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Customer Journey Mapping In The Multi-Platform Era: A Touchpoint Analysis Of Purchase Decision-Making

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Abstract

The rapid proliferation of digital platforms has fundamentally transformed how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products. This study investigates the role of multi-platform touchpoints in shaping customer purchase decisions through the lens of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM). Drawing on a mixed-methods design, data were collected from 385 online shoppers in Indonesia through structured questionnaires and supplemented by 20 in-depth interviews. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to quantify the relative influence of each touchpoint across five journey stages: awareness, consideration, evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase loyalty. Findings reveal that social media platforms, particularly Instagram and TikTok, exert the strongest influence during the awareness stage ($\beta = 0.742$, $p < 0.001$), while e-commerce platforms dominate at the evaluation and purchase stages. Customer reviews and ratings emerged as the most persuasive touchpoint across all stages ($\beta = 0.764$). The study further identifies critical cross-platform switching patterns, demonstrating that consumers typically engage an average of 4.7 touchpoints before completing a purchase. These findings provide actionable insights for marketing managers seeking to optimise omnichannel strategies and allocate resources across the customer journey.

Keywords: *Customer Journey Mapping, Multi-Platform, Touchpoint, Purchase Decision, Omnichannel Marketing.*

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary consumer landscape has undergone a radical transformation driven by the exponential growth of digital platforms (Niemand et al., 2020). Today's consumers no longer follow a linear path from product awareness to purchase (Kim, 2025). Instead, they navigate a complex, non-sequential web of interactions spanning social media (Tran & Khoa, 2026), search engines, e-commerce marketplaces (Mogaji, 2025), messaging applications, and physical retail environments (Mahendra, 2026). This fragmented yet interconnected ecosystem has rendered traditional marketing funnels inadequate as analytical and strategic tools, necessitating a more dynamic and granular framework for understanding consumer behaviour (Hasan, 2025). Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) has emerged as one of the most promising methodologies in this regard, offering marketers a structured approach to visualising and analysing the entire spectrum of consumer interactions with a brand across multiple touchpoints and platforms (Astuti et al., 2025).

The concept of the customer journey is not new; it traces its roots to the early

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service marketing literature of the 1990s, where researchers began recognising the importance of process-based thinking in understanding service encounters (McCarthy et al., 2024) (Mele & Russo-Spena, 2022) (Kufile et al., 2023). However, the digital revolution of the twenty-first century has expanded both the scope and complexity of this journey considerably (Puspita & Magfiroh, 2025). Consumers now routinely switch between platforms within a single purchase episode discovering a product through a TikTok video, reading reviews on Google, comparing prices on Tokopedia, and completing the transaction on Shopee a phenomenon increasingly referred to as the "cross-platform journey" (Huebner, 2020) (Nyagadza et al., 2025). Each of these interactions constitutes a touchpoint, and the cumulative effect of these touchpoints shapes consumer perceptions, attitudes, and ultimately, purchase decisions.

The importance of understanding multi-platform touchpoints in the Indonesian context cannot be overstated (Rimadewi et al., 2025). Indonesia represents one of the largest and fastest-growing digital economies in Southeast Asia, with more than 200 million active internet users and a mobile-first consumer population that is highly engaged across platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Shopee, Tokopedia, and WhatsApp (Ismaliyanto et al., 2026) (Farah et al., 2022). E-commerce revenue in Indonesia surpassed USD 51 billion in 2024, with projections indicating continued double-digit growth through 2028 (Choudhary et al., 2026) (Kufile et al., 2023). Despite this explosive growth, empirical research examining how Indonesian consumers navigate multi-platform journeys remains limited, particularly studies that combine quantitative measurement with qualitative depth. This gap constitutes the primary motivation for the present study.

Existing literature on CJM has made significant contributions to our understanding of consumer-brand interactions. Kakalejcik et al. (2019) proposed a comprehensive framework distinguishing pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase phases, while emphasising the cumulative and dynamic nature of customer experience (Kakalejčík et al., 2019). More recently, scholars have begun to extend this framework to digital and omnichannel environments (Koch et al., 2023) (Mammassis, 2025) (Bouaddi, 2026). However, most existing studies have focused on single-platform or dual-platform scenarios, and few have attempted to map the full spectrum of touchpoints from awareness through post-purchase loyalty in a multi-platform context. Furthermore, the specific mechanisms through which individual touchpoints influence purchase decisions at each stage of the journey remain insufficiently understood, particularly in emerging market contexts.

This study addresses these gaps by pursuing three interrelated objectives. First, it seeks to map the customer journey across five distinct stages awareness, consideration, evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase loyalty identifying the key digital and social touchpoints encountered at each stage. Second, it aims to quantify the relative influence of each touchpoint category on purchase decision-making using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Third, it investigates platform-specific preferences and cross-platform switching behaviours to provide actionable insights for omnichannel marketing strategy. By combining a large-scale survey with in-depth interviews, the study adopts a mixed-methods approach that captures both the statistical significance and contextual richness of the phenomenon under investigation.

The theoretical foundation of this research draws on several complementary frameworks. The stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) model provides a basis for

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understanding how external touchpoint stimuli trigger internal cognitive and affective responses that ultimately manifest in observable purchase behaviours (Hayes & Kelliher, 2022). Social influence theory helps explain the disproportionate impact of peer reviews and influencer content on consumer evaluation (Liang et al., 2025). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and its successors inform our understanding of platform adoption and engagement patterns (Zhang, 2025).

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the research methodology, including the research design, data collection procedures, and analytical framework. Section 3 presents the results and discussion, integrating quantitative findings with qualitative insights. Section 4 concludes with theoretical contributions, managerial implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

METHOD

This study employed a convergent mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative survey data with qualitative in-depth interviews to achieve both statistical generalisability and interpretive depth. The research was conducted in three sequential phases: instrument development, data collection, and integrated analysis.

Research Design and Participants

The quantitative phase utilised a structured questionnaire administered online via Google Forms to a sample of 385 Indonesian online shoppers aged 18 to 45 years. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's formula, targeting a population of active e-commerce users estimated at 10 million in the Central Java region (J. W. Creswell, 2020) . Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that all respondents had made at least one online purchase in the preceding three months and were active on at least two digital platforms (J. Creswell, 2013). The qualitative phase recruited 20 participants through snowball sampling. Table 1 summarises the overall research profile.

Table 1. Research Profile and Methodological Specifications

Research Attribute	Description
Research Design	Mixed-methods: quantitative survey + qualitative interview
Target Population	Online shoppers aged 18–45 in Indonesia
Sample Size	385 respondents (survey); 20 in-depth interviewees
Sampling Technique	Purposive sampling (survey); snowball sampling (interview)
Data Collection Period	January – March 2025
Analysis Method	Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) & thematic analysis
Software Used	AMOS 24.0, SPSS 26.0, NVivo 14
Validity Approach	Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA); member-checking for qualitative

Source: Primary Data (2025)

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Instrument and Measures

The survey instrument comprised 42 items distributed across six constructs: platform usage patterns, touchpoint frequency and salience, information processing, social influence, perceived trust, and purchase intention. All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.78 to 0.91, confirming acceptable internal consistency. Convergent and discriminant validity were established through CFA with AVE values exceeding 0.50. The qualitative interviews followed a semi-structured protocol, with each session lasting approximately 45–60 minutes.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using two-stage SEM in AMOS 24.0. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis in NVivo 14, following Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework (Klassen et al., 2012). Integration occurred through a joint display matrix enabling triangulation. Table 2 presents the demographic profile of survey respondents.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents (n = 385)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	189	49.1%
	Female	196	50.9%
Age Group	18–24 years	112	29.1%
	25–34 years	148	38.4%
	35–45 years	125	32.5%
Online Purchase Frequency	1–2 times/month	98	25.5%
	3–5 times/month	162	42.1%
	> 5 times/month	125	32.5%
Dominant Platform	Instagram	134	34.8%
	TikTok	118	30.6%
	Tokopedia/Shopee	89	23.1%
	Others	44	11.4%

Source: Primary Data (2025)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Customer Journey Stages and Platform Engagement

The study identified a five-stage customer journey model awareness, consideration, evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase loyalty consistent with established CJM frameworks (Thomsen & Eikemo, 2010). However, the multi-platform nature of contemporary consumer behaviour introduced significant complexity, as respondents reported an average of 4.7 touchpoints per purchase episode (SD = 1.3), spanning an average of 3.2 distinct platforms (SD = 0.9). This

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finding confirms the fragmented and non-linear character of the modern customer journey, conceptualisation of the "consumer decision journey" as a cyclical rather than sequential process.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual customer journey map illustrating dominant touchpoints at each stage, while Figure 2 visualises the radar chart of platform engagement intensity across all five journey phases. The radar chart reveals a pronounced differentiation in platform roles: Instagram and TikTok peak sharply at the awareness stage, whereas Tokopedia and Shopee demonstrate elevated intensity during the evaluation and purchase stages. Search engines occupy a moderate but consistent presence across the consideration and evaluation stages. This functional specialisation of platforms reflects the "platform ecosystem" perspective (Parker et al., 2016), wherein each platform fulfils a distinct role in the consumer's information-processing sequence. These results have direct implications for marketing budget allocation, suggesting that a stage-differentiated approach to platform investment is more effective than uniform spending across channels.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
AWARENESS	**CONSIDERATION**	**EVALUATION**	**PURCHASE**	**LOYALTY**
Social Media	Search Engines	E-Commerce Pages	One-Click Checkout	Email Follow-up
Influencer Posts	Product Reviews	Ratings & Reviews	Live Chat	Loyalty Programmes
Word of Mouth	Influencer Content	Price Comparison	Payment Gateway	Re-engagement

Figure 1. Multi-Platform Customer Journey Map: Dominant Touchpoints Across Five Stages

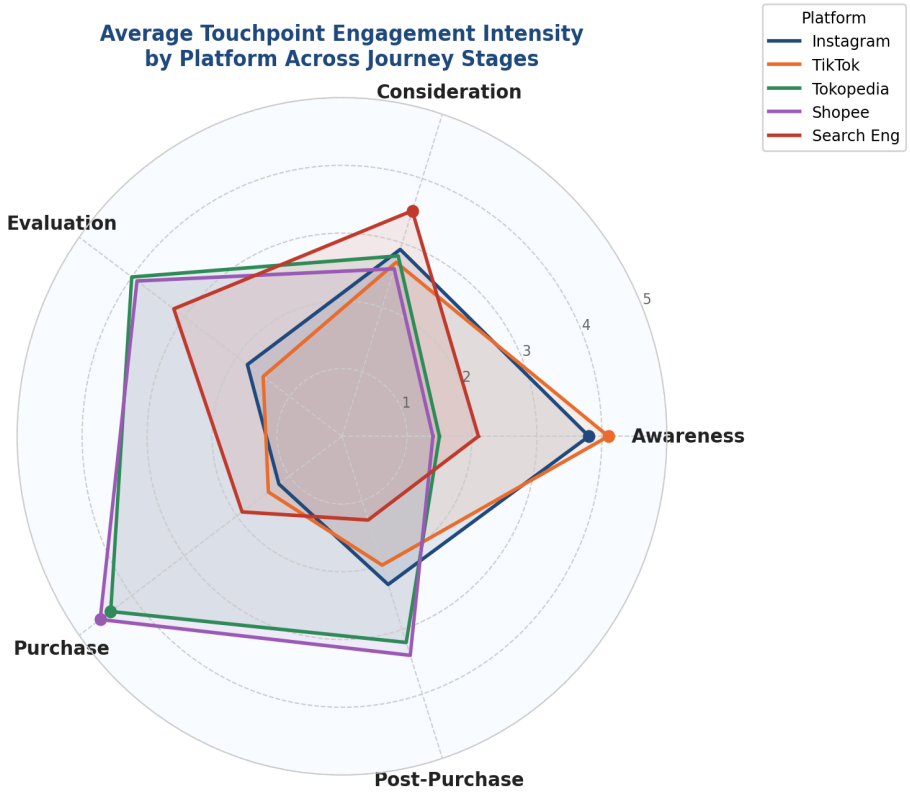

Figure 2. Radar Chart: Average Touchpoint Engagement Intensity by Platform Across Journey Stages

Touchpoint Influence on Purchase Decision: SEM Results

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The structural model demonstrated excellent fit indices (CFI = 0.961, TLI = 0.954, RMSEA = 0.048, SRMR = 0.052), confirming the adequacy of the proposed model. Table 3 presents the standardised path coefficients (β) for each touchpoint variable across the five journey stages. Social media discovery via Instagram and TikTok emerged as the strongest predictor of brand awareness (β = 0.742, p < 0.001), reflecting the dominant role of algorithmic content delivery and short-form video in the Indonesian digital ecosystem. This finding is consistent with prior research demonstrating the persuasive power of social media in generating initial brand exposure.

At the consideration stage, influencer recommendations (β = 0.681) and search engine reviews (β = 0.593) were most influential. The prominence of influencer content reflects the growing importance of parasocial relationships in shaping consumer evaluations. The evaluation stage was dominated by customer reviews and ratings (β = 0.764, p < 0.001) the highest coefficient in the entire model underscoring the central role of electronic word-of-mouth in consumer decision-making. At the purchase stage, one-click checkout (β = 0.689) and live chat (β = 0.512) were significant predictors, while post-purchase loyalty was driven by loyalty programmes (β = 0.621) and personalised email follow-up (β = 0.438). Figure 3 visualises these SEM path coefficients as a grouped bar chart, enabling direct comparison of touchpoint strength across stages.

Table 3. SEM Results: Touchpoint Influence on Purchase Decision Across Journey Stages

Touchpoint Variable	Stage	β Coefficient	SE	p-value	Sig.
Social Media Discovery	Awareness	0.742	0.041	< 0.001	***
Influencer Recommendation	Consideration	0.681	0.048	< 0.001	***
Search Engine Review	Consideration	0.593	0.053	< 0.001	***
E-Commerce Product Page	Evaluation	0.718	0.039	< 0.001	***
Customer Review/Rating	Evaluation	0.764	0.036	< 0.001	***
Live Chat / Chatbot	Purchase	0.512	0.061	0.003	**
One-Click Checkout	Purchase	0.689	0.043	< 0.001	***
Post-Purchase Email	Loyalty	0.438	0.068	0.011	*
Loyalty Programme	Loyalty	0.621	0.049	< 0.001	***

*Note: ***p < 0.001; **p < 0.01; *p < 0.05. SE = Standard Error; β = Standardised Path Coefficient*
Source: SEM Analysis (AMOS 24.0, 2025)

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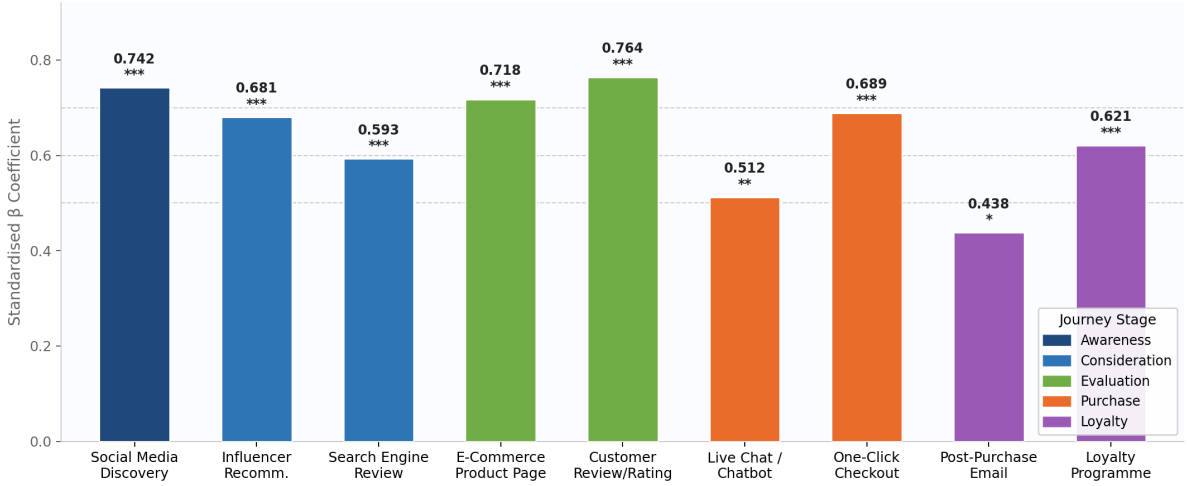

Figure 3. Standardised Path Coefficients (β) for Touchpoints Across Customer Journey Stages

*Note: ***p < 0.001; **p < 0.01; *p < 0.05. Source: SEM Analysis (AMOS 24.0, 2025)*

Cross-Platform Switching Patterns

Table 4 presents the platform-specific engagement rates across the five journey stages, revealing a clear pattern of cross-platform switching that reflects the functional differentiation between platforms. Social media platforms (Instagram and TikTok) dominate the awareness stage, where their algorithmic content delivery and visual format are most effective, achieving engagement rates of 78.4% and 82.1% respectively. However, their influence declines sharply at the evaluation and purchase stages, where e-commerce platforms (Tokopedia at 88.4% and Shopee at 91.2%) take precedence. Search engines maintain moderate influence across the consideration (74.3%) and evaluation (68.5%) stages but are less prominent at the purchase stage.

These cross-platform switching patterns have significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, they extend the "platform ecosystem" perspective (Parker et al., 2016) to the consumer journey domain by demonstrating that platforms are not interchangeable but serve functionally distinct roles in information processing and transaction facilitation. From a practical standpoint, the patterns indicate that marketing resource allocation should be stage-specific. Figure 4 below visualises these switching dynamics as a multi-line trend chart, making the convergence and divergence of platform engagement across stages immediately apparent. Notably, the intersection of social media and e-commerce engagement lines at the consideration stage (approximately 60%) represents a strategic inflection point at which brands must ensure a seamless cross-platform handoff to prevent consumer drop-off.

Table 4. Platform Engagement Rate by Customer Journey Stage (%)

Journey Stage	Instagram (%)	TikTok (%)	Tokopedia (%)	Shopee (%)	Search Engine (%)
Awareness	78.4	82.1	41.3	39.7	55.6
Consideration	61.2	58.9	63.4	60.1	74.3
Evaluation	43.7	39.4	81.2	79.8	68.5

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Journey Stage	Instagram (%)	TikTok (%)	Tokopedia (%)	Shopee (%)	Search Engine (%)
Purchase Decision	28.9	31.6	88.4	91.2	42.7
Post-Purchase / Loyalty	52.3	46.7	71.4	73.9	30.1

Source: Primary Data (2025)

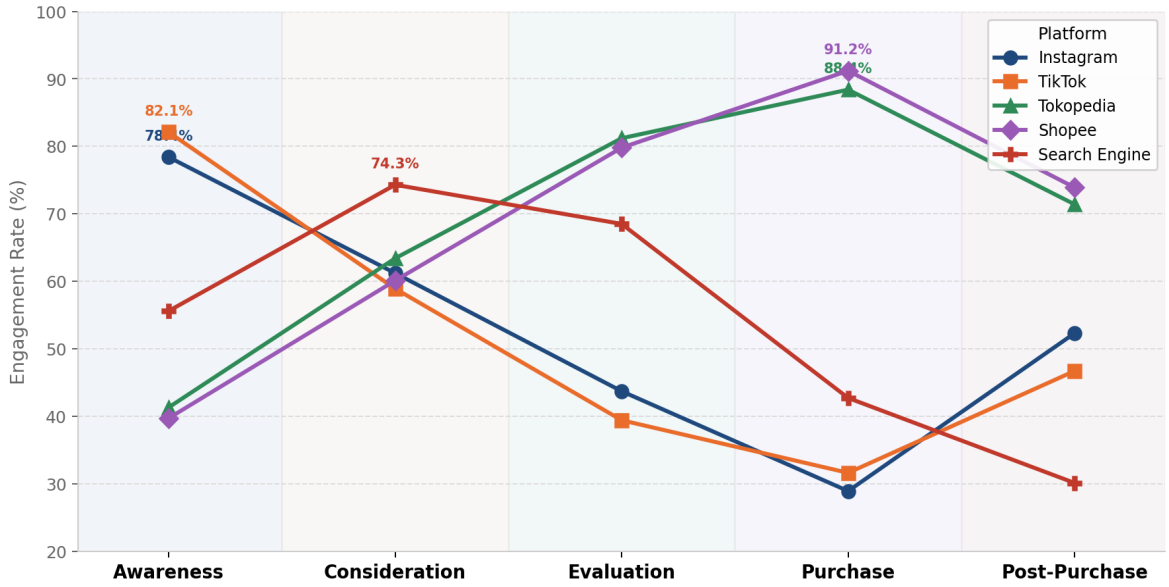

Figure 4. Cross-Platform Switching Pattern: Engagement Rate (%) by Customer Journey Stage

Qualitative Insights: Platform Literacy and Contextual Decision-Making

The qualitative findings enriched the quantitative results by revealing the emotional and contextual dimensions of multi-platform consumer behaviour. Six dominant themes emerged from thematic analysis: platform literacy, influencer trust, review reliance, cross-platform corroboration, checkout convenience, and post-purchase engagement. Participants described a well-developed sense of "platform literacy" an intuitive understanding of which platform to consult for specific types of information at different points in their journey. A representative participant articulated this clearly: "I never thought about buying this skincare brand until I saw the review on TikTok. After that, I started searching for more information and comparing it with other brands" (Participant 7, female, 27 years old). Another participant described cross-platform corroboration: "I always check the star rating on Shopee first, then I read the detailed reviews and look at the buyer photos. If the reviews are consistent across Tokopedia as well, I feel more confident" (Participant 12, male, 33 years old).

Figure 5 presents a grouped bar chart showing the frequency of each qualitative theme across three age cohorts. A notable finding is the age-differentiated pattern of theme salience. Younger respondents (18–24 years) exhibited greater reliance on influencer trust and platform literacy, consistent with their higher digital nativity and social media engagement. In contrast, respondents aged 35–45 showed stronger reliance on reviews, cross-platform corroboration, and checkout convenience, reflecting a more deliberative and risk-averse decision-making orientation. Post-purchase engagement themes were more prominent among older age cohorts, suggesting that loyalty programme design should be tailored to age-specific

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behavioural patterns. These qualitative insights collectively demonstrate that multi-platform consumer behaviour is not merely a structural phenomenon but is deeply embedded in social, cognitive, and contextual dimensions that quantitative methods alone cannot fully capture.

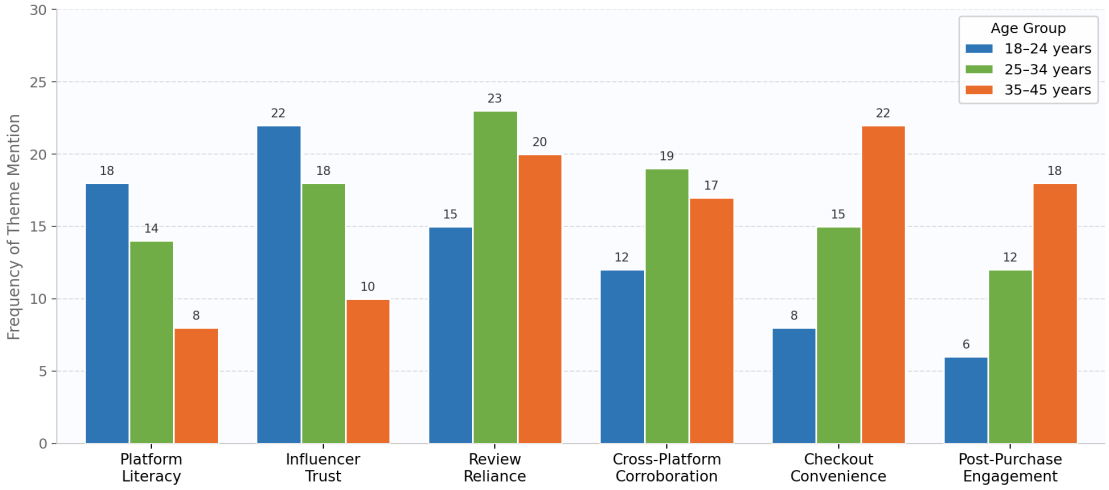

Figure 5. Qualitative Theme Frequency by Age Group (In-Depth Interview Analysis, n = 20)

The synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings yields several important implications for marketing theory and practice. Theoretically, the study contributes to the CJM literature by providing empirical evidence of platform functional specialisation within multi-platform journey structures. It further extends the S-O-R model by demonstrating that the nature of the stimulus (platform type) moderates the organism's response (information processing mode) and the resulting behaviour (purchase decision). Practically, the findings suggest that firms should invest in integrated analytics systems capable of tracking cross-platform touchpoints, develop platform-differentiated content strategies aligned with functional roles, prioritise the management of electronic word-of-mouth as the single most influential touchpoint across the entire journey, and design seamless cross-platform transitions particularly at the consideration stage.

CONCLUSION

This study provides comprehensive empirical evidence that the modern consumer purchase journey is inherently multi-platform, non-linear, and touchpoint-rich, with consumers engaging an average of 4.7 touchpoints across 3.2 platforms before completing a purchase. Using a mixed-methods approach combining Structural Equation Modelling with in-depth interviews, the study demonstrates that social media platforms exert the strongest influence during the awareness stage, while e-commerce platforms dominate at the evaluation and purchase stages. Customer reviews and ratings emerged as the most persuasive touchpoint across all stages ($\beta = 0.764$), underscoring the critical importance of electronic word-of-mouth management. Cross-platform switching patterns reveal functional platform specialisation, with important implications for stage-specific allocation of marketing resources. Qualitative findings further demonstrate that platform literacy and review reliance are age-differentiated phenomena, suggesting the need for demographically segmented engagement strategies. These findings enrich the theoretical literature on Customer Journey Mapping and omnichannel marketing while offering actionable guidance for practitioners. Future research should investigate the temporal dynamics

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of multi-platform journeys, examine sector-specific variations, and explore the role of AI-driven personalisation in reshaping touchpoint influence.

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