

# The Contribution of Product Quality Perception in Predicting The Effectiveness of Digital Marketing Strategies: A Case Study on the Shopee Platform

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## Abstract

In the digital era, competition in the e-commerce industry is fiercer. Platforms like Shopee have become integral to consumers' lives in fulfilling their daily needs. To win the competition, Shopee sellers must develop innovative and effective marketing strategies. One of the most widely used strategies is a combination of event marketing, viral marketing, and affiliate marketing. Through a quantitative approach and SEM analysis, this study found that the three strategies had a significant positive influence on purchase intention. The unique finding is the central role of product quality perception as a mediator in this relationship, which highlights the importance of building a positive perception of product quality in supporting the success of marketing strategies in the digital age. By examining the influence of multi-channel marketing strategies and the mediating role of product quality perception, this study is expected to enrich our understanding of how consumers respond to various marketing stimuli on e-commerce platforms.

**Keywords:** event marketing, viral marketing, affiliate marketing, purchase intention, quality perception

## Introduction

The rapid development of e-commerce in the digital era has changed the business landscape significantly. Platforms like Shopee have become an integral part of consumers' lives, offering ease and convenience in shopping. In an increasingly fierce competition, companies are required to develop effective digital marketing strategies to attract and retain customers. One of the commonly used strategies is a combination of affiliate marketing, event marketing, and viral marketing (Chaffey et al., 2019). However, the success of a digital marketing strategy is not only determined by creativity and innovation but also influenced by other factors, such as consumer perception of the quality of the products offered. This study aims to reveal the extent to which product quality perception acts as a mediator in predicting the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies (affiliate marketing, event marketing, and viral marketing) on consumer purchase intention on the Shopee platform.

Although several studies have examined the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer behavior, such as those conducted by Alhamid et al., (2023), Aman (2024) and Harto (2021) there is still a gap in understanding the role of mediating product quality perceptions. Previous research tended to focus more on the direct influence of marketing variables on purchase intention without considering the role of intervening variables such as product quality perception (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This study seeks to fill this gap by empirically examining how product quality perception mediates the relationship between digital marketing strategies (affiliate marketing, event marketing, and viral marketing) and consumer purchase

intention on the Shopee platform. The results of this research are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of marketing theory and provide practical implications for business people in designing more effective digital marketing strategies.

In the fast-paced digital era, companies are required to continue to innovate in developing effective digital marketing strategies. However, not all digital marketing strategies deliver the same results. This study aims to identify key factors that can improve the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, especially in the context of e-commerce platforms such as Shopee. By analyzing the role of mediating product quality perceptions, this research is expected to provide valuable insights for business people in optimizing resource allocation and increasing return on investment (ROI) from digital marketing activities. The results of this study can also be a reference for marketers in designing more effective and sustainable marketing campaigns (Chaffey et al., 2019).

## **Literature Review and Hypotheses**

### **Event Marketing on Quality Perception**

Event marketing is a form of advertising that involves creating a special event or theme to associate a brand or product with a unique experience. Through this activity, it is hoped that it can attract the attention of consumers, increase brand awareness, and ultimately stimulate purchase intention (Belch & Belch, 2012). Event marketing has a crucial role in increasing consumer perception of the quality of a product. Through hands-on experience with products, in-depth interactions, and excellent service, event marketing can build consumer trust and create strong emotional bonds. In addition, event marketing is also effective in differentiating products from competitors and positioning the brand better in the minds of consumers. By providing a unique and memorable experience, event marketing not only increases sales but also drives long-term consumer loyalty. Event marketing is also a marketing strategy that involves organizing special events or activities to promote products or brands. The event is designed to create an unforgettable experience for consumers, thereby increasing their perception of product quality and ultimately driving purchase intention. Based on the explanation above, the following hypothesis was formed:

***H1: Event marketing influences quality perception.***

### **Viral Marketing on Quality Perception**

Viral marketing is a type of internet-based word-of-mouth marketing (e-word-to-mouth marketing, also referred to as e-word-of-mouth marketing) that uses networking and aims to spread virus-like advertising quickly and widely by providing special rewards to customers (Hasan, 2010). According to (Hasanah & Nasution, 2023), viral marketing influences on quality perception. In addition, according to (Choshaly & Mirabolghasemi, 2022), viral marketing is a strategy directed at persuading someone to share a marketing message with others. From this statement, it is hoped that viral marketing can affect the perception of product quality in several ways. First, when many people talk about a product positively, the phenomenon of "social proof" makes consumers tend to believe that the product is of high quality. Second, authentic viral marketing that actively engages consumers can build consumer trust in brands and products. Finally, interesting and entertaining viral content can create a pleasant experience, so consumers associate the positive experience with the quality of the product. Based on the explanation above, the following hypothesis was formed:

***H2: Viral marketing influences on quality perception.***

### **Affiliate Marketing on Quality Perception**

Affiliate marketing is one way to market products digitally (Muhammim, 2017). Simply put, it is a system where a person earns a commission by promoting and selling other people's products. So, the more products are sold because of their recommendations, the greater the income they get. Affiliate marketing is a way of growing a business by inviting others to promote products. The process involves active efforts in introducing the product to potential buyers. If a potential buyer is interested and buys the product through a special link provided by the promoter, then the promoter will earn a commission. The promoter's ability to explain and offer a product is very important because it can increase the trust of potential buyers in the product, thus encouraging them to buy. Based on previous research conducted by Sari and Munawar & Rokhmat (2024), and Wicaksono (2022), affiliate marketing has proven to be effective in increasing consumer purchase intention. Therefore, in this study, we wanted to test whether the same thing also happened on the Shopee marketplace platform. Based on the above exploration, the third hypothesis is formed. Namely, Affiliate Marketing has a significant effect on qualitative perception. Based on the explanation above, the following hypothesis was formed:

*H3: Affiliate marketing influences quality perception.*

### **Quality Perception on Consumer Purchase Intention**

Schiffman & Kanuk (2008) define quality perception as a consumer's assessment of a product based on its intrinsic characteristics. These intrinsic characteristics refer to the physical attributes of the product that can be directly perceived by consumers and become the basis for them to make rational purchase decisions. According to (Setiawan & Hidayat, 2022) and (Rohman & Indaryadi, 2020) perception is a mental process that shapes how we understand the information we receive. In the context of purchasing, quality perception is a crucial factor. (Jaafar et al., 2012) explained that to measure quality perception by looking at three main aspects, namely: 1). **Conformity of quality and benefits**; The extent to which the product meets the needs and expectations of consumers. 2). **Product information**: How accurate the information provided about the product is. 3). **Competitive quality**: The advantage of the product compared to the competitor's product. The better the perception of consumer quality towards a product, the more purchase intention in the product will increase. Based on the explanation above, the following hypothesis was formed:

*H4: Quality perception influences on consumer purchase intention.*

## **Research Method**

In this study, a *purposive sampling* technique was applied. The research sample is limited to people aged 18-35 years who are active users of the Shopee marketplace. This restriction is in line with the opinion of Sugiyono (2014) who stated that *purposive sampling* is carried out based on specific criteria.

This study measures purchase intention as a dependent variable, that is, a variable that is influenced by other independent variables. Purchase intention, as defined by Peburiyanti & Sabran (2020), is a factor that encourages consumers to continue buying the product because it attracts attention.

This study also measures *event marketing*, *viral marketing*, and *affiliate marketing* as independent variables. According to Belch & Belch (2012) *event marketing* is a unique way of promotion, where companies create special events or activities to provide a pleasant experience to consumers, with the hope that they will remember and buy the company's products. Choshaly & Mirabolghasemi (2022) argue that *viral marketing* is a strategy that aims to encourage individuals to spread marketing messages to their social networks. Meanwhile, affiliate

marketing is a system in which companies expand their marketing reach by involving other individuals or businesses to promote their products online (Muhammim, 2017)

Mediation variables are used as a contribution to this study. Mediation variables are variables that theoretically affect the relationship between independent and dependent variables into indirect relationships and cannot be observed and measured (Sugiyono, 2014). This study measures the perception of quality as a mediating variable that wants to see the influence of the relationship between event marketing variables, viral marketing, and affiliate marketing on consumer purchase intention on the Shopee platform.

The data analysis process is carried out in several stages. First, a descriptive analysis was carried out to describe the characteristics of the respondents. Furthermore, the measurement model (outer model) is evaluated to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Finally, the structural model (inner model) is tested to confirm the relationship between latent variables according to the hypothesis proposed. The entire analysis process uses SmartPLS 3.0 software.

## Results and Discussion

In this study, as many as 98 answers qualified as respondents. The respondents used in this study are the general public in Yogyakarta who have shopped using *the* Shopee marketplace. The following is the data on the characteristics of the respondents obtained:

**Table 1.** Respondent Characteristics by Gender

Gender	Total Respondents	Percentage (%)
Man	52	53,06%
Woman	46	46,94%
Total	98	100%

From Table 1, based on gender, there are 98 total respondents, with 52 respondents being male and as many as 46 respondents being female. Therefore, it can be concluded that in this study, there are more dominant female respondents, with a percentage of 53.06%.

**Table 2.** Characteristics of Respondents Based on Domicile

Home	Total Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yogyakarta City	30	30.61%
Sleman	33	33,67%
Gunungkidul	5	5.10%
Bantul	28	28,57%
Kulon Progo	2	2,04%
Total	98	100%

## Instrument Testing Validity Test

To ensure that the data obtained is trustworthy and represents the concept to be measured, construct validity testing is carried out using SmartPLS 3.0. The results of the analysis showed that all variable indicators in this study had a significant loading factor and an AVE value above 0.5, so they met the criteria for construct validity.

**Table 3.** Validity Test

Variable	AVE Value
Affiliate Marketing	0,664
Event Marketing	0,596
Viral Marketing	0,613
Quality Perception	0,532
Purchase intention	0,673

### Reliability Test

The reliability test conducted in this study shows that the instruments used to collect data are consistent (Kusuma & Wardhani, 2022). The Cronbach Alpha value for all the research variables exceeded the threshold of 0.7, which indicates a high level of reliability. This is in line with the opinion of Nunnally (1978) which states that a Cronbach Alpha value above 0.7 indicates a reliable research instrument.

**Table 4.** Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Affiliate Marketing	0,873
Event Marketing	0,831
Viral Marketing	0,840
Quality Perception	0,778
Purchase intention	0,878

### Hypothesis Test Results

The structural equation model (SEM) is used to test the causal relationship between the research variables. The results of the SEM analysis presented in Table 5 show that there is sufficient empirical evidence to support the hypothesis that this is indicated by a p-value greater than 0.05.

**Table 5.** Hypothesis Testing Results

Variable	p-value
Event Marketing → Quality Perception	0,041
Viral Marketing → Quality Perception	0,065
Affiliate Marketing → Quality Perception	0,020
Quality Perception → Purchase intention	0,0001

### Discussion

The statistical testing of the first hypothesis in this study showed p-value of 0.041, which was smaller than the significance level of 0.05. This means that marketing events affect the perception of product quality, hence the first hypothesis in this study is accepted. Marketing events organized by Shopee, such as flash sales or free shipping, provide an opportunity for consumers to try products directly and feel the quality. This positive experience will form a strong perception that the products sold on Shopee are of good quality. The results of this study is supported by Belch & Belch (2012) when consumers are interested in a marketing event, it will increase the perception of quality and stimulate consumer buying interest.

The second hypothesis showed p-value of 0.065 (table 5), which was greater than the significance level of 0.05. According to (Choshaly & Mirabolghasemi, 2022), viral marketing is a strategy to persuade someone to share a marketing message with others, but the results of this study prove that although viral marketing can spread information about the product quickly, this does not guarantee that consumers will have a positive perception of the product quality. This is because the perception of quality is formed through direct experience of consumers when using the product than information obtained from others. When people already have a perception that the product is of quality, then the virality won't affect consumer's interest. Which is also confirmed by (Reonald & Sukanti, 2022).

The third hypothesis test in this study showed p-value of 0.02 ( $p < 0.05$ ), meaning that affiliate marketing affects the perception of quality. Muhammad & Rosyadi (2018) stated that affiliate marketing is one of the marketing systems where a person earns a commission by promoting and selling other people's products. When this affiliate marketing is carried out on the Shopee marketplace, more consumers became aware of the perception of the quality of a

product (Munawar & Rokhmat (2024), and (Wicaksono, 2022). Marketers can increase consumer trust and drive purchases by leveraging affiliate credibility, quality content, and transparency.

P-value in the fourth hypothesis is 0.0001 (table 5), which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. The results of this study is supported by (Satrio & Adiarsi, 2019), (Albari & Safitri, 2018), and (Rahmanullah & Nurjanah, 2018) which proves that the perception of quality affects buying interest. Quality perception is the main key to attracting consumer buying interest in marketplaces such as Shopee. The chosen material for a certain product also affect products quality, therefore improve consumer purchasing interest (Primandaru, 2021). For example, the quality of healthy products that are truly made from plant materials influences consumer purchasing interest. By building trust, providing a good shopping experience, and optimizing product appearance, sellers can increase sales and build a good reputation.

Based on the results of statistical testing and hypothesis discussion in this study, event marketing and affiliate marketing affect quality perception; quality perception affects purchase intention. Quality perception mediates the relationship between event marketing and affiliate marketing on purchase intention in the Shopee marketplace because the p-value from total indirect effects on SEM PLS results was 0,034 and 0,031 respectively (smaller than 0,05). Meanwhile, the testing of total indirect effects in viral marketing showed that the result was 0,076 (greater than 0,05). This means that the variable viral marketing did not indirectly affect the purchase intention.

## Conclusion

This study shows that quality perception is a key factor in influencing consumer purchase intention on e-commerce platforms such as Shopee. The results of data analysis show that event marketing and affiliate marketing activities significantly contribute to improving the perception of product quality in the eyes of consumers. This is in line with previous research that highlighted the importance of direct consumer experience and personal interaction in shaping quality perceptions. On the other hand, viral marketing, although effective in disseminating information, does not directly affect the perception of product quality. These findings indicate that to increase purchase intention, businesses need to focus more on strategies to provide a positive shopping experience and build consumer trust in product quality. The results of this research have significant implications for business people on e-commerce platforms. To increase sales and build customer loyalty, optimizing event marketing and affiliate marketing strategies further is recommended. By providing a direct experience to consumers, such as through special events or collaborating with influencers, companies can build a positive perception of the quality of their products. In addition, companies also need to pay attention to the quality of the product itself and provide good customer service to support the formation of a positive quality perception.

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