

EXAMINING TRUST IN THE CONTEXT OF K-POP FANS' PURCHASE DECISION THROUGH GROUP ORDERS AT CECIZ GO

Ira Ananda Azzahra¹, Puspo Dewi Dirgantari², Anis Izzaty Binti Mohd Tarmizi³, Yusuf Murtadlo Hidayat⁴

^{1,2,4}Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Jalan Dr. Setiabudi No.229

³Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Melaka, 110 Off Jalan Hang Tuah, 75350 Melaka, Malaysia

E-mail: iraananda17182@upi.edu; puspodewi@upi.edu; yusuf.murtadlo@upi.edu

ABSTRACT

The Korean Wave or Hallyu phenomenon has created significant changes in consumer behavior around the world, including Indonesia, especially in the pattern of purchasing K-Pop merchandise through the Group Order (GO) system. One of the GOs present among fans is Ceciz GO, which serves as an intermediary for fans to purchase merchandise from abroad. In this context, trust is an important factor that determines fans' purchase decisions toward GO owners. This study aims to analyze the influence of trust on the purchase decisions of active Ceciz GO members. The research method used a descriptive-verification quantitative approach with a sample of 83 respondents obtained through purposive sampling from a population of 440 active members of Ceciz GO. The instrument, in the form of a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, was tested for validity, reliability, and simple linear regression using IBM SPSS Statistics 26. The analysis results show that trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, contributing 61.5%. These findings indicate that trust in the credibility, transparency, and security of the purchasing system is a key factor driving purchasing decisions on fandom-based social commerce platforms. Further research is recommended to add variables such as perceived value and community engagement to broaden our understanding of consumer behavior in the digital fandom ecosystem.

Key words: Trust; Purchase Decision; Group Order; K-Pop Fandom; Social Commerce

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, Korean culture has grown to become extremely popular around the world. Its existence is generally accepted by people from all walks of life, giving rise to the phenomenon known as the "Korean Wave" or Hallyu. One of the main products of Hallyu is Korean pop music (K-Pop), which has a global fan base, including in Indonesia. This enthusiasm is not limited to music consumption, but also extends to the purchase of official merchandise such as albums, lightsticks, and photocards. When purchasing K-Pop albums and merchandise, fans usually make purchases through e-commerce, self-order, or group order, commonly known as GO. Group Order aims to facilitate fans who want to buy various types of K-Pop merchandise, both from international websites and overseas sellers. One of the GO groups gaining traction among fans is Ceciz GO, which focuses on providing collective merchandise purchasing services for its fan community.

The phenomenon of group orders within K-Pop fandom has become an integral part of fan culture, serving not only as a collective purchasing mechanism but also as a social space that strengthens community identity and trust (Salsabila & Sukmono, 2024). In addition, GO participation has a strong correlation with social influence and fan engagement, as fans share experiences and coordinate purchases through digital platforms such as LINE, Twitter, and Instagram (Nabawiyatin, Wijoyo, & Aryadita, 2024). The success of a GO is greatly influenced by the level of trust that fans have in the admin and the system being implemented. Sharma & Klein (2020) in the *Journal of Retailing and Customer Services* state that trust is a major factor that drives consumer participation in online collective purchasing systems. Similarly, research by Garcia et al (2020) found that trust contributes to satisfaction and loyalty in online purchasing platforms. However, research in Indonesia on the purchase of K-Pop merchandise through Group Orders (GO) shows mixed results. Qadri, Sinambella, and Arafah (2024) found that trust does not significantly affect the intention to purchase K-Pop merchandise through Group Orders, while Maulida & Aransyah (2023) found that trust has a positive effect on purchasing decisions and customer loyalty.

These findings indicate a research gap regarding the role of trust in K-Pop Group Order (GO) mechanisms. Actual purchasing decisions in GO are greatly influenced by contextual factors such as admin credibility, cost transparency, product authenticity, and fandom community experience (Hieronanda & Nugraha, 2024). By choosing Ceciz GO as the object of study, this study attempts to present a more applicable perspective on the real phenomena experienced by K-Pop fans in Indonesia. Based on this background and research gap, this study aims to analyze the influence of trust on K-Pop merchandise purchasing decisions among Ceciz GO Group Order fans, as well as to identify contextual factors that strengthen or weaken the influence of trust on purchasing decisions. Thus, this study is expected to contribute academically to enriching the literature on trust in social commerce, as well as providing practical recommendations for GO operators, particularly Ceciz GO, in enhancing credibility and satisfaction among fans who are members of the Ceciz GO.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive quantitative approach with a case study design on CECIZ GO to analyze the effect of trust on consumer purchase decisions through a research paradigm that adopts a theoretical framework of consumer behavior, whereby online purchasing decisions are influenced by the level of consumer trust in service providers. The independent variable is trust with dimensions of consumer confidence in the honesty of administrators, fulfillment of promises, transaction security, and credibility of GO managers, while the dependent variable is purchase decisions with dimensions of recognizing needs, searching for information, evaluating alternatives, making purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behavior.

The research sample was determined using the Slovin formula at a 10% error rate from a population of 440 Ceciz GO members, resulting in a minimum of 82 respondents. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with the following respondent criteria: (1) registered as an active member of Ceciz GO; (2) had made at least one merchandise purchase transaction through Ceciz GO; and (3) willing to complete the questionnaire. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire based on Google Forms with a 5-point Likert scale. Before use, the instrument was tested for validity (item-total correlation) and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, where the instrument was declared reliable if the α value was ≥ 0.70 (Ghozali, 2021). The data analysis technique used simple linear regression analysis with the equation model:

$$Y=a+bX$$

where Y is purchase decision and X is trust. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics software version 26 with validity, reliability, and classical assumption tests, including normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity tests to ensure the model's feasibility. Based on the problem formulation and theoretical framework, the hypotheses tested in this study are as follows:

$H_0: \beta_1 \leq 0$ (trust does not have a significant effect on purchase decision)

$H_1: \beta_1 > 0$ (trust has a significant positive effect on purchase decision)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 83 respondents who were active members of the Ceciz GO Group Order. Most respondents were between 15 and 20 years old, and almost all of them were female (95.2%), reflecting the demographic dominance of teenagers and young adults in the K-Pop fandom community. The majority of respondents had been members for 2–6 months, indicating a high level of engagement and real experience in making purchases. These characteristics reinforce the relevance of the respondents as representatives of active and loyal digital fandom consumers (Yoo et al., 2025).

Validity and Reliability Test

Validity testing was conducted using Pearson's correlation between each item and the total variable score. The results of the analysis showed that all items had a correlation value above 0.30 and were significant at a confidence level of 0.05, so all questions were declared valid (Ghozali, 2021).

Table 1. Results of Instrument Validity and Reliability Testing

Variable	Total Items	r	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Trust	7	0,774 – 0,889	0,933	Valid & Reliable
Purchase Decision	8	0,532 – 0,799	0,840	Valid & Reliable

Source: SPSS Processing Results (2025)

A Cronbach's Alpha value exceeding 0.70 indicates that the instrument has high reliability and is dependable. According to Ghozali (2021), an alpha value ≥ 0.70 indicates strong internal consistency, making the questionnaire suitable for further analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis provides an overview of respondents perceptions of the variables studied.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trust	83	7,00	35,00	32,6867	3,79964
Purchase Decision	83	8,00	40,00	34,3735	4,59775
Valid N (listwise)	83				

Source: SPSS Processing Results (2025)

The average Trust score (32.69) indicates a high level of trust in Ceciz GO administrators, while the average Purchase Decision score (34.37) indicates a strong tendency to make purchasing decisions. This indicates that respondents have had positive experiences with the credibility and security of the GO system.

Classical Assumption Test (Normality)

Normality tests were conducted to ensure that the residual data in the regression model were normally distributed, so that inferential analysis could be performed validly. Normality is an important prerequisite in linear regression analysis because it affects the accuracy of parameter estimates, significance values, and the

interpretation of relationships between variables (Ghozali, 2021). In this study, normality tests were performed using two approaches, namely (1) the Kolmogorov–Smirnov (K–S) statistical test and (2) the Normal P–P Plot graphical analysis.

Table 3. Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test Results

Statistic	Value	Criteria	Conclusion
Kolmogorov–Smirnov Z	0,085	-	-
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,155	> 0,05	normally distributed data

Source: SPSS Processing Results (2025)

Based on the results of the K–S test above, because the significance value of $0.155 > 0.05$, H_0 is accepted, which means that the regression model residuals are normally distributed. Thus, the regression model meets the assumption of normality and is suitable for use in analyzing the causal relationship between the variables of trust and purchase decision. In addition to the K–S test, the results of the Normal Probability Plot (P–P Plot) show that the residual points are scattered around the diagonal line and follow the direction of that line. This pattern reinforces the conclusion that the residual data has a normal distribution (Field, 2024).

Simple Linear Regression Test and Hypothesis

A simple linear regression test was conducted to determine the direction and magnitude of the influence between the independent variable, namely trust (X), and the dependent variable, purchase decision (Y). This analysis was used because the study only involved one independent variable with one dependent variable that was metric (interval), and both had met the classical assumptions, including residual normality. The analysis used the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method through the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 program. Based on the output results, the following regression coefficients were obtained:

Table 4. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Parameter	Coefficient	t-count	Sig.	Description
Konstanta (a)	3,347	1,220	0,226	Insignificant
Trust (b)	0,949	11,383	0,000	Significant

Source: SPSS Processing Results (2025)

Regression equation:

$$Y=3,347+0,949X$$

Table 5. Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	F-Count	Sig. F
1	0,784	0,615	129,569	0,000

Source: SPSS Processing Results (2025)

The R^2 value of 0.615 indicates that 61.5% of the variation in purchase decisions is explained by the level of trust, while the rest is influenced by other factors such as price, product quality, and fandom experience. The t-value (11.383) with Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ proves that trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.

Discussion

The results show that trust has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decisions of Ceciz GO members. This means that the higher the level of trust in the admin and the Group Order (GO) system, the greater the tendency for members to make purchases. This finding aligns with previous studies highlighting that higher levels of trust reduce perceived risk and strengthen consumers' willingness to buy (Tjahyono & Mahmud, 2024; Munikrishnan et al., 2023). These findings are in line with Sharma and Klein's (2020) research, which confirms that trust is a key element in increasing consumer participation in online group buying. Trust reduces the perception of risk and uncertainty towards online transaction organizers, so that consumers feel safe in making purchasing decisions. Furthermore, these results are also consistent with Maulida and Aransyah (2023), who found that consumer trust in GO administrators contributes significantly to purchasing decisions and customer loyalty within the community.

In addition, Lu, Fan, and Zhou (2016) explain that in a social commerce environment, social presence and interpersonal relationships can increase trust among community members. When users feel connected to administrators and fellow fandom members, their perception of transaction risk decreases, making purchasing decisions more likely. This phenomenon is evident among long-time, active members of Ceciz GO who frequently interact, as the trust that has been established makes them more confident about making repeat purchases. The research by Garcia et al. (2020) reinforces these findings by showing that high levels of trust will

have implications for customer satisfaction and loyalty in group order platforms. In this context, Ceciz GO administrators who maintain their reputation, provide accurate information, and respond quickly to complaints contribute to creating sustainable trust, which ultimately increases purchasing decisions.

Mofokeng (2023) also emphasizes that trust is an important element in shaping customer loyalty in online commerce. He found that positive experiences and perceptions of transaction security play an important role in strengthening the relationship between trust and purchasing behavior. The results of this study show a similar pattern, where positive experiences with GO administrators increase consumer confidence to make subsequent purchases. From another perspective, Sun et al. (2023) explain that trust and risk perception have a reciprocal relationship in the context of social commerce. Trust can reduce the perception of risk that usually arises due to doubts about product authenticity, payment security, or seller reliability. This is relevant to Group Orders, where transactions are conducted collectively and based on interpersonal trust.

The results of this study reinforce the literature that trust is a major determinant of purchasing behavior in community-based digital economic ecosystems. In the context of K-Pop fandom, trust is not only related to functional aspects (such as transaction security), but also emotional aspects namely, belief in solidarity and credibility among fandom members. These findings emphasize the importance of building transparent, responsive, and community-based service systems to maintain the sustainability of economic interactions within digital fandoms.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that trust is a major determinant in influencing the purchase decisions of Ceciz GO Group Order members in the context of purchasing K-Pop merchandise. A high level of trust in the integrity, credibility, and security of the system operated by the admins has been proven to encourage consumers to make purchase decisions with greater confidence and repeat purchases. Theoretically, these findings enrich the study of consumer behavior in the realm of social commerce, placing trust not only as a psychological aspect but also as a social factor that strengthens the relationship between fan communities and service providers. Practically, the implications of this research highlight the importance of reputation management, information transparency, and ethical communication in maintaining digital consumer trust. Future research is recommended to integrate other variables such as perceived value, customer satisfaction, and community engagement to broaden the understanding of purchase decision-making in the dynamic digital fandom ecosystem.

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