

The influence of discounts and free shipping on purchase decisions of tiktok shop consumers

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ABSTRACT

This research examines how price discounts and free shipping influence purchasing decisions among users of TikTok Shop. The study was carried out in Kotamobagu City and Ternate City, involving 170 respondents, consisting of 140 consumers from Kotamobagu and 30 consumers from Ternate. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression techniques with SPSS version 30 as the analytical tool. The findings reveal that discounts have a positive and statistically significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions. Free shipping also demonstrates a positive influence; however, its effect is not statistically significant when assessed individually. When analyzed simultaneously, discounts and free shipping jointly exhibit a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. The coefficient of determination indicates that 43.9% of variations in purchasing decisions can be explained by discount and free shipping variables. Based on these results, it is recommended that TikTok Shop sellers, particularly those operating in Kotamobagu and Ternate, focus on optimizing discount-oriented promotional strategies as an effective approach to stimulate consumer purchase decisions.

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1. Introduction

Consumers or buyers, in deciding to purchase a product, have many considerations and go through several stages. There are at least five stages that buyers go through when making a decision, namely: Need/Problem Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Behavior (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012; McNeish, n.d.; Yahia, Mihajlovic & Zhao, 2018).

Ongoing advances in digital technology have significantly transformed consumer behavior, especially with regard to online shopping practices. Data released by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) indicate that Indonesia's internet user base is expected to reach 221.56 million in 2024, accounting for around 80% of the national population (Prasetyo et al., 2024). This rapid growth has encouraged the expansion of social media-based commerce platforms, one of which is TikTok Shop, which has emerged as a prominent digital marketplace in recent years.

The integration of entertainment content and online transactions within TikTok Shop offers a distinctive shopping environment that emphasizes interactivity and engagement. Short-form video content and live streaming features enable sellers to communicate product value more persuasively, thereby influencing consumer purchase behavior (T. A. Fitri & Syaefulloh, 2023). As a result, consumers increasingly favor online shopping over conventional offline transactions (Umami, 2023).

Amid intense competition in the e-commerce sector, sellers are required to implement effective promotional strategies to attract consumer attention and encourage purchasing decisions. Discounts and free shipping are among the most widely used promotional tools. Price discounts function as financial incentives

that appeal to price-sensitive consumers and potentially increase sales volume (Nur Octafehili et al., 2024). Meanwhile, free shipping reduces additional costs that often become a major consideration in online purchasing decisions.

Purchasing decisions represent a complex process that involves cognitive and emotional evaluations prior to transaction completion. In online shopping contexts, price-related incentives and shipping costs play a crucial role in shaping these decisions. Several previous studies have demonstrated that discounts and free shipping influence purchasing behavior (Themba, 2021); Pamungkas & Anggarini, 2024). However, contrasting findings also exist, indicating that free shipping or discounts may not always exert a significant effect on purchase decisions (Yulistiyani et al., 2024); Istiqomah & Asral, 2024).

Despite the frequent application of discounts and free shipping, their effectiveness within the TikTok Shop environment remains insufficiently examined. Given TikTok Shop's reliance on creative content, social interaction, and live commerce features, promotional strategies may produce different outcomes compared to traditional e-commerce platforms. Many studies discuss TikTok as a social media platform or content-based marketing platform, but they do not specifically examine TikTok Shop, which features in-app direct transactions. Accordingly, this research seeks to examine the effects of discounts and free shipping on the purchasing decisions of TikTok Shop consumers. The results are expected to provide theoretical insights into consumer behavior studies as well as practical guidance for designing effective promotional strategies in social commerce.

2. Research Method

This study was conducted in Kotamobagu City and Ternate City over a two-month period, from May to June 2025. Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire distributed online through Google Forms. The research sample consisted of 170 respondents who had previously made purchases via TikTok Shop, including 140 respondents from Kotamobagu City and 30 respondents from Ternate City. Kotamobagu and Ternate were chosen because these two areas have different shipping rates despite sourcing goods from the same origin.

The variables examined in this research comprised discounts (X_1), free shipping (X_2), and purchasing decisions (Y). The discount variable refers to promotional pricing strategies that allow consumers to purchase products at reduced prices, which are commonly applied to attract consumers and stimulate sales growth. Measurement indicators included comparative discount levels across e-commerce platforms, diversity of discounted products, suitability of discounts to consumer preferences, popularity of discounted products, and the duration of discount offerings (Latifah & Nurmallasari, 2023).

The free shipping variable represents promotional incentives aimed at reducing or eliminating shipping costs to encourage consumer purchases. Indicators used to measure this variable included consumer preference for products offering free shipping, the motivational impact of free shipping promotions, utilization of free shipping vouchers, consumer awareness of free shipping availability, and comparisons of free shipping offers between TikTok Shop and other marketplaces (Yulistiyani et al., 2024).

Purchasing decisions are conceptualized as a series of stages that start with the identification of a need, continue with information gathering and alternative assessment, and culminate in the purchase decision and subsequent post-purchase behavior (Hendrianto & Kusdiyanto, 2025). Indicators for this variable included decisiveness after obtaining product information, brand-based purchase decisions, purchases driven by needs and desires, and the influence of customer reviews on purchasing behavior (Damayanti & Damayanti, 2024).

The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the assistance of SPSS version 30. Before testing the hypotheses, classical assumption tests—comprising normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity—were performed to verify that the regression model satisfied statistical assumptions. The hypotheses examined both the partial and joint effects of discounts and free shipping on purchasing decisions.

3. Result and Discussion

The researcher restricted the respondents to individuals aged 18 years and older, in accordance with the privacy and policy regulations of the TikTok Shop platform. Table 1 presents respondent data based on the age classification presented.

Table 1. Espondent data categorized by age

Region	Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage
Kotamobagu City	18-24	96	69
	25-34	29	21
	35-44	12	9
	45-54	3	2
	> 55	0	0
	<i>total</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>100</i>
Ternate City	18-24	25	84
	25-34	4	13
	35-44	0	0
	45-54	1	3
	> 55	0	0
	<i>total</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>100</i>

As shown in Table 1, approximately 90% of respondents were between 18 and 34 years old, indicating that the TikTok Shop market segment is predominantly composed of young consumers. A total of 170 respondents from both research locations participated in the survey. Item validity was evaluated using the Pearson Product–Moment correlation approach at a significance level of 0.05, and the results are reported in the subsequent section.

Table 2. Vaidity test results

Variable	Item	r count	r table	(Sig)	Description
Discount (X ₁)	1	0,766	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	2	0,738	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	3	0,718	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	4	0,699	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	5	0,668	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
Free Shipping (X ₂)	1	0,768	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	2	0,770	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	3	0,740	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	4	0,776	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	5	0,603	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
Purchase Decision Y	1	0,693	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	2	0,817	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	3	0,809	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid
	4	0,786	0,150	<0,001	Meets the validity criteriaValid

Source: Processed data (2025)

The results demonstrated that all measurement items for discounts, free shipping, and purchasing decisions had correlation coefficients exceeding the critical r-value, indicating that all items were valid.

Table 3. Reliability tests

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Threshold	Description
Discount (X ₁)	0,765	0,60	Reliabel
Free Shipping (X ₂)	0,80	0,60	Reliabel
Purchase Decision Y	0,777	0,60	Reliabel

Source: Processed data (2025)

Reliability testing further confirmed the consistency of the research instrument, as Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.60. Classical assumption testing showed that the data met the required statistical conditions. The results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test show that the residuals follow a normal distribution, as the significance value exceeds the 0.05 threshold.

Table 4. One sample kolmogorov-smirnov test results

One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		170
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.64443111
Most Extreme Difference	Absolute	.064
	Positive	.046
	Negative	-.064
Test Statistics		.064
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.082

a. Tes Distribution is Normal

The multicollinearity test was conducted to identify potential intercorrelations among independent variables. The results are presented below:

Table 5. Multicollenearity test results

Tablecients ^a			
Model	Collinearity Statistics		
	Tolerance	VIP	
1			
	Discount (X1)	.573	1.746
	Free Shipping (X2)	.573	1.746

a. Dependent Variable: Adaptive Performance

Multicollinearity testing revealed tolerance values above 0.10 and VIF values below 10, indicating the absence of multicollinearity among independent variables. Additionally, the Glejser test results confirmed that no heteroscedasticity was present in the regression model. Subsequently, the analysis proceeded to the heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser method, the results of which are presented in the following section.

Table 6. Heteroscedasticity test results (glejser)

Coefficients ^a			
Model		t	Sig
1	Constant	3.776	<.001
	Discount (X1)	-.261	.795
	Free Shipping (X2)	-1.589	.114

a. Dependent Variable: Abs_RES

As presented in Table 6, the Discount (X_1) and Free Shipping (X_2) variables yield significance values of 0.795 and 0.114, respectively. These values exceed the 0.05 significance level, suggesting that the regression model does not suffer from heteroscedasticity. In addition, the classical assumption test results indicate that the data are statistically appropriate for further analysis. Accordingly, the analysis was continued using multiple linear regression, with the results reported in Table 7.

Table 7. Results of the multiple linear regression analysis

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-3.725	1.287		-2.895	.004
1	Discount	.312	.375		
	Free Shipping	4.387	.468	5.720	<.001
				7.141	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis presented $Y = -3,725 + 0,312X_1 + 4,387X_2 + e$. The constant value of -3.725 indicates the condition in which the purchase decision variable (Y) is not yet influenced by either the discount (X_1) or free shipping (X_2) variables. In other words, when both independent variables are held at zero, the purchase decision remains unchanged. The regression analysis reveals that the discount variable has a coefficient value of 0.312, demonstrating that increases in discounts are positively associated with purchasing decisions when other factors remain unchanged. The effect is statistically significant, as evidenced by a p-value lower than 0.05. Based on this result, Hypothesis 1 (H_1) is confirmed, indicating that discounts exert a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions. This finding

suggests that more attractive discount offers increase consumers' propensity to complete transactions and aligns with previous studies on consumer response to discount strategies (Sera & Ekowati, 2023; Istiqomah & Asral, 2024). Similarly, Nur Octafehili et al (2024) emphasized that the primary objective of discount strategies is to capture consumers' attention and enhance the attractiveness of promoted products.

The analysis reveals that free shipping (X_2) exerts a positive and statistically significant effect on purchasing decisions, as reflected by a regression coefficient of 4.387 and a p-value below 0.05. Based on this outcome, Hypothesis 2 (H_2) is confirmed, indicating that free shipping incentives play an important role in motivating consumers to complete online purchases. This finding aligns with prior literature on the effectiveness of shipping-related promotions (Hendrianto & Kusdiyanto, 2025). Simultaneous testing reveals that discounts and free shipping together significantly affect purchasing decisions. The F-test yields an F-value of 119.694 and a significance level under 0.001. As this value exceeds the critical F threshold of 3.05 and the significance level is below 0.05, it can be inferred that both discount (X_1) and free shipping (X_2) variables collectively have a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision variable (Y). This suggests that combining price reductions with shipping incentives can effectively enhance consumer purchasing behavior on TikTok Shop. These findings reinforce earlier studies that reported similar combined effects of promotional strategies on purchase decisions (Pamungkas & Anggarini, 2024; Istiqomah & Asral, 2024). Similarly, Agus Wahyu Ningsih et al., (2024) found that, when considered together, discounts and free shipping have a significant combined impact on consumers' purchase decisions. Thus, these findings imply that online marketing strategies should further increase and expand discounts and maintain free shipping.

4. Conclusion

The analysis results reveal that discount promotions significantly and positively influence purchasing decisions among TikTok Shop consumers in both Kotamobagu City and Ternate City. Meanwhile, free shipping has a positive but statistically insignificant effect when assessed individually. When considered together, discounts and free shipping jointly contribute to a significant improvement in consumer purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination indicates that 58.9% of purchasing decision variance is explained by these promotional variables, while the remaining portion is affected by other factors beyond the scope of this research. The limitation of this study is the inability to control the sample selection because the distribution of the sample could not be identified beforehand, so the analyzed sample consists only of respondents who were willing to complete the questionnaire. In addition, this study does not analyze differences based on the gender and age of the respondents. For future researchers, it is recommended that the scope of the study be expanded by including gender and age variables to examine the determining factors in decision-making between male and female consumers, or between younger and older consumers.

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