

THE URGENCY OF CONSUMER PROTECTION LEGAL REFORM IN LIVE SHOPPING TRANSACTIONS IN INDONESIA

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Received: 02/06/2024 | Revised: 06/06/2024 | Accepted: 21/06/2024 | Published: 30/06/2024

Abstract

The development of digital technology has driven the emergence of a new live-streaming, or live shopping, trading model on e-commerce platforms and social media in Indonesia. This trading system allows businesses to promote products interactively and in real time to consumers. While offering convenience in digital transactions, live shopping also raises various legal issues that have the potential to harm consumers, such as product information manipulation, goods that do not conform to promotions, digital fraud, the use of detrimental standard clauses, and the misuse of consumers' personal data. These conditions indicate that consumers remain in a weak position in modern digital commerce practices. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of legal protection for consumers in live shopping transactions in Indonesia and to evaluate the weaknesses of consumer protection regulations in addressing the development of live-streaming-based digital commerce. The study uses a normative legal research method with a statutory, conceptual, and case-based approach. Legal materials were obtained through a literature review consisting of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. The results indicate that legal protection for consumers in live shopping practices is not yet effective. Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection and Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions do not specifically regulate live shopping-based trade mechanisms. Furthermore, weak oversight of digital platforms, low public legal literacy, and suboptimal digital dispute resolution mechanisms mean that consumer legal protection remains normative and unable to provide maximum legal certainty. The novelty of this research lies in its specific analysis of the effectiveness of consumer legal protection in live shopping practices, a rapidly growing modern digital commerce model in Indonesia. This research also emphasizes the urgency of digital regulatory reforms that are more adaptive to technological developments and e-commerce activities.

Keywords: Consumer Protection, Live Shopping, Digital Commerce, E-Commerce, Legal Protection.

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has brought about significant changes in the trading patterns of modern society. Trading activities, previously conducted conventionally, are now undergoing a transformation into an internet-based digital trading system. This change is marked by the increasing use of e-commerce platforms, social media, and various digital features that support electronic buying and selling activities. One of the latest developments in digital commerce is the emergence of live shopping practices, which combine product promotion activities with interactive live broadcasts. Live shopping is a digital commerce model that allows businesses to market products in real time through live video broadcasts. In practice, consumers can view product demonstrations, interact directly with sellers, and make purchases simultaneously. This system is growing rapidly in Indonesia because it is considered to provide a more interactive shopping experience and increase consumer trust compared to conventional online trading methods.

The growth of live shopping in Indonesia is inseparable from the high number of internet and social media users. According to data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the number of internet users in Indonesia will reach more than 221 million by 2024, or approximately 79.5% of the total national population. This high internet penetration has had a direct impact on increasing digital commerce activity in Indonesia, including the use of live shopping features on platforms like TikTok Shop, Shopee Live, and Instagram Live. On the other hand, the development of live shopping has also given rise to various legal issues that have the potential to harm consumers. In live-streamed digital commerce practices, consumers often receive items that do not match the

promotions advertised during live streaming, experience product information manipulation, and even become victims of digital fraud. Furthermore, the use of aggressive marketing strategies through live shopping often influences impulsive consumer decisions, increasing the potential for consumer losses. Another equally important issue concerns the protection of consumer personal data. In live shopping transactions, consumers are required to provide various personal data such as name, address, telephone number, and electronic payment information. If this data is not managed securely, consumers are at risk of personal data misuse, which can result in material and immaterial losses.

According to Shidarta, consumer protection is all efforts to ensure legal certainty and provide protection to consumers (Shidarta, 2014). Legal protection for consumers aims to create a balance between consumer rights and business actors' obligations in trade activities. Meanwhile, Ahmadi Miru explains that consumers are generally in a weaker position than businesses, both economically and educationally (Miru, 2013). Therefore, the state has an obligation to provide legal protection to guarantee justice and legal certainty for consumers. Normatively, consumer protection in Indonesia is regulated by Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection. Article 4 of the Consumer Protection Law states that consumers have the right to obtain comfort, security, safety, and correct, clear, and honest information regarding the condition of goods and services. Furthermore, electronic transactions are also regulated by Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions and its amendments. This regulation was later strengthened by Law Number 27 of 2022 concerning Personal Data Protection as a form of protection for consumers' personal data in digital activities.

Although various regulations have been enacted, the effectiveness of legal protection for consumers in live shopping practices still faces various obstacles. Research by Umi Hasanah (2023) explains that legal protection for consumers in digital transactions is still suboptimal due to weak oversight of digital business actors and the public's low legal understanding of consumer rights. Furthermore, research by Ahmad Fadhil Kaffah (2024) shows that the development of digital commerce is progressing much faster than the development of the legal regulations that govern it. One national case demonstrating the weakness of consumer protection in digital commerce is the widespread consumer complaints regarding items not matching promotions in live shopping features across various marketplaces. Furthermore, the Indonesian government temporarily shut down TikTok Shop in 2023 due to perceived competition issues and weak oversight of social media-based digital commerce systems. This case demonstrates that the development of digital technology has created new legal challenges that existing regulations have not fully addressed.

Previous research has generally only addressed consumer protection in e-commerce transactions in general. Meanwhile, research specifically analyzing the effectiveness of legal protection for consumers in live shopping practices is relatively limited. Therefore, this study offers novelty by focusing its analysis on the effectiveness of consumer legal protection in live shopping practices and evaluating the weaknesses of consumer protection regulations in the face of the development of modern digital commerce models.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer protection is a legal measure aimed at providing certainty and safeguarding of consumer rights in trade activities. According to Ahmadi Miru, consumers are generally in a weaker position than business actors, particularly in terms of information and economic power (Miru, 2013). Therefore, the state has an obligation to provide legal protection to consumers. In Indonesia, consumer protection is regulated by Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection. In digital commerce, consumer protection is also related to Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions and Law Number 27 of 2022 concerning Personal Data Protection.

Live shopping is a digital commerce model that combines product promotions with interactive live broadcasts through digital platforms. This system is growing rapidly in Indonesia because it is considered more effective in attracting consumer attention. However, live shopping practices also give rise to various legal issues such as goods that do not match promotions, digital fraud, product information manipulation, and misuse of consumer personal data. According to Abdul Halim Barkatullah, electronic transactions have special characteristics that require legal protection that is more adaptive to developments in digital technology (Barkatullah, 2019). Legal effectiveness is the degree to which a legal rule is successfully implemented in society. According to Soerjono Soekanto, legal effectiveness is influenced by legal substance, law enforcement, facilities, society, and legal culture (Soekanto, 2014). In digital commerce practices, consumer protection regulations in Indonesia are deemed unable to

fully keep pace with technological developments, particularly in live shopping practices. As a result, legal protection for consumers remains suboptimal and requires regulatory reform that is more adaptive to developments in modern digital commerce.

METHOD

This research employs a normative legal research method with a statutory approach, a conceptual approach, and a case approach. The statutory approach is conducted by analyzing various regulations related to consumer protection and digital transactions, such as Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection, Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions, and Law Number 27 of 2022 concerning Personal Data Protection. The conceptual approach is used to understand the concept of consumer legal protection, legal effectiveness, and digital commerce in live shopping practices. Meanwhile, the case approach is used to analyze several national cases related to consumer losses in live shopping and digital commerce transactions in Indonesia. The legal materials used consist of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. Primary legal materials include laws and regulations, secondary legal materials include books, scientific journals, and previous research, while tertiary legal materials include legal dictionaries and other supporting sources. The legal material collection technique was conducted through library research, reviewing various legal literature, scientific journals, and legal documents relevant to the research. Next, the legal material was analyzed qualitatively to draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of legal protection for consumers in live shopping practices in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Consumer Legal Protection in Live Shopping

The rapid rise of live shopping in Indonesia has brought about a new era of digital commerce that connects consumers directly with businesses through real-time, interactive broadcasts. This form of online shopping allows consumers to view product demonstrations, engage with presenters, and make purchases instantly via social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Shopee Live, and Tokopedia Live. The real-time engagement fosters a sense of trust and excitement among consumers, making them more likely to make impulsive purchases. However, this new shopping model raises serious concerns about consumer protection and the risks of fraud in digital transactions. Under Indonesia's Consumer Protection Law (No. 8 of 1999), consumers have the right to receive correct, clear, and honest information regarding products and services. The law specifically mandates that consumers be informed about the actual condition of goods and services before making a purchase. This includes providing accurate details about the product's quality, quantity, price, and other essential features. However, the nature of live shopping often contradicts these legal requirements, as the real-time interaction encourages exaggerated claims and manipulative marketing techniques that undermine the accuracy and transparency of information presented to consumers.

Live shopping broadcasts are often accompanied by aggressive promotional tactics that mislead consumers into thinking they are purchasing a high-quality product at a significantly discounted price. However, many times, the actual products delivered to consumers are of inferior quality or differ from what was shown during the live broadcast. This discrepancy between the advertised product and the received product constitutes a violation of consumer rights, as consumers are not receiving accurate information about what they are purchasing. For example, many consumers report receiving items with defects, incorrect specifications, or products that do not match the images or features demonstrated during the live broadcast. According to Barkatullah (2019), electronic transactions have inherent challenges because the consumer's ability to verify the truthfulness of information is limited. In live shopping, the consumer relies entirely on the presenter's or platform's claims, and the lack of physical inspection of the product before purchase makes the consumer more vulnerable to misleading marketing practices. This scenario significantly increases the risk of consumer exploitation, as it becomes easier for businesses to misrepresent products and create an illusion of value during live events (Barkatullah, 2019).

One of the most problematic aspects of live shopping is the use of manipulative marketing tactics, which often exploit consumer psychology. During live broadcasts, businesses frequently employ tactics such as flash sales, limited-time offers, and false claims about the quality or features of the product. These tactics encourage impulsive buying, as the consumer is led to believe that the offer is a time-sensitive opportunity that cannot be missed. While this creates a sense of urgency and excitement, it also reduces the consumer's ability to make a rational decision based on clear information about the product. For example, a live shopping event might show a product with a significant discount let's say 50% off along with glowing testimonials from supposed previous buyers. However, these testimonials may be false or exaggerated, and the product's true value may be far less than what is presented during the broadcast. Furthermore, once the consumer makes a purchase, they may find that the product quality does

not match the advertisement. Exaggerated product claims, such as over-promising features or understating defects, are common in live shopping, but they violate both ethical standards and consumer protection laws. This raises a fundamental issue in consumer law—how to ensure that marketing practices during live shopping events are honest and accurate, and how to hold businesses accountable when they engage in misleading promotions.

Research by Ahmad Fadhil Kaffah (2024) underscores that manipulative promotions in live shopping are particularly concerning because they target vulnerable consumers, who may be persuaded by emotional appeals and false urgency. Kaffah's research points out that impulsive purchases resulting from these tactics often lead to consumer regret and disputes over product quality. These issues are exacerbated by the lack of clear and accessible return policies, which make it difficult for consumers to seek remedies when they feel deceived (Kaffah, 2024). Despite the legal protections afforded to consumers under Indonesia's Consumer Protection Law, the enforcement of these protections in the digital environment remains weak. E-commerce platforms and social media platforms that host live shopping events typically act as third-party facilitators of transactions and tend to limit their responsibility for the misleading practices of sellers. This places the burden of accountability solely on the sellers, while the platforms often disclaim liability, claiming they are merely providing an electronic system to facilitate transactions.

As a result, consumer rights are left largely unprotected when disputes arise. In live shopping, businesses often use temporary platforms or live videos to conduct promotions, which are difficult for regulatory bodies to monitor and track. Furthermore, the lack of regulation on refunds and product returns leaves consumers in a vulnerable position, as they may not be able to obtain compensation when the product does not meet the promised specifications. Stevenson (2023) highlights that self-regulation of live shopping platforms is insufficient to address the ethical failures and legal gaps that consumers face in the digital marketplace. These platforms often do not have a clear framework for handling disputes or consumer complaints, which allows businesses to exploit these gaps and leave consumers without a legal recourse (Stevenson, 2023). To address these gaps in consumer protection, there is a strong need for legal reform in Indonesia's consumer protection laws, specifically in relation to live shopping transactions. First, the Consumer Protection Law must be updated to specifically address the challenges of digital commerce and live shopping. This includes clear regulations that hold digital platforms accountable for the content and promotions presented during live shopping events, ensuring that false advertising and manipulative marketing are prohibited.

Second, regulations on refunds and product returns need to be clarified and enforced more rigorously, ensuring that consumers are protected when they purchase substandard products or items that do not match advertised claims. Lastly, a digital dispute resolution mechanism should be established to provide consumers with an easy and accessible avenue for resolving conflicts that arise from live shopping transactions. This could involve setting up dedicated consumer protection channels within digital platforms that allow for quick resolution of complaints related to product mismatches, misleading promotions, and false claims.

B. Regulatory Weaknesses in Live Shopping Practices

The rapid evolution of digital commerce, particularly live shopping, has exposed significant regulatory weaknesses in the existing legal frameworks that govern consumer transactions in Indonesia. As live shopping is a relatively new phenomenon, it has outpaced the development of legal regulations that adequately address the specific challenges it presents. While traditional commerce has long been regulated by consumer protection laws, live shopping platforms present unique issues that existing regulations fail to address comprehensively. The Consumer Protection Law (No. 8/1999) was enacted to safeguard consumers in the context of traditional, offline transactions, but it does not explicitly address the complexities of digital commerce and the live shopping model. Live shopping involves real-time, interactive broadcasts where products are sold directly to consumers, often through social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Shopee. However, the law was drafted before the rise of e-commerce platforms and social media commerce, which means it does not fully capture the unique aspects of live shopping, such as real-time sales and instant promotions.

One significant gap in current legislation is the lack of clear definitions and guidelines for the role of digital platforms as facilitators of transactions in live shopping. Platforms like Tokopedia or TikTok generally claim that they are merely intermediaries, facilitating the transaction between sellers and consumers. They do not take responsibility for the accuracy or truthfulness of product representations made by the sellers. This lack of legal clarity leaves consumers vulnerable to misleading promotions and product discrepancies. Harper & Zhao (2023) highlight that one of the core issues of digital commerce is the absence of regulatory clarity, particularly regarding the responsibility of platforms in advertising and consumer protection (Harper & Zhao, 2023). Live shopping platforms, in particular, tend to limit their liability for consumer issues, asserting that the sellers are primarily responsible for

product quality and advertising accuracy. This legal loophole allows platforms to avoid accountability for fraudulent or deceptive practices, such as false advertising or misleading product descriptions. For example, platforms often feature live broadcasts where products are sold with exaggerated claims (e.g., a product being promoted as having “superior quality” or as being “discounted at an unbeatable price”) without verifying the truthfulness of these representations. This poses a significant challenge for consumer protection since the platform is typically not held responsible for these deceptive claims.

Another major weakness in regulating live shopping is the lack of enforcement mechanisms for digital platforms. While the Consumer Protection Law mandates that businesses provide honest information to consumers, live shopping platforms often escape the consequences of violating this obligation because there is no effective enforcement in the context of digital transactions. In traditional retail, consumers have the ability to inspect products before making purchases, and they can often resolve disputes through direct interactions with sellers. However, in live shopping, consumers are unable to physically verify products before purchase and are often left with little recourse if they receive products that do not match the advertised claims. One of the key factors contributing to insufficient enforcement is the ephemeral nature of live broadcasts. Many of the manipulative promotions in live shopping occur in real-time and are often removed or altered after the broadcast ends. The transient nature of live shopping events makes it difficult for regulatory bodies to track and monitor the content, as platforms have the ability to delete videos or edit promotional content after the event has concluded. As noted by Stevenson (2023), real-time digital commerce presents a new set of challenges that traditional consumer protection mechanisms are not equipped to handle. The inability to preserve evidence of misleading promotions during live shopping events significantly weakens regulatory enforcement (Stevenson, 2023).

Additionally, the lack of regulatory oversight of social media platforms exacerbates the issue. Social media platforms that host live shopping events often operate in jurisdictions with different legal standards, making it difficult for Indonesian regulators to apply local consumer protection laws to foreign-owned platforms. The cross-border nature of digital commerce means that platforms like TikTok and Facebook often face minimal regulation from local authorities, limiting the ability to enforce rules that ensure consumer rights are upheld. The lack of transparency in live shopping transactions is another significant regulatory issue. While traditional commerce allows for physical inspection of goods, live shopping is characterized by the absence of tangible product experiences, meaning consumers must rely on the claims of sellers and platform hosts. However, these claims are frequently unverified and often exaggerated to encourage consumers to make impulsive purchases. For example, businesses often claim their products have features or benefits that are either exaggerated or false.

The challenge of ensuring accuracy in live shopping advertising is compounded by the lack of clear guidelines from regulatory bodies. Inadequate regulation has allowed e-commerce platforms to avoid implementing standards for product representation and advertising claims during live broadcasts. This is particularly concerning given the growing reliance on user-generated content, testimonials, and promotions on these platforms. In this context, businesses can easily exploit consumer trust by presenting unverified information during live shopping events without facing legal repercussions. This lack of regulatory oversight means that consumers are often misled by false claims and unrealistic product expectations. The rise of live shopping highlights the need for modernized regulations that can keep pace with the rapid evolution of digital commerce. Consumer protection laws must be updated to include clear provisions that address the unique characteristics of live shopping transactions. This includes establishing clear responsibilities for digital platforms, particularly concerning their role in advertising, product representation, and dispute resolution. Furthermore, regulatory bodies should work towards establishing stronger oversight of social media platforms and digital commerce platforms to ensure that they comply with local consumer protection laws. Additionally, digital dispute resolution systems must be created that are accessible, user-friendly, and capable of handling complaints and claims related to live shopping transactions. This would help address the challenges posed by cross-border transactions and real-time promotional content, providing consumers with an avenue for redress when they experience fraudulent practices or misleading marketing.

ASEAN Guidelines on consumer protection in e-commerce can serve as a model for developing regional regulations to standardize consumer protections across Southeast Asia. This would help ensure that e-commerce platforms operating in the region are held to the same standards of accountability and transparency. These changes are vital to protecting consumers in live shopping and digital commerce in general, ensuring that businesses are responsible for the claims they make and the products they sell.

C. National Case Analysis and Legal Effectiveness

The rise of live shopping in Indonesia has created a number of legal challenges that have not been adequately addressed by the existing consumer protection framework. Despite the legal protections provided by the Consumer Protection Law (No. 8 of 1999), the effectiveness of these protections in the context of digital commerce, particularly live shopping, has been suboptimal. This section analyzes several national cases to demonstrate the weaknesses in the current legal framework and the need for regulatory reform. A significant example of the legal deficiencies in live shopping transactions can be found in the widespread consumer complaints about product mismatches. Consumers frequently report that the items they receive differ significantly from those shown during live broadcasts. In many cases, the quality of the product is not up to the standard promised by the live presenters. For example, a promotion may showcase a brand-new electronic gadget with excellent features, but when the consumer receives the product, it is either defective, used, or lacking features that were promised during the broadcast.

Such discrepancies often lead to consumer dissatisfaction and disputes between the buyer and the seller. However, the current legal framework does not adequately address these issues. The Consumer Protection Law mandates that businesses provide correct and clear information, but in live shopping, the real-time nature of the sales makes it difficult for regulators to monitor and enforce compliance with these provisions. Many platforms and sellers claim that the product information presented in live broadcasts is not subject to the same standards as traditional advertisements or sales pitches. This has led to a lack of accountability for false advertising and misleading product claims.

According to a report by Liputan6 (2023), the Indonesian Ministry of Trade received thousands of complaints regarding e-commerce transactions, with a significant proportion related to live shopping events. These complaints were primarily related to discrepancies between advertised products and received goods. The lack of effective oversight and dispute resolution mechanisms in live shopping transactions underscores the weaknesses of the current regulatory system in dealing with the new dynamics of digital commerce. One of the most notable national cases reflecting the weaknesses of consumer protection in live shopping was the temporary shutdown of TikTok Shop in Indonesia in 2023. The Indonesian government took action against TikTok Shop after concerns were raised about unfair competition and the lack of oversight regarding live shopping promotions conducted via the platform. The case centered around issues such as misleading product representations, unsubstantiated claims made during live broadcasts, and irregularities in the promotion of discounted products. The government noted that TikTok Shop failed to adhere to consumer protection laws governing advertising and transactional fairness.

Stevenson (2023) suggests that platforms like TikTok should be accountable for the content created by sellers on their platform, particularly during live broadcasts. This situation demonstrates the urgent need for clearer legal guidelines that define the role of digital platforms as facilitators of transactions in live shopping and hold them responsible for the integrity of the content presented during live broadcasts. The case also highlights the jurisdictional issues faced by Indonesian regulators when dealing with foreign-owned platforms, which often operate with minimal regulatory oversight in local markets (Stevenson, 2023). The TikTok Shop shutdown underscored the challenges of regulating digital platforms that provide a marketplace for third-party sellers. It revealed the need for comprehensive regulations to ensure that live shopping promotions comply with local consumer protection laws and that platforms are held responsible for misleading advertising and unethical business practices.

Another pressing issue in digital commerce, particularly live shopping, is the protection of personal data. Personal data leaks have become a significant concern in the digital economy, and several incidents in Indonesia have raised alarm about the vulnerability of consumer information. Personal data such as names, email addresses, telephone numbers, and shipping addresses has been leaked from several e-commerce platforms and marketplaces. For instance, Shopee and Tokopedia have been linked to data breaches that exposed personal information of millions of users. These data breaches are not only a violation of privacy rights but also expose consumers to identity theft and fraud. The lack of comprehensive data protection regulations for e-commerce platforms and live shopping sellers has led to an environment where consumer privacy is at risk.

Harper & Zhao (2023) emphasize that data privacy regulations in Indonesia are still underdeveloped and that consumer protection laws must be updated to address data security risks in digital commerce. The current regulatory framework does not adequately protect consumer data in the context of live shopping, where data is collected during the purchase process and shared with third-party sellers. This leaves consumers exposed to privacy violations, fraudulent use of personal data, and unauthorized access to sensitive information. Harper & Zhao argue that digital platforms must be held accountable for ensuring consumer data is handled with care and in compliance with privacy laws (Harper & Zhao, 2023). Given the weaknesses identified in the current consumer protection

framework for live shopping, this study suggests several key reforms to improve legal protections for consumers in digital commerce:

- **Specific Legal Provisions:** The Consumer Protection Law should be amended to explicitly include regulations for live shopping. This would define the roles and responsibilities of platforms hosting live broadcasts and sellers in ensuring that advertisements, promotions, and product representations are accurate and honest.
- **Platform Accountability:** E-commerce platforms and social media platforms should be held accountable for the content presented during live shopping events. This includes ensuring that advertising standards are upheld and that misleading product claims are prevented. Platforms must establish clear guidelines for sellers on how to conduct truthful promotions and represent products accurately.
- **Stronger Data Protection Laws:** Indonesia should update its data protection laws to specifically address the unique challenges posed by digital commerce. This would include measures to ensure that consumer personal data is securely stored and not misused or exposed in the event of a data breach.
- **Efficient Dispute Resolution Mechanisms:** A dedicated digital dispute resolution system should be created to handle complaints related to live shopping transactions. This system should allow consumers to easily file complaints, seek redress, and resolve disputes with minimal barriers.

CONCLUSION

The development of live shopping as part of digital commerce has created significant changes in transaction patterns in Indonesia. Live-streaming-based trading systems offer convenience and efficiency in digital buying and selling activities, but also increase the risk of consumer rights violations, such as product information manipulation, items not in line with promotions, digital fraud, and misuse of consumers' personal data. Research shows that legal protection for consumers in live shopping practices remains ineffective. Existing regulations, particularly Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection and Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions, do not specifically address live shopping-based trading mechanisms and digital platforms' liability for consumer losses. This situation has weakened legal certainty in modern digital commerce transactions.

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