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The Role of Electronic Word of Mouth in Mediating the Effects of Digital Touchpoints and E-Service Quality on Consumer Purchase Intention in the Alfagift Application

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Abstract: *Digital transformation has changed consumer purchasing behavior on e-grocery platforms. The success of digital retailers depends not only on the availability of applications but also on their ability to deliver optimal digital experiences through digital touchpoints, electronic service quality, and online consumer communication. This study aims to analyze the effects of digital touchpoints and e-service quality on consumer purchase intention, with electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) as a mediating variable, among Alfagift users. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey of students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, who actively use Alfagift. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling, and data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. The findings indicate that digital touchpoints and e-service quality have positive and significant effects on purchase intention. Electronic word of mouth also positively affects purchase intention and mediates the relationships of digital touchpoints and e-service quality with purchase intention. These findings suggest that positive digital experiences and high electronic service quality encourage positive consumer communication, thereby increasing consumers' propensity to purchase through Alfagift. The study provides implications for digital retail managers seeking to improve digital interaction quality, system reliability, and customer review management as part of their digital marketing strategies.*
Keywords: *Digital Touchpoints; E-Service Quality; Electronic Word of Mouth; Purchase Intention; Alfagift*

I. Introduction

Digital transformation has shifted the retail industry from conventional transaction models toward more integrated, technology-based commerce ecosystems. The use of the internet, mobile devices, and digital applications has changed how consumers search for information, compare products, and make purchasing decisions. These changes encourage retailers to develop digital innovations that improve customer experience while maintaining their competitiveness in increasingly competitive markets (Verhoef et al., 2021; Grewal et al., 2023). In this context, digital transformation is viewed not merely as a competitive advantage but as a strategic necessity for creating added value through effective digital interactions.

These developments coincide with the increasing adoption of electronic grocery (e-grocery) as part of digital commerce. E-grocery platforms enable consumers to obtain everyday necessities quickly, conveniently, and efficiently without visiting physical stores. In Indonesia, internet penetration exceeding 79% of the population and widespread smartphone use are major factors driving the growth of digital shopping (APJII, 2024). These conditions create opportunities for modern retailers to integrate physical store networks with digital platforms through omnichannel

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retailing, providing more flexible shopping experiences that respond to consumer needs.

As one of Indonesia's largest retailers, PT Sumber Alfaria Trijaya Tbk developed Alfagift as part of its digital transformation strategy. The application offers services including product searches, promotional information, customer loyalty programs, digital payments, and delivery based on the nearest store location. The development of these features reflects the company's efforts to build long-term customer relationships by optimizing digital technology. However, successful technology implementation depends not only on the range of application features but also on the quality of users' experiences when interacting with the digital platform. Customer reviews continue to report complaints concerning inaccurate stock information, delivery delays, customer service responses, and technical problems that may influence purchasing decisions. These issues are also reflected in the empirical phenomena described in this study.

From a marketing management perspective, interactions between companies and customers in digital environments take place through digital touchpoints. Digital touchpoints encompass all points of contact experienced throughout the customer journey, from information searches and application use to digital promotions, social media interactions, and after-sales services (Becker & Jaakkola, 2023). Each interaction contributes to customers' perceptions of company quality. Digital experiences that are easy, intuitive, responsive, and relevant enhance customer engagement, whereas unsatisfactory experiences can reduce trust and increase consumers' tendency to switch to competing platforms (Barwitz, 2024).

Alongside digital touchpoints, e-service quality is an important determinant of digital platform success. E-service quality describes an electronic system's ability to provide efficient, secure, and user-friendly services that meet customer expectations during online transactions (Blut et al., 2023). In digital retail, electronic service quality includes application navigation, product information accuracy, transaction security, system speed, and the company's responsiveness in addressing customer complaints. Higher perceived electronic service quality strengthens customer trust and satisfaction, thereby encouraging purchase intention (Rita et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, digital media have expanded the role of electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) as one of the most influential information sources in consumer decision-making. Electronic word of mouth is communication among consumers through digital media in the form of reviews, recommendations, and experiences of using products or services (Ismagilova et al., 2023). Unlike company-controlled marketing communication, E-WOM is considered more credible because it draws on users' actual experiences. Positive reviews can therefore strengthen prospective customers' confidence in service quality, whereas negative reviews can reduce trust and discourage purchasing decisions even when companies offer promotions and incentives (Filieri et al., 2024).

Purchase intention is an important indicator of consumers' propensity to make future purchases. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), behavioral intention is influenced by individual attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In digital commerce, purchasing decisions are influenced not only by product characteristics but also by customers' experiences with digital platforms and information received through communication among users. Digital touchpoints, e-service quality, and electronic word of mouth are therefore interrelated factors shaping consumer purchasing decisions on e-grocery platforms.

Previous studies have examined the relationships among digital touchpoints, e-service quality, electronic word of mouth, and purchase intention. However, their findings remain

inconsistent. Some studies find that digital touchpoints significantly affect purchase intention, whereas others indicate that this effect depends on the quality of customers' experiences with digital platforms. Similarly, some studies identify a strong direct relationship between e-service quality and purchase intention, while others suggest that the relationship is more effective when mediated by consumer behavioral factors such as trust, satisfaction, or electronic word of mouth. Furthermore, most studies focus on general marketplaces or large e-commerce platforms, while research on omnichannel e-grocery applications in Indonesia remains relatively limited. This gap offers an opportunity to develop a more comprehensive research model explaining how purchase intention develops on digital retail platforms.

Addressing this gap, the present study offers a novel contribution by integrating digital touchpoints, e-service quality, and electronic word of mouth into a single conceptual model explaining consumer purchase intention in Alfagift. Unlike previous studies that generally examine direct relationships between variables, this study positions electronic word of mouth as a mediating variable explaining how digital interaction quality and electronic service quality influence consumer purchasing decisions. The model is expected to enrich the marketing management literature and provide practical implications for retailers developing more effective digital marketing strategies.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the effects of digital touchpoints and e-service quality on consumer purchase intention and examine the mediating role of electronic word of mouth among Alfagift users. The findings are expected to contribute to digital marketing theory and inform company decisions to improve customer experience, electronic services, and digital communication that encourage consumer purchase intention.

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Digital Touchpoint

Digital touchpoints encompass all interactions between customers and companies through digital media throughout the customer journey, including information searches, product exploration, transactions, and after-sales services. In the digital era, digital touchpoints are strategic company assets because they determine customer experience quality and shape brand perceptions. Interactions through websites, mobile applications, social media, push notifications, and digital customer service enable companies to build more personalized relationships with consumers (Becker & Jaakkola, 2023).

As omnichannel retailing develops, digital touchpoints are understood not only as communication channels but also as mechanisms of value creation that connect customer experiences consistently across digital channels. High-quality interactions improve customers' convenience in obtaining information, accelerate decision-making, and strengthen customer engagement with the company (Barwitz, 2024). Conversely, poor digital experiences, such as complicated application navigation, inaccurate product information, and frequent system disruptions, can reduce customers' perceptions of company quality.

In Alfagift, digital touchpoints include the application interface, menu navigation, product search features, digital promotional programs, push notifications, customer service, and the ease of submitting reviews after transactions. Together, these components form a digital experience that directly influences consumer perceptions before purchase.

2.2 E-Service Quality

E-service quality refers to a digital platform's ability to provide effective, efficient, and

secure electronic services that meet customer expectations during online transactions. Unlike conventional service quality, which emphasizes face-to-face interactions, e-service quality focuses on information system quality, ease of use, transaction security, access speed, information accuracy, and the company's response to customer problems (Blut et al., 2023).

In e-commerce, electronic service quality is a major determinant of customer satisfaction and trust. Platforms that provide stable systems, straightforward transactions, accurate product information, and responsive customer service enhance consumers' positive perceptions of the company (Rita et al., 2022). Conversely, system failures, delivery delays, and inaccurate product information undermine customer experience and may discourage purchasing decisions.

In Alfagift, electronic service quality is reflected in application usability, transaction security, system speed, product stock information accuracy, and the company's ability to resolve customer complaints.

2.3 Electronic Word of Mouth

Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) is informal communication through digital media in which consumers discuss their experiences with a product, service, or company. This information may take the form of reviews, comments, recommendations, or ratings shared through social media, marketplaces, discussion forums, or application platforms. Compared with company-generated marketing communication, E-WOM is considered more credible because it is based on users' actual experiences (Ismagilova et al., 2023).

From a consumer behavior perspective, E-WOM functions as a mechanism for reducing uncertainty. Before purchasing, consumers tend to seek other users' experiences as a basis for evaluating product and service quality. Positive reviews can therefore increase consumer trust, whereas negative reviews may discourage purchasing decisions even when companies offer promotional programs (Filieri et al., 2024).

The development of digital media has made E-WOM a marketing instrument with a substantial influence on corporate image. The greater the intensity of positive communication generated by customers, the greater the company's opportunity to acquire new customers through digital recommendations.

2.4 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is consumers' psychological tendency to purchase a product or service in the future. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), behavioral intention is influenced by individual attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In digital environments, purchase intention is also influenced by customers' experiences with platforms, electronic service quality, and information obtained through communication among users.

Purchase intention is an important indicator in digital marketing because it precedes actual purchasing decisions. Consumers who have positive experiences using an application and obtain reliable information from other users are more likely to purchase through digital platforms.

2.5 Hypothesis Development

H1. Digital Touchpoint → Purchase Intention

Digital touchpoints represent customers' experiences when interacting with companies through digital media. An easy, fast, and informative customer journey enhances positive

perceptions of the company and encourages purchase intention. Pleasant digital experiences also make it easier for consumers to obtain information and accelerate their evaluation before purchase.

Becker and Jaakkola (2023) show that customer touchpoint quality significantly influences customer experience, which subsequently increases purchase intention. Barwitz (2024) also explains that companies that consistently manage all digital interaction points tend to achieve higher purchase conversion rates than companies that focus solely on promotion.

Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Digital touchpoints positively affect consumer purchase intention.

H2. E-Service Quality → Purchase Intention

Electronic service quality is an important determinant of customer trust in digital platforms. Better system quality, transaction security, application usability, and company responsiveness strengthen consumers' confidence in making purchases.

Blut et al. (2023) explain that e-service quality directly affects purchase intention by improving customer satisfaction and trust. This finding is supported by Rita et al. (2022), who identify electronic service quality as a major determinant of e-commerce platforms' success in retaining customers.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H2: E-service quality positively affects consumer purchase intention.

H3. Digital Touchpoint → Electronic Word of Mouth

Positive digital experiences encourage customers to share their experiences with other users through digital platforms. Easy, engaging, and responsive interactions increase customer satisfaction, prompting the voluntary sharing of positive recommendations.

Recent research indicates that digital customer experience quality contributes significantly to electronic word of mouth because customers tend to share their positive experiences with digital communities.

H3: Digital touchpoints positively affect electronic word of mouth.

H4. E-Service Quality → Electronic Word of Mouth

Customers who receive high-quality electronic services tend to provide positive reviews as an expression of appreciation for the company. Conversely, poor service quality often produces negative comments that spread widely through digital media.

Filieri et al. (2024) explain that satisfaction with electronic services is a major predictor of electronic word of mouth on digital platforms.

H4: E-service quality positively affects electronic word of mouth.

H5. Electronic Word of Mouth → Purchase Intention

Electronic word of mouth is a trusted information source for consumers evaluating product and service quality before purchase. More positive information increases consumer trust and, consequently, purchase intention.

Ismagilova et al. (2023) show that electronic word of mouth is among the most influential factors affecting purchase intention on digital platforms because it reduces information uncertainty.

H5: Electronic word of mouth positively affects consumer purchase intention.

H6. Electronic Word of Mouth Mediates the Relationship between Digital Touchpoints and Purchase Intention

High-quality digital touchpoints create positive experiences that encourage customers to provide recommendations through digital media. These recommendations subsequently influence other prospective consumers' purchasing decisions.

H6: Electronic word of mouth mediates the effect of digital touchpoints on consumer purchase intention.

H7. Electronic Word of Mouth Mediates the Relationship between E-Service Quality and Purchase Intention

High electronic service quality improves customer satisfaction, encouraging positive communication among users. This communication subsequently strengthens other consumers' confidence in making purchases.

H7: Electronic word of mouth mediates the effect of e-service quality on consumer purchase intention.

III. Research Methods

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to test causal relationships among digital touchpoints, e-service quality, electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), and consumer purchase intention in Alfagift. A quantitative approach was selected to objectively explain relationships between variables through statistical hypothesis testing. The research model positions digital touchpoints and e-service quality as independent variables, purchase intention as the dependent variable, and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) as the mediating variable. This design explains how digital interaction experiences and electronic service quality influence the formation of consumer purchase intention.

The study population comprises students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, who use Alfagift. Purposive sampling was employed with the following criteria: (1) respondents were students at the Faculty of Economics and Business,

Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon; and (2) they had used Alfagift and completed at least three transactions. These respondents were selected because they were considered sufficiently experienced to evaluate the application's digital interactions and electronic services. Sample size was determined following Hair et al. (2019), who recommend 5–10 times the number of research indicators. With 25 measurement indicators, the study included 125 respondents, meeting the recommended sample size for PLS-SEM analysis.

The study uses primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to respondents who met the study criteria. Secondary data were obtained from academic literature, company reports, supporting documents, and publications related to digital transformation and digital marketing. A five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, was used to measure respondents' perceptions of each research indicator.

The research variables comprise four constructs: digital touchpoints, e-service quality, electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), and purchase intention. Digital touchpoints were measured through the quality of users' interactions with the application during information searches, transactions, and after-sales services. E-service quality was measured through respondents' perceptions of system efficiency, service reliability, transaction security, and application responsiveness. Electronic word of mouth was measured through the intensity, credibility, and influence of digital reviews received or provided by users. Purchase intention was measured through respondents' propensity to purchase, choose Alfagift as a shopping platform, and recommend it to other users. All constructs were operationalized using indicators adapted from previous studies and adjusted to the Alfagift context.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM was selected because it can test complex relationships among latent variables while accommodating mediation models. The analysis involved two stages. First, the measurement model (outer model) was evaluated for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability using outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha. Second, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated using coefficients of determination (R^2), path coefficients, and significance testing through bootstrapping with t-statistics and p-values. Specific indirect effects were also tested to evaluate the mediating role of electronic word of mouth in the relationships of digital touchpoints and e-service quality with purchase intention.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 125 respondents who were students at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, and had used Alfagift at least three times. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling to ensure sufficient experience in evaluating the application's service quality. Based on characteristics including gender, study program, year of enrollment, and application use experience, all respondents met the study criteria and were eligible for inclusion in the structural model analysis.

4.2 Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The measurement model was evaluated to ensure that all constructs met validity and reliability requirements. The results show that all indicators have outer loadings >0.70, Average

Variance Extracted (AVE) >0.50, Composite Reliability >0.70, and Cronbach's Alpha >0.70. All constructs are therefore considered valid and reliable, allowing the analysis to proceed to structural model testing.

4.3 Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The coefficients of determination (R^2) are 0.469 for Electronic Word of Mouth and 0.509 for Purchase Intention. Both values fall within the moderate category, indicating that Digital Touchpoints and E-Service Quality explain 46.9% of the variance in Electronic Word of Mouth and 50.9% of the variance in Purchase Intention, while the remaining variance is influenced by factors outside the research model.

Table 1. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Relationship between Variables	β	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	Digital Touchpoints → Purchase Intention	0.178	2.008	0.045	Accepted
H2	E-Service Quality → Purchase Intention	0.205	2.964	0.003	Accepted
H3	Digital Touchpoints → Electronic Word of Mouth	0.627	10.807	0.000	Accepted
H4	E-Service Quality → Electronic Word of Mouth	0.166	2.708	0.007	Accepted
H5	Electronic Word of Mouth → Purchase Intention	0.490	5.913	0.000	Accepted
H6	Digital Touchpoints → Electronic Word of Mouth → Purchase Intention	0.307	5.039	0.000	Accepted
H7	E-Service Quality → Electronic Word of Mouth → Purchase Intention	0.081	2.394	0.017	Accepted

Source: Data processing results using SmartPLS 4 (2026).

4.2 Discussion

The Effect of Digital Touchpoints on Purchase Intention

The results indicate that Digital Touchpoints have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention, with a path coefficient of 0.178, a t-statistic of 2.008, and a p-value of 0.045. These findings suggest that higher-quality digital touchpoints in Alfagift increase consumers' propensity to purchase.

This finding indicates that users' digital experiences with the application are important in shaping purchasing behavior. Easy navigation, an attractive interface, comprehensive product information, relevant promotional notifications, and straightforward transactions create positive consumer experiences. These experiences reduce perceived risks in online shopping and strengthen consumers' confidence in transacting through the application.

These findings align with Customer Journey Theory, which explains that each interaction between customers and companies shapes perceptions of service quality. Becker and Jaakkola (2023) explain that consistent digital touchpoint management improves customer experience, ultimately encouraging purchase intention. Similarly, Barwitz (2024) states that companies

providing consistent digital experiences across communication channels have greater opportunities to increase purchase conversions.

In the Alfagift context, the findings indicate that optimizing digital touchpoints serves not only as a means of communication but also as a digital marketing strategy that enhances customer engagement. The company should therefore continue developing an intuitive interface, improving product information accuracy, accelerating application response times, and delivering more personalized digital experiences to strengthen consumer purchase intention.

The Effect of E-Service Quality on Purchase Intention

The analysis shows that E-Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention, with a path coefficient of 0.205, a t-statistic of 2.964, and a p-value of 0.003.

This finding indicates that electronic service quality in Alfagift increases consumers' confidence in making purchases. System speed, transaction security, application usability, and the company's ability to address customer complaints are major factors shaping positive perceptions of digital services.

Theoretically, these findings support the E-Service Quality concept, which identifies electronic service quality as a major determinant of digital platforms' success in building customer trust. Rita et al. (2022) explain that high electronic service quality improves customer satisfaction, thereby increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases. This finding is further supported by Blut et al. (2023), who identify system quality, service efficiency, and transaction security as important factors in increasing purchase intention on digital platforms.

Nevertheless, the company should continually evaluate application stability, stock information accuracy, and order fulfillment accuracy. Continuous improvements in these areas will enhance customer experience while strengthening Alfagift's competitiveness amid growing competition in the e-grocery industry.

V. Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the effects of Digital Touchpoints and E-Service Quality on Consumer Purchase Intention, with Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) as a mediating variable, among Alfagift users. Based on Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), all proposed research hypotheses were accepted.

The findings indicate that Digital Touchpoints have a positive and significant effect on Consumer Purchase Intention, suggesting that positive digital interactions increase consumers' propensity to purchase through Alfagift. E-Service Quality also has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention, indicating that reliable, secure, responsive, and user-friendly electronic services are important for building trust and encouraging consumer purchasing decisions.

The study also demonstrates that Digital Touchpoints and E-Service Quality positively affect Electronic Word of Mouth. These findings suggest that positive digital experiences and satisfactory electronic service quality encourage consumers to provide reviews and recommendations and share positive experiences with other users through digital media. Electronic Word of Mouth, in turn, positively affects Purchase Intention, highlighting the

importance of consumer communication through digital platforms in shaping confidence and purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, the findings confirm that Electronic Word of Mouth mediates both the relationship between Digital Touchpoints and Purchase Intention and the relationship between E-Service Quality and Purchase Intention. This indicates that improvements in digital interaction quality and electronic services influence purchase intention directly and indirectly through positive communication among users. Electronic Word of Mouth is therefore an important mechanism strengthening the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies on application-based retail platforms.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the marketing management literature, particularly the integration of Digital Touchpoints, E-Service Quality, Electronic Word of Mouth, and Purchase Intention in Indonesian e-grocery platforms. It extends understanding of how digital interaction experiences and online user communication shape consumer purchase intention in technology-based retail.

Practically, the findings suggest that Alfagift management should continue improving digital customer experience by refining the application interface, enhancing system stability, providing accurate product information, accelerating customer service responses, and managing customer reviews more effectively. These strategies are expected to strengthen customer experience, encourage positive Electronic Word of Mouth, and increase purchase intention and consumer loyalty toward Alfagift.

This study is limited to respondents from one university, meaning that the sample characteristics do not fully represent all Alfagift users in Indonesia. Future research should expand the geographical scope, involve respondents from diverse demographic groups, and extend the research model by incorporating variables such as customer trust, customer satisfaction, perceived value, brand image, or customer experience to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior on digital retail platforms.

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