
Consumer Traits Driving Social Commerce Purchase Intention in Cambodia.

ABSTRACT:

The rapid expansion of social commerce has transformed consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in emerging digital economies. Although previous studies have primarily emphasized technological and platform-related determinants of purchase intention, limited attention has been given to the role of consumers' inherent behavioral characteristics. Furthermore, the moderating influence of price sensitivity remains underexplored in social commerce research. Addressing these gaps, this study examines the effect of consumer behavioral traits on purchase intention and investigates the moderating role of price sensitivity among social commerce consumers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Drawing on Trait Theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior, Consumer Behavioral Traits were conceptualized as a higher-order construct comprising exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected from 272 valid respondents with prior social commerce purchasing experience in Phnom Penh using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. The proposed research model was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Consumer Behavioral Traits had a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.289$, $p < .001$), while Price Sensitivity negatively moderated this relationship ($\beta = -0.232$, $p < .001$). The model explained 43% of the variance in Purchase Intention.

The empirical findings reveal that Consumer Behavioral Traits exert a significant positive influence on purchase intention. Consumers who exhibit stronger exploratory buying behavior, lifestyles compatible with digital shopping, and lower perceived risk demonstrate greater intention to purchase through social commerce platforms. Moreover, price sensitivity negatively moderates this relationship, indicating that the positive influence of Consumer Behavioral Traits on purchase intention becomes weaker among highly price-sensitive consumers.

This study contributes to the social commerce literature by integrating exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk into a higher-order construct. The findings also provide practical implications for social commerce sellers in Cambodia by highlighting the importance of combining engaging social media marketing strategies with competitive pricing and value-oriented promotional activities to enhance consumers' purchase intention.

KEYWORDS

Social commerce; Consumer behavioral traits; Purchase intention; Price sensitivity; Exploratory buying; Perceived risk; Lifestyle; Cambodia

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies (ICTs), together with the widespread adoption of smartphones and social media platforms, has fundamentally transformed the retail landscape. Traditional e-commerce has gradually evolved into social commerce, an emerging business model that integrates commercial transactions with social interaction, user-generated content, and online communities (Liang & Turban, 2011; Hajli, 2015). Unlike conventional e-commerce, where transactions primarily occur through dedicated online shopping websites, social commerce enables consumers to discover products, interact with sellers, exchange opinions with peers, and complete purchases directly within social networking platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and Telegram. This convergence of social networking and online retailing has significantly changed consumers' information search, product evaluation, and purchasing processes.

The rapid expansion of social commerce has attracted increasing attention from both researchers and practitioners. Recent digital economy reports indicate that social commerce has become one of the fastest-growing retail channels worldwide, particularly in emerging economies where mobile internet usage and social media engagement continue to expand. In Southeast Asia, social

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commerce has experienced remarkable growth as consumers increasingly rely on livestream shopping, influencer marketing, and peer recommendations to make purchasing decisions (Google, 2024). Cambodia has similarly witnessed a rapid transformation in digital retailing, with Facebook Live, TikTok Shop, Messenger, and Telegram becoming major commercial platforms for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Consequently, understanding the factors that drive consumers' purchase intention in social commerce has become increasingly important for both academic research and managerial practice.

Purchase intention has long been regarded as one of the strongest predictors of actual purchasing behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Within the context of social commerce, purchase intention represents consumers' willingness to purchase products through social networking platforms after evaluating available information, interacting with online communities, and receiving recommendations from peers, influencers, and sellers (Kim & Park, 2013; Chen & Shen, 2015). Consequently, identifying the antecedents of purchase intention has become one of the primary research objectives in social commerce literature.

Previous studies have extensively examined technology-oriented determinants of purchase intention, including perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, website quality, social support, social influence, and information quality (Hajli, 2015; Dwivedi et al., 2021; Leong et al., 2023). Most of these studies have adopted the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), or the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003) to explain consumer behavior. Although these theories have substantially enhanced the understanding of technology adoption, recent systematic reviews suggest that technology-related variables alone cannot fully explain consumers' increasingly complex decision-making processes in social commerce environments (Leong et al., 2023). Consumer decisions are also shaped by relatively stable behavioral tendencies that influence how individuals search for information, evaluate alternatives, respond to uncertainty, and engage in online shopping activities.

Accordingly, increasing attention has been directed toward consumer behavioral traits, which reflect consumers' habitual patterns of thinking and behaving during purchasing decisions (Solomon, 2020). Rather than focusing solely on technological characteristics, consumer behavioral traits emphasize psychological and behavioral tendencies that influence purchasing behavior across different shopping contexts. Among various behavioral characteristics, exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk have consistently been identified as important determinants of online purchasing behavior.

Exploratory buying behavior describes consumers' tendency to seek novelty, experiment with unfamiliar products, and enjoy discovering innovative shopping experiences (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 1996). Such consumers are generally more willing to adopt emerging shopping technologies and participate in interactive retail environments such as livestream shopping and influencer marketing (Akram et al., 2021). Lifestyle, commonly conceptualized through the Activities-Interests-Opinions (AIO) framework, reflects consumers' daily activities, personal interests, and value orientations that shape consumption preferences (Plummer, 1974). Consumers increasingly select social commerce platforms that are consistent with their lifestyles and digital habits (Dwivedi et al., 2021). In contrast, perceived risk represents consumers' perceptions of uncertainty associated with online transactions, including concerns regarding product quality, privacy, payment security, and financial loss (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003). Although digital payment systems have become increasingly secure, perceived risk continues to discourage consumers from making purchases through social commerce platforms, particularly in developing economies where institutional trust remains relatively limited (Sarker et al., 2025).

While these behavioral characteristics have been widely examined individually, they collectively represent broader consumer behavioral traits that may provide a more comprehensive explanation of purchase intention. Treating exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk as isolated predictors may overlook their combined influence on consumers' purchasing decisions. Therefore, conceptualizing these dimensions as a higher-order construct offers a more integrated perspective for understanding consumer behavior in social commerce.

Another important factor that may influence consumer purchasing decisions is price sensitivity. Price sensitivity refers to the degree to which consumers alter their purchasing decisions in response to price differences, discounts, or promotional offers (Lichtenstein et al., 1993). In social commerce environments, price information is highly transparent, and promotional activities such as flash sales, livestream discounts, and platform coupons are frequently used to stimulate purchasing behavior. Consumers with high price sensitivity are generally more responsive to price promotions and actively compare prices across multiple sellers, whereas consumers with low price sensitivity place greater emphasis on product quality, convenience, and shopping experience (Goldsmith & Newell, 1997). Consequently, consumers possessing similar behavioral traits may exhibit different levels of purchase intention because they evaluate price information differently during the decision-making process.

Although previous studies have identified price sensitivity as an important predictor of consumer purchasing behavior, it has primarily been examined as an independent antecedent of purchase intention or purchase behavior. Comparatively little attention

has been devoted to its moderating role within social commerce research. Specifically, existing studies have seldom investigated whether price sensitivity strengthens or weakens the influence of consumer behavioral traits on purchase intention. Ignoring this moderating mechanism limits our understanding of why consumers with similar behavioral characteristics may exhibit substantially different purchasing intentions when confronted with different pricing conditions.

Furthermore, most empirical evidence concerning social commerce has been generated from technologically advanced markets such as China, South Korea, India, and Indonesia (Leong et al., 2023; Sheikh et al., 2024). Comparatively little research has been conducted in smaller emerging economies such as Cambodia, despite the rapid growth of social commerce adoption. Given the increasing importance of social media platforms in Cambodian retailing, investigating consumer behavioral traits and price sensitivity within this context may provide valuable theoretical and practical insights.

Accordingly, this study conceptualizes consumer behavioral traits as a higher-order construct comprising exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk, and examines its influence on consumers' purchase intention toward social commerce. More importantly, this study proposes that price sensitivity moderates the relationship between consumer behavioral traits and purchase intention, such that the strength of this relationship varies according to consumers' sensitivity to price. By integrating consumer behavioral traits with price sensitivity into a unified conceptual framework, this study extends existing consumer behavior literature beyond traditional technology adoption models and provides a more comprehensive explanation of purchase intention in social commerce.

This study contributes to the literature in four ways. First, it conceptualizes consumer behavioral traits as a higher-order construct consisting of exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk. Second, it extends social commerce research by shifting the focus from technology-centered determinants toward consumers' behavioral characteristics. Third, it introduces price sensitivity as a moderating variable, providing new insights into how consumers' price orientations strengthen or weaken the relationship between consumer behavioral traits and purchase intention. Finally, by providing empirical evidence from Phnom Penh, Cambodia, this study enriches the literature on social commerce in emerging economies and offers practical implications for marketers seeking to design effective pricing and consumer engagement strategies.

2. Literature review

2.1 Social Commerce and Purchase Intention

The rapid evolution of Web 2.0 technologies has transformed traditional electronic commerce into a more interactive and socially connected business model known as social commerce. Liang and Turban (2011) first conceptualized social commerce as an extension of e-commerce that integrates commercial transactions with social networking technologies, enabling consumers not only to purchase products but also to communicate, exchange experiences, share opinions, and establish relationships with sellers and other consumers. Unlike traditional e-commerce, where purchasing decisions mainly rely on website quality and product information, social commerce emphasizes social interaction, user-generated content, online communities, and collaborative decision-making.

The increasing popularity of social media platforms has significantly accelerated the development of social commerce. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Telegram, and WhatsApp have gradually evolved from communication channels into commercial marketplaces where consumers discover products, evaluate alternatives, communicate with sellers, and complete purchases within the same platform. Hajli (2015) argued that social commerce creates value by combining technological infrastructure with social interaction. His empirical findings demonstrated that social commerce constructs—including online forums, ratings and reviews, recommendations and referrals, and online communities—enhance consumer trust, which subsequently increases purchase intention. This study highlighted that consumers' purchasing decisions are increasingly influenced by information generated by other consumers rather than by firms alone.

Subsequent research further confirmed the importance of social interaction in shaping purchase intention. Kim and Park (2013) examined consumers participating in social commerce and found that trust, perceived usefulness, and social support significantly influence consumers' intention to purchase through social media platforms. Similarly, Lu et al. (2016) investigated the role of social presence and reported that interactions between consumers and sellers significantly increase trust, thereby improving purchase intention. Their findings indicate that the social environment embedded within digital platforms creates psychological comfort, reducing consumers' uncertainty during online purchasing.

As social commerce continued to evolve, researchers shifted attention from platform characteristics toward consumers' cognitive and emotional responses. Hajli et al. (2017) found that consumers' familiarity with social-commerce platforms, information-seeking behavior, and perceived social presence jointly strengthen trust formation, which subsequently promotes purchase intention. Yahia et al. (2018) likewise demonstrated that vendor reputation, social support, and technological characteristics significantly influence consumers' purchasing decisions by increasing perceived trustworthiness. These studies consistently suggest that trust serves as a critical psychological mechanism linking social-commerce characteristics to consumers' purchase intention.

Recent developments in livestream commerce have introduced additional perspectives regarding purchase intention. Sun et al. (2019) found that livestream functions improve consumers' perceptions of visibility, interactivity, and social presence, thereby strengthening purchase intention. Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) similarly demonstrated that livestream interactions facilitate trust building between consumers and sellers while increasing consumers' willingness to purchase products promoted during live broadcasts. Their study further indicated that consumers evaluate products through simultaneous observations of product demonstrations, seller communication, and peer interactions, making purchase intention more socially driven than in conventional e-commerce environments.

More recent systematic reviews continue to support these findings. Dwivedi et al. (2021) argued that digital and social media marketing have fundamentally transformed consumer engagement by integrating commercial activities into consumers' everyday social interactions. Furthermore, Leong et al. (2023), using meta-analytic structural equation modeling, concluded that trust, social influence, social support, and perceived behavioral control remain among the strongest determinants of social-commerce purchase intention. Their findings further suggest that intention remains the immediate predictor of purchasing behavior, consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Although previous studies have substantially advanced the understanding of social-commerce purchase intention, most research primarily emphasizes platform characteristics, technological attributes, trust, and social interaction. Comparatively less attention has been devoted to consumers' intrinsic behavioral characteristics that influence how individuals respond to identical social-commerce environments. Consumers exposed to the same platform, identical information, and similar promotional activities often exhibit considerably different purchase intentions because of differences in their behavioral tendencies, personal lifestyles, and perceptions of uncertainty. Consequently, investigating consumer behavioral traits provides an alternative perspective for explaining purchase intention beyond technology-oriented approaches.

2.2 Consumer Behavioral Traits

Consumer behavior has long been recognized as a complex psychological process influenced by both external environmental factors and internal personal characteristics. While marketing research has traditionally focused on external stimuli such as advertising, pricing strategies, and technological features, contemporary consumer behavior literature increasingly emphasizes the role of individual behavioral tendencies in explaining purchasing decisions (Solomon, 2020). These relatively stable tendencies, referred to in this study as consumer behavioral traits, influence how consumers search for information, evaluate products, perceive uncertainty, and ultimately decide whether to purchase.

Trait-based theories argue that consumers do not respond uniformly to identical marketing stimuli because individuals possess different psychological characteristics, motivations, and consumption orientations. Rather than treating purchasing behavior as purely situational, trait theory suggests that enduring behavioral dispositions significantly influence consumers' decision-making processes across different shopping contexts.

Existing literature has examined several behavioral characteristics individually. Baumgartner and Steenkamp (1996) conceptualized exploratory buying behavior as consumers' tendency to seek novelty, variety, and stimulation through consumption experiences. Consumers exhibiting stronger exploratory tendencies actively search for unfamiliar products, compare innovative alternatives, and enjoy discovering new shopping opportunities. These behaviors are particularly evident in digital retail environments where consumers continuously encounter new products through personalized recommendations and algorithm-driven content.

Another important behavioral characteristic is lifestyle. Plummer (1974) proposed that consumers' Activities, Interests, and Opinions (AIO) provide comprehensive insights into their consumption behavior. Lifestyle reflects how consumers allocate time, express personal values, and integrate consumption into their daily routines. Unlike demographic characteristics, lifestyle captures consumers' psychological orientation toward products, brands, and consumption activities. Consumers possessing similar demographic profiles may therefore demonstrate substantially different purchasing behaviors because of differences in lifestyle.

A third important behavioral characteristic concerns perceived risk. Featherman and Pavlou (2003) argued that consumers evaluate multiple dimensions of uncertainty before adopting electronic services, including financial, performance, privacy, social, psychological, and time risks. Consumers who perceive greater uncertainty generally exhibit lower willingness to purchase because they anticipate potential negative consequences associated with online transactions. This issue becomes particularly important in social commerce where product quality, seller credibility, payment security, and return policies may vary considerably across individual sellers.

Although exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk have frequently been investigated independently, these characteristics collectively represent broader consumer behavioral tendencies that influence purchasing decisions. Exploratory buying behavior explains consumers' openness toward novel shopping experiences; lifestyle reflects compatibility between shopping behavior and everyday routines; perceived risk captures consumers' tolerance for uncertainty during purchasing decisions. Together, these dimensions provide a more comprehensive explanation of consumer behavior than isolated constructs.

Recent methodological developments further support integrating these dimensions into higher-order constructs. Sarstedt et al. (2019) suggested that higher-order constructs enable researchers to represent multidimensional theoretical concepts more effectively while reducing model complexity. Similarly, Hair et al. (2022) emphasized that multidimensional consumer constructs should be conceptualized according to theoretical relationships among first-order dimensions rather than purely statistical considerations.

Accordingly, this study conceptualizes Consumer Behavioral Traits (CBT) as a higher-order construct consisting of Exploratory Buying Behavior, Lifestyle, and Perceived Risk. Rather than examining these three characteristics independently, the proposed framework assumes that they jointly represent consumers' overall behavioral orientation toward social-commerce purchasing. This higher-order conceptualization provides a more integrated explanation of purchase intention while extending existing social-commerce literature beyond technology-centered perspectives.

2.2.1 Exploratory Buying Behavior

Exploratory buying behavior refers to consumers' tendency to seek novelty, variety, curiosity, and stimulation during purchasing activities. Consumers exhibiting strong exploratory tendencies enjoy discovering unfamiliar products, experimenting with new brands, and experiencing innovative shopping environments. Unlike utilitarian consumers, who primarily seek efficient solutions to predetermined purchasing needs, exploratory consumers often derive enjoyment from the shopping process itself.

The concept of exploratory consumer behavior was initially proposed by Raju (1980), who described exploratory behavior as consumers' tendency to seek stimulation through variety seeking, information search, curiosity, and innovativeness. His study suggested that exploratory consumers intentionally expose themselves to unfamiliar marketplace experiences because novelty provides intrinsic satisfaction beyond the functional value of products.

Building upon this perspective, Baumgartner and Steenkamp (1996) developed a comprehensive conceptualization of Exploratory Consumer Buying Behavior (ECB). They distinguished between exploratory information seeking and exploratory product acquisition. Exploratory information seeking involves browsing products, reading reviews, comparing alternatives, and collecting marketplace information without immediate purchasing intentions. Exploratory product acquisition refers to consumers' willingness to purchase unfamiliar products, switch brands, and experiment with innovative alternatives. Their validated ECB scale has since become one of the most widely adopted measures of exploratory buying behavior in consumer research.

Subsequent studies further emphasized the importance of consumer innovativeness. Manning et al. (1995) argued that innovative consumers actively search for product information and are generally among the earliest adopters of new products and technologies. Roehrich (2004) similarly suggested that innovativeness represents a stable individual characteristic influencing consumers' acceptance of new products and shopping channels. Consumers exhibiting greater innovativeness generally demonstrate stronger willingness to experiment with emerging retail technologies and unfamiliar purchasing methods.

The emergence of social commerce provides an ideal environment for exploratory consumers. Unlike traditional online shopping websites, social-commerce platforms continuously expose consumers to personalized recommendations, livestream demonstrations, influencer endorsements, short-form videos, and user-generated content. Consumers frequently encounter products that they had not originally intended to search for, making exploratory behavior an integral component of social-commerce purchasing.

Empirical evidence supports this argument. Sun et al. (2019) demonstrated that livestream shopping significantly enhances consumers' curiosity and product exploration by increasing visibility, interactivity, and entertainment value. Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) likewise found that livestream interactions encourage consumers to explore unfamiliar products while simultaneously strengthening trust in sellers. Akram et al. (2021) further reported that consumers possessing greater innovativeness and stronger exploratory tendencies exhibit significantly higher purchase intention in social-commerce environments.

Nevertheless, existing studies have primarily examined exploratory buying behavior as an independent predictor of purchase intention. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to understanding how exploratory buying interacts with other behavioral characteristics, such as lifestyle and perceived risk, to influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Therefore, the present study integrates exploratory buying behavior within a broader higher-order construct representing consumer behavioral traits, thereby providing a more comprehensive explanation of social-commerce purchase intention.

2.2.2 Lifestyle

Lifestyle has long been recognized as one of the most important psychographic variables for explaining consumer behavior. Unlike demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, or income, lifestyle reflects how individuals allocate their time, express their interests, pursue personal values, and organize their daily activities (Plummer, 1974). Consequently, lifestyle provides a more comprehensive understanding of consumers' purchasing behavior because it captures both psychological and behavioral dimensions of consumption.

The concept of lifestyle was first introduced into marketing research through psychographic analysis. Wells and Tigert (1971) argued that consumers with similar demographic characteristics often exhibit substantially different purchasing patterns because of differences in their activities, interests, and opinions (AIO). Building upon this perspective, Plummer (1974) proposed that lifestyle reflects consumers' ways of living rather than simply describing their socioeconomic characteristics. Lifestyle therefore enables marketers to understand why consumers choose particular products, brands, and shopping channels beyond traditional demographic segmentation.

Lifestyle has become increasingly important within digital retailing. Swinyard and Smith (2003) compared online shoppers with traditional shoppers and found that online consumers generally possess distinctive psychographic profiles characterized by convenience orientation, time consciousness, innovativeness, and positive attitudes toward technology. These findings suggest that consumers' shopping preferences are strongly associated with their daily routines and personal lifestyles rather than with demographic characteristics alone.

The rapid development of social media has further strengthened the relationship between lifestyle and shopping behavior. Social networking platforms have become integrated into consumers' daily communication, entertainment, information search, and purchasing activities. Appel et al. (2020) argued that social media has transformed marketing by embedding commercial interactions within consumers' everyday lifestyles. Instead of treating shopping as a separate activity, consumers increasingly discover products while browsing entertainment content, communicating with friends, or following influencers whose lifestyles resemble their own.

Similarly, Dwivedi et al. (2021) suggested that digital marketing has fundamentally altered consumer engagement by integrating commercial information into consumers' daily online routines. Consumers frequently encounter product recommendations, influencer demonstrations, livestream shopping events, and user-generated reviews without intentionally searching for products. Consequently, purchasing behavior becomes closely intertwined with consumers' digital lifestyles.

Lifestyle also influences symbolic consumption. Solomon (2020) emphasized that consumers frequently purchase products not only because of functional benefits but also because products communicate identity, social status, and personal values. Social commerce strengthens this symbolic function because consumers are continuously exposed to influencers, online communities, and peer-generated content that reinforce particular consumption lifestyles. Products purchased through social media therefore often represent expressions of consumers' desired identities rather than purely functional choices.

Empirical studies further support the relationship between lifestyle and online purchasing behavior. Kim and Park (2013) found that consumers actively participating in social networking environments are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward social commerce. Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) similarly reported that consumers who frequently engage with livestream content demonstrate stronger purchasing intentions because shopping activities become integrated into their daily entertainment habits.

302 However, previous studies generally examine lifestyle as an independent predictor of online purchasing behavior.
303 Comparatively little research has explored lifestyle together with exploratory buying behavior and perceived risk as complementary
304 dimensions of a broader behavioral orientation. Since lifestyle shapes consumers' familiarity with digital technology,
305 communication preferences, and consumption habits, integrating lifestyle into a higher-order consumer behavioral traits
306 construct may provide a more comprehensive explanation of purchase intention in social commerce.

307 **2.2.3 Perceived Risk**

308 Perceived risk is one of the most extensively studied concepts in consumer behavior and online shopping research. Unlike objective
309 risk, perceived risk reflects consumers' subjective expectations regarding potential
310 negative consequences associated with purchasing decisions (Cunningham, 1967).
311 Because consumers cannot perfectly evaluate product quality, seller credibility, or transaction outcomes before purchasing, they rely
312 on subjective risk perceptions when deciding whether to complete a purchase.

313 Within electronic commerce, perceived risk has consistently been identified as one of the strongest barriers to consumer
314 adoption. Pavlou (2003) argued that online transactions inherently involve uncertainty because buyers
315 cannot physically inspect products, directly evaluate sellers, or immediately receive purchased items. Consequently,
316 consumers frequently perceive greater uncertainty when purchasing online than in traditional retail environments.

317 Featherman and Pavlou (2003) further extended this perspective by conceptualizing perceived risk as a multidimensional construct.
318 Their framework identified several dimensions of risk, including financial risk, performance risk, privacy risk, psychological risk, social
319 risk, time risk, and overall risk. Their empirical findings demonstrated that different forms of perceived risk significantly reduce
320 consumers' willingness to adopt electronic services.

321 Subsequent studies consistently supported these findings. Forsythe et al. (2006) found that product-performance risk, financial risk,
322 and psychological risks significantly influence consumers' online shopping decisions.
323 Consumers who anticipate greater uncertainty regarding product quality, payment security, or delivery performance
324 generally exhibit lower purchase intention. Similarly, Kim et al. (2008) demonstrated that trust reduces perceived risk and
325 indirectly increases consumers' online purchasing behavior.

326 Perceived risk becomes even more important within social commerce because transactions frequently involve individual sellers,
327 livestream demonstrations, influencer recommendations, and informal communication channels. Unlike established e-commerce
328 platforms, many social-commerce transactions occur through social networking applications where seller verification,
329 product quality, and return policies may vary considerably. Consequently, consumers may question whether products will
330 correspond with online descriptions, whether payments are secure, or whether sellers will fulfill their commitments.

331 Recent research confirms that trust remains the primary mechanism for reducing perceived risk within social commerce. Hajli et al.
332 (2017) demonstrated that platform familiarity, information seeking, and social presence reduce uncertainty by strengthening
333 consumer trust. Lu et al. (2016) similarly found that interactions between consumers and sellers enhance perceptions of credibility,
334 thereby reducing consumers' concerns regarding transaction risk.

335 Livestream commerce has introduced additional mechanisms for reducing uncertainty. Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020)
336 reported that real-time product demonstrations and interactive communication allow consumers to evaluate products more
337 effectively before purchasing. By enabling immediate responses to consumers' questions, livestream sellers reduce information
338 asymmetry and increase perceived transparency. Consequently, consumers perceive lower transaction risk and become more
339 willing to purchase products promoted through livestream events.

340 Despite these developments, perceived risk continues to influence consumer decision-making. Sarker et al. (2025)
341 argued that consumers in emerging economies remain highly concerned about payment security, product authenticity,
342 grievance resolution, and seller credibility. These concerns are particularly relevant in developing countries where institutional
343 protection and consumer protection mechanisms may be less developed than in mature markets.

344 Previous studies have predominantly examined perceived risk independently from other behavioral characteristics. However,
345 consumers rarely evaluate uncertainty in isolation. Individuals who enjoy exploring new
346 products may simultaneously tolerate higher levels of uncertainty, whereas consumers with conservative lifestyles
347 may perceive substantially greater risk during identical purchasing situations. Therefore, perceived risk should be
348 understood together with exploratory buying behavior and lifestyle as part of consumers' broader behavioral orientation.

349 From a theoretical perspective, perceived risk represents the uncertainty-management component of consumer behavioral traits.
350 Consumers exhibiting lower perceived risk—or greater tolerance for uncertainty—are generally more willing to engage in social-
351 commerce purchasing because they anticipate fewer negative consequences associated with online transactions. Conversely,
352 consumers with higher perceived risk are more likely to postpone purchasing, search for additional information, or choose
353 established retailers rather than social-commerce sellers.

354 Accordingly, integrating perceived risk into the higher-order construct of Consumer Behavioral Traits provides a more
355 comprehensive understanding of how consumers evaluate social-commerce purchasing opportunities. Rather than acting
356 independently, perceived risk interacts with consumers' exploratory tendencies and lifestyle orientations to shape overall purchase
357 intention.

358 **2.3 Consumer Behavioral Traits and Purchase Intention**

359 Purchase intention has long been regarded as one of the strongest predictors of actual purchasing behavior in consumer research.
360 According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), behavioral intention reflects an individual's motivational readiness to perform
361 a specific behavior and represents the most immediate antecedent of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Consumers generally form
362 purchase intentions after evaluating available information, considering potential benefits and risks, and
363 assessing whether purchasing aligns with their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Consequently,
364 understanding the antecedents of purchase intention remains a central objective in both marketing and consumer
365 behavior research.

366 Although TPB emphasizes cognitive evaluations and social influence, scholars have increasingly argued that consumers'
367 behavioral tendencies also play a fundamental role in shaping purchase intention. Individuals differ considerably in the way they
368 process marketplace information, respond to uncertainty, seek novel experiences, and evaluate purchasing opportunities.
369 These relatively stable differences cannot be fully explained by technological characteristics or situational factors alone. Instead,
370 they reflect enduring behavioral traits that influence consumers' purchasing decisions across different retail environments (Solomon,
371 2020).

372 Trait Theory provides an appropriate theoretical foundation for explaining these individual differences. Trait Theory
373 assumes that relatively stable psychological characteristics influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors across different situations.
374 In consumer research, these characteristics are reflected through consumers' shopping orientations, innovativeness, risk tolerance,
375 and lifestyle preferences, all of which affect how consumers search for information, evaluate alternatives, and
376 make purchasing decisions (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 1996). Consequently, consumers possessing different behavioral traits are
377 likely to respond differently even when exposed to identical social-commerce environments.

378 In social commerce, consumer behavioral traits become particularly important because purchasing decisions occur within highly
379 interactive, information-rich, and socially dynamic environments. Unlike traditional retailing, consumers are simultaneously exposed
380 to livestream demonstrations, influencer recommendations, customer reviews, personalized product recommendations, and real-
381 time interactions with sellers. Such environments provide abundant opportunities for consumers to explore
382 unfamiliar products while simultaneously requiring them to evaluate uncertain information. Consequently, consumers'
383 exploratory tendencies, lifestyles, and perceptions of risk collectively influence their willingness to purchase through social media
384 platforms.

385 Among these dimensions, exploratory buying behavior represents consumers' motivation to seek novelty and
386 variety during purchasing activities. Raju (1980) argued that exploratory consumers intentionally pursue stimulation through
387 information search, experimentation, and curiosity. Building upon this perspective, Baumgartner and Steenkamp (1996)
388 proposed that exploratory consumers actively search for unfamiliar products and willingly experiment with new
389 consumption experiences. These behavioral tendencies are highly compatible with social commerce because social-media
390 platforms continuously expose consumers to innovative products, livestream events, and algorithm-generated recommendations.
391 Consumers possessing stronger exploratory tendencies therefore have greater opportunities to discover products that match
392 their interests, increasing their likelihood of developing purchase intention.

393 Empirical evidence consistently supports this relationship. Manning et al. (1995) found that innovative consumers actively search for
394 information and demonstrate greater willingness to adopt new products. Roehrich (2004) similarly reported that consumer
395 innovativeness significantly predicts consumers' acceptance of emerging retail innovations. More recently, Sun et al. (2019)
396 found that livestream shopping environments stimulate consumers' curiosity and exploratory behavior through visual
397 demonstrations and interactive communication. Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) further demonstrated that livestream
398 interactions encourage consumers to discover unfamiliar products while simultaneously strengthening trust, resulting in

stronger purchase intention. Collectively, these findings suggest that exploratory buying behavior facilitates consumers' willingness to engage with social-commerce environments.

Lifestyle constitutes another important component of consumer behavioral traits. Lifestyle reflects consumers' daily activities, interests, values, and consumption habits that shape how they interact with digital technologies and shopping platforms (Plummer, 1974). Consumers whose lifestyles emphasize digital engagement, convenience, entertainment, and social interaction are more likely to perceive social commerce as compatible with their everyday routines. Unlike traditional shopping channels that required dedicated purchasing activities, social commerce enables consumers to integrate shopping with communication, entertainment, and information seeking. Consequently, consumers possessing digitally oriented lifestyles are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward purchasing through social media.

Several empirical studies support this argument. Swinyard and Smith (2003) demonstrated that online shoppers differ from conventional shoppers in their psychographic profiles, technological orientation, and shopping preferences. Appel et al. (2020) further argued that social media has transformed consumers' lifestyles by integrating marketing activities into everyday communication and entertainment. Dwivedi et al. (2021) likewise suggested that digital marketing increasingly embeds commercial information within consumers' daily online experiences, thereby strengthening consumer engagement. Within social commerce specifically, Kim and Park (2013) found that active participation in social networking environment significantly increases consumers' purchase intention. These findings indicate that lifestyle compatibility enhances consumers' willingness to purchase products through social-commerce platforms.

The third dimension, perceived risk, captures consumers' evaluation of uncertainty associated with purchasing decisions. Unlike exploratory buying behavior and lifestyle, perceived risk generally discourages purchasing because consumers anticipate potential financial, functional, psychological, or privacy-related losses (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003). Nevertheless, perceived risk remains an indispensable component of consumer behavioral traits because consumers differ substantially in their tolerance for uncertainty. Consumers exhibiting greater tolerance for uncertain outcomes are generally more willing to purchase products through emerging shopping channels such as social commerce.

Numerous studies have confirmed the importance of perceived risk in online purchasing. Pavlou (2003) demonstrated that uncertainty significantly reduces consumers' willingness to participate in electronic commerce. Featherman and Pavlou (2003) further showed that multiple dimensions of perceived risk negatively influence consumers' adoption of electronic services. Similarly, Kim et al. (2008) found that trust reduces perceived risk and indirectly enhances online purchase intention. Within social commerce, Hajli et al. (2017) reported that social presence and platform familiarity reduce uncertainty by strengthening trust. Lu et al. (2016) likewise demonstrated that interactions between consumers and sellers reduce perceived risk while increasing purchase intention. These studies consistently suggest that consumers exhibiting lower perceived risk are more likely to translate favorable behavioral characteristics into actual purchase intention.

Although exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk have individually demonstrated significant relationships with purchase intention, existing literature has predominantly examined these variables separately. Such an approach overlooks the possibility that these characteristics jointly represent a broader behavioral orientation influencing consumers' purchasing decisions. Consumers rarely evaluate shopping opportunities based upon only one psychological characteristic. Instead, purchasing decisions emerge from the interaction between consumers' desire for novelty, compatibility with their daily lifestyles, and tolerance for uncertainty. Therefore, integrating these dimensions into a higher-order construct provides a more comprehensive explanation of purchase intention than examining each dimension independently.

The higher-order construct perspective is supported by recent methodological literature. Sarstedt et al. (2019) argued that multidimensional constructs better capture complex behavioral phenomena because they integrate conceptually related dimensions into a more parsimonious theoretical framework. Hair et al. (2022) similarly emphasized that higher-order constructs improve explanatory power while reducing model complexity when first-order dimensions collectively represent broader theoretical concepts. In the present study, exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk are conceptualized as complementary dimensions that collectively define consumers' overall behavioral orientation toward social-commerce purchasing.

Furthermore, this integrated perspective contributes to the social-commerce literature by extending beyond existing technology-centered models. Previous studies have largely emphasized platform quality, trust, perceived usefulness, and social influence as primary determinants of purchase intention (Hajli, 2015; Kim & Park, 2013; Leong et al., 2023). While these variables explain how technological and social environments influence purchasing behavior, they provide comparatively limited explanations regarding why consumers are exposed to

identical environments often exhibit substantially different purchase intentions. By incorporating consumer behavioral traits, the present study introduces an individual-level explanation that complements existing technology-oriented research.

The proposed relationship is particularly relevant in emerging markets such as Cambodia, where social commerce has expanded rapidly through Facebook, TikTok, Telegram, and other social-media platforms. Consumers in these markets frequently encounter informal sellers, livestream promotions, and highly competitive digital marketplaces. Under such conditions, individual behavioral characteristics become increasingly important because consumers must continuously evaluate unfamiliar products, assess seller credibility, and tolerate varying levels of transaction uncertainty. Consumers exhibiting stronger exploratory tendencies, digitally compatible lifestyles, and lower perceived risk are therefore expected to demonstrate stronger purchase intention toward social commerce.

Based on the above theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, this study proposes that consumer behavioral traits positively influence consumers' purchase intention in social commerce. Consumers possessing stronger exploratory buying tendencies, lifestyles compatible with digital shopping, and lower perceived risk are expected to exhibit greater willingness to purchase products through social-commerce platforms.

H1: Consumer behavioral traits positively influence consumers' purchase intention toward social commerce.

2.4 Price Sensitivity

Price has long been recognized as one of the most influential determinants of consumer decision-making because it represents not only the monetary cost of acquiring a product but also an important signal of value, quality, and economic sacrifice (Monroe, 1990). However, consumers differ considerably in the degree to which price influences their purchasing decisions. These individual differences are commonly conceptualized as price sensitivity, referring to consumers' tendency to respond to changes in product prices when making purchasing decisions (Lichtenstein et al., 1993).

Lichtenstein et al. (1993) argued that consumers interpret prices differently according to their personal value systems. Some consumers are highly price-conscious and actively compare prices before making purchasing decisions, whereas others place greater emphasis on convenience, product quality, brand reputation, or shopping experience. Consequently, identical pricing strategies may generate substantially different purchasing responses among consumers.

Price sensitivity has received increasing attention in electronic commerce because digital technologies substantially reduce consumers' search costs. Online platforms allow consumers to compare prices across numerous sellers within seconds, making price information more transparent than in traditional retail environments. As a result, consumers can easily evaluate alternative offers and identify the most economically attractive purchasing option. Wakefield and Inman (2003) demonstrated that price sensitivity varies across consumption situations, suggesting that consumers' responses to price depend on contextual characteristics rather than solely on stable personal preferences.

Social commerce further intensifies this phenomenon. Unlike conventional e-commerce websites, social commerce combines product promotion with real-time interaction, influencer marketing, livestream demonstrations, and limited-time promotional campaigns. Consumers are frequently exposed to flash sales, exclusive discounts, promotional coupons, free shipping, and bundled pricing strategies while simultaneously communicating with sellers. Such environments increase consumers' awareness of price differences and encourage continuous price comparisons across competing sellers.

Empirical evidence supports the importance of price sensitivity in digital purchasing. Goldsmith and Newell (1997) reported that consumer innovativeness does not necessarily reduce price-consciousness because innovative consumers continue to evaluate products according to their perceived value. Consumers may be interested in purchasing innovative products while simultaneously seeking lower prices or greater economic value.

Within social commerce, Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) found that promotional pricing significantly enhances consumers' purchase intention during livestream shopping events. Their findings suggest that consumers simultaneously evaluate product quality, seller credibility, and promotional attractiveness before making purchasing decisions. Likewise, Akram et al. (2021) reported that perceived value and economic considerations remain important determinants of purchase intention even when trust and social interaction are present.

More recently, Leong et al. (2023) concluded through a meta-analysis that perceived value remains one of the strongest predictors of consumers' behavioral intention in social commerce. Their findings indicate that although technological characteristics facilitate consumer engagement, purchasing decisions continue to depend heavily on consumers' evaluations of economic benefits.

496 Similarly, studies conducted in emerging economies have demonstrated that consumers are generally more responsive to price
497 changes because purchasing decisions are constrained by disposable income and increasing market competition (Sarker et al.,
498 2025).

499 Cambodia represents an appropriate context for examining price sensitivity because social-commerce platforms such as Facebook,
500 TikTok, and Telegram facilitate intense price competition among individual sellers. Consumers frequently compare
501 identical products offered by different sellers while considering promotional discounts, delivery fees, and bundled offers.
502 Consequently, price sensitivity is expected to influence how consumers evaluate purchasing opportunities within Cambodian social
503 commerce.

504 Despite substantial evidence regarding the direct influence of price sensitivity on purchasing behavior, relatively limited research has
505 examined its role as a moderating variable. Existing studies have generally treated price sensitivity as an independent predictor
506 rather than investigating how it changes the relationship between consumers' behavioral characteristics and purchase intention.
507 Therefore, the present study extends previous literature by proposing price sensitivity as a boundary condition influencing the
508 relationship between consumer behavioral traits and purchase intention.

509 **2.5 The Moderating Role of Price Sensitivity**

510 Consumer behavior is rarely determined by a single psychological characteristic. Instead, purchasing decisions typically result from
511 the interaction between individual characteristics and situational factors. Contemporary consumer
512 behavior theories therefore recommend examining moderating variables that explain when and under what conditions relationships
513 become stronger or weaker (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

514 In the present study, price sensitivity is proposed as a boundary condition influencing the relationship between consumer
515 behavioral traits and purchase intention. Although consumers may possess favorable behavioral characteristics, their willingness to
516 purchase may still depend on how they evaluate product prices.

517 Consumers exhibiting strong exploratory buying behavior generally enjoy discovering innovative products and
518 experimenting with unfamiliar shopping experiences (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 1996). Nevertheless, highly price-sensitive
519 consumers may continue searching for alternative sellers when prices exceed their expectations. Even if consumers are interested in
520 a product, excessive price consciousness may discourage immediate purchasing decisions.

521 Similarly, consumers whose lifestyles are highly compatible with social media frequently encounter shopping opportunities while
522 engaging in everyday online activities (Appel et al., 2020). These consumers often perceive social commerce as convenient,
523 entertaining, and compatible with their daily routines. However, lifestyle compatibility alone may not guarantee purchase intention
524 if consumers perceive prices to be unreasonable or inconsistent with expected value.

525 Perceived risk demonstrates a similar interaction. Consumers exhibiting
526 relatively low perceived risk generally feel comfortable purchasing through social-commerce platforms
527 because they anticipate fewer negative consequences (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003). Nevertheless, even consumers with high trust
528 may postpone purchases when prices appear excessive relative to competing alternatives. Thus, favorable behavioral characteristics
529 do not necessarily translate into purchasing decisions unless consumers also perceive acceptable economic value.

530 This argument is consistent with Transaction Utility Theory, which proposes that purchasing decisions depend not only on product
531 utility but also on consumers' evaluation of the economic attractiveness of a transaction (Thaler, 1985). Consumers compare
532 actual prices with internal reference prices and evaluate whether purchasing represents a favorable transaction. Likewise, Prospect
533 Theory suggests that consumers evaluate gains and losses relative to reference points rather than absolute outcomes (Kahneman
534 & Tversky, 1979). Consequently, consumers exhibiting high price sensitivity may perceive identical prices differently from consumers
535 exhibiting lower price sensitivity.

536 The moderating role of price sensitivity has received increasing support within digital retailing. Wakefield and Inman (2003)
537 argued that consumers' responsiveness to prices varies according to contextual conditions and purchasing situations. Goldsmith
538 and Newell (1997) similarly suggested that consumers'
539 behavioral tendencies interact with economic evaluations during purchasing decisions. More recently, Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut
540 (2020) demonstrated that livestream commerce combines social interaction with promotional pricing, allowing consumers to
541 evaluate products according to both emotional and economic considerations.

From the perspective of social commerce, this interaction becomes particularly important because consumers can compare multiple sellers almost instantaneously. Social-media platforms continuously expose consumers to promotional campaigns, livestream discounts, influencer-exclusive offers, and algorithm-driven advertisements. Under these circumstances, consumers possessing similar behavioral characteristics may nevertheless demonstrate substantially different purchase intentions depending on their sensitivity to price.

In emerging economies such as Cambodia, where disposable income remains relatively constrained and social-commerce competition is intense, price sensitivity is expected to exert an even stronger moderating influence. Consumers may appreciate innovative shopping experiences and trust social-commerce sellers while simultaneously delaying purchases until prices become sufficiently attractive. Consequently, price sensitivity is expected to weaken the positive influence of consumer behavioral traits on purchase intention.

The present study therefore proposes that although consumer behavioral traits positively influence purchase intention, this relationship becomes weaker among consumers exhibiting higher price sensitivity. Conversely, consumers with lower price sensitivity are expected to translate favorable behavioral characteristics into purchase intention more readily because economic considerations exert less influence on their purchasing decisions.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Price sensitivity negatively moderates the relationship between consumer behavioral traits and purchase intention, such that the positive effect of consumer behavioral traits on purchase intention becomes weaker when consumers exhibit higher levels of price sensitivity.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the influence of Consumer Behavioral Traits on Purchase Intention in the context of social commerce and to investigate the moderating role of Price Sensitivity among consumers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because the primary objective of the study was to empirically test the proposed hypotheses and examine the structural relationships among multiple latent constructs using statistical analysis. Compared with qualitative approaches, quantitative research provides a systematic and objective means of measuring consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions while allowing researchers to generalize findings from a representative sample to the target population (Hair et al., 2022).

The study followed a deductive research approach in which hypotheses were developed based on established theories and previous empirical findings before being tested using survey data. Specifically, the Theory of Planned Behavior provides the conceptual basis for treating purchase intention as the immediate motivational antecedent of behavior, while Trait Theory explains how relatively stable consumer characteristics influence the formation of such intentions.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) consists of Consumer Behavioral Traits as a higher-order construct, Purchase Intention as the endogenous construct, and Price Sensitivity as a moderating variable. Consumer Behavioral Traits were operationalized as a reflective-formative hierarchical component model comprising three first-order dimensions: Exploratory Buying Behavior, Lifestyle, and Perceived Risk. Instead of examining these dimensions independently, they were integrated into a higher-order construct to capture consumers' overall behavioral characteristics in social commerce. This approach is consistent with recent recommendations for modeling multidimensional constructs in structural equation modeling (Becker et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2022).

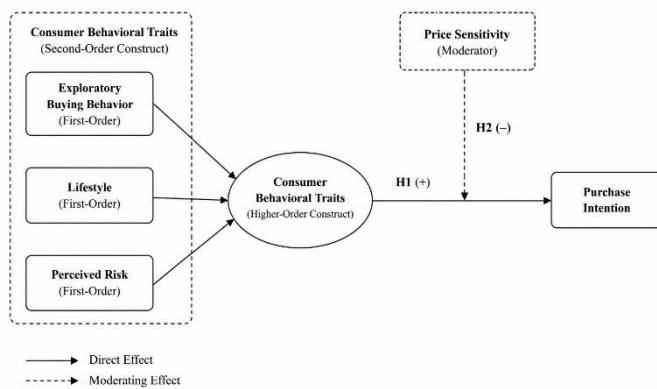


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

Given the complexity of the proposed research model, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to estimate the relationships among constructs. PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for prediction-oriented studies involving hierarchical component models, moderation analysis, and complex structural relationships. Furthermore, the analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4, following the recommended two-stage approach for higher-order construct assessment. This analytical procedure enables the simultaneous evaluation of both the measurement model and the structural model, thereby ensuring the reliability and validity of the proposed research framework before hypothesis testing.

3.2 Measurement Development

The measurement instrument used in this study was developed by adapting established scales from previous studies to ensure content validity and construct validity. All measurement items were selected based on their theoretical relevance and empirical support in consumer behavior and social commerce research. To enhance contextual appropriateness, minor modifications were made to the wording of several items so that they accurately reflected consumers' experiences within the social commerce environment in Cambodia while preserving the original meaning of the scales.

Consumer Behavioral Traits were conceptualized as a second-order reflective-formative construct comprising three first-order reflective dimensions: Exploratory Buying Behavior, Lifestyle, and Perceived Risk. Exploratory Buying Behavior was measured using items adapted from Baumgartner and Steenkamp (1996) and Manning et al. (1995), which capture consumers' tendency to seek novelty, explore unfamiliar products, and enjoy trying new shopping experiences. Lifestyle was assessed using the Activities, Interests, and Opinions (AIO) framework originally proposed by Wells and Tigert (1971) and further developed by Plummer (1974). The measurement items evaluated the extent to which social commerce activities were integrated into respondents' daily lifestyles, including their interests in online shopping, engagement with social media platforms, and shopping-related opinions. Perceived Risk was measured using items adapted from Featherman and Pavlou (2003), reflecting consumers' concerns regarding financial risk, product quality, privacy protection, transaction security, and delivery uncertainty when purchasing products through social commerce platforms. Because perceived risk is theoretically expected to reduce purchase intention, the perceived-risk indicators were reverse-coded before constructing the higher-order Consumer Behavioral Traits construct. Consequently, higher scores represented lower perceived risk or greater tolerance of transaction uncertainty.

Purchase Intention was measured using reflective indicators adapted from Kim and Park (2013) and Hajli (2015). These items assessed respondents' willingness to purchase products through social commerce platforms in the future, their likelihood of selecting social commerce as a preferred purchasing channel, and their intention to continue purchasing products through these platforms. As the moderating variable, Price Sensitivity was measured using items adapted from Lichtenstein et al. (1993). The scale evaluates consumers' responsiveness to price differences, preference for lower prices, and tendency to compare prices before making purchasing decisions.

All constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). A five-point scale was selected because it is easy for respondents to understand and provides sufficient response variability for measuring consumer perceptions. Prior to the main survey, the questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts with research experience in marketing, consumer behavior, and electronic commerce. The experts evaluated the clarity, relevance, and contextual appropriateness of the measurement items. Based on their suggestions, several wording revisions were made to improve readability and contextual suitability. The questionnaire was initially developed in English and subsequently translated into Khmer. A back-translation procedure was conducted by independent bilingual translators to ensure semantic equivalence between the English and Khmer versions. Any discrepancies were discussed and resolved before the pilot study. A pilot study involving a small group of social commerce consumers was subsequently conducted to assess questionnaire comprehensibility.

621 and preliminary reliability. Feedback obtained during the pilot test resulted in minor refinements to the questionnaire before the
622 final version was distributed for large-scale data collection.

623 **3.3 Sampling and Data Collection**

624 The target population of this study comprised consumers residing in Phnom Penh, Cambodia,
625 who had previous experience purchasing products through social commerce platforms. Phnom Penh was selected as the research
626 setting because it is the country's largest metropolitan area and has experienced rapid growth in internet penetration, smartphone
627 usage, and social media adoption, making it the most active market for social commerce in Cambodia. To
628 ensure that respondents possessed sufficient knowledge and experience to evaluate the research constructs,
629 only individuals who had previously purchased products through social commerce platforms such as Facebook, TikTok Shop,
630 Instagram, or Telegram were considered eligible to participate in the survey.

631 A purposive sampling technique was employed because the study required respondents with specific characteristics relevant to the
632 research objectives. Prior to completing the questionnaire, potential respondents were asked a screening question to
633 confirm whether they had purchased products through a social commerce platform within the previous 12 months.
634 Individuals who did not meet this requirement were excluded from the study.

635
636 Data were collected through face-to-face distribution of structured questionnaires at selected locations in Phnom Penh. Potential
637 respondents were approached by the researchers and trained research assistants in places where consumers were likely to be
638 accessible, including shopping areas, universities, cafés, and public spaces. Respondents who satisfied the screening
639 criterion were informed about the purpose of the study and invited to participate voluntarily.

640
641 After providing their consent, respondents completed the self-administered questionnaire in person. The researchers and research
642 assistants were available to clarify the questionnaire instructions when necessary but did not influence the respondents' answers.
643 To protect participants' privacy, no personally identifiable information was collected, and all responses were treated anonymously
644 and confidentially.

645
646 Completed questionnaires were collected immediately and checked for completeness. After the data collection period, all
647 returned questionnaires were carefully screened for missing responses, repetitive answering patterns, and inconsistent answers.
648 Invalid questionnaires were excluded, while valid questionnaires were coded and entered into IBM SPSS Statistics and SmartPLS 4
649 for subsequent analysis.

650 **3.4 Data Analysis**

651 The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics and SmartPLS 4. Prior to hypothesis testing, the dataset was screened
652 for missing values, duplicate responses, and inconsistent response patterns to ensure data quality. Descriptive statistical analyses
653 were first performed using SPSS to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics, including gender, age, education level,
654 monthly income, and frequency of social commerce purchases. Means and standard deviations were also calculated to provide an
655 overview of respondents' perceptions of the research constructs.

656 Subsequently, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to examine the proposed research
657 model. PLS-SEM was selected because it is particularly suitable for prediction-oriented research involving complex structural
658 relationships, higher-order constructs, and moderating effects. In addition, PLS-SEM imposes fewer distributional assumptions than
659 covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) and has been widely recommended for consumer behavior and social
660 commerce research (Hair et al., 2022). The statistical analyses were conducted using SmartPLS 4 following the two-stage
661 approach proposed by Becker et al. (2012) for assessing hierarchical component models.

662 The measurement model was evaluated before examining the structural relationships among constructs. For the reflective first-
663 order constructs, indicator reliability was assessed using outer loadings, with values of 0.70 or above considered acceptable.
664 Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), both of which should exceed
665 the recommended threshold of 0.70. Convergent validity was assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with values
666 greater than 0.50 indicating satisfactory convergent validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait
667 ratio (HTMT), where values below the recommended threshold indicate adequate discriminant validity among the constructs (Hair
668 et al., 2022).

669 Because Consumer Behavioral Traits was specified as a reflective-formative higher-order construct, the two-stage
670 approach was adopted to estimate the hierarchical component model. In the first stage, latent variable scores of the
671 three reflective dimensions—Exploratory Buying Behavior, Lifestyle, and Perceived Risk—were estimated. In the second stage, these
672 latent scores were used as formative indicators of the higher-order construct. The significance of outer weights and the variance
673 inflation factor (VIF) were examined to evaluate the contribution of each formative dimension and to
674 ensure that multicollinearity did not threaten the validity of the higher-order construct.

After establishing the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model was evaluated by examining collinearity, path coefficients, coefficients of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). The significance of the hypothesized relationships was assessed using the bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples to generate t-values, p-values, and bias-corrected confidence intervals. Finally, the moderating effect of Price Sensitivity on the relationship between Consumer Behavioral Traits and Purchase Intention was tested by constructing an interaction term in SmartPLS 4. A statistically significant interaction coefficient was interpreted as evidence supporting the proposed moderation hypothesis. The overall analytical procedure enabled a comprehensive assessment of both the measurement properties and the structural relationships, thereby providing robust empirical evidence for testing the proposed research model.

4. Results

4.1 Respondent Profile

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, of which 285 were returned, representing a response rate of 95.0%. After excluding 13 invalid questionnaires, 272 valid responses were retained, yielding a usable response rate of 90.7% based on the questionnaires distributed.

Among the participants, 41.8% were male and 58.2% were female. Regarding age, the largest proportion of respondents was between 21 and 30 years old (41.72%), followed by those aged under 20 years (22.5%). In terms of educational attainment, 68.7% possessed a bachelor's degree. The majority of respondents reported a monthly income below USD 300 (41.49%).

4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated by examining indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2022).

As shown in Table 1, all constructs of Consumer Behavioral Traits loading exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, ranging from 0.788 to 0.866. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.801 to 0.897, while Composite Reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.885 to 0.933, exceeding the recommended minimum value of 0.70. These results indicate satisfactory internal consistency reliability.

Convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The AVE values ranged from 0.621 to 0.778, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity.

Table 1 Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Exploratory Buying	0.865	0.882	0.914	0.778
Lifestyle	0.866	0.897	0.933	0.750
Perceived Risk	0.831	0.851	0.896	0.701
Purchase Intention	0.847	0.873	0.907	0.719
Price Sensitivity	0.788	0.801	0.885	0.621

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT). As shown in Table 2, all HTMT values were below the recommended threshold of 0.85, demonstrating satisfactory discriminant validity among the latent constructs.

Table 2 HTMT Matrix

Construct	1	2	3	4	5
1. Exploratory Buying	-				
2. Lifestyle	0.544	-			
3. Perceived Risk	0.415	0.410	-		
4. Purchase Intention	0.543	0.517	0.521	-	
5. Price Sensitivity	0.570	0.556	0.506	0.542	-

Consumer Behavioral Traits were specified as a reflective-formative higher-order construct comprising Exploratory Buying Behavior, Lifestyle, and Perceived Risk. The formative measurement model was assessed by examining the significance and relevance of the outer weights and the variance inflation factor values. As shown in Table 3, all formative dimensions exhibited statistically significant outer weights. Because the perceived-risk indicators were reverse-coded, higher scores represented lower perceived risk.

Therefore, all three dimensions—Exploratory Buying Behavior, Lifestyle, and Low Perceived Risk—made positive and statistically significant contributions to Consumer Behavioral Traits. All VIF values were below the recommended threshold, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern.

Table 3 Assessment of the Higher-Order Formative Construct

Higher-order construct	First-order dimension	Outer weight	Outer loading	VIF	t	p
Consumer Behavioral Traits	Exploratory Buying Behavior	0.416	0.836	1.64	5.107	< .001
	Lifestyle	0.369	0.784	1.61	4.544	< .001
	Low Perceived Risk	0.298	0.731	1.47	3.874	< .001

4.3 Structural Model Assessment

Before testing the hypotheses, collinearity among predictor constructs was examined. All VIF values were below the recommended threshold, suggesting that multicollinearity did not affect the structural model.

The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2). The results indicate that Consumer Behavioral Traits explained 43% of the variance in Purchase Intention ($R^2 = 0.43$), suggesting moderate explanatory power.

Predictive relevance was evaluated using Stone–Geisser's Q^2 statistic. The obtained Q^2 value of 0.407 indicates that the proposed model possesses satisfactory predictive relevance.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was performed to examine the significance of the proposed hypotheses.

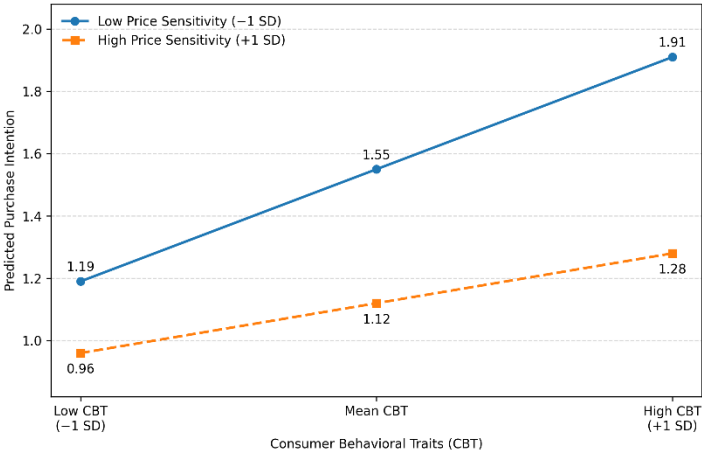
As shown in Table 4, Consumer Behavioral Traits had a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.289$, $t = 7.241$, $p < .001$), supporting H_1 .

The interaction effect between Consumer Behavioral Traits and Price Sensitivity was statistically significant ($\beta = -0.232$, $t = 6.104$, $p < .001$), indicating that Price Sensitivity significantly moderated the relationship between Consumer Behavioral Traits and Purchase Intention. Therefore, H_2 was supported.

Table 4 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t	p	Decision
H1	CBT $\rightarrow$ PI	0.289	7.241	< .001	Supported
H2	CBT $\times$ PS $\rightarrow$ PI	-0.232	6.104	< .001	Supported

Figure 2 illustrates the moderating effect of Price Sensitivity on the relationship between Consumer Behavioral Traits and Purchase Intention. The slope was steeper under low Price Sensitivity (slope = 0.36) than under high Price Sensitivity (slope = 0.16). This result indicates that the positive influence of Consumer Behavioral Traits on Purchase Intention becomes weaker as Price Sensitivity increases, thereby supporting the proposed negative moderating effect.



733 **4.5 Effect Size and Predictive Relevance**

734 The effect sizes (f^2) were examined to determine the contribution of each exogenous construct. Consumer Behavioral Traits
735 exhibited an effect size of 0.28 on Purchase Intention, indicating a medium effect according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines. The
736 interaction term between Consumer Behavioral Traits and Price Sensitivity produced an effect size of 0.23, suggesting a medium
737 moderating effect.

738 The predictive relevance of the endogenous construct was further evaluated using the blindfolding procedure. The Q^2 value of
739 0.407 exceeded zero, indicating that the proposed model possesses satisfactory predictive relevance.

740 **4.6 Summary of Findings**

741 The results demonstrated that the proposed measurement model satisfied all reliability and validity requirements. The higher-
742 order construct of Consumer Behavioral Traits exhibited satisfactory formative measurement properties, and no multicollinearity
743 issues were detected. The structural model explained 43% of the variance in Purchase Intention and demonstrated acceptable
744 predictive relevance.

745 Hypothesis testing further revealed that Consumer Behavioral Traits exerted a significant positive influence on Purchase Intention,
746 thereby supporting H_1 . In addition, Price Sensitivity significantly moderated the relationship between Consumer Behavioral Traits
747 and Purchase Intention, supporting H_2 . Overall, the findings provide empirical support for the proposed research framework and
748 establish a foundation for the subsequent discussion of theoretical and managerial implications.

749 **4.7 Discussion**

750 The significant positive relationship between Consumer Behavioral Traits and Purchase Intention indicates that consumers'
751 behavioral orientations play an important role in social-commerce decision-making. Consumers who are more willing to explore
752 unfamiliar products, whose lifestyles are compatible with digital shopping, and who perceive lower transaction risk demonstrate
753 stronger intentions to purchase through social-commerce platforms. This finding extends previous social-commerce research,
754 which has largely emphasized technological and platform-related factors, by showing that individual behavioral characteristics
755 also explain variation in purchase intention. This finding is consistent with prior studies showing that exploratory tendencies and
756 consumer innovativeness increase consumers' willingness to engage with emerging digital shopping channels (Baumgartner &
757 Steenkamp, 1996; Akram et al., 2021). It also supports previous research indicating that lifestyle compatibility facilitates online
758 shopping engagement (Kim & Park, 2013), whereas lower perceived risk encourages online purchase intention (Featherman &
759 Pavlou, 2003; Kim et al., 2008).

760 The negative interaction effect indicates that Price Sensitivity weakens the positive relationship between Consumer Behavioral
761 Traits and Purchase Intention. Even consumers who enjoy product exploration and frequently engage in digital shopping may
762 hesitate to purchase when they perceive the price as unattractive. This result suggests that favorable behavioral tendencies alone
763 are insufficient to generate purchase intention when consumers place considerable emphasis on economic sacrifice and price
764 comparison. The negative moderating effect is consistent with the logic of Transaction Utility Theory, which suggests that
765 consumers evaluate not only the benefits of a product but also the economic attractiveness of the transaction (Thaler, 1985).
766 Highly price-sensitive consumers may therefore continue comparing prices or postpone purchases even when they possess
767 favorable behavioral orientations toward social commerce.

768 The findings are consistent with previous studies showing that exploratory tendencies and consumer innovativeness facilitate
769 engagement with emerging shopping channels. They also support research demonstrating that perceived risk discourages online
770 purchasing. However, the present study extends prior research by integrating these behavioral characteristics into a higher-order
771 construct and by demonstrating that their influence depends on consumers' sensitivity to price.

772 This moderating effect may be particularly relevant in Phnom Penh, where consumers can compare offers across Facebook,
773 TikTok Shop, and Telegram sellers with relatively low switching costs. Under such conditions, price sensitivity may function as an
774 important boundary condition that limits the translation of favorable behavioral traits into purchase intention.

775 **5. Conclusion, Implications, Limitations, and Future Research**

776 **5.1 Conclusion**

The primary objective of this study was to examine the influence of consumer behavioral traits on purchase intention in social commerce and to investigate the moderating role of price sensitivity within the Cambodian context. Drawing upon the Theory of Planned Behavior and Trait Theory, this study conceptualized consumer behavioral traits as a higher-order construct comprising exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk. Using data collected from consumers with prior social commerce purchasing experience in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, the proposed hypotheses were empirically examined using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

The empirical findings indicate that consumer behavioral traits significantly and positively influence consumers' purchase intention toward social commerce, thereby supporting the first hypothesis. The results suggest that consumers who enjoy exploring new products, possess lifestyles compatible with digital shopping, and perceive lower levels of purchasing risk are more likely to develop stronger intentions to purchase products through social commerce platforms. These findings confirm that consumers' intrinsic behavioral characteristics remain important determinants of purchase intention beyond technological features or platform characteristics.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate that price sensitivity negatively moderates the relationship between consumer behavioral traits and purchase intention. Although favorable behavioral characteristics encourage consumers to purchase through social commerce, this positive relationship becomes weaker among highly price-sensitive consumers. In other words, even consumers who actively engage in digital shopping and enjoy discovering new products may postpone or avoid purchasing when product prices exceed their expectations or when they perceive alternative sellers as offering better value.

Overall, this study confirms that purchase intention in social commerce is jointly determined by consumers' psychological characteristics and their economic evaluations. Consumer behavioral traits provide the motivational foundation for purchasing decisions, whereas price sensitivity determines the extent to which these motivations are translated into actual purchase intention. The findings therefore contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior in social commerce, particularly within emerging digital economies such as Cambodia.

5.2 Practical Implications and Research Contributions

5.2.1 Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide several practical implications for social commerce sellers, digital marketers, and small online entrepreneurs operating in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The empirical results demonstrate that consumer behavioral traits significantly influence purchase intention, while price sensitivity weakens this positive relationship. These findings suggest that successful social commerce strategies should not only encourage consumer engagement but also carefully consider the economic characteristics of Cambodian consumers.

First, social commerce sellers should recognize that Phnom Penh consumers exhibit strong exploratory buying behavior. Young consumers in Cambodia are highly active on Facebook, TikTok, Telegram, and Instagram, where they spend considerable time browsing short videos, livestream shopping sessions, and influencer-generated content before making purchasing decisions. Rather than searching for products directly through traditional e-commerce websites, many consumers discover products through social interactions and entertainment-oriented content. Therefore, sellers should continuously introduce new products, produce creative short-form videos, conduct livestream demonstrations, and encourage real-time interaction with potential buyers. These marketing approaches can stimulate consumers' curiosity and strengthen purchase intention among individuals with stronger exploratory buying tendencies.

Second, the findings indicate that lifestyle compatibility plays an important role in shaping purchase intention. The rapid growth of smartphone usage and mobile internet in Phnom Penh has made social media an integral part of consumers' daily lives. Shopping is increasingly embedded within social networking, entertainment, and communication activities rather than being treated as a separate purchasing process. Consequently, sellers should integrate shopping experiences into consumers' everyday digital lifestyles by collaborating with local content creators, encouraging user-generated content, and maintaining active communication through messaging applications such as Telegram and Facebook Messenger. Building long-term customer relationships may be more effective than focusing solely on one-time sales promotions.

Third, reducing consumers' perceived risk remains essential. Many Cambodian consumers continue to purchase through individual online sellers rather than large, established e-commerce platforms. As a result, concerns regarding product quality, payment security, delivery reliability, and after-sales service remain common. Sellers should therefore improve transparency by providing accurate product descriptions, authentic customer reviews, clear pricing information, and responsive customer service.

Offering flexible payment methods, cash-on-delivery options where feasible, and clear return or exchange policies can further reduce uncertainty and strengthen consumers' confidence in purchasing through social commerce.

Most importantly, the significant moderating effect of price sensitivity suggests that pricing strategies are critical in the Cambodian social commerce environment. Although consumers may enjoy exploring new products and actively participate in digital shopping, highly price-sensitive consumers are less likely to translate these favorable behavioral characteristics into purchase intention when prices are perceived as unattractive. This finding reflects the competitive nature of Phnom Penh's social commerce market, where consumers can compare prices across numerous Facebook pages, TikTok Shop sellers, and Telegram stores within a short period. The relatively low switching costs among sellers enable consumers to move easily to competitors offering lower prices or better promotional packages.

Accordingly, social commerce sellers should avoid relying solely on attractive content or influencer marketing to generate sales. Instead, marketing strategies should combine engaging customer experiences with competitive pricing policies. Promotional activities such as limited-time discounts, free delivery, bundle offers, loyalty rewards, and exclusive livestream promotions may be particularly effective in encouraging purchase intention among price-sensitive consumers. Rather than engaging in excessive price competition that could reduce profitability, sellers should enhance consumers' perceptions of value by combining reasonable prices with reliable service quality, rapid delivery, and trustworthy customer support.

Finally, the findings imply that market segmentation based on consumer behavioral traits and price sensitivity may improve marketing effectiveness. Consumers exhibiting strong behavioral traits but relatively low price sensitivity may respond positively to premium products, exclusive collections, or personalized services. In contrast, consumers with high price sensitivity may respond more favorably to promotional pricing, discount campaigns, and value-for-money offerings. By tailoring marketing strategies to different consumer segments, social commerce sellers can allocate marketing resources more efficiently while improving customer satisfaction and long-term business performance.

Overall, the findings suggest that sustainable success in Phnom Penh's social commerce market depends on achieving a balance between stimulating consumers' behavioral motivations and satisfying their economic expectations. While interactive social media marketing encourages consumer engagement, competitive pricing and perceived value remain decisive factors in converting purchase intention into actual purchasing behavior.

5.2.2 Research Contributions

This study makes several important contributions to the existing literature on social commerce and consumer behavior.

First, the study extends the social commerce literature by shifting attention from technology-oriented determinants toward consumer-oriented behavioral characteristics. Previous research has primarily focused on factors such as trust, social support, platform quality, perceived usefulness, and technological acceptance. In contrast, the present study demonstrates that consumers' intrinsic behavioral tendencies also play a fundamental role in shaping purchase intention.

Second, this study contributes to consumer behavior research by conceptualizing Consumer Behavioral Traits as a higher-order construct consisting of exploratory buying behavior, lifestyle, and perceived risk. While previous studies have typically investigated these constructs independently, the present research provides empirical evidence that they collectively represent a broader psychological orientation influencing consumer purchase intention. This integrated conceptualization offers a more comprehensive explanation of consumer decision-making within social commerce.

Third, this study contributes methodologically by applying a hierarchical component model (higher-order construct) together with moderation analysis using PLS-SEM. The integration of a higher-order construct with a moderating variable provides a more sophisticated analytical framework for examining complex consumer behavior relationships and demonstrates the usefulness of advanced structural equation modeling techniques in social commerce research.

Fourth, the study contributes theoretically by drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior's conceptualization of behavioral intention and adopting Trait Theory to explain individual differences in purchase intention. Trait Theory explains why consumers differ in their behavioral responses. The combination of these theoretical perspectives provides a richer explanation of consumer purchase intention than relying on either theory independently.

Finally, this study contributes to the limited body of social commerce research conducted in emerging economies, particularly Cambodia. Most previous studies have focused on developed countries or larger Asian markets such as China, South Korea, and Malaysia. By examining Cambodian consumers, the present study provides empirical evidence from a rapidly developing

digital economy characterized by widespread social media usage, increasing smartphone adoption, and the dominance of informal social commerce. These findings enrich the geographical diversity of social commerce research and provide valuable insights for future comparative studies across southeast Asian countries.

5.3 Research Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged.

First, the study employed a cross-sectional research design in which data were collected at a single point in time. Although this design is appropriate for examining relationships among variables, it does not allow researchers to observe changes in consumer behavior over time. As social commerce platforms, digital technologies, and consumer preferences continue to evolve rapidly, future studies could adopt longitudinal research designs to examine how consumer behavioral traits and purchase intentions change across different stages of digital market development.

Second, the study focused exclusively on consumers residing in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Although Phnom Penh represents the country's largest commercial and digital marketplace, consumer behavior in other provinces may differ due to variations in income, internet accessibility, education levels, and digital infrastructure. Future studies should therefore include respondents from multiple regions across Cambodia to improve the generalizability of the findings.

Third, the present study examined only one higher-order construct and one moderating variable. Consumer purchase intention is a complex phenomenon that may also be influenced by additional factors such as trust, electronic word-of-mouth, social influence, perceived value, influencer credibility, digital payment convenience, or platform quality. Future research could incorporate these variables into more comprehensive research models to provide a broader understanding of social commerce behavior.

Fourth, this study relied exclusively on self-reported questionnaire data, which may be subject to common method bias and social desirability bias. Although established statistical procedures were employed to minimize these concerns, future studies could combine survey data with actual purchasing records, transaction histories, behavioral analytics, or experimental methods to obtain a more objective understanding of consumer behavior.

Finally, the present study focused on general social commerce platforms without distinguishing between different platform types. Consumer behavior may vary considerably across Facebook Marketplace, TikTok Shop, Instagram Shopping, Telegram-based commerce, and dedicated e-commerce platforms. Future research could conduct comparative analyses across different digital platforms or examine cross-country differences among ASEAN markets to determine whether consumer behavioral traits and price sensitivity operate similarly under different cultural, technological, and economic conditions.

Overall, addressing these limitations would not only strengthen the robustness of future research but also contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior in the rapidly evolving social commerce environment.

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