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Beyond Price and Reputation: Hedonic Experience, Social Interaction, and Consumer Behavior in Digital Commerce

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ABSTRACT

The competitive edge of digital commerce portals is not confined merely to price and reputation anymore. The whole focus lies on creating an engaging experience for the consumers. The need of the hour, thus, is to study the role played by hedonism and sociality in shaping consumer behavior. This study examines the influence of price advantage, reputation, hedonic experience, and social interaction on customer satisfaction, and evaluates the effect of customer satisfaction on repurchase intention and electronic word-of-mouth in digital commerce. A quantitative explanatory design was adopted using secondary cross-sectional survey data from 253 digital commerce consumers. Construct scores were developed from Likert-scale items. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, and robust regression with HC3 heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors were applied to test the proposed hypotheses. The findings revealed that hedonic experience significantly influenced customer satisfaction, followed by social interaction. In contrast, price advantage and reputation did not demonstrate significant effects after robust estimation. Customer satisfaction significantly predicted both repurchase intention and electronic word-of-mouth. The results indicate that experiential and social dimensions are stronger drivers of satisfaction and post-purchase behavior than traditional economic and reputational cues. The findings suggest that digital commerce platforms should prioritize enjoyable, interactive, and socially engaging experiences to strengthen customer satisfaction, repeat purchasing, and positive online recommendations. The study contributes to digital consumer behavior literature by highlighting the growing importance of experience-based and interaction-based engagement in digital commerce.

KEYWORDS: Digital commerce, customer satisfaction, hedonic experience, social interaction, electronic word-of-mouth.

1. Introduction

The development of digital commerce has changed consumer markets in a substantial way and has impacted how consumers search for products, make comparisons, communicate with brands online, etc. In e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart, fierce business rivalry has emerged, and businesses have also taken notice of the importance of customers' experiences and involvement, along with pricing and reputation. In the age of digitalization, companies are trying to incorporate more social and experiential aspects into digital platforms to influence consumer decision-making (Chaffey et al., 2019). Moreover, with the continuous expansion of global e-commerce, the importance of interactive and engaging online spaces is increasing even more (Zenkina, 2022). In digital commerce, consumer behavior is based on both rational and emotional considerations. Previously, traditional research focused primarily on the role of price, economic value, and reputation in consumer satisfaction and repurchase intention. Nonetheless, according to consumer involvement theory, internet shoppers want much more from shopping – they seek engaging experiences (Rachmad, 2025). Thus, in e-commerce, consumer satisfaction becomes a vital factor shaping consumer loyalty and behavior.

There are two phenomena that can influence customer retention, online presence, and competitiveness, i.e., repurchase intentions and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) behaviors in digital commerce. Previous studies show that the service quality and consumer satisfaction can positively impact consumers' willingness to repurchase goods/services and share positive recommendations (Ngo et al., 2025). It can be noted that these findings confirm previous studies on the role of customer satisfaction in the relationships between consumer online experience and repurchase intentions and e-WOM (Dandis et al., 2026). Such behaviors are particularly important in the highly saturated e-commerce environment with plenty of alternatives that consumers have at hand online via different platforms.

Recent developments in digital commerce have shifted the focus in the scientific community to consumer engagement and interactivity online. Customer engagement involves the consumers' emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses to the digital platforms. Previously, it was shown that interactivity leads to higher consumer engagement and strengthens their connection in online spaces (Bilro & Loureiro, 2020). In addition, online brand communities and digitally-connected social ecosystems allow building broader customer relationships through communication and interaction (Marbach et al., 2019). Thus, the conclusion that can be drawn here is that nowadays,

more reliance on the engagement strategy has become common in digital commerce rather than on economic incentives alone.

Price advantage has always played an important role among the factors influencing online buying decisions; people tend to compare prices and decide which websites are better for the purchases. As in many spheres, pricing wars still exist in e-commerce, and competitive pricing remains popular (Chen et al., 2020). Although pricing is still an influential determinant of online consumer decisions, trusted relations, credible platforms, and peer-produced content also begin playing a part in making decisions. Formation of trust, security perceptions, and e-WOM communication are critical elements influencing online purchasing behavior that reduce uncertainty in the process (Handoyo, 2024). Thus, it can be concluded that the explanations of post-purchase customer satisfaction and behavior should not be limited by economic variables.

The perception of online shopping gains importance while discussing the topic of consumer behavior in digital environments. Hedonic experiences include the consumers' fun, enjoyment, and emotions when shopping online. The literature shows there is a strong link between emotionally engaging shopping experiences and customer attitudes and intentions to act (Tarka et al., 2023). As a result, digital commerce systems are increasingly more interested in developing interactive, visually attractive environments, so as to improve customer satisfaction and engagement.

Social interaction also impacts consumer behavior online by allowing the consumer to communicate, share information and see what other consumers are going through while making a purchase. Social commerce interactions enhance social influence and consumer involvement in online spaces (Xq et al., 2021). The consequence is that the social interaction is becoming a significant determinant of online engagement and customer satisfaction.

Satisfied customers are also likely to return to the digital platforms and to spread the word about their satisfaction, which in turn positively influences their behavior, including repurchase intentions and electronic word-of-mouth. Past studies have proved that e-satisfaction and e-trust have a positive effect on the intention to repurchase within the context of online shopping (Prahiawan & Purba, 2021). Likewise, online reviews and recommendation systems also have a significant influence on purchase intention because they improve consumers' perception and help to reduce information asymmetry in online transactions (Zhu et al., 2020). The results show that customer satisfaction acts as an intermediate mechanism between platform experiences and positive consumer behaviours.

Although the literature surrounding digital consumers is extensive, there are some significant gaps in the literature. Previous research has mainly focused on the economic and reputational factors, and the research on the mixed effect of hedonic experience and social interaction on customer satisfaction and post-purchase behaviours is rather limited. Moreover, the results on the relative weight afforded to price advantage and reputation in Digital Commerce environments are inconsistent. Experiential, social and behavioral aspects have been studied in isolation and/or in combination in a limited number of studies in a single analytical framework, with regard to customer satisfaction, intention to repurchase, and electronic word-of-mouth.

The current study suggests that price advantage has a positive effect on customer satisfaction (H1), reputation has a positive effect on customer satisfaction (H2), hedonic experience has a positive effect on customer satisfaction (H3), and social interaction has a positive effect on customer satisfaction (H4) based on the literature. Customer satisfaction is further suggested to have a positive impact on repurchase intention (H5) and electronic word of mouth (H6). With this backdrop, this study seeks to explore the effect of price advantage, reputation, hedonic experience and social interaction on customer satisfaction and its effect on repurchase intention and electronic word-of-mouth in digital commerce environments. The research aims to make a theoretical contribution to the digital commerce and consumer behaviour field by examining whether experiential and social factors have a stronger impact on consumers' behavioural response than traditional economic and reputational factors.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

In this study, a quantitative research design was used to investigate the relationships between price advantage, reputation, hedonic experience, social interaction, customer satisfaction, repurchase intention and electronic word of mouth in relation to digital commerce. A cross-sectional method was used as there was one data collection point in time. The study also employed an explanatory research approach in analysing the predictive relationship between the variables in regression-based analysis.

2.2 Data Source

This study was based on a secondary data set, which was already publicly available and created by Rumangkit (2024). This dataset includes the results of the questionnaires for the repeat purchase behavior and e-word-of-mouth for the smartphone e-commerce market in Indonesia. The data

specifically focus on the effect of price advantage, reputation, hedonic appeal, and social interaction on consumer satisfaction and resulting behaviors in online consumers. A total of 253 valid observations were used and included the following structured measurement items in Likert scales for the constructs in the study.

2.3 Measurement of Variables

Seven constructs were examined for the study from the data set. Price advantage, reputation, hedonic experience, and social interaction were considered as the independent variables, and customer satisfaction served as the mediating construct. Repurchase intention and electronic word-of-mouth were considered dependent variables.

Multiple questionnaire items on a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) were used to measure each construct. Construct-level scores were created by averaging the scores of the measurement items of the construct.

2.4 Data Processing and Screening

Data was screened before being subjected to statistical analysis for the purpose of checking data quality and consistency. The results of the missing value analysis showed that there were no observations with partially completed responses. The problems encountered were duplicate response patterns in the data, but these were kept due to the nature of the original secondary data structure. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the distribution of the variables. To measure the internal consistency of measurement constructs, Cronbach's alpha was used to test their reliability.

2.5 Statistical Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to explore the correlation between the constructs and to check for possible multicollinearity issues. The hypotheses were tested using robust multiple regression with HC3 (Heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors). Heteroscedasticity was detected in the regression diagnostics, so it was determined that robust estimation would be appropriate. Three regression models were estimated: a model for the relationship between price advantage, reputation, hedonic experience, and social interaction and customer satisfaction, a second model for the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention, and a third model for the relationship between customer satisfaction and electronic WOM.

3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

The descriptive statistics showed that overall, the responses were positive with regard to all constructs of the study. The mean ratings ranged from 4.02 to 4.19 using a 5-point Likert Scale, which denotes that the platforms received a favorable rating from users. Reputation had the highest mean rating (Mean = 4.19), while Hedonic experience had the lowest mean rating (Mean = 4.02). However, it was still a favorable rating.

A number of constructs demonstrated adequate internal consistency during the reliability test. Price advantage ($\alpha = 0.741$) and social interaction ($\alpha = 0.709$) were above the recommended cut-off value of 0.70. Moderate reliability values were found for other constructs, possibly due to the few measurement items in the secondary dataset. Descriptive statistics and the results of reliability are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis (N = 253)

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Cronbach's Alpha
Price Advantage	4.174	0.550	2.000	5.000	0.741
Reputation	4.188	0.481	1.667	5.000	0.699
Hedonic experience	4.016	0.581	2.000	5.000	0.541
Social Interaction	4.136	0.511	1.333	5.000	0.709
Customer Satisfaction	4.085	0.508	2.000	5.000	0.528
Repurchase Intention	4.123	0.520	1.500	5.000	0.576
Electronic Word-of-Mouth	4.191	0.440	2.000	5.000	0.643

Figure 1 below shows the distribution of construct means comparatively. It is evident that relatively minor variations existed amongst the constructs, suggesting that participants assessed the elements of digital commerce fairly uniformly.

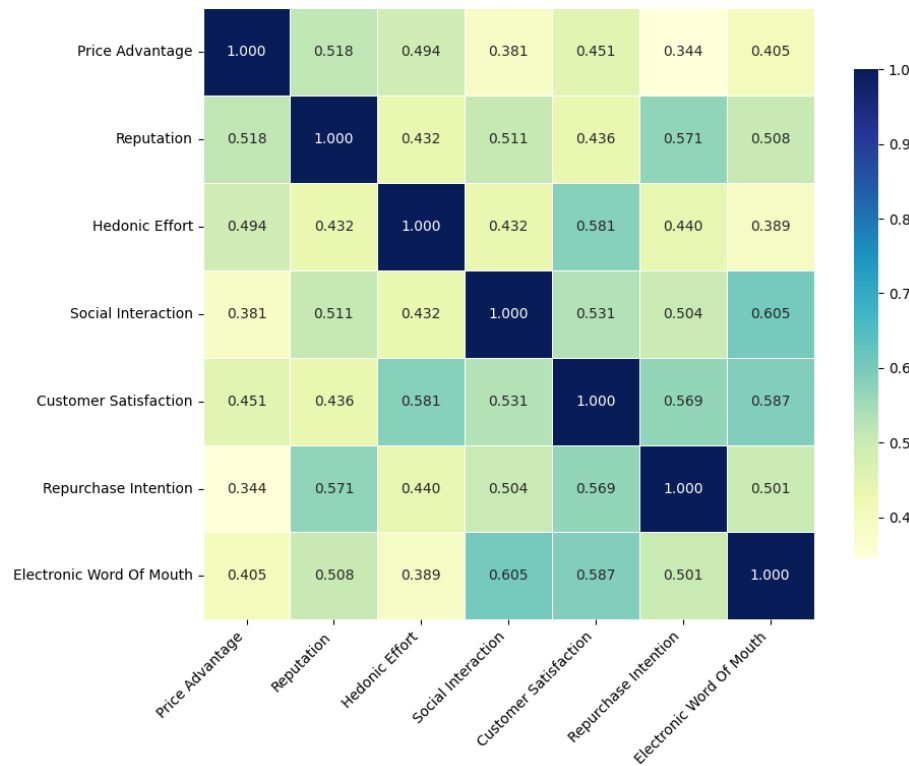


Figure 1. Mean Scores of Study Constructs

3.2 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was used to study the relationship between the study variables. Results indicated that all constructs were positively correlated. Customer satisfaction had relatively strong relationships with hedonic experience ($r = 0.581$), social interaction ($r = 0.531$), repurchase intention ($r = 0.569$), and electronic word of mouth ($r = 0.587$). This indicates that experience and social aspects of online shopping are highly related to positive post-purchase behaviours.

There was also a strong positive relationship with electronic word-of-mouth ($r = 0.605$), suggesting that if a platform environment is socially engaging, it could promote consumers' word-of-mouth behavior on the internet. Furthermore, there was a moderate correlation between reputation and repurchase intention ($r = 0.571$), indicating that the perceived credibility might still be related to platform loyalty.

The highest value of the correlation coefficient did not exceed the threshold of 0.80, which is normally acceptable to be used in regression analysis. The correlation matrix is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variable	Price	Reputati	Hedonic	Social	Custome	Repurcha	Electron
s	Advanta	on	experien	Interacti	r	se	ic
	ge		ce	on	Satisfacti	Intention	Word-
					on		of-
							Mouth
Price	1.000	0.518	0.494	0.381	0.451	0.344	0.405
Advantage							
Reputation	0.518	1.000	0.432	0.511	0.436	0.571	0.508
Hedonic experience	0.494	0.432	1.000	0.432	0.581	0.440	0.389
Social Interaction	0.381	0.511	0.432	1.000	0.531	0.504	0.605
Customer Satisfaction	0.451	0.436	0.581	0.531	1.000	0.569	0.587
Repurchase Intention	0.344	0.571	0.440	0.504	0.569	1.000	0.501
Electronic Word-of-Mouth	0.405	0.508	0.389	0.605	0.587	0.501	1.000

Relationships among the study constructs have been represented visually in Figure 2 below. It illustrates the strength and direction of the relationship among variables considered within the conceptual framework.

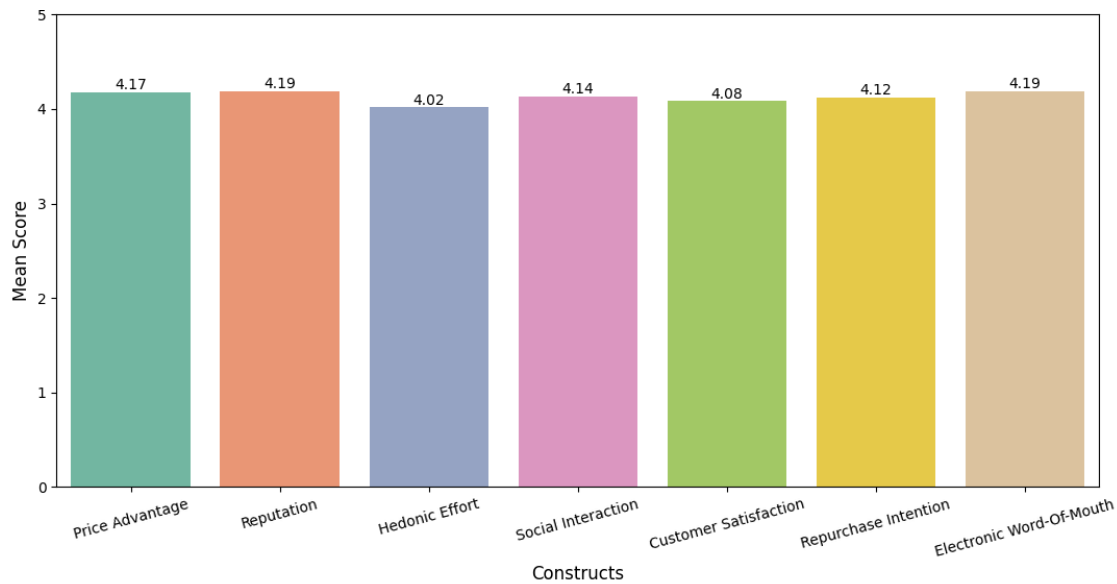


Figure 2. Correlation Matrix of Study Construct

3.3 Robust Regression and Hypothesis Testing

To test the proposed hypotheses, robust regression analysis using HC3 heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors was used. Based on diagnostic testing, some heteroscedasticity was observed, and the use of robust estimation was deemed appropriate.

The results indicated that the hedonic experience had a significant effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.319$, $p < 0.001$), thus supporting H3. In the same vein, social interaction was also found to have a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.292$, $p = 0.001$), thus supporting H4. The results suggest that digital shopping that is fun and engaging in the social component plays a significant role in customer satisfaction.

However, price advantage was not found to have a significant impact on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.117$, $p = 0.132$), thus H1 was rejected. However, reputation did not show a significant impact on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.066$, $p = 0.402$), so that H2 is rejected. The results indicate that in the digital commercial world, consumers' attention may be more drawn to experiential and engagement than economic and reputational factors.

Findings revealed that customer satisfaction significantly predicted the repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.583$, $p < 0.001$), thus supporting the H5. Similarly, the effect of customer satisfaction on electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM) was also found to be significant and positive ($\beta = 0.509$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H6. The regression models accounted for 32.4% of the variance in repurchase

intention and 34.4% of the variance in eWOM. The results of robust regression and hypothesis test results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Robust Regression Results and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient (β)	Robust Standard Error	p- value	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Result
H1	Price Advantage and Customer Satisfaction	0.117	0.078	0.132	0.452	0.444	Not Supported
H2	Reputation and Customer Satisfaction	0.066	0.078	0.402	0.452	0.444	Not Supported
H3	Hedonic Experience and Customer Satisfaction	0.319	0.081	0.000	0.452	0.444	Supported
H4	Social Interaction and Customer Satisfaction	0.292	0.089	0.001	0.452	0.444	Supported
H5	Customer Satisfaction and	0.583	0.085	0.000	0.324	0.321	Supported

	Repurchase						
	Intention						
H6	Customer	0.509	0.066	0.000	0.344	0.342	Supported
	Satisfaction						
	and						
	Electronic						
	Word-of-						
	Mouth						

The hypothesis testing framework is illustrated in Figure 3. It shows the supported and unsupported relationships in the proposed conceptual model. Positive paths symbolize supported hypotheses, and separate relationships are symbolized.

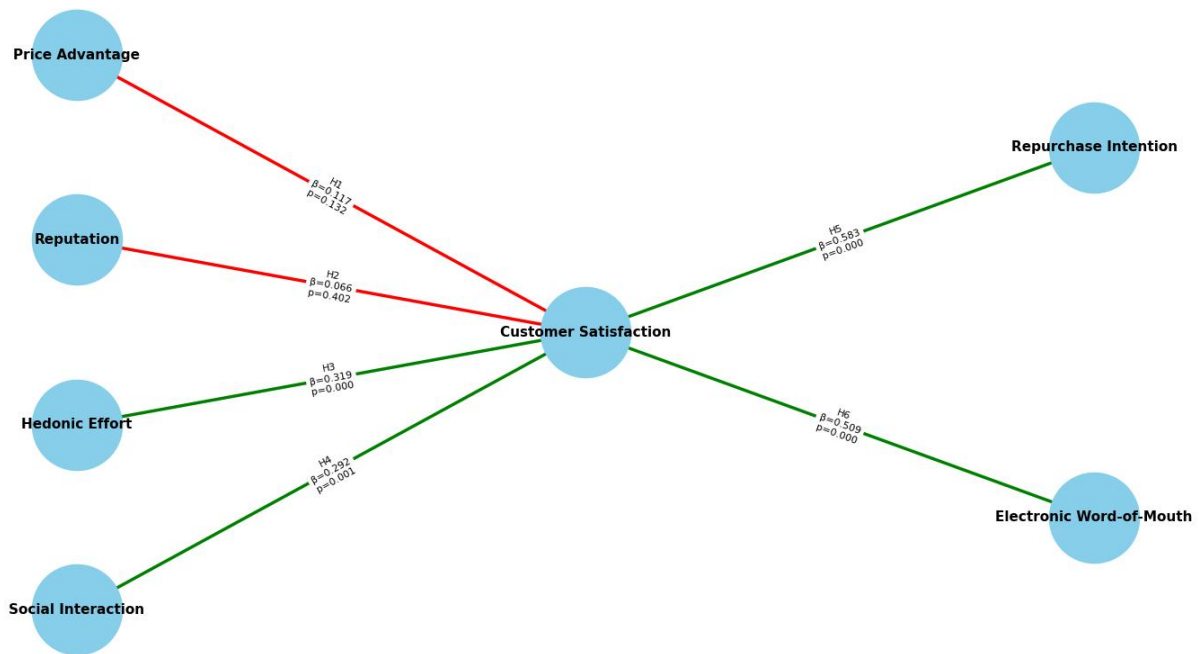


Figure 3. Hypothesis Testing Framework

4. Discussion

Digital commerce experiences are becoming more and more reliant on consumer experience in addition to competition via price. This research agrees with this argument as price advantage and reputation do not statistically significantly impact customer satisfaction after using robust regression estimation, and hedonic experience and social interaction do. This suggests that consumers in digital commerce environments might judge platforms more by the enjoyment, interaction and engagement they offer as well as by economic or reputational signals. The non-

significant impact of price advantage indicates that price competitiveness may no longer be enough to make the consumer satisfied with the product when he/she is presented with several platforms providing the same offers, discounts, and alternative products. When online shopping, price is important; it might become less important when consumers assume price competitiveness is a fundamental part of online shopping. Likewise, the low impact of reputation suggests that although platform credibility is important to establish initial trust, it may not be sufficient to drive satisfaction post-platform use.

Customers' satisfaction was found to be best predicted by hedonic experience. This discovery indicates that fun, interactive and rewarding online shopping experiences are important to consumers. Also, social interaction has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, which implies that communication, peer influence and interaction-based platform features enhance consumer experience. These findings point towards the main findings of the study, namely that experiential and social elements become more influential in determining satisfaction than the traditional economic and reputational elements. Likewise, customer satisfaction had a remarkable effect on both purchase intention and e-WOM. As is evident, satisfied customers are more prone to continue patronizing digital commerce websites and even praise their performance to others. Hence, the outcomes demonstrate customer satisfaction as one of the major pathways through which the effect of platform usage is transferred into the realm of post-purchase behavior.

The findings support the general thesis that digital transformation has brought about a change in the marketing attitude, moving from transactional marketing to experience and consumer-oriented marketing (Radzikhovska, 2021). The findings regarding the limited role of price advantage in this study corroborate the findings of other studies, suggesting that digital consumers are no longer driven towards functional or economic benefits alone, with platform competition imposing similar price structures in the market. The substantial influence of hedonic experience is consistent with the previous study's findings that hedonistic shopping experiences have an impact on consumer attitudes and behavioral tendencies (Tarka et al., 2023). It also aligns with the latest study that suggested hedonic cues are also the drivers of purchase-related outcomes in digital platforms because of emotional and experiential activation (Cao et al., 2025). The hedonic experience was not just one of the attributes that customers attend to when shopping online, but the most influential one of customer satisfaction. The positive impact of social interaction is also in line with the studies that highlight the role of social commerce features in influencing consumer behaviors. Social

factors like interaction, communication, and community participation can positively affect consumers' buying intention in the context of social commerce, especially when social commerce is rich with features (Friedrich et al., 2021). Likewise, digital communication reinforcement has been found to affect purchase intention in the context of social commerce by enhancing consumer engagement and relational exchange (Selem et al., 2023). The current study supports this notion in that it found a direct link between social interaction and customer satisfaction.

The results of this study indicated that customer satisfaction was significant with repurchase intention, which was in line with previous studies in e-commerce that found that e-service quality and e-WOM also influences the repurchase intention of customers in Indonesia (Rachbini et al., 2021). The finding is also consistent with the studies showing that e-WOM, website quality and product satisfaction lead to customer satisfaction and repurchasing intent (Tandon et al., 2020). These results indicate that satisfaction still plays a key role in loyalty-related online shopping behaviour. Additionally, social, hedonic, and utilitarian values have been highlighted in the field of e-commerce, especially when user experience and engagement play a pivotal role in platform adoption (Kusumawardani et al., 2023). In addition, this perspective is corroborated by the findings that the hedonic and social aspects are also significant in the adoption process, in addition to satisfaction, repurchase intention, and eWOM generation.

In theoretical and practical terms, there are several implications of this study. Theoretically, there are several implications for digital consumer behavior research, where satisfaction in digital commerce is shown to be significantly more affected by hedonic and social elements than price advantage or reputation. Thus, this study helps promote the shift from traditional value-based explanations of consumer behavior to engagement-based approaches. Managerially, this means that digital commerce platforms cannot rely on price advantages or reputation to retain customers, but instead they should invest in fun and exciting browsing, interactive interfaces, personal interaction, and social functionality to increase involvement. In other words, there are many ways of increasing satisfaction in the process of purchase: by making the process more engaging, fun, and sociable. As a consequence, the strong connection between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention means that the level of customer satisfaction can affect customer retention. Similarly, the positive influence of satisfaction on eWOM means that satisfied customers can become unofficial eWOM producers. As a result, customer satisfaction cannot be treated merely

as an outcome of good services, but can be considered as one of the ways to achieve customer loyalty.

A number of limitations are apparent. First, secondary cross-sectional data were used, meaning that causal inferences cannot be drawn. Second, the use of pre-existing measurement items and a limited number of indicators per construct can adversely affect the reliability of measurement. Finally, the use of digital commerce consumers in a certain market setting can limit the scope of generalizability.

As an option, future research can adopt longitudinal research designs to trace changes in customer satisfaction and behavioral intention throughout multiple platform uses. Also, use wider and more advanced measurement scales to enhance construct validity and reliability. Comparison across countries, products, and types of digital platforms can shed light on the generalizability of these effects. Finally, further research can test various moderators of influence, such as digital literacy, platform familiarity, and shopping frequency.

5. Conclusion

The importance of satisfying, engaging and socially interactive consumer experience is becoming increasingly important for successful digital commerce. The findings demonstrate that hedonic experience and social interaction have a great impact on customer satisfaction. In contrast, price advantage and reputation do not have any significance when it comes to customer satisfaction through robust estimation techniques. This contributes to customer satisfaction, which is further confirmed to have a great effect on customers' repurchase intention and e-word-of-mouth. Hence, this highlights the importance of customer satisfaction as one of the major factors in developing customer loyalty. The findings suggest a new way of thinking about digital consumers who will no longer focus on market considerations, but rather on experience and interaction. From a platform's perspective, this means that for successful business operations, they should ensure competitive pricing and reputation, as well as fun and interactive browsing experiences. The findings extend the research on digital commerce by showing that experiential and social factors have a greater influence on satisfaction compared to market variables. Overall, it seems that to keep customers engaged, it is necessary to concentrate on emotional value, social connection and customer satisfaction as key drivers for repeat purchase and word-of-mouth recommendations.

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