

FROM DISCOUNTS TO DECISIONS: THE ROLE OF BRAND REPUTATION IN TIKTOK GO'S F&B CONSUMER ECOSYSTEM

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of TikTok discount vouchers on consumer purchase decisions in the food and beverage (F&B) sector, with brand reputation as a mediating variable within the social commerce ecosystem. The growing use of TikTok Go as a promotional channel reflects a shift in consumer behavior from passive content exposure to transaction-driven digital engagement. However, the effectiveness of discount strategies in this context is not solely determined by price incentives, but also by perceived brand reputation. This research employs a quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Data were collected through a survey of consumers who have used TikTok discount vouchers for F&B products. The results indicate that TikTok discount vouchers have a positive and significant effect on both brand reputation and purchase decisions. Furthermore, brand reputation significantly influences purchase decisions and acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between discount vouchers and purchase decisions. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of discount strategies in social commerce depends not only on price-based stimuli but also on the ability of brands to maintain a strong reputation. This study contributes to digital marketing literature by highlighting the integration of price promotions and brand perception in shaping consumer behavior.

Keywords: *discount vouchers, brand reputation, purchase decision, TikTok Go, social commerce*

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has driven a significant transformation in marketing practices, particularly through the integration of social media into social commerce. Platforms like TikTok no longer function solely as entertainment media, but have evolved into distribution and promotional channels capable of directly influencing consumer behavior. This phenomenon is further strengthened by the high number of TikTok users globally, with Indonesia ranking as the country with the largest number of users, reaching approximately 194.37 million users by 2025. This condition indicates that Indonesia is a digital market with significant potential in driving digital platform-based consumption activities. In addition, the growth of the industry *food and beverage* The F&B (Food and Beverage) sector has also shown a positive trend in recent years. Data shows that the food and beverage industry experienced growth of 8.23% in 2021, increasing to 9.26% in 2022, then experiencing a slight decline to 8.51% in 2023, and then increasing again to 8.69% in 2024. This trend indicates that the F&B sector has stable growth dynamics and remains a potential sector for digital marketing activities.

In this context, the use of discount vouchers has become a widely used promotional strategy within the TikTok Go ecosystem. This strategy aims not only to increase price appeal but also to encourage consumers to try new products with lower cost barriers. However, in practice, the effectiveness of discount vouchers does not always directly correlate with purchasing decisions, as consumers also consider non-economic factors such as perceived quality and brand credibility (Chen & Zhang, 2021; Ismagilova et al., 2020). Furthermore, in a digital environment saturated with information and social interactions, brand reputation becomes a crucial element in the decision-making process. Consumers tend to use brand reputation as a basis for evaluating products and reducing uncertainty in digital transactions. This is especially relevant for Generation Z, who have high levels of exposure to digital information and rely on social references to shape their preferences (Lee & Kim, 2020; Dwidienawati et al., 2025). Although several studies have shown that discount-based promotions can increase purchase intention, these results are not fully able to explain actual purchase decisions. On the other hand, brand reputation has been shown to influence consumer

trust, but there is still limited research examining its role as a mediating variable in the relationship between discount strategies and purchase decisions in the context of consumer behavior. *social commerce* (Pratama & Nugroho, 2022; Putra & Hidayat, 2023). This indicates a research gap in understanding the mechanisms of purchasing decision formation more comprehensively.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the influence of TikTok discount vouchers on consumer purchasing decisions in the retail sector. *food and beverage* (F&B), considering the role of brand reputation as a mediating variable. This research is expected to contribute to the development of digital marketing studies, particularly in explaining the dynamics of consumer behavior in the food and beverage ecosystem. *social commerce*

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Purchasing Decisions in the Context of F&B Social Commerce

In this study, purchasing decisions are positioned not only as the end result of the consumption process, but also as the point of conversion between intention and actual action in a digital marketing environment. Conceptually, purchasing decisions involve individuals engaging in the selection process of various product alternatives, considering value, benefits, and risks before making a choice. However, in the context of social commerce, this process undergoes a transformation in terms of speed, interactivity, and the sources of influence involved. The classic models of consumer behavior proposed by Kotler and Keller (2016) and Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) remain relevant as conceptual foundations because they position purchasing decisions as the outcome of stages from need recognition to post-purchase evaluation. However, in a digital ecosystem like TikTok, this process is no longer linear, but rather dynamic and influenced by real-time external stimuli, such as visual content, recommendations from other users, and platform-based promotions.

In this study, purchasing decisions are contextualized specifically within consumer behavior when using TikTok discount vouchers for food and beverage (F&B) products. These decisions are reflected in concrete actions such as voucher redemption and purchase transaction completion. Thus, purchasing decisions are influenced not only by rational product evaluation but also by perceived value derived from price incentives and the digital experience offered by the platform. Furthermore, the Theory of Planned Behavior explains that purchasing behavior is influenced by intentions formed from attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of social commerce, factors such as system ease, trust in the platform, and the existence of promotions such as discount vouchers play a role in strengthening perceived behavioral control, thereby increasing the probability of converting intentions into actual purchasing decisions. This confirms that purchasing decisions in the digital environment are no longer solely driven by internal needs, but also by the system design and marketing stimuli inherent in the platform. Thus, this study positions purchasing decisions as a construct that is simultaneously influenced by economic factors (discount vouchers), psychological factors (perceived value and behavioral control), and socio-digital factors (interaction and validation within the platform), which overall shape the purchasing behavior of F&B consumers on TikTok.

2.2 The Influence of TikTok Discount Vouchers on Brand Reputation

In perspective *signaling theory*, discount vouchers can function as signals that shape consumer perceptions of a brand. In the context of *social commerce* Like TikTok, discounts are no longer perceived as an indicator of declining quality, but as a form of added value that reflects the brand's attention to consumers. Empirical findings show that discount promotions on digital platforms are able to improve brand image and reputation, because they are perceived as *value offering* which benefits consumers (Agmeka et al., 2019; Tarmizi & Husna, 2024; Sabila et al., 2024). In the F&B context on TikTok, offering attractive discount vouchers also reinforces the perception that the brand is customer-oriented and capable of providing added value. Thus, TikTok discount vouchers not only act as price incentives but also as a mechanism for building brand reputation by increasing consumer perceptions of value and trust.

2.3 The Influence of TikTok Discount Vouchers on Purchasing Decisions

Discount vouchers act as price incentives that reduce consumers' financial burden, thereby increasing the likelihood of a purchase decision. Within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior, this reduction in barriers strengthens *perceived behavioral control* and encourage the conversion of intentions into purchasing actions (Ajzen, 1991). Furthermore, discounts also increase perceived value *and* provide a sense of transaction *utility*, which are key drivers of purchasing decisions (Mishra et al., 2024; Galib, 2023). The perception of gaining "more value" than the price paid has been shown to strengthen consumers' propensity to make purchases, particularly in digital contexts (Pratiwi & Pratomo, 2024; Hongdiyanto et al., 2020; Tarigan et al., 2022). On the TikTok platform, the ease of

claiming vouchers and the promotional time limit create a sense of urgency (*scarcity effect*) that encourages consumers to make immediate purchases (Putri & Sudaryanto, 2022). Users' impulsive and price-sensitive nature further strengthens the influence of discount vouchers on purchasing decisions. Thus, the higher the attractiveness of the TikTok discount vouchers offered, the greater the tendency of consumers to make purchasing decisions on F&B products.

2.4 The Influence of Brand Reputation on Purchasing Decisions

Brand reputation represents consumer perceptions of a brand's credibility and quality, formed from experiences and information received. In the context of digital marketing, brand reputation is a crucial factor because consumers cannot evaluate products directly before purchasing, so reputation serves as a basis for trust and a risk reducer (Spence, 1973). Within the framework *signaling theory* , brand reputation acts as a quality signal that helps consumers in assessing products, especially in the F&B category which is... *Experience goods* . Consumers tend to choose brands with good reputations because they are perceived as more capable of meeting expectations and minimizing the potential for dissatisfaction.

In addition, brand reputation is also related to the formation of trust and subjective norms in *the Theory of Planned Behavior* , where a reputable brand increases consumer confidence that the purchasing decision made is appropriate and socially acceptable. Empirically, various studies have shown that brand reputation positively influences purchasing decisions, as it can increase trust and reduce consumer uncertainty (Tambunan et al., 2025; Alfianto et al., 2018; Tampubolon & Sofia, 2024). Therefore, the better the brand reputation, the greater the consumer's tendency to make purchasing decisions for F&B products.

2.5 The Influence of TikTok Discount Vouchers on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Reputation

The relationship between discount vouchers and purchasing decisions is not only direct but can also occur through the formation of brand reputation as a mediating variable. Theoretically, this mechanism can be explained through a combination of *signaling theory* and utility perspective, where discounts not only increase the attractiveness of the transaction, but also shape positive perceptions of the brand. In a digital context, attractive discount vouchers encourage consumers to try a product, and the positive experience resulting from the transaction contributes to an enhanced brand reputation. This established reputation then strengthens consumer trust and increases the likelihood of making a purchase, so the discount's effect is not only direct but also indirect through brand reputation. Empirical findings indicate that brand reputation mediates the relationship between price promotions and purchasing decisions, with discounts being more effective in encouraging purchases if they enhance a positive brand image (Permana, 2023; Djannah, 2021). Furthermore, consumers' experiences benefiting from discount programs also strengthen the perception that the brand provides added value, ultimately increasing trust and purchasing decisions. Thus, TikTok discount vouchers not only have a direct influence on purchasing decisions but also have an indirect influence through brand reputation as a mechanism that strengthens the effectiveness of promotions in driving F&B consumer purchasing behavior.

2.6 Research Hypothesis Development

Based on the theoretical study and the relationships between the variables outlined, TikTok discount vouchers are understood not only as a price promotion instrument but also as a stimulus capable of shaping consumer perceptions of the brand and driving purchasing decisions. *In social commerce* , the effectiveness of discounts depends not only on the economic aspect, but also on their ability to increase perceived value and build consumer trust in the brand. On the other hand, brand reputation acts as a quality signal that reduces consumer uncertainty and strengthens confidence in purchasing decisions, especially for F&B products that cannot be directly evaluated before consumption. This suggests that brand reputation not only has a direct influence on purchasing decisions but also has the potential to act as a mechanism that channels the influence of discount vouchers on consumer purchasing behavior.

Thus, the relationship between variables in this study is formulated in the following hypothesis:

H1: TikTok Discount Vouchers have a positive and significant effect on Brand Reputation.

H2: TikTok Discount Vouchers have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions.

H3: Brand reputation has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

H4: TikTok Discount Vouchers have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Reputation.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory design to test the influence of TikTok discount vouchers on purchasing decisions, both directly and through brand reputation as a mediating variable. The population of this study was all TikTok users in Indonesia who had been exposed to and used discount vouchers on food and beverage (F&B) products. This population was selected because it was directly relevant to the research objective of analyzing digital promotion-based purchasing behavior. Sampling technique using *Purposive sampling*, which selects respondents based on certain criteria. The respondent criteria in this study include: (1) TikTok app users, (2) having used TikTok discount vouchers on F&B products, (3) being at least 17 years old, and (4) domiciled in Indonesia. This approach was used to ensure that respondents had experience relevant to the research context.

The sample size was determined based on the approach of Hair et al. (2018), which recommends a minimum sample size of 5–10 times the number of indicators in SEM-PLS-based research. With 17 indicators, the minimum sample size used was 170 respondents. This number is considered to meet the criteria for multivariate analysis and is capable of producing reliable and valid data. Data were analyzed using *Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. Model evaluation was conducted through: (1) outer model – including *convergent validity* (*loading factor* > 0.7 and *AVE* > 0.5), *discriminant validity* (*cross loading*), and *composite reliability* (> 0.7); and (2) inner model – including R-square and Q-square values. Hypothesis testing was conducted through bootstrapping, with acceptance criteria if the t-statistic value > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 171 respondents from Indonesian citizens with experience using TikTok discount vouchers on food and beverage (F&B) products. Demographically, the majority of respondents were aged 21–24 (40.4%), with a predominance of bachelor's degree graduates (32.7%). In terms of occupation, the majority of respondents were self-employed or *entrepreneur* (36.8%). All respondents in this study had used discount vouchers (100%), indicating that the sample was directly relevant to the research context. Furthermore, the most frequently used brand in transactions was Fore Coffee (55.6%), indicating the dominance of certain brands in discount voucher utilization on TikTok.

4.2 Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The *convergent validity* test results show that 17 indicators have *loading factor values* > 0.70 and are declared valid. The AVE value of all constructs exceeds 0.50, which meets the requirements for *convergent validity*. All constructs also meet the requirements for *discriminant validity based on the cross-loading results*. Table 1 presents a summary of the outer model test results.

Table 1. Results of the Validity and Reliability Test of the Constructs

<i>Variables</i>	<i>AVE</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>	<i>Information</i>
Discount Voucher (X)	0.889	0.854	0.889	Reliable & Valid
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.704	0.788	0.877	Reliable & Valid
Brand Reputation (Z)	0.546	0.862	0.894	Reliable & Valid

Source: SmartPLS results data, 2026

4.3 Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The results of the structural model evaluation show that the Purchase Decision (Y) variable has an R² value of 0.416 (Adjusted R² = 0.409) which is included in the sufficient model category, meaning that approximately 41.6% of the variation in investment decisions can be explained by the variables in the model. The Q-square value of 0.411 indicates that the model has adequate predictive relevance.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

The results of the hypothesis test through bootstrapping are presented in Table 2 and Table 3 below.

Table 2. Results of the Direct Effect Test

Variable Relationship	Coefficient (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Note:
Discount Voucher → Brand Reputation	0.615	10,777	0,000	✓
Discount Voucher → Purchase Decision	0.305	3,076	0.002	✓
Brand Reputation → Purchase Decision	0.411	4,588	0,000	✓

Source: SmartPLS results data, 2026

Table 3. Results of the Indirect Effect Test

Variable Relationship	Coefficient (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Note:
Discount Voucher → Brand Reputation → Purchase Decision	0.253	3,476	0,000	✓

Source: SmartPLS results data, 2026

4.6 Research Discussion

The Impact of TikTok Discount Vouchers on Brand Reputation

Research findings show that TikTok discount vouchers have an impact on brand reputation. This indicates that in the context of *In social commerce*, discounts are no longer perceived as a negative signal, but rather as a form of added value provided to consumers. This perception reinforces the brand's image of being customer-satisfying and capable of providing added value in every transaction. In perspective *Signaling theory* suggests that discounts can serve as signals that shape consumers' perceptions of brand quality and credibility (Spence, 1973). The shift in the meaning of discounts in the digital environment suggests that consumers not only assess prices but also interpret discounts as a form of attention and relational strategy from brands.

This finding is in line with previous research which shows that discount promotions on digital platforms can improve brand image and reputation because they are perceived as *value offering* which benefits consumers (Agmeka et al., 2019; Tarmizi & Husna, 2024; Sabila et al., 2024). In the context of F&B on TikTok, the intensity of discount promotions integrated with digital content also strengthens brand exposure, thereby accelerating the formation of positive perceptions among consumers. The implication is that discount vouchers not only function as a short-term promotional tool, but also as a strategic instrument in building brand reputation by increasing consumer perceptions of value and experience.

The Influence of TikTok Discount Vouchers on Purchasing Decisions

The research results show that TikTok discount vouchers influence purchasing decisions. This confirms that price incentives remain a key determinant of purchasing behavior, particularly in a competitive and price-sensitive digital environment. Theoretically, this finding can be explained through the Theory of Planned Behavior, where the presence of discounts strengthens *perceived behavioral control* by lowering financial barriers, thereby increasing the likelihood of consumers realizing their intentions into purchasing actions (Ajzen, 1991). Furthermore, discounts also increase the perception of value and provide a sense of profit in the transaction, which acts as a psychological driver in purchasing decision-making (Mishra et al., 2024; Galib, 2023).

In the context of TikTok, the platform's fast-paced, visual, and impulsive nature amplifies the effect of discounts on purchasing decisions. The time limit on vouchers also creates a sense of urgency that encourages consumers to act quickly, shortening the decision-making process and making it less rational. Thus, the effectiveness of discount vouchers comes not only from the price reduction, but also from their ability to shape value perceptions and create a psychological boost that accelerates purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Brand Reputation on Purchasing Decisions

Research findings indicate that brand reputation influences purchasing decisions. This confirms that under conditions of uncertainty, particularly for F&B products that cannot be evaluated before consumption, brand reputation becomes a key factor in decision-making. Within the framework *Signaling theory* states that brand reputation serves as a quality signal that helps consumers reduce risk and increase confidence in a product (Spence, 1973). Consumers tend to choose brands with a good reputation because they are considered more capable of meeting expectations and providing a satisfying experience.

These findings align with previous research showing that brand reputation positively influences purchasing decisions by increasing trust and reducing uncertainty (Tambunan et al., 2025; Alfianto et al., 2018; Tampubolon & Sofia, 2024). Although some studies have shown insignificant results, this generally occurs when price is more dominant than reputation. In the context of TikTok, where product information is presented in a limited and rapid manner, brand reputation becomes a primary reference point for consumers in making choices. Therefore, brand reputation serves as a risk-reducing mechanism and a confidence booster in purchasing decisions.

The Influence of TikTok Discount Vouchers on Purchasing Decisions through Brand Reputation

The results showed that TikTok discount vouchers influenced purchase decisions through brand reputation as a mediating variable. This indicates that the discount's influence is not only direct but also reinforced through the formation of positive brand perceptions. Theoretically, this mechanism can be explained through a combination of utility and *Signaling*, where discounts not only increase the attractiveness of a transaction but also build a more positive brand image in the eyes of consumers. When consumers gain a beneficial experience from using a discount voucher, their perception of the brand improves, which ultimately increases trust and the likelihood of making a purchase. This finding is supported by previous research showing that brand reputation mediates the relationship between price promotions and purchasing decisions, where discount effectiveness increases when it strengthens a positive brand image (Permana, 2023; Djannah, 2021). Furthermore, positive experiences with discount programs also strengthen the perception that the brand provides added value, which contributes to the formation of consumer trust. Thus, TikTok discount vouchers are more effective in driving purchasing decisions when they build a strong brand reputation, so their influence is not only transactional but also relational.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the influence of TikTok discount vouchers on purchasing decisions, with brand reputation as a mediating variable, in food and beverage (F&B) products. The analysis found that TikTok discount vouchers have a positive effect on brand reputation. This indicates that discounts in the context of F&B products can be used as a proxy for brand reputation. *social commerce* is no longer perceived as a decrease in quality, but rather as a form of added value that can build a positive perception of the brand. Furthermore, TikTok discount vouchers were also shown to influence purchasing decisions. This finding indicates that price incentives remain a crucial factor in encouraging consumers to make purchases, particularly in a price-sensitive and impulsive digital environment. Furthermore, brand reputation was shown to influence purchasing decisions. This suggests that brand reputation acts as a trust mechanism that helps consumers reduce uncertainty and increase confidence in product choices, particularly in the F&B category. In addition to its direct impact, this study also found that TikTok discount vouchers influence purchasing decisions through brand reputation. This finding confirms that the effectiveness of discounts lies not only in price but also in their ability to build positive brand perceptions, ultimately strengthening purchasing decisions.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

The results of this study strengthen the understanding that in the context of *In social commerce*, the role of price promotions is not only economic but also has psychological and relational dimensions. Discount vouchers not only directly influence purchasing decisions but also contribute to the formation of brand reputation as a mediating mechanism. Thus, this study expands the study of consumer behavior by demonstrating that the relationship between price promotions and purchasing decisions is more complex, particularly in digital ecosystems. In addition, this finding also strengthens the relevance *signaling theory* in explaining how discounts can function as positive signals that shape consumer perceptions of a brand. In this context, brand reputation plays a key role in mediating the influence of promotions on purchasing behavior.

Practical Implications

Practically, the results of this study offer implications for F&B businesses utilizing TikTok as a marketing channel. The use of discount vouchers should not only focus on increasing short-term sales but also on building brand reputation through positive customer experiences. Businesses need to design discount programs that are not only price-attractive but also consistent with their brand image and positioning. This is crucial to ensure that the discounts offered strengthen consumers' perceptions of value and trust, rather than simply triggering fleeting purchases. Furthermore, integrating discount promotions with digital content strategies is crucial for increasing exposure and strengthening brand perception among consumers. This way, discount vouchers can be optimized not only as a transaction tool but also as a strategic tool for building long-term relationships with consumers.

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