consumer trust and enhancing consumer satisfaction with online fashion products in Batam City.

Table 7. Mediation Testing Evidence

	β	T	P
EWOM > TR > CS	0,133	4,708	0,000
PR -> TR -> CS	0,098	3,490	0,000
PQ > TR > CS	0,094	3,195	0,001

Source: Output of SmartPLS 4.11

Based on Table 7, the mediation analysis evidence indicate the indirect effects among the variables, with Trust serving as the mediating variable. The insights show that Trust notably mediates the relationships between Electronic Word of Mouth, Price, Product Quality, and Consumer Satisfaction. Specifically, the indirect effect of Electronic Word of Mouth on Consumer Satisfaction through Trust is notable ($\beta = 0.133$; $t = 4.708$; $p < 0.001$). Likewise, Price has a notable indirect impact on Consumer Satisfaction through Trust ($\beta = 0.098$; $t = 3.490$; $p < 0.001$). Product Quality also exerts a notable indirect impact on Consumer Satisfaction through

Trust ($\beta = 0.094$; $t = 3.195$; $p = 0.001$). These insights demonstrate that Trust plays a notable mediating role in strengthening the effects of Electronic Word of Mouth, Price, and Product Quality on Consumer Satisfaction among users of online fashion products in Batam City.

C.2 Discussion

C.2.1 The Effect of Price on Consumer Satisfaction

The evidence indicate that price has a positive and notable impact on consumer satisfaction. This finding suggests that consumers purchasing fashion products through e-commerce platforms tend to experience higher satisfaction when people think the price they pay is reasonable and matches the quality and advantages they get. In accordance with Consumer Behavior Theory (Kotler & Keller, 2016), consumers evaluate the value of a product by comparing the perceived benefits with the monetary sacrifice required. When consumers perceive that the product offers good value for money, they are more likely to feel pleased with their purchasing decision.

The characteristics of online fashion shopping further explain this relationship. Unlike offline shopping,

consumers cannot physically inspect the product before making a purchase. Consequently, price becomes an important signal of value and quality during the evaluation process. Consumers tend to compare prices across multiple sellers and e-commerce platforms before making a purchase. A reasonable and competitive price therefore increases consumers' perceptions that the transaction is worthwhile and that the purchased product is consistent with their expectations.

This finding is consistent with the studies of Utomo et al. (2024), who reported that price positively influences customer satisfaction, and Viola et al. (2025) who identified price as one of the important determinants of consumer behavior in digital commerce. Similarly, Hasan & Siddikh (2025) found that competitive pricing notably influences purchasing decisions among TikTok Shop users, emphasizing the strategic role of price in online shopping environments.

From a managerial perspective, online fashion sellers in Batam should not compete solely by offering the lowest prices. Instead, they should establish transparent and competitive pricing strategies that reflect product

quality, provide clear pricing information, and communicate the value offered to consumers. Such strategies can enhance consumers' perceptions of fairness, strengthen satisfaction, and encourage long-term customer relationships.

C.2.2 Effect of Price on Trust

The insights demonstrate that price positively and notably affects consumers' trust toward online fashion sellers. This indicates that consumers perceive fair and transparent pricing as an indicator of seller credibility and reliability. In online shopping, where people can't see or check products before buying, price does more than just tell how much something costs. It also gives buyers a clue about the product's quality, helping them feel more sure about both the seller and the item they're buying.

According to Consumer Behavior Theory (Kotler & Keller, 2016), consumers actively evaluate available information before making purchasing decisions. When prices are perceived as reasonable and consistent with product quality, consumers become more confident that sellers are acting honestly and are less likely to engage in misleading

pricing practices. Consequently, transparent pricing contributes to the development of consumer trust.

These insights support the evidence reported by Ramadhan & Besra (2023), who found that price positively influence consumer trust in online transactions. Likewise, Hasan and Siddikh (2025) emphasized that price plays a notable role in shaping consumers' evaluations of sellers in digital marketplaces.

From a practical perspective, online fashion businesses in Batam should implement transparent pricing policies by clearly displaying product prices, avoiding hidden costs, and ensuring consistency between product quality and selling price. Such practices help reduce consumers' perceived risk, strengthen trust toward sellers, and ultimately improve the overall online shopping experience.

C.2.3 The Effect of Product Quality on Consumer Satisfaction

The insights show that the quality of a product has a good and important impact on how pleased purchasers are. This shows that purchasers are happier when the fashion items they get are exactly what is described on online shopping sites and fit their

expectations in terms of what they're made of, how they look, how long they last, and how well they work. Product quality is still a key factor that affects how pleased purchasers are with their online fashion purchases.

From the perspective of Consumer Behavior Theory (Kotler & Keller, 2016), satisfaction is felt when the actual evidence of a product match or even exceed the buyer's expectations. In online shopping, product quality becomes particularly important because consumers rely primarily on digital information, photographs, and product descriptions before making purchasing decisions. If the received product corresponds with these expectations, consumers are more likely to evaluate the shopping experience positively.

These insights are consistent with Ayesha & Indradewa (2024), who concluded that product quality notably enhances customer satisfaction in e-commerce. They also support the insights of Viola et al. (2025) and Hasan and Siddikh (2025), which identify product quality as one of the primary determinants influencing consumers' evaluations and purchasing behavior in digital marketplaces.

The practical implication of this finding is that online fashion sellers in Batam should prioritize maintaining consistent product quality by ensuring that product specifications, images, and descriptions accurately represent the actual items delivered to consumers. Improving quality control, providing accurate product information, and minimizing discrepancies between advertised and received products can reduce consumer disappointment, enhance satisfaction, and strengthen long-term customer loyalty.

C.2.4 The Influence of Product Quality on Trust

The evidence demonstrate that product quality positively and notably influences consumers' trust toward online fashion sellers. This result suggests that consumers are more likely to trust sellers when the products received consistently match the information, specifications, and images displayed on e-commerce platforms. In the circumstances of online shopping, consumers are unable to examine products physically before making a purchase. Consistent product quality becomes an important indicator of seller reliability and credibility.

According to Consumer Behavior Theory (Kotler & Keller, 2016), consumers evaluate available information to minimize uncertainty before making purchasing decisions. When the quality of received products consistently meets expectations, consumers perceive that sellers fulfill their promises honestly and reliably. This positive experience gradually strengthens trust and reduces perceived risks associated with future transactions.

These insights support the evidence reported by Nofrizal et al. (2023), who found that product quality notably influences consumer trust in e-commerce. Likewise, Ramadhan and Besra (2023) concluded that higher product quality contributes positively to building consumer trust in digital shopping environments. Hasan and Siddikh (2025) also emphasized that product quality is one of the primary considerations influencing consumers' evaluations of online sellers.

From a managerial perspective, online fashion sellers in Batam should prioritize maintaining consistent product quality by ensuring that products delivered correspond with the descriptions and images

presented on marketplace platforms. Accurate product information, quality control, and consistent product performance are essential for strengthening consumer trust and encouraging repeat purchases.

C.2.5 The Influence of Word of Mouth on Consumer Satisfaction

The insights reveal that electronic (e-WOM) has a positive and notable impact on buyer satisfaction. This indicates that positive reviews, ratings, and recommendations shared by previous consumers contribute to shaping favorable expectations before purchase, which subsequently enhance satisfaction when the purchased products meet those expectations.

Unlike traditional shopping, consumers in online marketplaces heavily depend on information generated by other users because they cannot directly examine product quality. Reviews, ratings, photographs, and testimonials therefore become valuable channels of information that help consumers evaluate products and reduce uncertainty. Positive e-WOM help consumers make better purchasing decisions based on relevant information, increasing the likelihood

that their expectations will match the actual product received, ultimately leading to higher satisfaction.

These insights are consistent with Ginting & Yusriadi (2023), who demonstrated that e-WOM positively influences customer satisfaction in e-commerce. Similarly, Hasan and Siddikh (2025) identified e-WOM as one of the major factors influencing consumer behavior in digital marketplaces, particularly in product evaluation before purchase.

The practical implication is that online fashion businesses in Batam should actively encourage pleased purchasers to leave authentic reviews and ratings after completing transactions. Sellers should also maintain product quality and customer service to generate positive e-WOM that develops organically. A strong digital reputation supported by credible consumer reviews can improve satisfaction and strengthen long-term customer relationships.

C.2.6 The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Trust

The evidence demonstrate that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) positively and notably affects consumers' trust toward online fashion

sellers. This finding suggests that positive reviews and recommendations from previous buyers reduce consumers' uncertainty and increase their confidence in the credibility of online sellers. Since online shopping involves relatively higher perceived risk than offline shopping, consumers frequently rely on other users' experiences before deciding whether a seller is trustworthy.

From the perspective of Consumer Behavior Theory (Kotler & Keller, 2016), consumers seek external information to reduce uncertainty before making purchase decisions. In digital environments, electronic e-WOM serves as an important information source because consumers often perceive fellow buyers' experiences as more objective and credible than promotional messages created by sellers. Consequently, consistent positive reviews strengthen consumers' confidence that sellers are capable of delivering products as promised and conducting transactions honestly.

These insights support Ramadhan and Besra (2023), who found that e-WOM notably enhances consumer trust in online shopping.

Likewise, Ilhamalimy & Ali (2021) demonstrated that electronic word of mouth contributes positively to trust by reducing perceived risk in digital transactions. Although Almi (2026) examined brand trust, the insights similarly suggest that positive online recommendations play an important role in strengthening consumers' confidence before making purchasing decisions.

For online fashion sellers in Batam, these insights imply that managing online reputation should become a strategic priority. Businesses should encourage authentic customer reviews, respond professionally to negative feedback, and maintain consistent service quality to foster positive electronic word of mouth. Such efforts can strengthen consumers' trust toward sellers, reduce perceived transaction risk, and improve overall competitiveness in the increasingly competitive e-commerce market.

C.2.7 The Role of Trust in Mediating the Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Consumer Satisfaction

The mediation analysis indicates that trust it has a big impact on how electronic word of mouth connects

with customer satisfaction. Since both the direct effect of e-WOM on consumer satisfaction and the indirect effect through trust are statistically notable, trust acts as a partial mediator. This finding suggests that positive electronic word of mouth not only directly enhances consumer satisfaction but also indirectly increases satisfaction by strengthening consumers' trust toward online fashion sellers.

This result can be explained by the characteristics of online fashion shopping, where consumers are unable to physically inspect products before making a purchase. Consequently, consumers frequently rely on reviews, ratings, and recommendations provided by previous buyers to reduce uncertainty regarding product quality and seller credibility. Positive e-WOM creates confidence that sellers are reliable and capable of delivering products as promised. As trust increases, consumers feel more secure during the purchasing process, which ultimately contributes to higher satisfaction.

These insights are consistent with Almi (2026) who found that electronic word of mouth positively

influences trust, as well as Ginting and Yusriadi (2023), who demonstrated that trust contributes notably to consumer satisfaction. The present study extends these insights by showing that trust serves as an important mechanism through which e-WOM enhances buyer satisfaction among online fashion consumers in Batam City.

From a managerial perspective, online fashion sellers in Batam should actively encourage pleased purchasers to provide authentic reviews, ratings, and testimonials after completing transactions. Maintaining a positive online reputation through responsive customer service and consistent product quality can strengthen consumers' trust and improve overall satisfaction.

C.2.8 The Role of Trust in Mediating the Influence of Price on Consumer Satisfaction

The evidence reveal that trust notably mediates the relationship between price and consumer satisfaction. Because both the direct effect of price on consumer satisfaction and the indirect effect through trust remain statistically notable, trust functions as a partial mediator. This indicates that

consumers evaluate price not only as a monetary sacrifice but also as an indicator of seller credibility, which subsequently influences their level of satisfaction.

In online fashion shopping, consumers cannot directly examine products before purchasing. Therefore, reasonable and transparent pricing reduces consumers' uncertainty and strengthens their confidence that sellers are honest and reliable. Fair pricing creates perceptions that the value received is consistent with the price paid, while simultaneously reinforcing trust in sellers. Consequently, satisfaction is influenced both by consumers' direct evaluation of price and by the trust developed throughout the transaction process.

These insights support Ramadhan and Besra (2023), who found that price positively affects consumer trust, and Utomo et al. (2024), who reported that fair pricing notably improves customer satisfaction. The current study further demonstrates that trust partially explains how price contributes to consumer satisfaction in online fashion transactions.

Practically, online fashion businesses in Batam should implement transparent pricing strategies by clearly communicating product prices, avoiding hidden costs, and ensuring consistency between price and product quality. Such practices can strengthen consumer trust while simultaneously improving satisfaction.

C.2.9 The Role of Trust in Mediating the Influence of Product Quality on Consumer Satisfaction

The mediation analysis demonstrates that trust notably mediates the relationship between product quality and consumer satisfaction. Since both the direct and indirect effects are statistically notable, trust acts as a partial mediator. This finding indicates that product quality directly increases consumer satisfaction while simultaneously strengthening trust, which further enhances satisfaction.

Among all relationships examined in the current study, trust has the strongest direct influence on buyer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.486$). This finding highlights the crucial role of trust in online fashion transactions. Unlike conventional shopping, consumers purchasing fashion

products through e-commerce platforms cannot physically examine product materials, assess quality, or try on products before completing a purchase. As a result, consumers face higher levels of uncertainty and perceived risk. Under these conditions, trust becomes a key determinant of satisfaction because consumers who believe that online sellers provide accurate product information, deliver products as promised, and conduct transactions honestly are more likely to perceive their shopping experience positively.

These insights support Nofrizal et al. (2023), who reported that product quality notably influences trust, as well as Ginting and Yusriadi (2023), who found that trust positively affects buyer satisfaction. The present study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that trust not only directly influences satisfaction but also partially mediates the effect of product quality on buyer satisfaction among online fashion consumers in Batam City.

The insights also have important managerial implications. Since trust exerts the strongest influence on buyer satisfaction, online fashion sellers in Batam should prioritize

strategies that strengthen consumer trust in addition to maintaining product quality. These strategies include providing accurate product descriptions and photographs, delivering products that match advertised specifications, fulfilling delivery commitments, responding promptly to customer inquiries and complaints, and maintaining transparency throughout the transaction process. By strengthening consumer trust, online fashion businesses can improve satisfaction, encourage repeat purchases, and establish long-term customer relationships in the increasingly competitive digital marketplace.

D. Conclusion

The current study examined the effects of product quality, price, and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) on buyer satisfaction through the mediating role of trust among online fashion consumers in Batam City. The insights indicate that product quality, price, and e-WOM positively influence both trust and buyer satisfaction. Among all variables, trust was identified as the strongest determinant of buyer satisfaction, highlighting its crucial role in reducing consumers'

perceived risk and enhancing confidence in online transactions. These insights suggest that online fashion businesses should prioritize maintaining product quality, implementing fair and transparent pricing, encouraging authentic customer reviews, and providing reliable customer service to strengthen consumer trust and improve customer satisfaction. Nevertheless, the current study was limited to online fashion consumers in Batam City and included only five research variables. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve respondents from different regions, investigate other product categories or e-commerce platforms, and incorporate additional variables such as perceived value, service quality, brand image, perceived risk, customer loyalty, or purchase intention to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer satisfaction in digital commerce.

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