



Indonesian Consumer Complaint Behavior: The Role of Information Seeking, Knowledge, Purchase Behavior, and Tendency to Talk

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aimed to determine the effect of information-seeking, knowledge, purchasing behavior, and word-of-mouth on complaint behavior.

Design/methodology/approach: This study was conducted in rural and urban areas of 28 provinces in Indonesia. The respondents in this study are consumers who have worked (have income) or are married, aged 17-60 years, and have made consumption decisions independently. The respondents totaled 4200 people, including 2175 people in urban areas and 2025 in rural areas. The Kish Grid method used in social research, especially household surveys, was used to determine respondents. The study was conducted through direct interviews with respondents.

Findings: The results showed that purchasing behavior is influenced by consumer knowledge and information seeking. Purchasing behavior also affects WOM. In addition, complaint behavior is influenced by purchasing behavior, consumer knowledge, and WOM. The results show WOM has a significant effect on complaint behavior.

Research limitations/implications: Managerial implications for companies providing direct and online complaint services. Managerial implications for the government include providing advertisements related to complaining institutions as complaint services for the public and providing consumer education. The managerial implication for the community is to increase knowledge of consumer rights and consumer protection agencies.

Originality/value: This is an original study that explores the factors that directly and indirectly cause the complaint behavior of Indonesian consumers. This study provides benefits for Indonesian consumers to pay more attention to seeking information related to a product/service so that they can increase their knowledge, good purchasing behavior, and courage to WOM so that they have a strong reason to complain.

Keywords: Information seeking, Knowledge, Purchase behavior, Word-of-mouth, Complaint behavior

I. Introduction

Consumer knowledge is the information about a product embedded in the consumer's memory (Gong et al., 2020). Consumer knowledge affects purchasing behavior. Purchasing behavior is a process or activity

in which a person recognizes a product, seeks information, evaluates other product alternatives, purchases, uses, and evaluates a product or service to meet their needs and desires (Qazzafi, 2019; Haralayya, 2021). To enrich the information possessed, a person will conduct an information-seeking process (Qazzafi, 2019). Consumers tend to anticipate buying by searching for more in-depth information, such as through online reviews and shopping websites (Rossanty & Nasution, 2018; Zhang et al., 2018).

Received: Jul. 21, 2023; Revised: Oct. 4, 2023; Accepted: Nov. 6, 2023

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Consumers obtain direct information through retailers/service providers or recommendations from close people, and indirect information is usually obtained from the internet (Jun & Park, 2016). Information seeking affects purchasing behavior. Search results provide additional information to potential consumers and reduce consumer uncertainty for consumers (Haridasan et al., 2021). Information obtained by consumers can also affect post-consumption dissatisfaction (Trihudyatmanto et al., 2022). The Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB) theory is a form of consumer complaint (Crié, 2003).

The CCB theory is a collection of responses to consumer dissatisfaction. CCBs are part of all possible consumer responses to dissatisfaction with purchasing, consuming, or owning goods (or services) (Crié, 2003). Dissatisfied consumers will do the following: (1) complain directly to the company; (2) complain indirectly, such as through social media, online reviews, or negative word of mouth (NWOM); and (3) do not complain (Berry et al., 2018). Consumers complain directly about returning goods, requesting repairs, or taking legal action (Tamara, 2018; Wandani & Simanjuntak, 2019). Consumers complain about why the goods/services received are not based on the initial agreement, and provide suggestions to businesses to improve their services (Azizah et al., 2022). If the quality or service received by consumers is lower than their expectations, the tendency of consumers to complain is higher (Aisyiyah et al., 2019). Consumers who complain tend to expect quick responses from business actors to resolve their complaints (Putri et al., 2017). Complaints of consumer dissatisfaction impact future consumer behavior (Stauss & Seidel, 2019). Dissatisfied consumers tend to increase their tendency to talk (WOM) communication to notify their dissatisfaction through the media, and their loyalty level decreases (Salim et al., 2018; Simanjuntak & Hamimi, 2019). The tendency to talk or WOM can influence consumers' purchasing decisions as a form of complaint (Yasin & Achmad, 2021).

Consumers need to know more about consumer rights and the laws that protect them. Many consumers find grievance procedures too laborious, so they tend

to complain directly to producers (Cai & Chi, 2018). However, complaints are a tool to assess consumer awareness of their rights (Ozsoy & Bak, 2021). This phenomenon proves that consumers still need knowledge and confidence to express dissatisfaction with products or services. Previous research has revealed that many still need to appreciate the importance of sharing knowledge with consumers (Awodoyin et al., 2016). Increased knowledge will produce expert consumers who are expected to share information with other consumers, so that each individual can fight for consumer rights independently or collectively (Utkarsh et al., 2019).

Customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction arises from previous purchase experiences (Lee et al., 2022). Complaint behavior arises because of post-purchase dissatisfaction. Therefore, business actors need to understand consumer behavior and emotions to solve consumer complaints and problems, because this will increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Cai & Chi, 2018). The results of previous research indicate that the complaint actions taken by consumers are determined by several factors, such as demographic factors (gender, age, education, income, and country of origin) and cultural factors (Henthorne et al., 2018; Tahir et al., 2018; Joe & Choi, 2019; Kumar & Kaur, 2022). In addition, complaint behavior is influenced by knowledge behavior (Fetscherin, 2019; Filho & Barcelos, 2021; Azizah et al., 2022). However, only some previous studies have analyzed the effect of information seeking and consumer knowledge on complaint behavior, especially regarding Consumer Protection Laws and consumer protection institutions. Therefore, this study analyzes the effects of information seeking, knowledge, purchasing behavior, and tendency to talk or WOM on complaint behavior.

II. Literature Review and Research Hypothesis

A. Relationship between Information Seeking and Purchasing Behavior

Information seeking is an important activity carried out by consumers to reduce uncertainty and risk before making a purchase (Haridasan et al., 2021). Producers' information seeking supported by information disclosure (accurate, informative, and timely) can influence purchase intentions (Tseng & Wu, 2017). Information seeking affects consumers' purchasing behavior. Information seeking allows consumers to know the advantages and disadvantages of product companies and get to know the products they consume. Quality information from search results increases product purchase certainty (Hongjoyo et al., 2022). Information seeking affects purchasing behavior; consumers generally obtain information directly or indirectly (Jun & Park, 2016). Consumers obtain direct information from retailers/service providers; one popular method is through social media, with business actors doing live streaming (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020).

H1: Information seeking has a significant effect on purchasing behavior

B. Relationship between Consumer Knowledge and Purchasing Behavior

Consumer knowledge involves a process of familiarity (experience in buying and using products) and is related to changes in consumer attitudes and behavior (Piha et al., 2018; Öztürk, 2022). Consumer knowledge of a product influences their purchasing intentions. Consumers with greater knowledge of a product will have a greater repurchase interest (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020). Product knowledge depends on consumer awareness, understanding of the product, or trust. Knowledge also affects information seeking. Consumers need an external search to complement their existing knowledge if their internal knowledge is insufficient. Consumers who make

infrequent purchases tend to increase their search frequency to enhance their knowledge (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019). Consumer knowledge of products affects their decision-making process. Consumers with high knowledge are highly satisfied with their decision-making process (Karimi et al., 2018). Product knowledge affects purchasing behavior; the higher the product knowledge, the higher the purchasing behavior (Wang et al., 2018; Pamungkas et al., 2021; Prakosa & Tjahjaningsih, 2021).

H2: Knowledge has a significant effect on purchasing behavior

C. Relationship between Purchasing Behavior and Tendency to Talk or WOM

The tendency to talk is related to purchasing behavior, and the tendency for word of mouth is a driving factor for consumer involvement in other consumer purchasing behaviors. At this time, the tendency to talk increased on social media. Consumers can easily access information from WOM through comments and product evaluations. Positive comments provided by consumers increase consumer confidence in a product. Evaluating products through consumer speech trends on social media influences a person's purchase intention (Chakraborty, 2019; Aji et al., 2020). This evaluation can be in the form of online reviews from consumers and social media influencers, the quality of information, and other consumer assessments (Chen & Chang, 2018; Weismueller et al., 2020). One form of tendency to talk is word of mouth, both directly and through electronic media—the tendency to talk influences purchasing behavior. EWOM provides information to consumers through visual impressions, making it more attractive (Filieri et al., 2021). Marketers can create official websites and provide complete information regarding products/services; thus, consumers will have more confidence in the product/service (Manzoor et al., 2020).

H3: Purchasing behavior has a significant effect on the tendency to talk or WOM

D. Relationship between Purchasing Behavior and Complaint Behavior

Complaints arise from defective or poor product or service quality, unmet service expectations, or broken promises from product manufacturers or service providers (Yan et al., 2021). Purchasing behavior is influenced by complaint behavior. Consumer dissatisfaction with a product leads to complaint behavior. Complaints that the manufacturer does not properly address will reduce consumer purchasing behavior, influence other consumers with messages (Wibawa et al., 2019), and influence other consumers with negative word-of-mouth (Simanjuntak & Hamimi, 2019). Complaint behavior is a negative emotional response to the quality of the product/service offered by the service provider. Complaint behavior arises because of post-purchase dissatisfaction. Understanding consumer complaint behavior is important because it allows companies to increase customer satisfaction (Cai & Chi, 2018). Customer complaint behavior is essential for developing effective service recovery strategies to manage services and regain the trust of dissatisfied consumers. Handling complaints increases consumer loyalty and repurchase intentions (Wibawa et al., 2019). In addition, WOM is one of the factors that plays a major role in generations within the family, so if parents set an example for their offspring to become responsible consumers by comparing prices, then complaining about a bad product or service will be considered in a purchase (Wiese & Kruger, 2016).

H4: Purchasing behavior has a significant effect on complaint behavior

E. Relationship between Information Seeking and Consumer Knowledge

Purchasing behavior is a process or activity when someone recognizes a product, seeks information, evaluates other product alternatives, purchases, uses, and evaluates a product or service to meet their needs and desires (Qazzafi, 2019; Haralayya, 2021). WOM

can influence consumer purchasing decisions in the form of complaints (Yasin & Achmad, 2021). Social factors (such as WOM) influence information-seeking, which is used to fulfill knowledge before making decisions. Consumers trust the power of WOM more than the product information generated by marketers, such as advertisements (Cheong & Mohammed-Baksh, 2020). According to Chen et al. (2020), having little knowledge motivates consumers to search for and read more sources of information to solve problems. Information-seeking activities can develop when consumers process information and become more knowledgeable about a product to improve their decisions more effectively and efficiently (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019). In addition, experience will help people better understand and know the various sources of information that can provide them with much knowledge (Zhang, 2019).

H5: Information seeking has a significant effect on consumer knowledge

F. Relationship between Tendency to Talk (WOM) and Complaint Behavior

Complaint behavior involves word of mouth; the messages that appear when complaining are negative messages that indicate dissatisfaction during purchase, consumption, or ownership (Wibawa et al., 2019). Companies must manage customer complaints, prevent customer loss and the emergence of negative word-of-mouth messages, and reduce complaints from other consumers (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2019; Simanjuntak & Hamimi, 2019; Morgeson et al., 2020). Speech tends to share and talk about information with others. The information provided is in the form of views, suggestions, experiences, or disagreements with a non-commercial product that is not commercial (Wang & Yu, 2017; Hussain et al., 2018; Previte et al., 2019). The tendency of word-of-mouth was related to complaint behavior. The tendency toward negative word of mouth is a complaint behavior that affects purchasing behavior (Fetscherin, 2019; Roy et al., 2019; Wibawa et al., 2019; Tsai & Bui, 2021).

H6: WOM has a significant effect on complaint behavior

G. Relationship between Consumer Knowledge and Complaint Behavior

Knowledge affects complaint behavior. Consumers who know about products and their rights tend to feel protected and have high satisfaction (Tjizumaue, 2019). Challenges such as lack of consumer motivation to share knowledge, lack of competence, and skills to absorb knowledge become important barriers to knowledge acquisition (Khosravi et al., 2017). On the other hand, many consumers are not directly involved in gathering information, such as consumer protection agencies/organizations, company policies, and warranty papers. In addition to consumer knowledge, retailers should be knowledgeable about various complaint forums so that consumers and manufacturers/distributors have a good relationship and come up with the most effective solutions (Koekemoer, 2017). Mwakatumbula et al. (2016) found that consumers who know their rights and obligations are likely to understand the grievance procedure until they receive a response/redress. Nowadays, even young consumers have the same knowledge of consumer rights as older consumers (Chinedu et al., 2017).

H7: Knowledge has a significant effect on complaint behavior

H. Research Model

The research model can be represented and evaluated as a framework that shows the influence of research variables. Figure 1 depicts the hypotheses of this model.

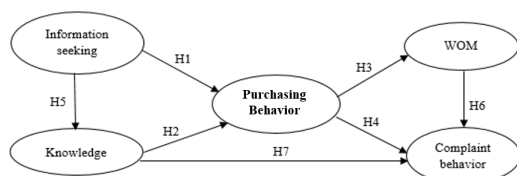


Figure 1. Research framework

III. Research Methodology

This study used an explanatory design based on the survey method. This research was conducted in rural and urban areas of 28 provinces in Indonesia. Respondents are consumers who have worked (have income) or are married aged 17-60. There were 150 respondents in each province: 75 in urban areas and 75 in rural areas. The total number of respondents was 4200, including 2175 people in urban areas and 2025 in rural areas. Household sampling was performed using systematic random sampling so that every household could be selected. The Kish Grid method used in social research, especially household surveys, was used to determine respondents.

Data were collected using direct interviews with the aid of a questionnaire. The face-to-face interviews used a questionnaire and showed cards, making it easier for respondents to understand the questions. The research variables included complaint behavior, information seeking, knowledge, purchasing behavior, and tendency to talk. The supporting variables were age, sex, occupation, education, and income. The instrument used in this study was modified from Simanjuntak (2019).

Information seeking is the process by which consumers search for information before buying products such as electronic products or electrical appliances, food and beverages, banking (savings, credit cards, deposits), clothing, cosmetics, shoes or sandals, vehicles (cars or motorbikes), public transportation (buses, trains, ships, planes), and health services (hospitals, doctors). Knowledge is consumers' understanding of the Consumer Protection Act, consumer rights as consumers, consumer protection institutions, and how to choose products. Purchasing behavior is the behavior of consumers in checking the amount of the product both before and after purchase, such as when buying fuel, paying attention to gas station employees showing filling starting from zero, reading terms and conditions as an agreement between sellers and buyers when buying goods and services, buying guaranteed goods, and checking the

existence of a warranty card. The tendency to talk (WOM) is to remind others (spouses, parents, children, friends) to observe goods/services before buying and to share bad experiences when buying goods/services with others. Complaint behavior refers to consumer complaints when they feel dissatisfied with various products, such as food and beverage, banking (savings, credit cards, deposits), public transportation (buses, trains, ships, planes), health services (hospitals, doctors), educational institutions (schools, courses), and cellular telephone providers.

The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). SEM analysis determined the direct and indirect effects of the endogenous and exogenous latent variables. This study conducted tests to analyze the effects of information seeking, knowledge, purchasing behavior, and tendency to talk about compliant behavior.

IV. Results

A. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis aimed to test whether the data fit the hypothesized model. The results in Table 1 show that the factor loading for each item was greater than 0.50. Three variables have an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of less than 0.50 (Complaint Behavior, Information Seeking, and Purchasing Behavior). However, the three variables have a Composite Reliability (CR) of more than 0.6 and still meet the requirements of convergent validity.

The level of discrimination between a latent variable and other latent variables is known as discriminant

validity (Figure 2). If the quadrat AVE of each exogenous construct (diagonal value) is greater than or equal to 0.5, or if the value is greater than the correlation between the construct and other constructs,

Table 1. Measurement model evaluation

Construct	Items	FL	CA	CR	AVE
Complaint Behavior	Cb10	0.622			
	Cb2	0.537			
	Cb3	0.583			
	Cb6	0.554	0.662	0.774	0.329
	Cb7	0.623			
	Cb8	0.538			
	Cb9	0.533			
Information Seeking	Info1	0.706			
	Info2	0.572			
	Info3	0.705			
	Info4	0.594	0.827	0.867	0.452
	Info5	0.755			
	Info6	0.664			
	Info7	0.626			
	Info8	0.733			
Knowledge	Know1	0.722			
	Know2	0.812			
	Know3	0.786	0.761	0.840	0.518
	Know4	0.729			
	Know5	0.508			
Purchasing Behavior	Pb1	0.587			
	Pb2	0.675	0.633	0.783	0.477
	Pb3	0.723			
	Pb4	0.764			
Word of Mouth	Wom1	0.866	0.427	0.773	0.632
	Wom2	0.717			

FL=Factor Loadings ; CA=Cronbach Alpha; CR= Composite Reliability; AVE= Average Variance Extracted

Table 2. Results of discriminant validity

Construct	CB	IS	KL	PB	WM
Complaint Behavior (CB)	0.574				
Information Seeking (IS)	0.298	0.672			
Knowledge (KL)	0.164	0.221	0.719		
Purchasing Behavior (PB)	0.196	0.491	0.274	0.691	
Word of Mouth WM)	0.136	0.360	0.108	0.376	0.795



Figure 2. The result of structural equation modelling

the discriminant validity is good. The results in Table 2 show that the AVE values for all variables are greater than 0.5, with values in the range of 0.574 and 0.795.

B. Hypotheses Test

Based on the empirical model proposed in this

study, hypotheses can be tested by testing the path coefficient on the structural equation modeling. Table 3 shows the SEM results. The effect of the variable was significant if the path coefficient value was ≤ 0.05 . However, if the path coefficient value is ≥ 0.05 , the variable's effect is insignificant. Based on the research results in Table 3, it can be seen that information seeking has a direct and significant effect on purchasing behavior, with a beta value of 0.67 and

Table 3. Hypotheses test

Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Conclusion
Information Seeking -> Knowledge	0.221	0.223	14.934	0.000	Accept
Information Seeking -> Purchasing Behavior	0.453	0.453	36.650	0.000	Accept
Knowledge -> Complaint Behavior	0.119	0.119	6.537	0.000	Accept
Knowledge -> Purchasing Behavior	0.173	0.174	13.247	0.000	Accept
Purchasing Behavior -> Complaint Behavior	0.136	0.138	8.427	0.000	Accept
Purchasing Behavior -> Word of Mouth	0.376	0.378	26.638	0.000	Accept
Word of Mouth -> Complaint Behavior	0.072	0.071	4.054	0.000	Accept

a t-value of 36.650 ($p < 0.01$). Knowledge significantly affects purchasing behavior with a beta value of 0.19 and a t value of 6.537 ($p < 0.01$). Purchasing behavior directly and significantly affects WOM with a beta value of 0.72 and a t-value of 13.247 ($p < 0.01$). Purchasing behavior directly and significantly affects complaint behavior, with a beta value of 0.36 and a t value of 8.427 ($p < 0.01$). Information seeking directly and significantly affects knowledge, with a beta value of 0.27 and a t-value of 14.934 ($p < 0.01$). Knowledge directly and significantly affects complaint behavior, with a beta value of 0.09 and a t-value of 4.054 ($p < 0.01$). WOM has a negative and insignificant effect on complaint behavior, with a beta value of -0.040 and a t-value of 26.638 ($p > 0.05$).

V. Discussions

Complaint behavior is an emotional response driven by dissatisfaction and negative emotions about the service provider's quality of the product/service (Nawijn & Biran, 2019). Based on the study's results, it is known that consumer complaint behavior is still low; this is reflected in consumers who have never complained about banking indicators (savings, credit cards, deposits) or vehicles (cars or motorbikes). The results showed that knowledge and complaint behavior directly and significantly influenced complaint behavior. In addition, complaint behavior is indirectly influenced

by information-seeking through knowledge and purchasing behavior. Information-seeking conducted by respondents is predominantly sourced from the Internet. Based on the results of this study, the hypothesis accepted in this study is that information seeking has a significant effect on purchasing behavior (H1), purchasing behavior (H1), consumer knowledge has a significant effect on purchasing behavior (H2), purchasing behavior has a significant effect on the tendency to talk or WOM (H3), purchasing behavior has a significant effect on complaint behavior (H4), information seeking has a significant effect on consumer knowledge (H5), WOM has on significantly affects complaint behavior (H6), and consumer knowledge has a significant effect on complaint behavior (H7). This means that all hypotheses in this research are accepted.

The results of the SEM analysis show that, in Hypothesis 1(H1), information seeking significantly and positively affects purchasing behavior. The more frequent the information seeking, the more consumers search for information before buying products, and the more frequent the purchasing behavior of consumers. Information seeking is divided into eight indicators, with the most important one being to search for information before buying a vehicle (car or motorcycle). This finding is supported by previous research conducted by Haridasan et al. (2021) that information-seeking provides new knowledge to consumers about the products/services to be consumed and reduces the risk of purchasing products. In addition, information-seeking behavior is one of the factors in consumer

decision-making to buy products or services (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019).

Effective information-seeking must be supported by accurate and credible sources that can encourage consumers to trust the product/service information obtained (Kang & Namkung, 2019). An information search conducted by consumers increases purchasing behavior because it provides certainty to consumers (Yang et al., 2019). In this case, consumers will spontaneously search for information, and from this search, it is hoped that they will make good decisions in determining purchasing behavior (Kato & Tsuda, 2018).

The influence test results show that Hypothesis 2, namely consumer knowledge, significantly and positively affects purchasing behavior, thus supporting Hypothesis 2 (H2). The higher the consumer's understanding of the Consumer Protection Act, the consumer rights as consumers, consumer protection institutions, and how to choose products, thus increasing consumer behavior by checking the amount of the product both before and after purchase, such as when buying fuel, paying attention to gas station employees showing filling starting from zero, reading terms and conditions as an agreement between sellers and buyers when buying goods and services, when buying guaranteed goods, and checking the existence of a warranty card. Among the five indicators of knowledge, the indicator that contributes the most to knowledge is knowing consumer rights. These findings are supported by the results of previous research conducted by O'Connor (2018), Piha et al. (2018), and Öztürk (2022) that consumer knowledge involves a process of familiarity (experience in buying and using products) and is related to cognitive aspects, thus contributing to changes in consumer attitudes and behavior. Furthermore, consumer knowledge affects purchasing behavior; a higher consumer's knowledge of a particular product will increase trust and encourage consumers to purchase. This result is supported by previous research conducted by Joshi and Rahman (2017), who stated that limited consumer knowledge and lack of consumer understanding of the consequences of purchasing decisions create uncertainty for consumers

about the product to be chosen so that it attracts them to make purchases.

The results show that Hypothesis 3, namely purchasing behavior, has a significant and positive effect on WOM, thus supporting Hypothesis 3 (H3). Purchasing behavior is divided into four indicators, with the most contributing indicator to purchasing behavior being reading the terms and conditions as an agreement between sellers and buyers when buying goods and services. This result is supported by previous research conducted by Wang and Yu (2017) that the tendency to talk is related to purchasing behavior, and the tendency for word of mouth to be a driving factor in consumer involvement in other consumer purchasing behavior. Purchase behavior based on consumers' trust affects their tendency to engage in WOM (Haryanto & Budiman, 2016). Satisfied customers can make these customers communicate through word of mouth and become reliable communicators in communicating the advantages of a product or service (Utama, 2018). The tendency to talk increases with the existence of social media. Consumers are indirectly exposed to information from the Internet through word-of-mouth. One form of speech tendency is electronic word of mouth. These speech tendencies influence purchasing behavior. EWOM provides consumers with visual impressions to make them more attractive and allows them to exchange information with certain websites. Marketers can create an official website and provide complete information regarding the product/service; thus, consumers will have more confidence in the product/service. Consumers with EWOM consumers will have more confidence in a product that can shape their purchasing behavior. For example, recommendations or reviews from other consumers on a sharing review platform or community can undoubtedly influence consumer purchasing behavior (Wintang & Pasharibu, 2021).

The analysis shows that Hypothesis 4, namely purchasing behavior, has a significant and positive effect on complaint behavior, thus supporting Hypothesis 4 (H4). These results support CCB theory as part of all responses that consumers may feel in the form

of dissatisfaction with purchasing, consuming, and owning goods and services (Crié, 2003). Complaint behavior was divided into eight indicators; complaints about health services contributed the most to complaint behavior. According to Kumar and Kaur (2020), complaint behavior is based on consumer dissatisfaction with post-purchase products/services such as product defects, employee behavior, and price mismatches. This analysis is also supported by previous research by Lysenko-Ryba and Zimon (2021), who found that purchasing behavior affects complaint behavior. Consumer dissatisfaction with the product will lead to complaining behavior; complaints that the manufacturer does not properly resolve will reduce consumer purchasing behavior and influence other consumers with the emergence of negative word-of-mouth. Meanwhile, based on CCB theory, dissatisfaction that is responded to properly increases repeat purchases and consumer loyalty (Crié, 2003). Understanding consumer complaint behavior is important because it allows companies to increase consumer satisfaction.

The results show that Hypothesis 5, namely, information seeking, has a significant and positive effect on consumer knowledge, thus accepting Hypothesis 5 (H5). The more frequently information seeking is the process of consumers searching for information before buying products, the more knowledge they have about the product to purchase. This finding is supported by previous research conducted by Nurislaminingsih (2020) and Setra and Puspitasari (2021) that information seeking increases consumer knowledge, and consumers with good knowledge tend to have lower risks and make the right purchasing decisions. According to Stanton and Cook (2019), consumer knowledge relates to information processing. Consumers seek information and choose products on the basis of their knowledge. Consumers who seek information by looking at product quality in terms of color, style, size, smell, and taste will increase their knowledge of a product (Xin & Choi, 2020). Consumers are motivated to seek information about a product from various sources because they believe that their knowledge will increase so that purchasing decisions for a product will be made

appropriately (Ayuningsih & Maftukhah, 2020). Consumers' objective and subjective knowledge affects information processing differently. Consumer knowledge is also believed to moderate the persuasiveness and completeness effects on a product's credibility (Kumar et al., 2021).

The results of Hypothesis 6, namely the tendency to talk or WOM, have a significant and positive effect on complaint behavior. It means that WOM affects complaint behavior. WOM has been shown to impact complaint behavior in several earlier research. Customer complaints and unfavorable word-of-mouth (WOM) are frequently brought on by businesses' poor customer service (Bach & Kim, 2012). According to Kumar and Kaur (2020), complaint behavior is based on consumer dissatisfaction with product purchases. Positive and negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) also affects a brand's reputation (Sandes & Urdan, 2013). Consumer dissatisfaction occurs when the perceived quality of consumption is lower than pre-consumption expectations, so consumers engage in complaint behavior (Nam et al., 2020). Handling complaint behavior is an important factor in retaining consumers and reducing negative word of mouth. Fetscherin (2019), Filho and Barcelos (2021), and Azizah et al. (2022) mentioned that negative messages from the tendency of word of mouth are a form of consumer complaint behavior and affect purchasing behavior.

The results show that Hypothesis 7, namely consumer knowledge, has a significant and positive effect on complaint behavior, thus supporting Hypothesis 7 (H7). This finding was supported by previous research conducted by Tjizumaue (2019) and Azizah et al. (2022), who found that knowledge is related to complaint behavior; the higher the consumer's knowledge, the higher the complaint behavior. These results also support the CCB theory that education level influences complaint behavior. Consumers with a high level of education know their rights to reduce the uncertainty associated with reduced complaints (Crié, 2003). Knowledge is a force that can protect or prevent consumer rights from being violated by business actors; consumers with good knowledge of

their rights tend to complain if there is a violation of rights in the purchasing process (Widyastuti & Prastitya, 2020). Furthermore, this study found that consumers who know their rights tend to feel protected and have high satisfaction, one of which is by being more active in expressing dissatisfaction with products/services through complaints shown to consumer protection agencies or companies directly. Therefore, in addition to establishing consumer rights and complaint procedures, increasing consumer awareness and knowledge (Khan et al., 2019; Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020).

A. Research Limitations

This study has limitations with respect to the sampling method. In this study, the determination of respondents was carried out using the Kish Grid approach, a technique commonly used in research surveys that uses a table of numbers. However, this method is difficult to implement because the ward data differ from those in the field. In addition, this study was conducted using direct interviews. However, at the time of the interview, it needed to be equipped with the use of media (pictures or videos), and limited Internet access in rural areas caused researchers to be unable to obtain data related to e-WOM on respondents who resided in rural areas.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendation

A. Conclusions

Information seeking and knowledge directly and significantly positively affect purchasing behavior. Also, purchasing behavior directly and significantly affects the tendency to talk or WOM. Purchasing behavior and knowledge have a direct and significant effect on complaint behavior. Information seeking has a direct and significant effect on knowledge. In addition, WOM also has a direct and significant effect

on complaint behavior. The managerial implications for companies are providing direct and online complaint services. Next, the government should provide advertisements related to complaining institutions as a complaint services channel for the public and provide consumer education. Finally, the community should increase knowledge about consumer rights and protection institutions.

B. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, companies and consumers must make several efforts. First, industry players complain to the consumers. Developing an effective complaint-service strategy and good management can increase consumer trust and loyalty. Additionally, businesses should provide online complaint services to make it easier for consumers to deliver complaints. Complaint services must be consumer-friendly, such as using information with short sentences that consumers can easily understand. This information is equipped with pictures so that consumers can easily apply them. The complaint process must be effective, taking up only a small amount of consumer time. Industry players can also train service officers to deal with consumer emotions during the complaint resolution process. Service officers must be able to empathize with unhappy or angry consumers by providing them with calming responses.

The managerial implication for the government is to provide advertisements related to complaining institutions so that consumers can know the channel that provides services for consumer complaints. The government should also educate the public on increasing consumer knowledge of consumer rights and consumer protection institutions in Indonesia. Consumers should search for information before purchasing to gain additional knowledge about a product or service and to reduce the risk of purchasing. Furthermore, consumers should know their rights as consumers and consumer protection institutions to protect them when they experience dissatisfaction with purchasing and complaining. Further research needs to be conducted

by differentiating between rural and urban areas to determine the impact of consumer education on complaint behavior. Further research can be conducted by adding other variables that influence complaint behavior, such as cultural factors (power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculine vs. feminine, or uncertainty avoidance) and the use of media (images/video) as interview aids.

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