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## THE DARK SIDE OF ONLINE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study uses the stimulus-organism-response approach to explore online consumer attitudes and behaviors that are detrimental to themselves and sellers. A causal framework capable of explaining these behaviors was developed using content analysis of memes. Furthermore, screenshots were circulated online to the Indonesian public to capture these dark attitudes and behaviors. The result showed that three attitudes influence consumer behavior, which also harms them, namely preference for endorsers, overconsumption, and distance sensitivity. Furthermore, consumer behavior detrimental to sellers has roots in six attitudes, namely skepticism, over expectation, unexpected demand, generation gap, spam awareness, and misperception. These findings suggest that both sellers and consumers need to modify their behavior to produce online transactions beneficial to both parties in a sustainable manner.

### INTRODUCTION

The internet, which is a global system of interconnected computer network, first existed in 1969 in the United States as a means of sharing information between four universities, namely the University of California at Los Angeles, University of California at Santa Barbara, University of Utah, and Stanford Research Institute (Juwenie, Miru, Sumardi, & Paserangi, 2016). Initially, the internet was considered as a means of obtaining public information and was prohibited for commercialization. However, its use as a trading location has been in existence since its usage was commercialized in the early 1990s (Olah et al., 2019). The commercial use of the internet started in 1991 after the National Science Foundation lifted a ban on internet use for business purposes, which led to the opening of several online shops. In 1995, the two oldest online marketplaces, Amazon, and eBay were founded and are still doing business today (Hussung, 2016).

Similar to the real world, trading in cyberspace also leads to consumer behaviors. The stampede threat, which is the dark side (Kristofferson, McFerran, Morales, & Dahl, 2017), cannot be found online, despite its ability to promote consumption (Frick, Matthies, Thogersen, & Santarius, 2020) and

behavior change (Zolfagharian & Yazdanparast, 2017). According to Moschis (2017), materialism and compulsive buying also tend to occur more or less online.

However, irrespective of the increase in online businesses, there are limited studies on the dark side of online consumer behavior (Thaichon, Cheah, & Ting, 2020). This is unfortunate, considering that online trading has existed for almost 30 years (Ipek, 2020). Therefore, it is imperative to determine various forms of consumer behavior that are detrimental to both companies and consumers in the context of online trading. Some of these behaviors have been relatively identified, such as the spread of hoaxes (Talwar, Dhir, Kaur, Zafar, & Alrasheedy, 2019) and deviant co-creation content (Gatzweiler, Blazevic, & Piller, 2017).

This study aims to review online consumer behavior in the e-commerce marketplace (MECC - marketplace e-commerce companies) and social media in Indonesia by highlighting consumers' dark sides. The e-commerce marketplace in Indonesia is an interesting location to be researched due to its rapid development, especially in the Covid-19 pandemic context. In Indonesia, the e-commerce sector emerged after Sanur founded the first online bookstore in 1996 (Juwenie et al., 2016). Several studies illustrate that this economic sector experienced significant growth after the economic crisis from 1997-1998, starting with minorities familiar with this technology.

Over the years, this sector has continuously increased with the establishment of MECCs such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Lazada, Blibli, JD.ID, Orami, Bhinneka, etc, as shown in Table 1. As of 2019, five of the 10 most visited and successful sites were local MECCs. The most successful ones are those in the general section, while those in specific niches do not get many active visits. Therefore, the diversity of product content is the most commonly used strategy to increase MECC users' activity in Indonesia.

Table 1: Monthly Web Visitors of the Ten Largest MECCs in Indonesia 2020 for the fourth quarter of 2018 and the second quarter of 2020

| MECC         | Q4 2018     | Q2 2020    |
|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Shopee       | 67,677,900  | 93,440,300 |
| Tokopedia    | 168,000,000 | 86,103,300 |
| Bukalapak    | 116,000,000 | 35,238,100 |
| Lazada       | 58,288,400  | 22,021,800 |
| Blibli       | 43,097,200  | 18,307,500 |
| Jd.Id        | 16,978,200  | 9,301,000  |
| Orami        | 2,061,900   | 4,176,300  |
| Bhinneka     | 2,310,500   | 3,804,800  |
| Zalora       | 5,518,600   | 2,334,400  |
| Mataharimall | 2,071,000   | 2,197,200  |

Source: IPrice (2020)

Tokopedia, one of the largest local MECCs in Indonesia, stated that there was an increase of one million merchants from February to May 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, with a 2.5-fold increase in orders during the same period (CNN Indonesia, 2020). This has increased the number of merchants selling on Tokopedia from 7.3 million to 8.3 million people. Tokopedia was founded in 2009 and reached 7.3 million sellers in 2019, which means that the company is getting an additional 55 thousand sellers per month. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic, it increased by 250 thousand sellers per month with a percentage rise of 452%.

The increase is generally experienced in various categories, such as children's toys (638%), pet food (503%), mothers, and babies (311%) (Yunarko, 2020). It is also important to compete between MECCs, therefore, there is always a change in the first position mostly used every quarter (SimilarWeb, IPrice, & App Annie, 2019).

In 2019, the Indonesian internet's economic value was valued at \$40 billion, and it is estimated to reach \$130 Billion by 2025 (Google, 2019). As a decision-making tool, the Google search engine records buyers of expensive products like cars at a total of 83%, while 53% use YouTube (Google, 2019). Another dominant search is hair care and comfort products, which increased by 1.5 times (Google, 2019; Abbas et al., 2020). Google also found that 88% of all buyers initiate a purchase online, while 71% of smartphone buyers search for new models and high-performance technology features.

Google claims that online-based payments (e-money) are rapidly adopted by consumers in Indonesia, with a five times growth per year and a total value of \$22 billion in 2019 (Google, 2019). This is supported by convenience (simple, easy to use, and can be used at any time), practical (fast without the need to queue), and promotions (discounts, rewards, and cashback) (Google, 2019). However, the significance of consumer behavior in making payment is still very traditional, with the majority marked by transfers, COD (cash on delivery), and minimarket outlets (Warta Ekonomi, 2019; Abbasi et al., 2020; Ahmad et al., 2018). This research attempts to reveal other unidentified patterns of behavior among Indonesian online consumers, focusing on negative or detrimental behavior to consumers or sellers.

## Theory

The theoretical background of online consumer behavior in Indonesia is based on two literatures, namely (a) collectivistic-individualistic culture theory and (b) stimulus-organism-response theory. The following is an explanation of the relationship between these two theories.

### Online Consumer Behavior in Collectivistic Culture

Research on online consumer behavior has been extensively carried out (Hwang & Jeong, 2016), which generally showed that it is influenced by cognitive factors, such as informativeness, information content effectiveness, and consumer emotional factors (Richard & Chebat, 2016; Arshad et al., 2020; Ashraf et al., 2020). Hwang and Jeong (2016) stated that demographic factors are perceived convenience, usefulness, convenience, attitudes toward use, intention to use, sociability, computer skills, purchase satisfaction, usability expectations, time availability, risk perception, purchasing attitudes, reputation, frequent use of internet, regular purchase of internet products, shopping enjoyment, attitudes towards computers, previous experience with catalog and TV shopping, lifestyle, discretionary time, privacy perception, personal innovativeness, product knowledge, belief in decision making, customer service, price, IT education, and fitness.

Contextual factors such as the evolution of information technology that determines online environment also affect consumers' behavior (Martinez-Ruiz & Moser, 2019). Hwang and Jeong (2016) stated that the environmental factors that play a role in consumers' behavior are internet use by family members, social disorders, social norms, product types, vendor types and qualities, packaging types, guarantees, news pieces, trust mechanisms (testimonials, size, reputation), subjective norms, network speed, the influence of external media, interpersonal influence, and external network. Regarding compulsive buying behavior, the contextual factors that influence online consumer behavior are

novelty offers, discount sizes, the total number of products sold, quantity, and transaction time limits (Kukar-Kinney, Scheinbaum, & Schaeffers, 2016).

Furthermore, consumers tend to form negative behaviors due to cognitive and emotional factors, which are generally associated with the seller and buyer. This negative behavior appears as a manifestation of a buyer's cognitive and emotional aspects. Furthermore, Omar, Zainol, Thye, Nordin, & Nazri (2017) stated that service dissatisfaction and unfavorable events trigger negative behavior in the form of complaints, anger, and berserk. Sellers' low ethical credibility also trigger negative events, such as boycotts, brand avoidance, and the spread of unfavorable news (Balaji, Khong, & Chong, 2016; Knittel, Beurer, & Berndt, 2016; Lavorata, 2014; Balakrishnan et al., 2019). The stronger the initial relationship between the consumers and sellers, the more powerful the negative reaction that occurs when there is any form of betrayal between them (Trump, 2014). Hawkins (2019) stated that consumers take revenge on the sellers by spreading negative word of mouth, boycotting, and stopping the act of buying products. Compulsive behavior is defined as consumer behavior with a negative effect on oneself. Furthermore, it is defined as consumers' tendency to buy excessively and repetitively due to lack of impulsive control over purchases (Kukar-Kinney et al., 2016).

However, there are differences in behavior based on consumers' original culture (Rhama, 2017; Richard & Habibi, 2016). According to Zendejdel, Paim, & Delafrooz (2016), culture is a set of beliefs, values, and behavior patterns that are shared by a community or group. The most commonly used cultural theoretical framework is Hofstede, which divides culture into five dimensions, namely individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity, and long-term orientation (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Jabarullah et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2019). However, among these cultural theoretical framework dimensions, individualism-collectivism is the most commonly studied (Xia et al., 2019).

Contextual factors play a significant role in societies with a collectivist culture. This contrasts with individualist societies that emphasize the individual's role, with implications for the importance of content rather than context. Individualists analyze themselves as autonomous, independent, unique, and careful sets of people, while collectivists see themselves as a dependent, responsible, emotional, and subject to social norms (Xia et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the collectivist society views social media and the internet as extensions of offline relationships, while the individualist society separates offline and online relationships (Izogo, Mpiganjira, & Ogba, 2020). The literature shows that there are different characteristics of online consumer behavior in collectivist and individualist countries, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Differences in consumer behavior in collectivistic and individualistic cultures

| <b>Collectivist</b>   | <b>Individualist</b>  |
|---|---|
| Context, group welfare, and causal reasoning are more important in decision making.   | Content, individual achievements, and analysis are more important in decision making.                                       |
| In the implicit meaning, group success is paramount, and relationship building is the goal of communication.                      | In explicit meaning, personal success is paramount, and information exchange is the goal of communication.                  |
| Consumers pay more attention to the context of online shopping, while low-relevance instructions for purchase are more important. | Consumers pay more attention to online shopping content, while high-relevance instructions for purchase are more important. |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Emotional expression is suppressed for group welfare.   | System exploration and emotional expression are appreciated. |
| Emotion plays less role in the online shopping process. | Emotion plays a big role in the online shopping process.     |
| More task-oriented in decision making.                  | More affection-oriented in decision making.                  |

Source: Richard and Habibi, 2016

Indonesia is a collectivist country, therefore there is the possibility of obtaining differing consumer behavior compared to developed countries, which are generally individualistic. Online consumers in Indonesia are more likely to emphasize trust before interaction occurs by building and maintaining it, providing implicit and hidden meanings in context, and emphasizing mutual welfare (Richard and Habibi, 2016).

### **Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory**

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory formulated by Jacoby (2002) proposes that several features from the environment (stimulus) can influence the internal processes of an individual (organism), which lead to attitudes and behaviors (responses) (Islam & Rahman, 2017). This theory can explain positive and negative consumer behavior, and it is commonly used in online consumer behavior research.

The latest version of Jacoby's (2002) theory stated that stimulus, organism, and response are not linearly related as a sequence. The relationship between these three components is bi-dimensional, with each component forming a circle that intersects with one another. This creates three intersections of two components and one intersection of three components simultaneously. A stimulus that is not related to the organism or response is referred to as the encountered environment, and when it is related, an automatic process field occurs. Meanwhile, when the stimulus is related to response, a field is created that describes the stimulus-response event without a trace. Finally, when stimulus, organism, and response overlap one another, consciousness arises, which means that they meet in an individual's consciousness. Other fields are the storehouse of experiences (organisms only), as well as internal (organisms-response), and external responses. The storehouse of experience is a field of organisms that do not intersect with response and stimulus, while an internal response is an intersection between organism and response, excluding stimulus. In addition, the external response is the field of response that does not intersect with stimulus and organism.

In the context of consumer behavior, stimulus influences the individual, with affective and cognitive states of organisms that intervene between stimuli and responses, which are consequences in the form of behavior (Kamboj, Sarmah, Gupta, & Dwivedi, 2018). In general, responses can be divided into two major groups, namely, approach and avoidance. According to Kim, Lee, & Jung (2019), approach responses include all positive behaviors, while avoidance is negative consumer behavior. The dark side of consumer behavior in this research is the avoidance response that creates an adverse stimulus between sellers and consumers.

### **Memes and Consumer Behavior**

Memes are individual bits of cultural information propagated from person to person while experiencing the variety, selection, and retention (Guadagno, Rempala, Murphy, & Okdie, 2013). The internet is an ideal platform for meme development because it spreads quickly, accurately, available, easily accessed, and uses the visual expression genre (Shifman, 2012, 2014). These features do

not only make the meme spread across different individuals, it also allows variations to develop rapidly according to individual contexts. Therefore, any theme can be raised by a meme, including consumer behavior.

The content generated by memes is known to trigger emotions in the form of activation or excitation, either positively or negatively, which increases its possibility of being shared online (Reichstein & Brusch, 2019). When negative emotions obtain the activating effect, such as fear, it drives the intention to share. This is different from negative emotions with a deactivating effect such as grief, which prevents sharing (Reichstein and Brusch, 2019).

This sharing behavior indirectly facilitates group identity, builds social bonds, and validates someone's actions as something that agrees with or is in line with the meme content (Dunas & Vartanov, 2020). In this case, meme divider anticipates that the recipient experiences similar emotions (Guadagno et al., 2013).

The study of memes is based on the mind infection theory of Atadil, Sirakaya-Turk, Baloglu, & Kirillova (2017), which stated that consumer choice is determined by unconscious thinking infected by memes, and not rational conscious. Memes spread like a virus on the minds of today's and potential future consumers. Contact with memes leads people to make decisions that do not consider rational choices. In this case, the mind infection theory contradicts the traditional marketing theory, particularly rational choice.

According to Murray, Manrai, & Manrai (2013), the mind infection theory follows six basic stages in life, namely:

1. Transmission, where memes are created in an information carrier, such as the internet, which expresses knowledge.
2. Code cracking, where the host perceives the meme with the messenger medium used to reveal the host's brain to a meme. In this case, knowledge is received.
3. Infection, where the meme takes place in the host's brain with processed knowledge.
4. Storage, where memes are stored in the long-term memory of the host's brain.
5. Survival, where memes compete with counter-memes for survival, thereby defending knowledge.
6. Retransmission, where the meme is retransmitted to the brains of the other hosts, thereby spreading knowledge.

The study on internet memes is part of a digital method used to carry out researches (Tsuria, Yadlin-Segal, Vitullo, & Campbell, 2017). The initial study on internet memes was conducted by Shifman (2012) by examining the symbolic meanings along with their intersexuality and relationship to broader internet culture (Shifman, 2014). This research is similar to previous studies that use memes as a tool to capture consumer behavior such as tourism and marketing in Indonesia (Atadil et al., 2017; Lee, Liang, Liao, & Chen, 2019).

## Method

Data were collected from secondary sources, such as online shopping websites. The keywords "meme" + "shopping" + "online" is typed into the Google image search engine, and the sites that appear are visited sequentially, thereby saturating the data. When five consecutive identical memes appear on the reviewed site, the data is defined as saturated. The data includes text that accompanies the meme and the accompanying image. Furthermore, this study also takes data in the form of screenshots from public online conversations that were found from the above process because it becomes direct evidence of consumer behavior. Memes and screenshots not related to consumer behavior, such as sales fraud reports, are not taken, with abstracted themes directly from the images obtained. The data were then analyzed using content analysis, which

is commonly carried out in consumer behavior research (Paschen, Wilson, & Robson, 2020; Peighambari, Sattari, Kordestani, & Oghazi, 2016). Content analysis is useful because it allows textual and visual data to be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively (Flaherty, McCarthy, Collinns, & McAuliffe, 2017).

Table 3 shows that a total of 61 memes were collected from 15 sites related to online shopping. An example of the meme obtained is shown in Figure 1.

Table 3: Meme data used in this study

| No | Title   | Theme                       | Ref |
|----|---|-----------------------------|-----|
| 1  | Endeavour to take extreme care when purchasing from an online shop  | Overtrust                   | [1] |
| 2  | Many asked but didn't buy ... hmmm. .. I knew it  | Asking too much information | [1] |
| 3  | For those confused about online shopping online, choose Raisa or Isyana   | Celebrity endorser effect   | [1] |
| 4  | Its okay to buy an online product with a fake wife, the important thing is free delivery.   | Distributional effect       | [1] |
| 5  | You ask a lot of questions and failed to place an order, I'll mark you! And mind you, I am the son of the commerce minister!                      | Asking too much information | [1] |
| 6  | If you shop online! Soma ulte (further discount)  | Generational gap            | [1] |
| 7  | According to him (national online shopping day) Harbolnas has big discounts, however, I realized that the price is the same in most online shops. | Skepticism                  | [2] |
| 8  | Some people placed their orders and ran away, drown!  | Unexpected cancellation     | [3] |
| 9  | You asked numerous questions and did not place an order. I cannot be treated in such manner   | Asking too much information | [3] |
| 10 | Tired of making memes, with numerous online shopping comments   | Spam awareness              | [3] |
| 11 | Face mask?  | Overtrust                   | [3] |
| 12 | The chat took a long time, and you failed to place an order (CLBK)  | Asking too much information | [4] |
| 13 | Transfer False Hope Giver, followed up, read plus blocked   | unexpected cancellation     | [4] |
| 14 | Rangga, what you did to me was evil. You made payment   | Overexpect                  | [4] |

| No | Title  | Theme                       | Ref |
|----|--|-----------------------------|-----|
|    | for your goods and after a day you asked why your order has not arrived. You called me a cheat huh!  | tation                      |     |
| 15 | I hope this is not some kind of fraud? The items were actually delivered right? The item is real right? I intend to transfer the money when the items have been delivered I hope you are ok with it? | Skepticism                  | [4] |
| 16 | I ordered size S, when is it likely to arrive? ...   | Overtrust                   | [4] |
| 17 | What do you want to buy? We have numerous items that are also cheap and of high quality.   | Pending payment             | [4] |
| 18 | Rangga, what you did to me was evil. I already gave cheap promo + free delivery, and you kept bargaining.  | Exploitation                | [4] |
| 19 | While shopping online again, please ask if the goods are for all ages or those above 18.   | Overtrust                   | [5] |
| 20 | Happy pay day for young mothers  | Millennial periodic payment | [5] |
| 21 | Before and after harbolnas   | Overconsumption             | [6] |
| 22 | Harbolnas: National broken bag day   | Overconsumption             | [6] |
| 23 | Just pretend to write a discount, even though the price has already been increased   | Skepticism                  | [6] |
| 24 | Furthermore, focus on harbolnas: charge HP using battery   | Creativity                  | [6] |
| 25 | Discount? My allergies   | Skepticism                  | [6] |
| 26 | Watches are only 19 thousand, and this is what makes my wallet empty   | Overconsumption             | [6] |
| 27 | You don't need Harbolnas, they're already ferocious  | Overconsumption             | [6] |
| 28 | Although the medicine has not been drunk, its effect is already working  | Sarcasm                     | [7] |
| 29 | <i>Mantab djiwa</i> (Great)  | Sarcasm                     | [7] |
| 30 | Order now, the goods arrived yesterday   | Sarcasm                     | [7] |
| 31 | The best quote ever "It been transferred."   | Hard transaction            | [8] |
| 32 | The amount was totaled, and the consumer disappeared without making payment.   | unexpected cancellation     | [8] |
| 33 | He needed an inexpensive gadget, therefore he kept bargaining till I got dizzy   | Exploitation                | [8] |
| 34 | Ask numerous questions, and the goods were totaled after which he disappeared.   | unexpected cancellation     | [8] |
| 35 | The consumer nagged throughout the chat and did not make any purchase.   | unexpected cancellation     | [8] |



| No | Title  | Theme                   | Ref  |
|----|--|-------------------------|------|
| 36 | Sadistic bargain, ask for free delivery. Does JNE belong to my father?   | Exploitation            | [8]  |
| 37 | Most consumers, ask for quick reply, free delivery, bid a lot, then ask for a total, before finally running away without making a purchase. This is painful! | unexpected cancellation | [8]  |
| 38 | Lots of bargains, and questions, without purchase, sometimes make me feel sad.   | unexpected cancellation | [8]  |
| 39 | Have you transferred it yet?   | Hard transaction        | [8]  |
| 40 | New items and promo price are negotiated. This is an olshop, not a market  | Exploitation            | [8]  |
| 41 | He said he wanted to order, however until now, the money has not been transferred.   | Hard transaction        | [8]  |
| 42 | Details of size, price, and materials have been written. However, why are you still asking questions?  | Skepticism              | [8]  |
| 43 | We have been chatting for a long time, and you failed to place an order, I cannot be treated this way.   | unexpected cancellation | [8]  |
| 44 | Delivered from a warehouse in Jakarta, free delivery to my village in Brebes. Payment on delivery. Lending safely  | Traditional payment     | [9]  |
| 45 | Oh my friends, make savings  | Overconsumption         | [9]  |
| 46 | When pocket money runs out to buy goods  | Overconsumption         | [9]  |
| 47 | Just scowl   | Overconsumption         | [9]  |
| 48 | Payday cycle: (1) yeeey payday, (2) online shopping, (3) pay installments, (4) oh my, when is the payday again? How long does it take                        | Overconsumption         | [10] |
| 49 | Sorry, facemask ran out  | Unexpected demand       | [10] |
| 50 | Like but False Hope Giver  | unexpected cancellation | [10] |
| 51 | Barbie head is dizzy   | Skepticism              | [10] |
| 52 | Before and after harbolnas   | Overconsumption         | [11] |
| 53 | After the harbolnas opens the wallet after seeing a cap  | Overconsumption         | [11] |
| 54 | Between Harbolnas and the boarding house mother.   | Overconsumption         | [11] |
| 55 | The punishment of wives that frequently shop online without their husband's knowledge. JNE took her body away  | Overconsumption         | [12] |

| No | Title  | Theme               | Ref  |
|----|--|---------------------|------|
| 56 | Shopping in an online shop, keep track orders  | Distributio<br>n    | [13] |
| 57 | Uncle, today is online shopping day, and Otong doesn't have money  | Overconsu<br>mption | [13] |
| 58 | It's not that easy, Ferguson   | Overconsu<br>mption | [13] |
| 59 | Me: Save first, while payday money is given. Inner me: save it later, because in December, there is going to be lots of online discounts | Overconsu<br>mption | [13] |
| 60 | The pipette is bent  | Low<br>knowledge    | [14] |
|    | Why is it a thousand cheaper in the next shop?   |                     |      |

Note: references [1] (Brilio, 2016), [2] (Okezone, 2017), [3] (Loop, 2019), [4] (Lucu, 2018), [5] (Inafeed, 2017), [6] (Wow Menariknya, 2017), [7] (Lucu, 2017), [8] (Hipwee, 2017), [9] (Okezone, 2018), [10] (Guyonrekeh, 2018), [11] (Akurat, 2018), [12] (Pinterest, 2020), [13] (Brilio, 2019), [14] (PalingSeru, 2018), [15] (Kaskus, 2018)



Figure 1 Example of Overconsumption (left) and distribution (right) Memes

### Result

There are at least 20 theme patterns that emerge from the memes studied in Table 4. The theme that appears most is overconsumption, which indicates excessive buying, therefore consumers are aware of the inadequate budget for other needs. This theme appears in many memes, especially in relation to harbolnas, which is the national online shopping day. Consumers compare the situation before and after the harbolnas, where they can eat luxuriously and moderately, respectively. This tends to reflect on the money that has been spent on buying a lot of goods when the harbolnas discount period arises. Another meme from this category changes the acronym for harbolnas to national broken pocket day. For example, the meme showing the cheap price of a watch encourages consumers to buy it, thereby making them run out of money. However, there is also a meme which states that basically, overconsumption has occurred in offline discount situations in malls, therefore Harbolnas does not provide anything different.

One Harbolnas theme cannot be categorized as overconsumption rather, creativity is by people that do not want to lose the discount. Therefore when their smartphone is almost off, it is charged with a battery. The person's creativity stands out here and cannot be categorized as overconsumption

because there is no indication that the person was shopping and ran out of money.

The second most common theme is an unexpected cancellation that is detrimental to the seller because after providing great information and relentless effort, the prospective buyer does not order without providing reasons. An example of this theme is a meme that states that consumers suddenly disappear even though the seller has served and totaled the goods' price. This makes the seller upset and wants to "drown" the consumer, as shown in a photo showing the assertiveness of the Indonesian Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries that tends to sink the fishing thieves' ships entering the Indonesian sea.

Unexpected cancellation relates to the theme of hard transactions, which shows how difficult it is for sellers to locate consumers. An example of this theme is a meme stating that the best quote that the seller expects is "It has been transferred," or the question "has it been transferred or not?" and "he said he wanted an order, however until now the money had not been transferred."

The third theme is skepticism, where consumers express various suspicions on the seller regarding the product being sold. An example of a meme in this category shows that the seller is only pretending to give a discount even though the item's price has previously been increased. Another example is a meme showing someone allergic to discounts.

The theme of skepticism is related to sarcasm, in which consumers insinuate the quality of products received from sellers. An example of the theme of sarcasm are consumers that says that their younger siblings have increased in height even before taking medicine, or a consumer that stated that the ordered item arrived quickly. For instance, it was bought yesterday, and it arrived today. Another example is consumers that gave testimonials on tautological goods, stating that "a small card can fit into a cellphone and make it able to communicate" to describe the quality of a GSM card brand.

Table 4: Frequency of meme themes

| Theme                       | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Asking too much information | 4         | 6.6     |
| Celebrity endorser effect   | 1         | 1.6     |
| Creativity                  | 1         | 1.6     |
| Distribution                | 1         | 1.6     |
| Distributional effect       | 1         | 1.6     |
| Exploitation                | 4         | 6.6     |
| Generational gap            | 1         | 1.6     |
| Hard transaction            | 4         | 6.6     |
| Low knowledge               | 1         | 1.6     |
| Millennial periodic payment | 1         | 1.6     |
| Overconsumption             | 15        | 24.6    |
| Overexpectation             | 1         | 1.6     |
| Overtrust                   | 4         | 6.6     |
| Pending payment             | 1         | 1.6     |
| Sarcasm                     | 3         | 4.9     |
| Skepticism                  | 6         | 9.8     |
| Spam awareness              | 1         | 1.6     |
| Traditional payment         | 1         | 1.6     |

|                         |    |       |
|-------------------------|----|-------|
| Unexpected cancellation | 9  | 14.8  |
| Unexpected demand       | 1  | 1.6   |
| Total                   | 61 | 100.0 |

Overtrust theme has the potential to possess high frequency because it is drawn from a meme that shows the expectation vs consumers obtain reality conditions after the goods. However, many descriptions of this expectation and reality condition are derived from sellers' behavior, and not buyers because the ordered goods do not match the consumers' needs. However, very few of these cases are purely the fault of consumers because they fail to pre-check product specifications or ask for information to confirm expectations prior to the purchasing process. For example, a consumer that buys a bag and rather receives a toy bag shows a mismatch between expectations and reality due to carelessness. The comparison between these two types of errors is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Comparison of expectations vs reality classified as consumer error (left) and seller error (right)

Table 5 provides the frequency and percentage of aggrieved parties in the emerging meme themes. Based on the table, 37.7% of memes show a loss to consumers while the rest is for sellers.

Table 5: The parties at disadvantaged due to bad online consumer behavior based on meme categories

| The aggrieved parties | Categories  | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|---|-----------|---------|
| Consumer              | Celebrity endorser effect, creativity, distributional effect, low knowledge, millennial periodic payment, overconsumption, overtrust  | 23        | 37.7    |
| Seller                | Asking too much information, distribution, exploitation, generational gap, hard transaction, overexpectation, pending payment, sarcasm, skepticism, spam awareness, traditional payment, unexpected cancellation, unexpected demand, low consumer knowledge | 38        | 62.3    |

This study creates an interrelation path between themes for losses incurred by the consumer and seller using the existing data, as shown in Figures 3 and 4, respectively. A number of major issues immediately emerge and illustrate the strategies used to provide solutions to problems by addressing these main issues.

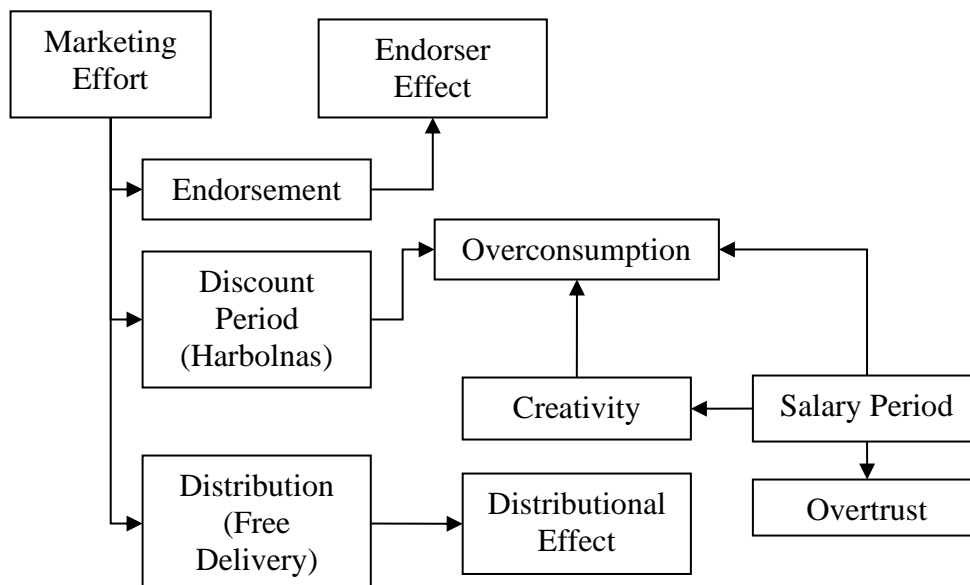


Figure 3: Model of the relationship between the dark side of consumer behavior that is detrimental to consumers

Figure 3 shows that there is an interrelation between the dark side of consumer behavior towards consumers and their interactions in online marketing activities. The three online marketing strategies pose different dark sides to consumers, such as endorsement, discount period, and free delivery strategies. In the endorsement strategy, the same product is chosen based on the value of the endorser. In this study's sample, this value is beauty and detrimental to consumers because it distracts them from rational judgments on the quality of the products to be used.

This is followed by the discount period strategy, which is determined nationally on 12<sup>th</sup> December as an online shopping day (Harbolnas). This period was inaugurated in 2012 by the Indonesian E-commerce Association (IdeA). Other MECCs formulate different discount periods in addition to Harbolnas. For example, Shopee has a November 11 (11.11) discount period, which was inaugurated in 2019. The company managed to take advantage of 11.11 and

12.12 to get the highest web visits in the fourth quarter of 2019 (SimilarWeb et al., 2019).

The existence of a discount period causes consumers to buy in large quantities, thereby leading to overconsumption. Apart from Harbolnas, overconsumption also occurs due to the onset of a payday period that generally occurs at the beginning of every month. During this period, consumers have a lot of money to spend, are more creative in crossing technical boundaries, and spending more time searching for products online. They also become less careful in reviewing products, which creates an overtrust problem where the expected product differs greatly from the reality obtained.

In the free delivery strategy, sellers eliminate the cost of sending products to consumers. Although some realize the product has the potential to have low quality, they still take the risk of buying due to the free delivery costs. In Indonesia, a geographically large country, delivery costs have significant value, and it is, therefore, higher than consumers in a country with narrow geography.

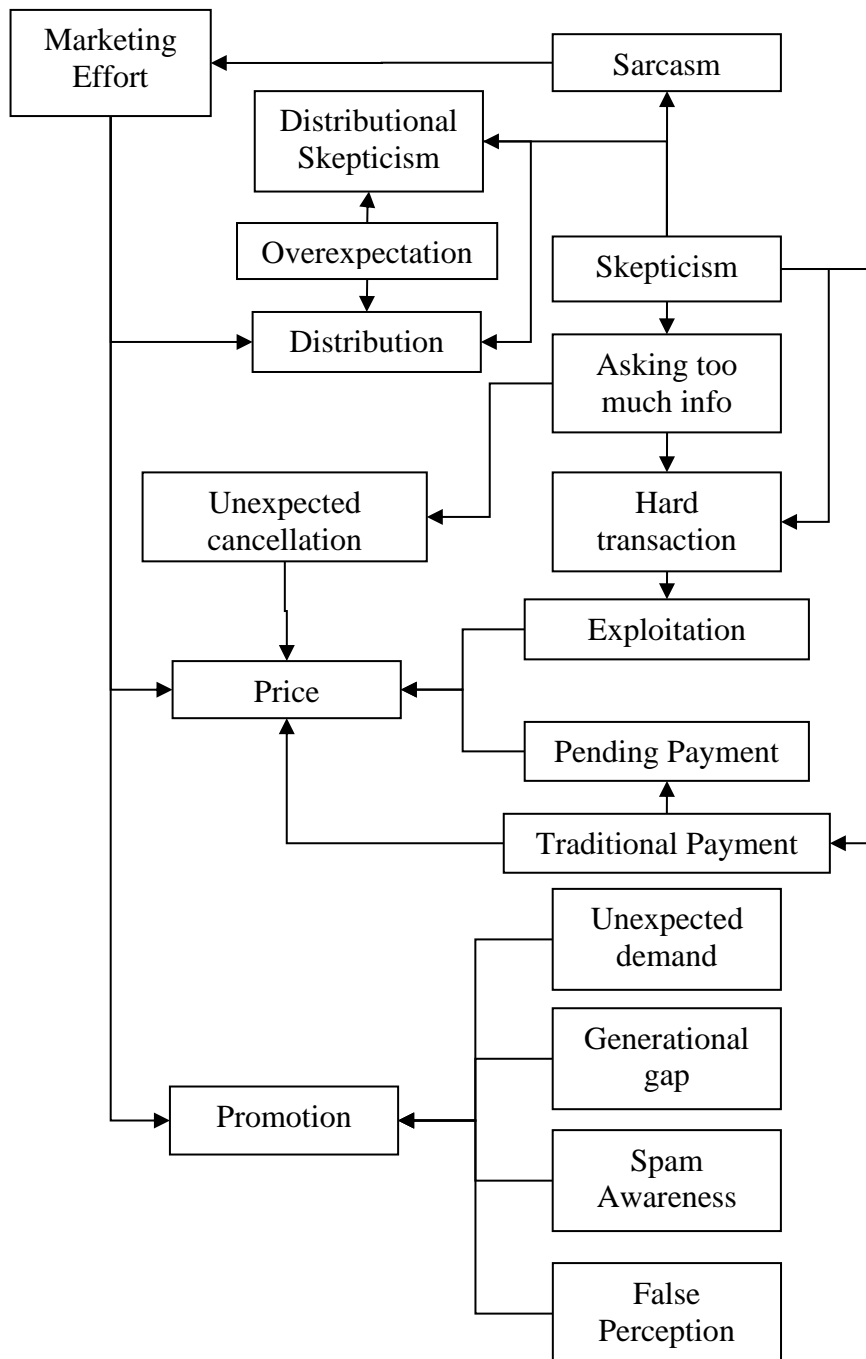


Figure 4: Model of the relationship between the dark side of consumer behavior that is detrimental to sellers

Figure 4 shows an interrelation between the dark side of consumer behavior towards marketers. This model is more complex and has roots in the six dark sides of online consumers. The first is skepticism, which comes from past consumer experiences or social learning processes. This negative attitude causes sarcasm in product marketing efforts and makes consumers ask too many questions that can actually be found in the product description. This leads to inefficient marketing time and difficulty in carrying out transactions. The process of requesting too much information also leads to increased seller expectations assuming the output of communication seems positive. However, it can also lead to unexpected payment cancellations. Furthermore, consumers



tend to agree on a price and promise to pay, without fulfilling their promise with no clear reasons. However, studies have indicated that these reasons are sometimes from the consumer side, such as their awareness of not buying a product due to alternatives or the urge to make savings. This causes the seller's expectations to be refuted with lost time and resources.

Meanwhile, when sellers are too patient and friendly, consumers tend to exploit to get the lowest possible price. Skepticism also make consumers distrust online payment systems and decide to use traditional methods such as bank transfers, cash on delivery (COD), and even getting into debt.

The second is consumers' over-expectation of seller services, which is usually associated with fast delivery by the distributor (courier). Consumers with over-expectations tend to continuously monitor the distribution of goods from sellers.

The third is unexpected demand, which is detrimental to sellers because they are in an unprepared position, therefore, they tend to cancel consumers' purchases, thereby making them disappointed. This is observed in health products that give excessive promises at affordable prices, thereby providing instant opportunities for consumers to improve their health or physical condition. Health products are known to have a placebo effect, which is recognized as effective by consumers even though they are actually ineffective through the influence of marketing practices (Köcher & Holzmüller, 2019). Placebo is a common term in the medical field, which is referred to as a product that affects the patient's mind and imagination, in contrast to drugs that affect the body (Adie, Hall, & Prayag, 2018). In the field of marketing, it is a brand that claims to have certain properties that are not actually owned and, through these claims, changes consumer behavior (Shieh, Ling, & Liao, 2012). Research shows that brand awareness is able to generate positive ratings on products, to either have good or poor quality (Hsiao, Hsu, & Chu, 2014). In turn, it is relatively related to the large number of unattended health products marketed through social media.

The generation gap is the fourth and comprises of three generations that are currently online consumers. The post-millennial generation (born above 2000) is the youngest, the millennial generation (born 1981-2000) is the older, and the pre-millennial generation (born before 1981) is the oldest. The pre-millennial generation can have a large budget for spending because of the promotional design adapted to millennial and post-millennial generations. Furthermore, they do not possess adequate information on online trading terms and do not understand products' value in a contemporary context. As a result, they are ignored by the attention of sellers.

The fifth is spam awareness, which is associated with consumers' annoyance when sellers try to promote their products. Spam is defined as a promotional activity that fulfills three conditions, namely: (1) it is irrelevant to the consumer's personal identity and context because the message applies equally to all other potential recipients, (2) the recipient does not intentionally give permission for the message's arrival, and (3) the transmission and reception of messages appears to the recipient to provide unequal benefits to the sender (Grimes, Hough, & Signorella, 2007). Spamming is an unethical seller behavior, and it is normal when it makes consumers angry. However, this behavior can have a positive meaning assuming the spam is contextual to consumer needs. This is because it is the easiest way for sellers, especially those from MSMEs, to search for the product's potential consumers manually. However, when each promotional activity is considered spam, it becomes detrimental to consumers and sellers that have promoted their products. When positive relationships are created, it becomes a good thing and an important point for relationship marketing. However, when this relationship is still

tenuous, promotion on consumer accounts tends to make a bad impression on sellers.

The sixth is the wrong perception, which is usually related to sellers' behavior that deliberately photographs their products until they attract potential consumers. For online products, the only reliable sense is visual, and this is limited and dependent on the strategies used by the seller to visually frame their product. However, in this case, bad photography actually creates a wrong perception of the consumer.

Overall, this study found nine online consumer attitudes in Indonesia that lead to consumer behavior classified as the dark side, with six detrimental to online sellers. Three attitudes influence consumer behavior, which is detrimental to consumers, namely preference for endorsers, overconsumption, and distance sensitivity. Furthermore, the consumer behavior that is detrimental to sellers has roots in six attitudes, namely skepticism, over-expectations, unexpected demand, generation gaps, spam awareness, and misperceptions. However, this study does not know the percentage of consumer behavior that is classified as the dark side, rather it only shows that these behaviors can appear among online consumers in Indonesia.

### Discussion

According to Raphaeli, Goldstein, & Fink (2017), online consumer behavior research can be carried out in traditional or data mining-based ways. This research uses traditional methods to analyze online consumer behavior, focusing on memes that have emerged among online consumers in Indonesia.

Furthermore, among all the root problems that lead to consumer behavior's negative effect on sellers, skepticism is the most difficult factor that can be overcome. Meanwhile, over expectation, unexpected demand, generation gap, spam awareness, and misperception are factors that can be easily overcome by providing consumers with broader knowledge regarding product information (over-expectations, generation gap, misperception), product availability (unexpected demand), and practicing good marketing ethics (spam awareness). However, skepticism needs more long-term treatment from the seller's side.

Skepticism is generally classified as healthy because it reflects the organism's response to negative stimuli (Luo, Sun, Shen, & Xia, 2020). Studies show that skepticism reduces purchase intentions and encourages sellers to increase the honesty of their products, therefore the next opportunity can be dispelled (Luo et al., 2020). This also applies to consumers that are not mature (An & Kang, 2019), therefore, sellers need to continually improve the honesty of their products in terms of showing its advantages and disadvantages to consumers. They also need to dare to ask again on the product's quality when consumers accept it and provide the best possible post-purchase service. Research indicates that consumer service experience after purchasing a product online has an impact on their satisfaction rate, which in turn, promotes repurchase intentions (Cao, Ajjan, & Hong, 2018). When this is carried out continuously, it creates high consumer confidence, therefore, this high level of trust is essential to build sustainable purchasing in a collective society, such as Indonesia. In an atmosphere of high competition, the retention value of old consumers is very important compared to new customers' acquisition.

Furthermore, overconsumption is the most difficult factor to be overcome by consumers. Other factors, such as the preference for endorsers and distance sensitivity, can be overcome because they apply to specific products, such as communication devices and products with significant weight. Marketing methods that emphasize product function and quality and the development of the meme that reveals marketing tricks can increase consumer awareness to be more rational in buying products online.

Conversely, overconsumption, which relates to impulsive buying, requires a long-term solution for the consumers. The post-shopping experience play a role in subsequent purchases, therefore, when consumers realize that they have made overconsumption, in the sense of experiencing a negative post-shopping experience, a feeling of regret arises, which lead to restrictions for future purchases (Cornish, 2019). This is because there is a possibility that consumer remorse is unable to prevent them from repeating the next impulsive purchase. According to Cornish (2019), overconsumption occurs because regret leads to three possible coping mechanisms, namely planned problem solving, positive reinterpretation, and mental release. When the consumer uses only planned problem solving to overcome feelings of regret, there is no further impulsive buying. Meanwhile, when consumers carry out positive reinterpretation or mental release, the next impulsive buying occurs and leads to a continuous cycle of guilt. Overconsumption that leads to a positive post-shopping experience does not prevent further impulsive buying because there is absolutely no remorse by the consumer. It means that without being reminded, consumers tend to stop overconsumption when they feel sorry and solve the problem in a planned manner. Davydenko & Peetz (2020) stated that planning in the form of a shopping list can reduce overconsumption in online purchases. Therefore, memes need to be designed to remind people of the importance of compiling a shopping list before payday or big promotions online.

In relation to the stimulus-organism-response theory, the negative consumer behaviors above are seen as a response to a number of stimuli that occur in online business. The endorser effect is the buying behavior caused by a stimulus from the endorsement, which makes consumers emotionally decide to buy products promoted by people they like. Overconsumption can be seen as a behavior stimulated by the discount and consumer pay period, which leads to emotional consideration for compulsive buying. Furthermore, the distributional effect is due to the stimulus of free delivery from the seller, which makes consumers take cognitive considerations in thinking it is profitable, even though in reality, the seller includes delivery costs into the total cost of the product, thereby giving the impression of free delivery.

The same can be applied to the dark side of consumer behavior that is detrimental to sellers. Consumer skepticism regarding the distribution of the seller's product's distribution is a response from personal experience or their social learning to the slow delivery process, which is much different from what was promised by the seller. This triggers the organism's process to think cognitively on the possibility of the reoccurring event. Order cancellation is probably a very complex response, influenced by consumers' and sellers' internal and external factors. The existence of a sudden urgent need can be a stimulus for consumers to make a decision to cancel an order. In addition, spam awareness can be seen as a response to the general behavior of spambots that make consumers take the decision to generalize all online promotional activities, even though consumers need these promotions.

## CONCLUSION

This research investigates the dark sides of Indonesia's online consumer behavior by carrying out content analysis on online shopping memes. Several themes emerged from the content analysis, which shows that the dark side of Indonesian online consumer behavior affects consumers and sellers. Specifically, three root themes emerge to describe attitudes that influence consumer behavior that harms consumers themselves, namely preference for endorsers, overconsumption, and distance sensitivity. Meanwhile, consumer behavior detrimental to sellers has roots in six attitudes, namely skepticism, over expectation, unexpected demand, generation gap, spam awareness, and

misperception. In each group, overconsumption is the most difficult to deal with in terms of behavior that is detrimental to consumers. Meanwhile, skepticism is the most difficult to remove in terms of the impact on sellers.

This study contributes to the academic and practical literature. For the academic literature, it analyzes memes to understand online consumer behavior in Indonesia. Previous studies have been limited to research in developed countries or on aspects of memes that do not refer to online consumer behavior. Therefore, this study adds a deeper understanding of the dark side of online consumer behavior in Indonesia and provides further understanding regarding the conceptual and theoretical aspects in developing countries. Furthermore, this study enriches the literature regarding the importance of memes as material for content analysis in order to understand human behavior in computer-mediated communication.

Furthermore, the research results provide an overview of online consumer behavior that can be a source for sellers to market their products better. For example, sellers can emphasize the honesty of products to erase consumer skepticism.

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