



# The Power of Shopee Mall Branding in Reducing Counterfeit Risk and Increasing Purchase Intention Among Gen Z

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**Abstract.** *The growth of e-commerce has made online marketplaces a major channel for purchasing fashion products, yet it has also increased consumer concerns about counterfeit goods, especially in shoes and sneakers. This study examines the role of Shopee Mall Signal Perception in increasing Purchase Intention for original shoes among Gen Z consumers by considering the mediating roles of Perceived Shopping Security and Decision Convenience. A quantitative explanatory approach was used, involving 239 Gen Z Shopee users in Indonesia selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through an online questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS. The findings show that Shopee Mall Signal Perception positively affects Perceived Shopping Security ( $\beta = 0.430$ ), Perceived Shopping Security improves Decision Convenience ( $\beta = 0.399$ ), and Decision Convenience increases Purchase Intention ( $\beta = 0.359$ ). Shopee Mall Signal Perception also has a direct effect on Purchase Intention ( $\beta = 0.182$ ), while the serial mediation effect through Perceived Shopping Security and Decision Convenience is significant ( $\beta = 0.062$ ). These findings imply that marketplace labels can function as authenticity signals that reduce uncertainty, simplify consumer decisions, and strengthen confidence in purchasing original products online.*

**Keywords:** Branding; Gen Z Consumers; Perceived Shopping Security; Purchase Intention; Shopee Mall.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of e-commerce has changed the way young consumers search, compare, and purchase fashion products. In Indonesia, marketplace platforms have become a familiar shopping space because they offer broad product choices, price transparency, promotional flexibility, and practical transaction systems. Yet this convenience also produces a less visible problem: consumers cannot directly inspect product authenticity, seller credibility, or material quality before buying. The problem becomes sharper in fashion categories such as shoes and sneakers, where originality is tied not only to product function but also to identity, lifestyle, and brand value. In this situation, consumers need credible marketplace cues that help them separate authentic products from uncertain or potentially counterfeit alternatives. Recent studies show that trust, perceived risk, perceived security, and consumer perception remain central in explaining online purchase intention and e-commerce decision-making (Handoyo, 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Ghosh, 2024).

The Shopee Mall label can be understood as a marketplace-level authenticity signal. Unlike ordinary seller information, this label represents platform recognition of official brands, authorized distributors, or sellers that meet specific governance standards. From the perspective

of signaling theory, the label reduces uncertainty by communicating credibility to consumers who do not have complete information about product authenticity. This is especially relevant for original shoes because consumers often judge products only through photos, prices, descriptions, and seller claims. In digital markets where counterfeit risks are difficult to detect, certification and platform assurance mechanisms can increase buyer confidence, reduce evaluation effort, and support safer transactions (Lin et al., 2025; Peinkofer & Jin, 2023; Al-Adwan et al., 2022).

For Generation Z consumers, digital trust signals are particularly important. Gen Z consumers are familiar with marketplace applications, online reviews, social media recommendations, and digital promotions, but familiarity does not automatically remove hesitation. In fact, exposure to many product alternatives, unofficial sellers, and promotional claims may make young consumers more selective. When they perceive Shopee Mall as providing stronger transaction security, seller accountability, and return assurance, they are more likely to feel protected from counterfeit risk and purchase uncertainty. Perceived shopping security therefore becomes a psychological bridge between marketplace signals and consumer confidence in buying original shoes online (Tran & Nguyen, 2022; Quan et al., 2025; Hipólito et al., 2025).

Beyond security, the Shopee Mall label may also shape decision convenience. Consumers who believe that the label filters more credible sellers can compare products more easily, reduce search burden, and make decisions with less hesitation. This study therefore examines how Shopee Mall Signal Perception influences Purchase Intention for original shoes among Gen Z consumers through Perceived Shopping Security and Decision Convenience. The contribution of this study lies in positioning marketplace labeling not merely as a seller classification feature, but as an authenticity signal that reduces uncertainty, simplifies evaluation, and encourages purchase intention in the context of original footwear purchases (Zeqiri et al., 2023; Syamsuar & Witarsyah, 2025; Ahn & Lee, 2024).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study is grounded in the argument that online purchase intention is not formed only by product attractiveness, but also by the consumer's ability to interpret credible marketplace signals under uncertainty. In e-commerce, consumers face information asymmetry because product authenticity, seller reliability, and post-purchase protection cannot be directly verified before payment. Signaling theory explains that platform labels such as Shopee Mall can function as credibility cues that help consumers distinguish official or authorized sellers

from ordinary sellers. In high-risk product categories such as shoes and sneakers, such labels become more than visual markers; they operate as mechanisms for reducing counterfeit anxiety and strengthening confidence in product originality. Recent studies confirm that trust, perceived risk, perceived security, and credibility cues significantly influence online purchase decisions (Handoyo, 2024; Tran & Nguyen, 2022; Wang et al., 2022).

Shopee Mall itself is a premium marketplace feature provided by Shopee for selected brand owners and official distributors. Sellers under Shopee Mall are required to comply with stricter platform standards, including product authenticity guarantees, structured product information, higher-quality product presentation, and customer protection policies such as extended return periods and refund guarantees for counterfeit products. As a result, Shopee Mall functions not only as a seller classification system, but also as a platform-based governance mechanism intended to reduce uncertainty and increase consumer confidence in online transactions. In the context of counterfeit-prone product categories such as shoes, the Shopee Mall label may serve as an important marketplace signal that helps consumers evaluate seller legitimacy and product originality before making purchasing decisions.

However, marketplace signals do not automatically lead to purchase intention unless consumers translate them into perceived shopping security and easier decision-making. This means the Shopee Mall label should be examined not merely as a seller-status feature, but as a psychological signal that reduces hesitation, simplifies product evaluation, and increases decision convenience. Prior research shows that certification mechanisms, trust in sellers, and perceived platform security are important in encouraging consumers to proceed from evaluation to purchase intention (Lin et al., 2025; Peinkofer & Jin, 2023; Wang et al., 2023). Therefore, this research is justified because it connects marketplace labeling, security perception, and decision convenience in explaining Gen Z consumers' intention to buy original shoes.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the relationship between Shopee Mall Signal Perception, Perceived Shopping Security, Decision Convenience, and Purchase Intention. This design was considered appropriate because the study aimed to test predictive relationships among latent variables rather than merely describe consumer behavior. The research focused on Gen Z consumers in Indonesia who actively use Shopee and have experience searching for or purchasing shoes through the platform. The sample consisted of 239 valid respondents selected through

purposive sampling. Respondents were required to be aged 18–27 years, active Shopee users, familiar with Shopee Mall labels, and have searched for or purchased shoes on Shopee.

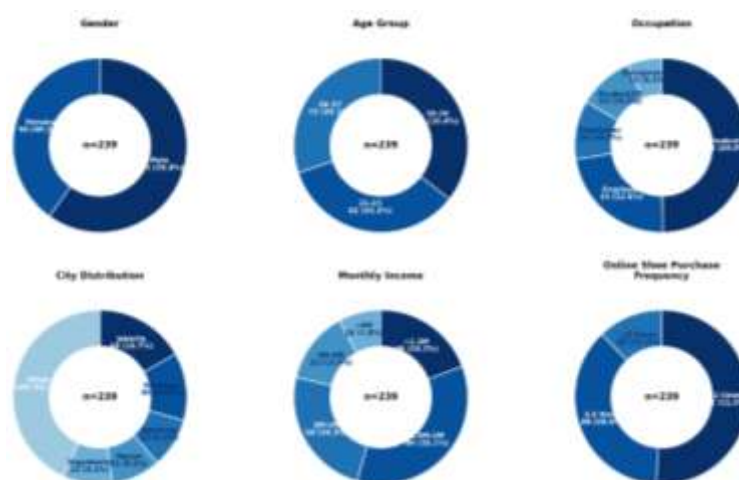
Primary data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed through Instagram, WhatsApp groups, TikTok, and other social media channels. All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, meaning strongly disagree, to 5, meaning strongly agree. The constructs measured in this study include Shopee Mall Signal Perception as the independent variable, Perceived Shopping Security and Decision Convenience as mediating variables, and Purchase Intention as the dependent variable.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling through SmartPLS. PLS-SEM was selected because it is suitable for examining complex predictive models involving latent constructs, mediation paths, and consumer behavior relationships in marketing research (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Ringle et al., 2023). The analysis covered outer model evaluation, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted. The inner model was evaluated using collinearity testing, R-square, path coefficients, bootstrapping, and mediation analysis to determine the significance of direct and indirect effects.

#### 4. FINDINGS AND DUSCUSSION

##### Respondent Profile

The respondents in this study consisted of 239 Gen Z consumers who met the predetermined criteria, namely active Shopee users, had seen the Shopee Mall label, and had searched for or purchased shoes on Shopee.



**Figure 1.** Demographic profile of respondents.

Based on gender, male respondents dominated the sample with 143 respondents or 59.83%, while female respondents accounted for 96 respondents or 40.17%. The respondents

were aged between 18 and 27 years, with the largest age groups being 23 years old, 20 years old, and 24 years old. In terms of occupation, most respondents were university students, representing 49.79% of the total sample, followed by private employees at 22.59%. The respondents were distributed across several urban areas in Indonesia, with Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Medan, Yogyakarta, and Padang as the most represented cities. Most respondents had monthly income between IDR 1.5 million and IDR 3 million. Regarding online shoe purchase frequency, most respondents purchased shoes online 1–2 times, indicating moderate marketplace shopping experience.

### Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to identify the general tendency of respondents' perceptions toward each research construct. As shown in Table 2, all constructs obtained mean scores above the neutral point of 3.00, indicating that Gen Z consumers generally expressed positive responses toward Shopee Mall labels, perceived shopping security, decision convenience, and purchase intention for original shoes. The highest mean score was found in Perceived Shopping Security with a mean value of 4.137 and a standard deviation of 0.604. This result indicates that respondents tend to perceive Shopee Mall as a safer shopping channel, particularly in reducing uncertainty related to counterfeit products, payment security, seller accountability, and return assurance.

Meanwhile, Decision Convenience recorded a mean score of 3.974, suggesting that Shopee Mall labels help consumers simplify product evaluation and reduce hesitation during purchase decisions. Purchase Intention also showed a relatively high mean score of 3.926, reflecting respondents' willingness to buy original shoes from Shopee Mall stores. The Shopee Mall Signal Perception construct had a mean score of 3.923, indicating that respondents recognize the label as a useful signal for identifying more credible sellers and authentic products.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics.

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Shopee Mall Signal Perception	3.923	0.639	High
Perceived Shopping Security	4.137	0.604	High
Decision Convenience	3.974	0.594	High
Purchase Intention	3.926	0.740	High

### Outer Model Evaluation

Outer model evaluation was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement indicators. In the initial model, several indicators showed relatively weak loading values; therefore, item purification was applied by removing indicators with the lowest contribution. The final model retained indicators with acceptable loading values and stronger

measurement quality. As presented in Table 3, most outer loading values exceeded 0.70, indicating adequate indicator reliability. Although PI1 and PI2 were slightly below 0.70, both indicators were retained because the overall reliability and convergent validity of the Purchase Intention construct remained acceptable.

Table 4 shows that all constructs achieved Composite Reliability values above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50. These results indicate that the constructs met the criteria for internal consistency reliability and convergent validity. However, Cronbach's Alpha for Decision Convenience was relatively low, suggesting that future studies may improve this construct by refining or expanding its measurement items.

**Table 2.** Outer Loading.

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	Decision
Shopee Mall Signal Perception	SML2	0.754	Valid
Shopee Mall Signal Perception	SML3	0.736	Valid
Shopee Mall Signal Perception	SML5	0.776	Valid
Perceived Shopping Security	PSS2	0.795	Valid
Perceived Shopping Security	PSS4	0.726	Valid
Perceived Shopping Security	PSS5	0.716	Valid
Decision Convenience	DC2	0.711	Valid
Decision Convenience	DC3	0.701	Valid
Decision Convenience	DC4	0.769	Valid
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.698	Acceptable
Purchase Intention	PI2	0.656	Acceptable
Purchase Intention	PI3	0.713	Valid
Purchase Intention	PI4	0.728	Valid
Purchase Intention	PI5	0.747	Valid

**Table 3.** Reliability and Validity.

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Decision
Shopee Mall Signal Perception	0.622	0.799	0.571	Reliable and valid
Perceived Shopping Security	0.601	0.790	0.557	Reliable and valid
Decision Convenience	0.555	0.771	0.530	Acceptable
Purchase Intention	0.751	0.834	0.503	Reliable and valid

### Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The HTMT results show that all inter-construct values were below the recommended threshold of 0.85, indicating that each construct in the model is empirically distinct. The highest HTMT value was found between Shopee Mall Signal Perception and Perceived Shopping Security at 0.707, followed by Perceived Shopping Security and Decision Convenience at 0.687. These values remain within the acceptable range, confirming that the constructs do not overlap excessively. Therefore, the model satisfies the requirement for discriminant validity.

**Table 4.** HTMT.

Construct	SML	PSS	DC	PI
SML	1.000	0.707	0.535	0.429
PSS	0.707	1.000	0.687	0.533

DC	0.535	0.687	1.000	0.644
PI	0.429	0.533	0.644	1.000

### Inner Model Evaluation

The inner model evaluation was conducted by examining collinearity and explanatory power. The VIF values for the predictors were 1.109, which is far below the recommended threshold of 5.00. This indicates that the model does not suffer from multicollinearity problems. Furthermore, the R-square values show that Shopee Mall Signal Perception explains 18.5% of the variance in Perceived Shopping Security. Perceived Shopping Security explains 15.9% of the variance in Decision Convenience, while Shopee Mall Signal Perception and Decision Convenience jointly explain 20.3% of Purchase Intention. These values indicate weak to moderate explanatory power.

**Table 5.** R-Square.

Endogenous Variable	R-Square	Interpretation
Perceived Shopping Security	0.185	Weak to moderate
Decision Convenience	0.159	Weak to moderate
Purchase Intention	0.203	Weak to moderate

### Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure to examine the significance of each structural path in the model. As presented in Table 7, all proposed relationships were statistically significant because the t-values exceeded 1.96 and the p-values were below 0.05. Shopee Mall Signal Perception had a positive and significant effect on Perceived Shopping Security, with a path coefficient of 0.430, t-value of 7.291, and p-value below 0.001. This finding indicates that the Shopee Mall label strengthens consumers' sense of security when purchasing original shoes online.

Perceived Shopping Security also had a significant effect on Decision Convenience, with a coefficient of 0.399, suggesting that security perception helps reduce hesitation and simplify consumer decisions. Furthermore, Decision Convenience significantly influenced Purchase Intention, with a coefficient of 0.359, showing that easier decision-making increases consumers' willingness to buy original shoes. The direct effect of Shopee Mall Signal Perception on Purchase Intention was also significant, although weaker, with a coefficient of 0.182. Overall, the findings support all proposed relationships in the research model.

**Table 6.** Path Coefficients.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	SML → PSS	0.430	7.291	<0.001	Supported
H2	PSS → DC	0.399	6.886	<0.001	Supported
H3	DC → PI	0.359	5.716	<0.001	Supported
H4	SML → PI	0.182	2.632	0.008	Supported

## Mediation Testing

Mediation testing was conducted to examine whether Perceived Shopping Security and Decision Convenience explain the indirect relationship between Shopee Mall Signal Perception and Purchase Intention. The results show that the serial mediation path from Shopee Mall Signal Perception → Perceived Shopping Security → Decision Convenience → Purchase Intention was positive and significant, with an indirect effect coefficient of 0.062, t-value of 3.568, and p-value below 0.001. This finding indicates that the Shopee Mall label does not only influence purchase intention directly, but also works through a psychological decision process.

The result suggests that when Gen Z consumers perceive the Shopee Mall label as a credible signal of authenticity, they feel safer from counterfeit risk and transaction uncertainty. This perceived security then reduces hesitation and simplifies the decision-making process, which ultimately increases purchase intention toward original shoes. In addition, the indirect effect of Perceived Shopping Security → Decision Convenience → Purchase Intention was also significant, confirming that shopping security strengthens purchase intention when it is translated into decision convenience. Therefore, the mediation model supports the argument that marketplace labels operate as both trust-building and decision-simplifying mechanisms.

**Table 7.** Mediation Effect.

Indirect Effect	Beta	t-value	p-value	95% CI	Decision
SML → PSS → DC → PI	0.062	3.568	<0.001	0.032–0.098	Significant
PSS → DC → PI	0.143	4.263	<0.001	0.081–0.212	Significant
Total Effect SML → PI	0.244	3.491	<0.001	0.106–0.381	Significant



**Figure 2.** Path Diagram with Beta Coefficients.

## Discussion

The findings indicate that the Shopee Mall label works as more than a marketplace ornament; it functions as a practical authenticity signal in a shopping environment where Gen Z consumers must judge product originality without physical inspection. The significant effect of Shopee Mall Signal Perception on Perceived Shopping Security shows that consumers interpret the label as a shortcut for identifying more reliable sellers, safer transactions, and lower counterfeit risk. This is important because original shoes are not only functional products but also identity-related fashion goods. When authenticity is uncertain, consumers do not only

worry about financial loss; they also worry about social embarrassment, brand mismatch, and regret after purchase. Thus, the unique contribution of this study is that it positions Shopee Mall as a platform-based trust infrastructure, not merely as a seller category (Al-Adwan et al., 2022; Quan et al., 2024; Ghosh, 2024).

The significant relationship between Perceived Shopping Security and Decision Convenience further suggests that security does not stop at making consumers feel protected; it also makes the buying process cognitively easier. In real-world marketplace behavior, Gen Z consumers face excessive product choices, similar images, price variations, seller claims, and promotional messages. The Shopee Mall label helps reduce this overload by narrowing the consideration set. This explains why Decision Convenience significantly increases Purchase Intention. Consumers are more likely to buy original shoes when they do not need to spend excessive effort verifying sellers, comparing authenticity claims, or worrying about return procedures. This finding strengthens the argument that convenience in e-commerce is not only about speed or usability, but also about reducing uncertainty during decision-making (Zeqiri et al., 2023; Hipólito et al., 2025; Syamsuar & Witarsyah, 2025).

The mediation result provides the most meaningful implication. Shopee Mall labels influence purchase intention through a sequential psychological process: consumers first perceive the label as credible, then feel safer, then experience easier decision-making, and finally become more willing to buy. This means marketplace labels should not be managed only as visual badges; they must be supported by consistent originality guarantees, transparent return policies, seller accountability, and visible consumer protection. For Shopee and official footwear sellers, the practical lesson is clear: authenticity signals become persuasive only when consumers can connect them with real protection. For future research, the relatively modest R-square suggests that purchase intention for original shoes is also shaped by price fairness, brand trust, peer influence, reviews, and lifestyle identity (Handoyo, 2024; Lin et al., 2025; Peinkofer & Jin, 2023).

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The results of this study show that the Shopee Mall label can create a more reassuring shopping experience for Gen Z consumers who want to buy original shoes online. The label is not only seen as a formal sign from the marketplace, but also as a small cue that helps consumers feel more confident, safer, and less burdened when making a purchase decision. The findings confirm that Shopee Mall Signal Perception increases Perceived Shopping Security, which then improves Decision Convenience and strengthens Purchase Intention.

Interestingly, the label also has a direct influence on purchase intention, meaning that many Gen Z consumers may already associate Shopee Mall with trust, authenticity, and a lower risk of buying counterfeit products.

From a practical perspective, Shopee and official shoe sellers can build on this positive perception by making the value of Shopee Mall even clearer. Originality guarantees, easy return options, responsive seller service, and honest product information should be communicated in a way that feels simple and convincing. Still, the study should not be generalized too widely, since purchase intention is also shaped by other factors such as price, reviews, brand image, discounts, and social influence. Future studies could explore these factors to give a richer picture of Gen Z shopping behavior. Overall, the Shopee Mall label offers a promising way to make online shoe shopping feel safer, easier, and more enjoyable.

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