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Digital Marketing In The Role For Student Purchase Decisions In Pontianak City on The TikTok Shop Marketplace Through Competitive Prices

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine whether there is an influence of digital marketing on student purchasing decisions in Pontianak City through the TikTok Shop platform, with the role of competitive prices as a mediating variable. The population in this study is students in the city of Pontianak. This study uses a quantitative research method. The sample in this study is 136 respondents. Data is analyzed using the sampling technique using the Accidental Sample. The results were measured using a rating scale interpreted using the Three Box Method criteria. The analysis tool used in this study was using the help of AMOS software. Based on the test results conducted through hypothesis testing using the weight regression test, it is shown that digital marketing variables have a direct effect on purchase decisions, digital marketing does not have a significant effect on competitive prices, and competitive prices affect purchase decisions. The results of the test using the Sobel test show the role of competitive price mediation in strengthening the relationship between digital marketing and purchase decisions.

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1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has significantly changed the way businesses have been significantly changed, especially in terms of marketing and sales. One of the phenomena that is growing rapidly is social media platforms as a place of marketing and sales, such as TikTok Shop. TikTok, initially functioned as a platform for various short entertainment videos, but has since grown into a popular e-commerce marketplace platform. This marketplace offers a variety of products at competitive prices and innovative digital strategies to attract buyers' buying interest, especially students who tend to be active in the use of social media.

TikTok transformation into a shopping platform has driven changes in consumer purchasing behavior. Students in Pontianak, as part of Generation Z, are a group that is highly exposed to developments in digital technology. They tend to be more selective in their purchasing decisions, considering factors such as price, ease of access, and the effectiveness of digital promotions. TikTok Shop, with its combination of creative content and attractive pricing, has become one of the top choices for TikTok Shop users among students when shopping online. Most students use TikTok Shop to search for affordable products, evaluate reviews, and make purchases.

Digital Marketing plays a role in the buying decision-making process because, through strategies such as influencer marketing, viral content, and data-driven advertising, TikTok Shop manages to create high engagement with potential buyers. On the other hand, competitive prices are also a determining factor in purchasing decisions, especially among students who have limited budgets. The combination of an effective digital marketing strategy and attractive price offers has a big impact on consumers' purchasing decisions through the TikTok Shop platform. Countries with the most total TikTok users in the World (October 2023)

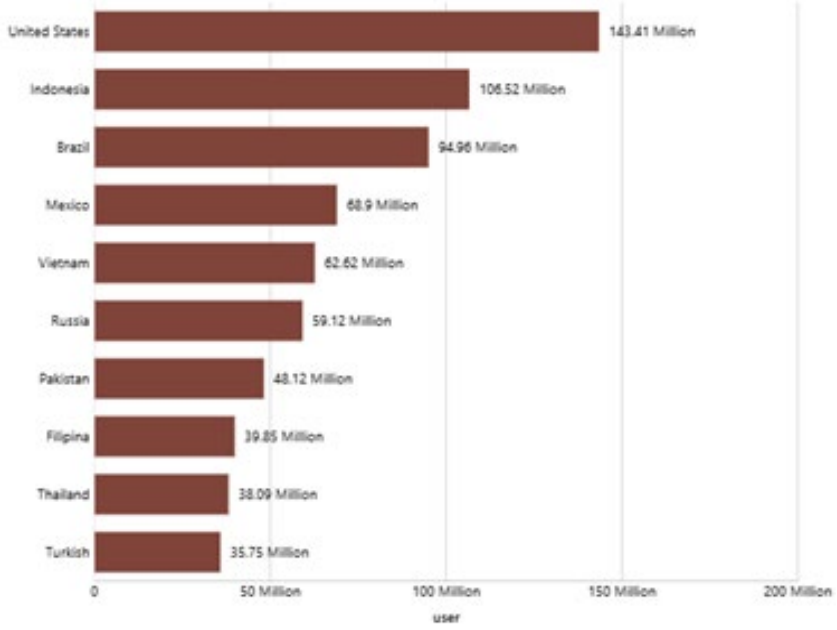

Figure 1. Source: Data box

Based on report data released by We Are Social, in October 2023, there were 106.51 million TikTok users from Indonesia. This figure occupies the position of Indonesia with the second-largest number of TikTok users globally. Overall, TikTok had 1.22 billion users worldwide in the same period. Within a quarter, the platform gained 137 million new users or experienced a growth of 12.6%. When compared to the previous year, the number of TikTok users increased by 272 million, or an increase of around 228.8%. The data also shows that as of October 2023, global TikTok users are dominated by men with a percentage of 50.8%, while women are 49.2% of users.

Based on the results of a study conducted by Populix, as many as 86% of respondents do shopping activities through social e-commerce platforms, TikTok Shop is the most used platform, with a percentage of users reaching 45%, followed by WhatsApp (21%), Fecebook (10%), and Instagram (10%). This shows that TikTok Shop is the most commonly used application for making purchases. The majority of TikTok Shop users are women aged 18 to 25, while active male users are between the ages of 36 and 45 (Puspa, 2023).

In the first quarter of 2022, TikTok recorded around 1.4 billion monthly active users aged 18 years and above worldwide. This figure has increased by 15,34% when compared to the previous quarter, which recorded around 1.2 billion. An analysis from the Music Business Worldwide website (2021) shows that 47% of TikTok's active users feel interested in buying a product after watching a video on the platform. A survey from We Are Social, also revealed that 67% of TikTok users make purchases because they are spontaneously inspired. In Indonesia itself, according to data from Ginne (2021), most TikTok users are in the age group of 18 to 24 years, with the highest proportion of 40%.

The use of Digital Marketing creates efficiency in the buying and selling process because buyers and sellers can interact directly without the need for face-to-face interaction. Previous studies have said that Digital Marketing influences creating purchasing decisions (Ani, 2023; Tomo, et al. 2023; and Bagas, et al. 2023). However, another study found the opposite result, that digital marketing does not affect purchasing decisions (Budianto, et al. 2023).

Price is the amount of money it charges for a certain product. Competitive pricing refers to the price offered by a product that is equal to or better than other competitors. There is a previous research study conducted by (Fauzi, et al. 2023; Nazara, et al. 2023; and Devina et al. 2023) that

found that price influences purchasing decisions. However, another study found the opposite result, that price did not affect purchasing decisions (Yulianto, et al., 2024).

Based on the above background, the increasing use of TikTok Shop among students shows that digital marketing and competitive prices can be factors that influence the purchasing decisions of TikTok Shop users in Pontianak. However, how does digital marketing influence students' purchasing decisions, and does competitive pricing play a role in mediating digital marketing and competitive pricing In addition, further understanding of the relationship between digital marketing and the perception of competitive pricing on the TikTok Shop platform is still needed. Based on the issues outlined above, the research questions in this study are (1) does digital marketing influence students' purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop in the city of Pontianak; (2) does digital marketing influence competitive prices on TikTok Shop in the city of Pontianak; (3) do competitive prices influence students' purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop in the city of Pontianak; (4) Does competitive pricing mediate the effect of digital marketing on students' purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop in the city of Pontianak

2. Literature Revies

2.1. Digital Marketing and Purchase Decision

Kotler and Armstrong (2023) define digital marketing as marketing activities that utilize digital platforms, internet technology, and various online media to reach, interact with, and build relationships with consumers. Through digital channels such as websites, search engines, social media, and applications, companies can convey product information, sales, and values that influence consumer purchasing decisions. Digital marketing is a marketing activity carried out by utilizing digital media to introduce products, build communication, and encourage consumer interest in purchasing through various online platforms. Pratama et al. (2022) state that digital marketing gives consumers the freedom to make purchasing decisions or not to buy, simply by using devices such as smartphones, without requiring much time and effort. This means that the purchasing process becomes more efficient and flexible. Purchase decision-making is the final process of an individual choosing the product or service that they feel best meets their needs. Naruliza, et al. (2021) explain that the effective use of digital marketing has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions. The more intensively a company uses digital marketing strategies, the greater the opportunity for increased sales of the products offered.

H1: Digital Marketing has a Positive and Significant Effect on Purchase Decisions.

2.2. Digital Marketing and Competitive Pricing

Digital Marketing is the activity of marketing products by utilizing digital technology applications to create, convey, and exchange value to customers. Wijaya, et al. (2022) state that the development of digital marketing has now become a more accessible means for both producers and consumers to interact and conduct direct and indirect sales transactions through various digital platforms. With the development of platforms such as TikTok Shop, companies can reach consumers. However, apart from digital marketing factors, price plays the most dominant role in purchasing decisions. Tjiptono (2022) defines price as the overall cost that must be incurred by the buyer to benefit from a product. Effective pricing involves considering factors such as production costs, perceived value by consumers, and prices set by competitors. Price not only reflects costs but can also be an indicator of product quality in the eyes of consumers. Psychological pricing strategies, such as setting prices ending in 999, can give consumers a different perception of price. Neuhaus, et al. (2022) state that price is an important part of the marketing mix that plays a significant role in supporting the achievement of company goals. Therefore, companies are required to set prices that are not only acceptable to consumers but also in line with their purchasing power, so as to drive consumer interest and generate profits from the products being marketed. Competitive pricing is defined as pricing that has optimal competitiveness at the prices offered by competitors in the market, so that a competitive pricing strategy, when combined with the use of digital marketing, becomes the key to influencing purchasing decisions and maintaining consumer loyalty.

H2: Digital Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Prices.

2.3. Competitive Price and Purchase Decisions

Price is an important element in a marketing strategy because it reflects the position of a product compared to products offered by similar competitors in the market. pricing includes aspects such as payments, discounts, and special promotions. The right pricing strategy can create added value for consumers and affect the overall image of the product. Pricing plays a significant role in creating a perception of value in the eyes of customers, shaping product image, and influencing consumers' final purchase decisions in purchasing a product. This is supported by the opinion of Kotler and Armstrong (2020) stating that there is a negative relationship between price and purchase decisions; The higher the price of a product means that the consumer's tendency to buy will decrease, and conversely, the lower the price, the more likely the purchase will increase. Mulyana (2021) explained that the price aspect is the main consideration that affects consumers in determining buying interest. Comparisons between similar products with different prices from various sources are often taken into consideration by consumers when choosing a product. A competitive price perception, namely a price that is considered commensurate with the quality and benefits received, can increase perceived value, strengthen consumer confidence, and ultimately encourage students' purchasing decisions.

H3: Competitive Pricing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

2.4. Competitive Price in Mediating Digital Marketing and Purchasung Decision

The application of digital marketing provides a strategic advantage for business people in developing a more competitive price structure through the efficiency of promotional costs and the implementation of discounts (Tjiptono, 2020). Competitive pricing plays a role as a factor in influencing consumer purchasing decisions, especially in the fierce market competition. Digital marketing allows companies to offer more competitive prices through promotional fees, data-driven discount strategies. Data obtained from social media, such as consumer behavior, market trends, and consumer needs, can be used to optimize prices to remain competitive and attract consumer buying interest. Thus, competitive pricing is not only the result of a digital marketing strategy but also functions as a mediator that strengthens the relationship between digital marketing and purchasing decisions (Grewal et al., 2020).

H4: Competitive Pricing in Mediating the Influence of Digital Marketing on Purchase Decisions

3. Research Method

This study uses a quantitative research method by collecting respondent data. The focus is on TikTok Shop users in Pontianak City. Data will be collected through the distribution of questionnaires directly to respondents. Respondent data will be analyzed using sampling techniques, using Accidental Sampling. The results of the answers are measured using a rating scale interpreted in the Three Box Method criteria. The sample size is 136 respondents, and the population includes TikTok users who have had experience buying at TikTok Shop. The results of the tabulation of respondents' answers on the questionnaire were then processed using the AMOS tool. This includes validity testing, reliability testing, goodness-of-fit criteria, hypothesis testing, and mediation testing.

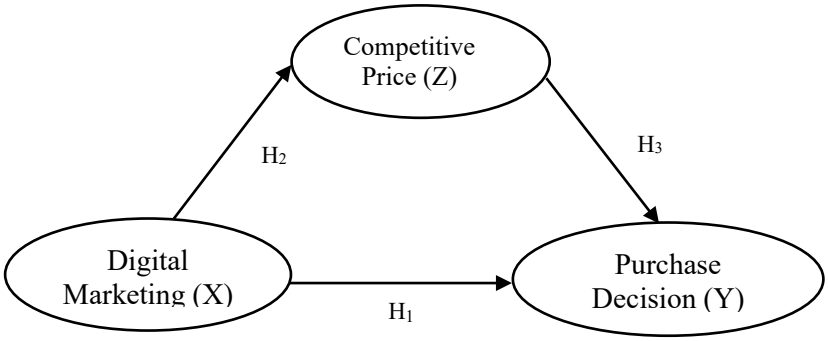

Figure 2. Research Framework

Table 1. Variables and Indicators

Research Variables	Operational Definition	Indicator
Digital Marketing	Activities promote products and services using digital distribution channels.	1. Accessibility 2. Interactivity 3. Entertainment 4. Informativeness
Competitive Pricing	A pricing strategy offered by a product that is equal to or more attractive than competitors in the market.	1. Price compatibility with benefits 2. Cheaper price 3. Price compatibility with quality
Purchase Decision	The process by which consumers choose and buy a product after making a consideration.	1. Product Selection 2. Brand Choice 3. Payment Methods

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Testing the Validity and Reliability of Endogenous Constructs

Construct validity testing was carried out to ensure the accuracy of the questionnaire used. Validity can be seen through the value of Standardized Loading Estimates, which must exceed 0.50, and Average Variance Extract (AVE) with a minimum value of 0.50. and construct reliability testing aims to assess the consistency of participants' responses in filling out the questionnaire. The reliability level can be known through the Construct Reliability (CR), which must reach more than 0.70. The results of the analysis show that.

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Variance Extract of Endogenous Constructs

Construct	Digital Marketing			Competitive Pricing			Purchase Decision		
Item	Std. Loading	(Std. Loading)^2	Std. Error	Std. Loading	(Std. Loading)^2	Std. Error	Std. Loading	(Std. Loading)^2	Std. Error
DM1	0,693	0,480	0,519						
DM2	0,636	0,404	0,595						
DM3	0,728	0,529	0,470						
DM4	0,680	0,462	0,537						
HK1				0,647	0,418	0,581			
HK2				0,729	0,531	0,468			
HK3				0,712	0,506	0,493			

KP1			0,791	0,625	0,374
KP2			0,852	0,725	0,274
KP3			0,820	0,672	0,327
Σλ	2,737	2,088	2,463		
Σεj	2,121	1,542	0,975		
$(\Sigma\lambda)^2$	1,875	1,455	2,022		
$(\Sigma\lambda)^{2+\Sigma\varepsilon j}$	3,996	2,997	2,997		
AVE	0,500	0,500	0,674		
CR	0,779	0,738	0,861		

Source: Processed data, 2025

The results of the construct reliability test (CR) for all variables are above the cut of value value of 0.70, so that the data is reliable. The results of the construct variance extract (AVE) test show that all variables have reached above the value of 0.50, so that the data is valid.

4.2. Assessing Structural Model Identification

Table 3. Calculation of Degrees of Freedom

Number of distinct sample moments:	55
Number of distinct parameters to be estimated:	24
Degrees of freedom (55 – 24):	31

Source: Processed data, 2025

Based on the results of the analysis using the AMOS program, a degree of freedom value of 31 (positive value) was obtained. This shows that the research model is overidentified and can proceed to the next stage of analysis.

4.3. Goodness of Fit Criteria Testing

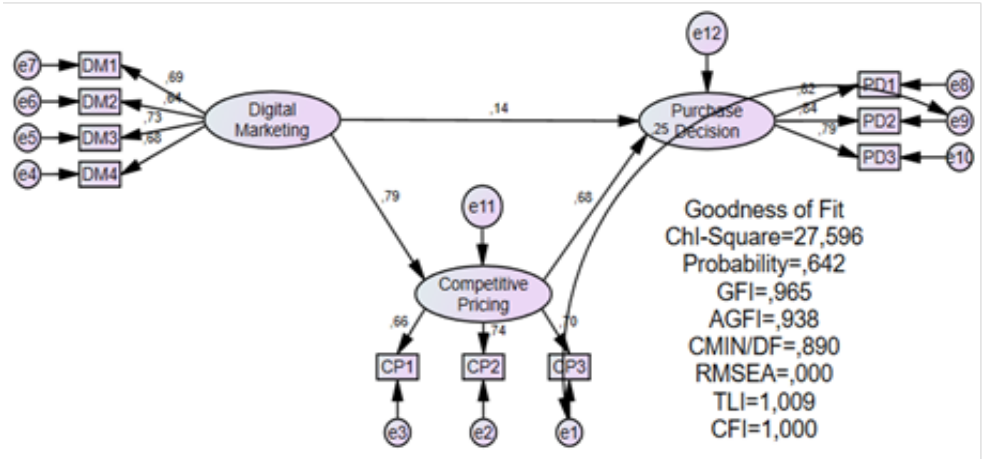

Figure 3. Full Model Path Results of Digital Marketing Variable Analysis on Purchase Decisions Through Competitive Prices

From the results above, it can be described as follows:

Table 4. Goodness of Fit Index Test Results

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
Chi-Square	27,596	≤164,216	Excellent
Probability	0,642	≥0,50	Excellent
GFI	0,965	≥0,90	Excellent
AGFI	0,938	≥0,90	Excellent

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN/DF	0,890	≤1	Excellent
RMSEA	0,000	≤0,08	Excellent
TLI	1,009	≥0,95	Excellent
CFI	1,000	≥0,95	Excellent

Source: Processed data, 2025

The output path diagram, it shows a chi-square value of 27,596 with df = 32; this figure is below the set cut-off value. In addition, the probability scores, RMSEA, Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), CMIN/DF, and Comparative Fit Index (CFI), have met the standards of goodness of fit criteria.

4.4. Hypothesis Test

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results

Hipotesis	C.R	*Cut-off Value*	P	*Cut-off Value*
H1*: Digital Marketing* has a Positive and Significant Effect on Purchase Decisions.	5,848	≥1,96	***	≤0,05
H2: *Digital Marketing* has a positive and significant effect on Competitive Prices.	0,400	≥1,96	0,689	≤0,05
H3: Competitive Pricing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.	3,544	≥1,96	***	≤0,05

Source: Processed data, 2025

Table 5 shows that digital marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. This is evidenced by a probability value (P) below <0.001 (with a sign ***), meeting all CR criteria >1.96 and P <0.05. This means that the better the implementation of digital marketing, the more it will influence the purchasing decisions of TikTok Shop users. This is in line with Kotler & Armstrong's (2023) theory that digital marketing can influence consumer perceptions, interest, and purchasing behavior. TikTok Shop features such as short videos, FYP, live shopping, and influencer marketing make product information more attractive, accessible, and relevant to students' needs. Various digital channels, including social media, e-commerce platforms, and search engines, help users access product information quickly and efficiently. The convenience gained by TikTok Shop users influences purchasing decisions without going through a complex or time-consuming process. This statement is supported by research by Putri, et al. (2022) and Yudhistira, et al. (2023), which shows that the more effective the digital marketing strategy, the higher the number of consumer purchases.

In addition, digital marketing does not have a positive or significant influence on competitive prices. From the results obtained, with a critical ratio (CR) of 0.748 and a probability value (P) of 0.689, both did not meet the criteria (CR >1.96 and P <0.05).

This means that the determination of digital marketing strategies has no effect on competitive pricing. Although digital marketing is effective in reaching TikTok Shop users, this strategy does not necessarily have a direct impact on product price adjustments or perceptions from the perspective of students in the city of Pontianak. Digital marketing only functions as a medium for conveying information, not as a price determinant. Prices on TikTok Shop are more influenced by other factors, such as promotional discounts, vouchers, competition, and seller strategies . This statement is supported by research by Zed, et al. (2025) and Farmelia, et al. (2022).

Furthermore, there is a positive and significant influence between competitive prices and consumer purchase decisions. This can be seen from the critical ratio (CR) value of 3.369 and (P) < 0.001, both of which meet the criteria with a CR exceeding 1.96 and P being below 0.05. This means that the more competitive the price, the more it will trigger purchasing decisions by TikTok Shop users. Prices that meet consumer expectations and reflect product quality will build trust and

encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions. Thus, competitive pricing strategies influence the purchasing decisions of TikTok Shop users. Students tend to choose products that are priced according to their benefits, are cheaper, and are of good quality. In terms of price, TikTok Shop is very strong because many sellers offer discounts, flash sales, free shipping, and discount vouchers. This statement is supported by the research of Lasfiana, et al. (2024) and Inkasari, et al. (2025), which states that competitive prices are the most dominant factor in purchasing decisions on e-commerce platforms.

4.5. Testing the Role of Competitive Price as a Mediating Variable

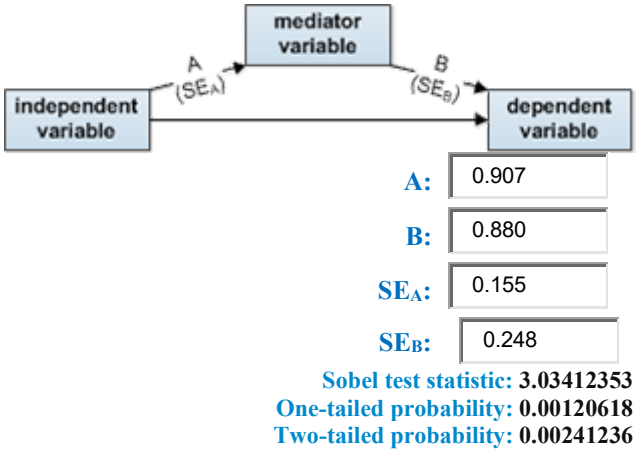

Figure 4. Results of the Sobel Test Calculation of the Role of Competitive Price in Mediating Digital Marketing and Purchase Decisions

From the image above, to prove the influence of competitive prices as a mediating variable, the Sobel Test method was carried out. The calculation results showed a value of 3.03412353 with a significance value of 0.00241236. In the Sobel Test, a mediation is considered feasible if the Z value is more than 1.90 and the cut-off value must be below 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is an influence of the competitive price variable as a mediator of digital marketing and purchase decisions. Interesting and informative digital content encourages Pontianak students to recognize and consider products. Price is the main basis for purchasing decisions, so the combination of digital marketing and competitive pricing influences the purchasing decisions of TikTok Shop users in Pontianak. This statement is supported by the research of Harisandi, et al. (2023) and Ibrahim, et al. (2025), which found that competitive pricing strengthens the influence of marketing on purchasing decisions.

4. Conclusion

From the analysis and discussion of the influence of digital marketing on the purchasing decisions of TikTok Shop users in Pontianak through competitive pricing, three out of four hypotheses showed an influence, while one hypothesis was found to have no influence. The results of this study indicate: (1) digital marketing has a direct effect on the purchasing decisions of students in Pontianak, showing that students are highly responsive to creative, informative, and interactive marketing content on TikTok Shop, which can shape perceptions and encourage purchases; (2) digital marketing does not have a significant effect on competitive pricing, as the shows that students in Pontianak assess prices independently, unaffected by digital content, but rather by factors such as discount promotions, vouchers, competition, and seller strategies. Therefore, sellers on TikTok Shop cannot rely solely on digital content; (3) competitive prices influence consumer purchasing decisions in Pontianak, especially among students with limited budgets, who are more likely to choose products with prices that match their benefits and affordability. Further analysis through the Sobel test examines the mediating role of competitive prices in strengthening the relationship between digital marketing and purchasing decisions. Competitive pricing is a factor that enhances the effectiveness of digital marketing. TikTok Shop users in Pontianak are not only interested in digital marketing, promotions, or information delivered

digitally, but also assess the alignment between price and product value. The combination of effective digital marketing strategies with competitive pricing can create positive perceptions and drive consumer interest in purchasing.

Based on the above conclusions, the researchers recommend several strategies to increase purchasing decisions among TikTok Shop users who are students in the city of Pontianak: Maintain and optimize digital marketing strategies to reach the student segment. Sellers need to pay attention to the tendencies of students as digital consumers who prioritize value, compare prices, and are responsive to promotions. Additionally, this research can serve as a reference for local businesses and SMEs in Pontianak seeking to expand their market through TikTok Shop.

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