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PERCEIVED VALUE AND DIGITAL CONSUMPTION IN INSTAGRAM SOCIAL COMMERCE: EVIDENCE FROM INDONESIAN SMES

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates how information quality, convenience, and customization influence purchase intention within Instagram-based social commerce, while considering perceived value as an underlying mediating factor. This research addresses the limited evidence regarding how various platform attributes collectively shape consumers' decision-making processes. A total of 263 respondents from the Greater Jakarta area participated in the survey. All respondents had purchased customized cakes via Instagram within the past six months. A structured online survey was employed, and the hypothesized relationships were analyzed using the PLS-SEM approach. The findings suggest that Instagram-based SMEs should prioritize value creation strategies by improving information transparency, streamlining ordering and communication processes, and offering efficient customization options. From a policy perspective, digital SME support programs should emphasize capability development in content management, transaction efficiency, and personalization. These capabilities can strengthen SMEs' competitiveness in social commerce ecosystems. This study contributed to social commerce literature by demonstrating the mediating role of perceived value. Specifically, it explains how key platform attributes influence purchase intention in an emerging market SME context. Beyond managerial implications, this study highlights how Instagram-based social commerce reflects evolving digital consumption practices embedded within Indonesia's collectivist and visually oriented cultural environment.

KEYWORDS: Perceived Value, Social Commerce, Instagram, Customization, Purchase Intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The expansion of e-commerce in Southeast Asia has significantly transformed consumer purchasing patterns, positioning Indonesia as one of the fastest-growing digital markets in the region [1]. The market was estimated at USD 52 billion in 2023 and is projected to reach USD 82 billion by 2025. Indonesia's e-commerce sector continues to outpace regional averages, supported by internet penetration exceeding 77% of the population and the growing integration of social media into daily consumption practices [1], [2]. Platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and particularly Instagram have evolved into multifunctional environments in which product discovery, interaction, and purchasing converge within social commerce ecosystems [3]. Beyond its economic expansion, the rise of social commerce also reflects broader transformations in digital consumption culture. In visually mediated platforms such as Instagram, purchasing behavior is increasingly intertwined with symbolic representation, social validation, and identity expression, particularly within collectivistic societies such as Indonesia.

Instagram's visually oriented design and interactive features facilitate unique forms of consumer-brand engagement. These features include Stories, Reels, direct messaging, and user-generated content, which differ substantially from traditional e-commerce interfaces [4]. These interactive and visual characteristics enable consumers to explore products, communicate directly with sellers, and evaluate brand offerings within a socially embedded environment. As a result, these interactions shape value perceptions and influence purchase intention in social commerce contexts.

Within this environment, customized products, especially customized cakes, have experienced notable growth, reflecting broader shifts toward personalization, aesthetic appeal, and experiential consumption among younger digital-native consumers [5], [6]. Customization enhances not only functional utility but also symbolic and experiential value, increasing product relevance in visually driven and socially mediated purchasing contexts [6].

Despite this favorable market trajectory, many Instagram-based SMEs still struggle to convert high levels of online engagement into consistent purchase behavior [7]. Prior research has identified information quality, convenience, and customization as important determinants of online consumer evaluation [8], [9], [10]. However, these attributes are

frequently examined in isolation. This approach provides limited understanding of how multiple platform cues are cognitively integrated in social commerce environments where informational, experiential, and interactive elements are processed simultaneously [11]. A pertinent theoretical constraint pertains to the mechanisms by which platform attributes convert into behavioral intention. Although perceived value is widely recognized as a central determinant of consumer evaluation [11], its role as an explanatory mechanism in social commerce remains underexplored, particularly in emerging markets where SMEs rely heavily on digitally mediated interactions [12]. Existing studies tend to emphasize technological or transactional factors, with comparatively less attention given to value-based assessments that integrate perceived benefits such as personalization, convenience, and information clarity against perceived sacrifices, including time, effort, and risk [11].

These limitations are especially salient in the Indonesian context. As a collectivistic market characterized by strong reliance on peer validation and user-generated content, Indonesian consumers often evaluate online sellers through socially embedded and visually mediated cues rather than isolated functional attributes [11], [13]. On visually dominant platforms such as Instagram, aesthetic presentation, informal interaction, and personalization play a central role in shaping consumer judgments, particularly within the SME-dominated and largely informal digital ecosystem typical of emerging Asian markets. Under such conditions, purchase decisions are more likely to be driven by holistic value assessments than by discrete platform features.

In addition to these empirical and theoretical observations, a bibliometric approach was employed to further substantiate the relevance and positioning of the present study. Using VOSviewer, a bibliometric visualization was conducted on indexed scientific publications addressing the keyword "purchase intention" during the 2021–2025 period. The resulting mapping illustrates the broader intellectual structure of recent research on digital consumer behavior and social commerce. As shown in Figure 1.1, constructs such as information quality, convenience, customization, and perceived value appear across multiple research clusters related to consumer behavior and digital marketing [14].

However, the visualization also indicates that these variables are rarely examined simultaneously within a single, integrated conceptual model. Instead, the dominant clusters surrounding purchase

analysis focuses on value-creation mechanisms most salient in visually driven and customization-intensive Instagram-based SME contexts. These attributes enhance clarity, efficiency, and personal relevance, thereby strengthening perceived value when benefits outweigh expected costs.

Social commerce further reinforces these dynamics by integrating social interaction, user-generated content, and community participation into digital shopping environments [16], [17]. Reviews, recommendations, and peer communication facilitate value co-creation and reduce perceived risk, strengthening trust and engagement, particularly in collectivistic Asian markets with high social media penetration [13], [18], [19]. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Shopee Live enable real-time interaction and visually rich experiences that support more confident purchase decisions [12].

Within these environments, information quality improves decision confidence through accuracy and relevance [8], convenience reduces time and effort costs [9], and customization enhances experiential relevance and engagement [7]. Together, these attributes shape perceived value, defined as the overall assessment of benefits relative to sacrifices [20]. Prior research consistently shows that perceived value is a central predictor of purchase intention, serving as the primary mechanism through which platform attributes influence consumer behavior in social commerce contexts [7], [21].

2.1 Hypothesis Development

In social commerce settings, perceived value arises from consumers' comprehensive evaluation of the benefits gained in relation to the sacrifices made during online transactions. One of the most influential benefit-oriented attributes is information quality, which refers to the accuracy, clarity, and completeness of product-related information provided by sellers. High-quality information reduces uncertainty and strengthens consumers' confidence in decision-making processes [8].

On visually driven platforms such as Instagram, rich information conveyed through detailed product descriptions, visual proofs, and peer-generated content enhances credibility and facilitates effective product evaluation. Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that trustworthy and comprehensive information significantly increases perceived value in digital purchasing contexts [10], [15]. As information becomes more reliable and actionable, consumers experience reduced cognitive burden, which leads to higher evaluations of value. Within digitally embedded cultural environments, platform

attributes function not merely as technical features but as carriers of symbolic and social meaning.

H1: Information quality positively influences perceived value.

Convenience contributes to perceived value by minimizing the time, effort, and complexity associated with online transactions. In digital shopping environments, features that enable efficient navigation, rapid communication, and seamless purchasing processes reduce perceived sacrifices and enhance consumers' overall shopping experience [9]. In social commerce contexts such as Instagram, where consumers often engage in interactive communication with sellers, particularly for customized or made-to-order products, convenience becomes a critical factor. Prior research confirms that convenience positively influences perceived value by lowering transactional friction and increasing satisfaction within digital shopping environments [14], [22].

H2: Convenience positively influences perceived value.

Customization represents another important source of perceived benefit by allowing sellers to tailor products and services according to consumers' individual preferences. Personalized offerings enhance emotional engagement, perceived uniqueness, and the relevance of products, especially in creative categories such as customized cakes and personalized goods [7]. Through customization, consumers perceive greater symbolic and experiential value, as products are seen as more closely aligned with their identity and expectations. Empirical evidence suggests that AI-powered personalization significantly enhances consumer trust and evaluative judgments, particularly among Gen Z consumers who prioritize identity-aligned digital experiences [12], [23].

H3: Customization positively influences perceived value.

Perceived value is defined as consumers' overall assessment of the utility gained from a product relative to the costs associated with acquiring it [20]. When consumers judge that the benefits of a product or service outweigh the sacrifices involved, they experience greater confidence and motivation to purchase. Numerous empirical studies in digital commerce consistently indicate that perceived value plays a significant role in shaping consumers' intention to purchase, illustrating its central role in shaping consumer behavior across online platforms [9], [10]. As such, higher perceived value is expected to increase consumers' willingness to engage in future transactions.

H4: Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.

Experiential attributes embedded within social commerce, such as high-quality information, transactional convenience, and personalized offerings, shape consumers' judgments by influencing the perceived benefits and costs of online purchasing. Perceived value operates as a central psychological mechanism that translates these platform characteristics into behavioral responses. Research in digital consumption consistently demonstrates that perceived value mediates the relationship between platform attributes and purchase-related outcomes, reflecting its integrative

role in consumers' evaluative processes [15], [24]. When consumers perceive that platform benefits meaningfully outweigh sacrifices, perceived value strengthens and subsequently increases purchase intention. Therefore, perceived value is expected to mediate the effects of information quality, convenience, and customization on purchase intention.

H5: Perceived value mediates the relationship between information quality and purchase intention.

H6: Perceived value mediates the relationship between convenience and purchase intention.

H7: Perceived value mediates the relationship between customization and purchase intention.

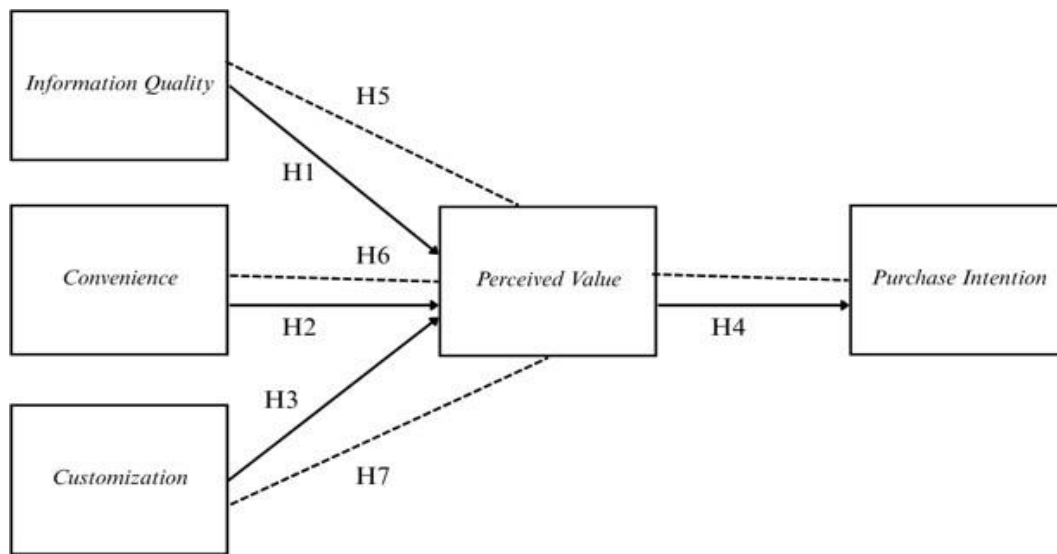


Figure 2. Research model.

The proposed research model conceptualizes information quality, convenience, and customization as key experiential attributes of social commerce platforms that function as antecedents shaping consumers' perceived value. Perceived value is positioned as the central evaluative mechanism through which these platform characteristics exert their influence on behavioral outcomes, consistent with value-based perspectives that emphasize consumers' assessment of benefits relative to sacrifices [20]. Supported by extensive empirical findings demonstrating the importance of platform attributes and value perceptions in online purchasing behavior [7], [8], [9], [10], the model incorporates both direct and indirect effects by proposing that perceived value mediates the relationships between information quality, convenience, and customization and purchase intention. This conceptual structure provides a coherent foundation for the hypotheses advanced in this study and is illustrated in Figure 2.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The measurement instruments used in this study were adapted from previously validated scales grounded in established theoretical frameworks [7], [8], [9], [10], [20], [21]. All items were adjusted to ensure conceptual alignment with the Indonesian social commerce context. Content validity was enhanced through expert review by three academics specializing in digital marketing and consumer behavior, resulting in minor refinements for improved clarity and contextual suitability.

A pilot test with 63 participants was conducted to examine the clarity, reliability, and adequacy of the items. This number exceeded the recommended sample size for pilot testing [25], [26]. The results indicated strong psychometric properties, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.898 to 0.946 and AVE values between 0.738 and 0.822, meeting established thresholds for internal consistency and convergent validity [27], [28], [29].

Data for the main study were collected through a structured online questionnaire distributed via

Instagram and WhatsApp using Google Forms. All constructs were assessed using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The study applied a purposive sampling technique categorized as non-probability sampling, targeting respondents residing in the Greater Jakarta area who had purchased customized cakes via Instagram within the previous six months. Of the 285 responses collected, 22 incomplete responses were excluded, resulting in 263 valid cases for analysis. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0, including assessments of reliability, validity, and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping.

4. RESULT

A total of 263 valid online survey responses were used for the empirical analysis. As summarized in Table 1, 31.8% of respondents were male and 68.2% were female, indicating the predominance of female consumers in Instagram-based customized cake purchases. The sample was largely concentrated in younger age groups: 20.1% were under 20 years old, 59.0% were aged 20–34, 19.8% were aged 35–49, and only 1.1% were above 49. This distribution reflects a consumer base dominated by digitally active young adults.

In terms of education, 41.8% of respondents had completed elementary to senior high school, 0.8% had a diploma, 54.8% had a bachelor's degree, and 2.6% had a master's degree. In terms of occupation, students represented 41.8% of the sample, followed by private-sector employees (40.3%), government employees (12.5%), and others (5.4%). Monthly income distribution shows that 52.9% of respondents earned more than USD 350, while 39.9% earned between USD 70 and USD 210, with only a small proportion earning below USD 70 or between USD 210 and USD 350. Overall, the sample is characterized by young, educated, and economically active consumers, a demographic profile consistent with high engagement levels in social commerce platforms.

Table 1: Characteristics of respondents.

Class	n	%
Gender		
Male	84	31.8
Female	179	68.2
Age		
< 20 years old	53	20.1
20–34 years old	155	59.0
35–49 years old	52	19.8
> 49 years old	3	1.1
Education Level		

Elementary/Junior/Senior High School	110	41.8
Diploma (D3)	2	0.8
Bachelor's Degree (D4/S1)	144	54.8
Master's Degree (S2)	7	2.6
Occupation		
Student	110	41.8
Private Employee	106	40.3
Government Employee	33	12.5
Others	14	5.4
Monthly Income		
≤ USD 67	5	1.9
USD 67 – USD 200	105	39.9
USD 200 – USD 333	14	5.3
> USD 333	139	52.9

4.1. Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The evaluation of the measurement model was conducted to establish the reliability and validity of all latent constructs before testing the structural relationships. Following recommendations from Hair et al. (2021), the analysis assessed indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Figure 3 illustrates the outer model, showing that all standardized loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that each indicator contributes meaningfully to its corresponding latent construct.

As presented in Table 2, the measurement model shows satisfactory psychometric performance. All constructs demonstrated composite reliability values above 0.875, indicating strong internal consistency [28], [29]. Cronbach's alpha values ranged between 0.809 and 0.887, further supporting the reliability of the constructs. Additionally, the AVE values exceeded the 0.50 threshold for all constructs, confirming convergent validity by indicating that more than 50% of the variance in the indicators is explained by their respective latent constructs [30].

4.2. Structural Model (Inner Model)

After establishing the reliability and validity of the measurement model, the structural model was assessed to evaluate the hypothesized relationships among constructs. The explanatory power of the model is demonstrated by the R² values of the endogenous constructs. Perceived value (PRV) achieved an R² of 0.780, indicating that information quality, convenience, and customization collectively explain 78% of its variance, a substantial level of predictive accuracy [31]. Meanwhile, purchase intention (PCI) recorded an R² of 0.694, suggesting that perceived value explains almost 70% of the

variance in consumer intention to purchase customized products via social commerce platforms.

Effect size (f^2) analysis further contributed to the evaluation of model relevance. The f^2 values for information quality (0.144), convenience (0.113), and customization (0.106) on perceived value indicate small-to-medium effect sizes [32], suggesting that each antecedent contributes meaningfully to consumers' value perceptions. Perceived value

demonstrated a large effect ($f^2 = 2.266$) on purchase intention, reflecting its central theoretical role within the Value-Based Adoption Model (VAM). These results support the robust explanatory capability of the structural model and align with prior research emphasizing perceived value as a key driver of consumer behavior in digital commerce environments.

Table 2: Assessment of Measurement Model.

Construct		Indicator	M	SD	Factor loading
Information Quality	INQ1	The product information is accurate and reliable	4.285	0.938	0.796
	INQ2	The product information is clear and easy to understand	4.087	0.969	0.801
	INQ3	The product information is up-to-date	3.954	0.997	0.750
	INQ4	The product information is relevant to my needs	4.004	1.091	0.840
	Composite Reliability = 0.875, AVE = 0.636, and Cronbach's Alpha = 0.809				
Convenience	CNV1	The platform is easy to access anytime and anywhere	4.133	1.014	0.821
	CNV2	The purchasing process is simple and fast	4.148	0.938	0.759
	CNV3	Navigation and checkout process are efficient	4.163	0.979	0.781
	CNV4	The platform interface is easy to use	4.122	0.955	0.724
	CNV5	Payment methods are practical and diverse	4.251	1.067	0.869
	Composite Reliability = 0.894, AVE = 0.628, and Cronbach's Alpha = 0.851				
Customization	CMT1	The product can be customized according to my preferences	4.084	0.998	0.807
	CMT2	I can request personalized designs or features	4.186	1.005	0.817
	CMT3	The seller responds to customization requests	4.190	0.960	0.765
	CMT4	Customization options make the product more attractive	4.076	1.062	0.819
	CMT5	I feel that customized products reflect my personality	4.183	0.970	0.818
	Composite Reliability = 0.902, AVE = 0.649, and Cronbach's Alpha = 0.864				
Perceived Value	PRV1	The product provides good value for the price	4.061	0.996	0.826
	PRV2	Purchasing from this store is worth the cost	3.973	1.030	0.813

	PRV3	I feel that the product quality matches the price paid	4.160	0.989	0.809
	PRV4	Overall, the purchase gives me positive value	4.137	1.052	0.855
	PRV5	I believe this purchase provides greater benefit than alternatives	4.285	0.938	0.848
	Composite Reliability = 0.917, AVE = 0.690, and Cronbach's Alpha = 0.887				
Purchase Intention	PCI1	I intend to purchase products from this store in the future	4.011	1.011	0.741
	PCI2	I am likely to recommend this store to others	4.015	0.967	0.767
	PCI3	I will consider this store as my first choice	4.023	1.035	0.804
	PCI4	I am willing to repurchase products from this store	4.175	1.002	0.850
	PCI5	I will continue purchasing due to satisfaction	4.084	0.967	0.788
Composite Reliability = 0.893, AVE = 0.625, and Cronbach's Alpha = 0.850					

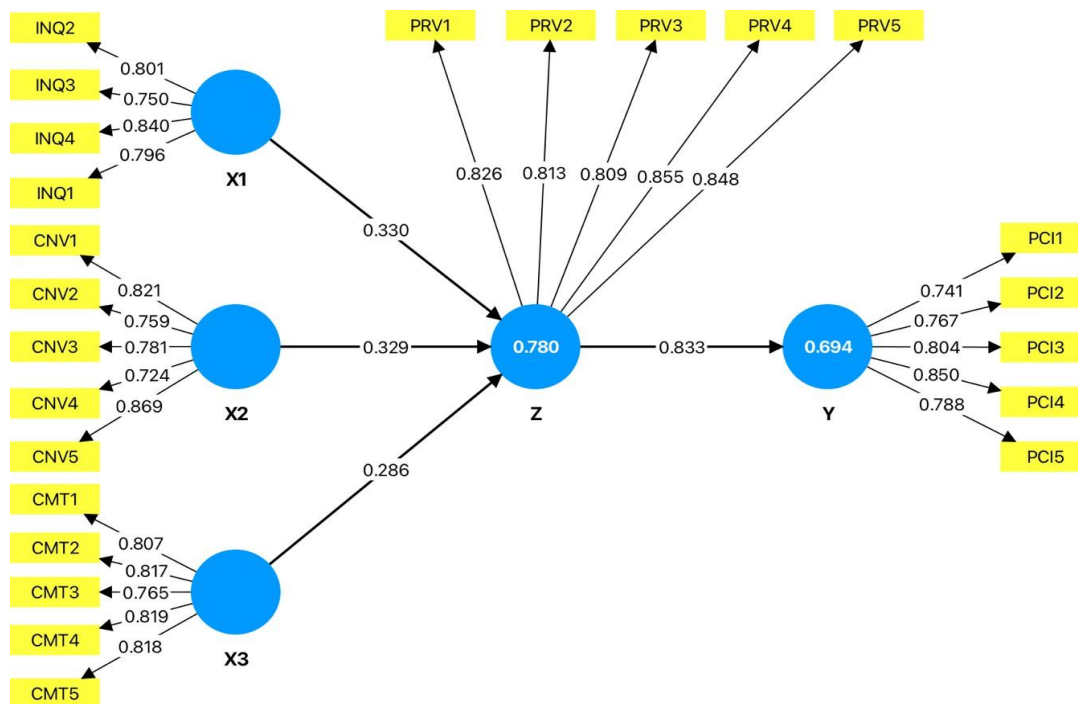


Figure 3. Structural model results.

Table 3: Discrimination validity verification results

Variable	INQ	CNV	CMT	PRV	PCI
INQ	0.798				
CNV	0.792	0.826			

CMT	0.805	0.829	0.805		
PRV	0.823	0.838	0.815	0.830	
PCI	0.791	0.795	0.823	0.833	0.791

Discriminant validity was examined using the heterotrait monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). As shown in Table 3, all HTMT values remained below the conservative threshold of 0.85 [33], demonstrating that each construct is empirically distinct. This result reinforces the conceptual clarity of the constructs: information quality, convenience, customization, perceived value, and purchase intention within the social commerce context. To ensure that multicollinearity did not threaten the estimation of the structural paths, inner VIF values were assessed (Table 4). All VIF values ranged between 1.000 and 4.356, well below the maximum threshold of 5.0 recommended by Hair et al. (2021), indicating the absence of collinearity concerns and supporting the stability of the regression estimates.

Furthermore, predictive relevance was examined using the Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CVPAT). Table 5 shows that the PLS-SEM model yielded lower prediction loss compared to the indicator-average benchmark and demonstrated comparable predictive performance relative to linear regression, supporting its appropriateness for prediction-oriented modeling [34]. These findings collectively confirm that the measurement model meets the necessary standards of reliability and validity to proceed with structural model evaluation.

Table 4: Inner variance inflation factor.

Construct	VIF
Information Quality → Perceived Value	3.437
Convenience → Perceived Value	4.356
Customization → Perceived Value	3.494
Perceived Value → Purchase Intention	1.000

The predictive performance of the structural model was further evaluated using the Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CVPAT), which assesses whether the PLS-SEM model generates significantly better out-of-sample predictions compared to benchmark models, namely the indicator average (IA) and the linear model (LM). As shown in Table 5, Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CVPAT), the results indicate that for both endogenous variables, Purchase Intention (Y) and Perceived Value (Z), the PLS loss values are substantially lower than the IA loss values (Y: 0.561 vs. 1.002; Z: 0.478 vs. 1.011).

The negative average loss differences (Y: -0.441; Z: -0.533), accompanied by p-values of 0.000, demonstrate that the PLS-SEM model significantly reduces prediction error relative to the IA

benchmark. These findings suggest that the model captures meaningful variance that cannot be replicated by simple indicator averaging, thereby exhibiting strong predictive capability. In contrast, when the PLS-SEM model is compared with the LM benchmark, the predictive improvement becomes marginal. The PLS loss values are only slightly lower than the LM loss values, with average loss differences approaching zero (Y: -0.000; Z: -0.014), and the associated p-values (0.984 for Y; 0.109 for Z) exceed the 0.05 threshold, indicating that the differences are not statistically significant.

This outcome implies that although PLS-SEM performs marginally better in numerical terms, the improvement is negligible and almost indistinguishable from the predictive accuracy of a traditional linear model, a result consistent with prior findings where both approaches capture similar linear patterns in the data. Overall, the average loss difference between PLS and IA (-0.487, $p = 0.000$) confirms that the PLS-SEM model offers superior predictive performance compared with simplistic aggregation-based benchmarks. In contrast, the comparison with LM (-0.007, $p = 0.332$) indicates comparable performance between the two modeling approaches. Taken together, these findings provide strong evidence that the proposed PLS-SEM model demonstrates robust predictive validity, particularly when evaluated against naïve predictive strategies, thereby reinforcing its suitability for explaining and forecasting both Perceived Value and Purchase Intention in the Instagram-based customized cake business context.

Table 5: Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CVPAT).

Constructs	PLS-SEM vs. Indicator average (IA)				PLS-SEM vs. Linear model (LM)			
	PLS loss	IA loss	Average loss difference	P-value	PLS loss	LM loss	Average loss difference	P-value
Purchase Intention	0.561	1.002	-0.441	0.000	0.561	0.561	-0.000	0.984
Perceived Value	0.478	1.011	-0.533	0.000	0.478	0.492	-0.014	0.109
Overall	0.519	1.007	-0.487	0.000	0.519	0.526	-0.007	0.332

Table 6 summarizes the results of the direct effect hypotheses. The bootstrapping procedure using 10,000 subsamples revealed that information quality ($\beta = 0.330$, $p < 0.001$), convenience ($\beta = 0.329$, $p < 0.001$), and customization ($\beta = 0.286$, $p < 0.001$) all exert significant positive effects on perceived value. These findings support the assertion that functional,

informational, and experiential platform attributes elevate consumers' evaluative judgments within social commerce [7], [8].

Perceived value also demonstrated a strong and significant influence on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.833$, $p < 0.001$), corroborating prior literature that identifies value perceptions as a decisive factor in consumers' willingness to engage in online purchasing [9], [20]. Taken together, the direct effect results support all four hypotheses (H1- H4), affirming the theoretical structure of the extended Value-Based Adoption Model within the context of customized product purchases via Instagram-based social commerce.

Table 6: Direct effects (hypothesis testing).

Hypotheses	Std. β	t-value	p-value	CI 2.5%	CI 97.5%	Result	f ²
H1: Information Quality → Perceived Value	0.330	4.665	0.000	0.195	0.468	Supported	0.144
H2: Convenience → Perceived Value	0.329	4.344	0.000	0.178	0.474	Supported	0.113
H3: Customization → Perceived Value	0.286	4.090	0.000	0.142	0.417	Supported	0.106
H4: Perceived Value → Purchase Intention	0.833	23.542	0.000	0.751	0.888	Supported	2.266

To examine whether perceived value functions as a mediating mechanism, indirect effects were tested via bootstrapping. As shown in Table 7, all indirect effects were significant at $p < 0.001$. Given that the model specifies only indirect paths from platform attributes to purchase intention through perceived value, the results indicate that consumers' purchase intention is shaped primarily via value evaluations rather than directly by platform attributes. These results strengthen the theoretical argument that perceived value is the principal mechanism through which social commerce attributes influence consumer decision-making, reinforcing its importance in digital marketing strategy and customer experience design.

Table 7: Mediation (specific indirect effects).

Hypotheses	Indirect coeff (β)	t-value	p-value	Mediation result
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H5: Information Quality → Perceived Value → Purchase Intention	0.275	4.570	0.000	Indirect-only mediation (no direct paths specified in the model)
H6: Convenience → Perceived Value → Purchase Intention	0.274	4.205	0.000	Indirect-only mediation (no direct paths specified in the model)
H7: Customization → Perceived Value → Purchase Intention	0.238	3.993	0.000	Indirect-only mediation (no direct paths specified in the model)

Overall, the findings offer substantial empirical evidence supporting the proposed conceptual model. The measurement model satisfied all criteria for reliability and validity, while the structural model demonstrated substantial explanatory and predictive power. The combined direct and indirect effects highlight the central role of perceived value in shaping consumer purchase intention, consistent with theoretical expectations in VAM and prior research.

4.3. Discussion

This study demonstrates that information quality, convenience, and customization are positively associated with consumers' perceived value in social commerce environments, consistent with the Value-Based Adoption Model (VAM), which posits that behavioral intention is shaped by evaluations of benefits relative to perceived costs. In Instagram-based commerce, consumers rely primarily on value assessments when deciding whether to purchase customized products. High-quality information reduces uncertainty and supports more accurate evaluations, which is particularly important in online contexts where direct product inspection is not possible [8], [10], [14], [22], [23].

Convenience further enhances perceived value by reducing transaction effort through efficient ordering procedures and smooth interactions, thereby improving the overall shopping experience [9]. This aspect is especially relevant for customized products, as simplified processes help offset the additional effort associated with personalization. Customization also strengthens perceived value by

increasing personal relevance and emotional attachment, which enhances consumers' evaluative judgments and satisfaction [7], [10], [35].

The findings further indicate that perceived value serves as the primary mechanism through which information quality, convenience, and customization influence purchase intention. As the model specifies only indirect paths, purchase decisions appear to be driven mainly by value-based evaluations rather than direct responses to platform attributes. Overall, the results suggest that these platform attributes operate jointly, shaping consumers' holistic value perceptions and increasing the attractiveness of social commerce offerings in visually driven and personalization-oriented digital marketplaces [23], [36], [37]. These findings suggest that consumer decision-making in Instagram-based commerce cannot be fully separated from its cultural context. Value perceptions are shaped not only by functional evaluations but also by socially embedded expectations, visual symbolism, and personalization norms that characterize contemporary digital culture.

These findings also need to be interpreted within the Indonesian cultural context. Indonesia is generally characterized as a collectivistic society, where social relationships, community influence, and shared opinions play a significant role in shaping consumer decision-making. In such contexts, consumers tend to rely not only on functional product attributes but also on social cues and perceived relational value when evaluating online offerings. Social commerce platforms such as Instagram facilitate these culturally embedded interactions by enabling visual storytelling, peer engagement, and social validation through comments, likes, and recommendations.

Consequently, the perceived value generated from information quality, convenience, and customization may be amplified in collectivistic environments where social endorsement and community-driven consumption patterns are particularly influential. Furthermore, Indonesian consumers are known to respond strongly to visually appealing and personalized content in digital marketplaces, making Instagram an especially suitable platform for customized products such as cakes and other creative goods. This cultural alignment between visual social media environments and consumer preferences may further strengthen the role of perceived value in shaping purchase intention in Instagram-based social commerce settings.

5. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

This study finds that information quality, convenience, and customization influence purchase intention in Instagram-based social commerce primarily through consumers' perceived value evaluations. Rather than exerting direct effects, these platform attributes contribute to purchase intention by shaping how consumers assess the overall value of customized offerings. This finding suggests that consumer responses are guided by evaluative judgments rather than by platform features in isolation.

From a theoretical perspective, the results highlight the importance of perceived value as an explanatory mechanism linking social commerce attributes to behavioral intention. By applying a benefits-focused extension of the Value-Based Adoption Model (VAM), this study shows that value-based assessments provide a useful lens for understanding consumer decision-making in visually oriented and customization-intensive contexts. The findings also indicate that models focusing solely on direct attribute-intention relationships may offer an incomplete account of consumer behavior in social commerce environments.

From a managerial perspective, the results suggest that SMEs operating on Instagram should focus on strengthening consumers' value perceptions rather than emphasizing platform features independently. Providing clear and credible product information, simplifying ordering and communication processes, and offering manageable customization options can collectively enhance perceived value and support purchase intention. These implications are particularly relevant for resource-constrained SMEs seeking to improve conversion outcomes in competitive digital marketplaces. Overall, this study contributes to understanding how digitally mediated consumption practices reflect broader cultural transformations in emerging markets. Instagram-based social commerce represents not only a technological innovation but also a cultural shift in how value, identity, and social interaction are constructed within online environments.

These findings highlight the importance of considering cultural context when examining consumer behavior in social commerce environments, particularly in emerging digital markets such as Indonesia.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions to digital consumer

behavior and perceived value literature, this study has several limitations. First, the use of purposive sampling restricts the generalizability of the findings. Although this approach ensures respondents' experiential relevance in social commerce contexts [38], non-probability sampling limits the extent to which the observed relationships can be interpreted as universally applicable psychological processes. Future studies employing probability-based or mixed sampling methods could enhance theoretical generalization and cross-demographic comparison.

Second, the study focuses on a single SME within a specific geographic and cultural context. As perceived value is influenced by cultural norms, social expectations, and technology readiness, findings from one context may not fully capture variations across different socio-cultural settings. Expanding research across diverse markets would allow examination of whether the identified relationships reflect context-specific or more

generalizable mechanisms.

Third, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to capture temporal changes in perceived value and purchase intention. Value perceptions are dynamic and may evolve with experience and platform changes; thus, longitudinal studies could provide deeper insight into how these relationships develop over time.

Additionally, the model excludes other theoretically relevant constructs such as trust, perceived risk, eWOM, and social influence, which may oversimplify value-formation processes. Future research should integrate these factors to develop more comprehensive models of digital consumer behavior. Finally, the absence of experimental or quasi-experimental designs constrains causal inference. Employing experimental or longitudinal approaches would strengthen confidence in the proposed causal mechanisms.

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