

Online Business Ethics Violations: The Unspoken Danger Behind Medan City'
Digital Screens

Ahmad Kholil¹, Azhari Akmal Tarigan², Muhammad Syukri Albani Nasution³

e-mail: ahmadkholil@polmed.ac.id

¹ Politeknik Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia

^{2 3} Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2024-11-12 Revised: 2025-02-25 Accepted: 2025-03-20 Keywords: Online Business Ethics, Ethical Violations, Digital Economy	The phenomenon of online business in Medan City is growing rapidly, but it is accompanied by various violations of business ethics that harm consumers and reduce public trust. This research aims to analyze the forms of online business ethics violations, the factors causing them, and their impact on the digital trade ecosystem. Using a qualitative approach through case studies, data was collected from in-depth interviews with business actors, consumers, and sharia economic experts. The results identified various forms of violations such as price manipulation, data misuse, and fraudulent practices. The main factors that trigger violations include weak regulations, low digital literacy, and unfair business competition. The resulting impacts include a decline in consumer confidence and a slowdown in the development of the digital economy. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of the perspectives of business actors, consumers, and sharia economic experts in understanding the dynamics of online business ethics violations in Medan City.

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I. Introduction

The development of information technology has changed the trade landscape in various cities, including Medan City, where online businesses are increasingly prevalent. This phenomenon provides convenience in transactions, but also brings challenges, especially in terms of business ethics. The practice of violating online business ethics has started to emerge, causing unrest among consumers, and potentially hampering the development of the digital economy in Medan City. This research is important to reveal the various forms of online business ethics violations and their impacts, as well as to find optimal solutions.

Recent studies on online business ethics in various major Indonesian cities show an alarming trend of increasing ethical violations. Damanik's (2023) research revealed that 67% of consumers in major Indonesian cities have experienced various forms of fraud in online transactions. Meanwhile, (Li et al., 2024) found that online business ethics violation practices have evolved to become more sophisticated, involving technological manipulation and exploitation of digital system loopholes. These findings indicate the urgency to conduct more in-depth research on the phenomenon of online business ethics violations, particularly in Medan City.

Research on online business ethics centers on two main views. The first group, represented by Maesyaroh and Suryaman (2024), argues that violations of online business ethics are an inevitable consequence of the too rapid digital transformation. On the other hand, Delgado-Guillena et al. (2024) argue that the root of the problem lies in weak regulation and law enforcement, not in the speed of digital transformation itself. This debate reflects the complexity of the problems faced in the effort to create a healthy online business ecosystem (Delgado-Guillena et al., 2024; Maesyaroh & Suryaman, 2024).

Recent research by Hai Anh and Vinh (2024) revealed that violations of online business ethics have a long-term impact on consumer trust and the development of the digital economy. This study is reinforced by the findings of Affandi (2021) who showed a strong correlation between the level of ethical violations and the slowing adoption of digital technology in business transactions. Jayadi (2023) further identified that this issue has a strong cultural dimension, especially in cities with distinctive socio-cultural characteristics such as Medan (Hai Anh & Vinh, 2024; Jayadi, 2023).

A study conducted by Kabir Hassan et al. (2024) on Islamic business ethics in the digital context found that many contemporary online business practices contradict the basic principles of Islamic economics. Ronaghi (2024) reinforced these findings by identifying gaps between online business practices and sharia ethical values, especially in the aspects of transparency and honesty of transactions. These studies provide an important foundation for understanding the religious dimension of online business ethics issues (Hassan et al., 2024; Ronaghi, 2024).

Although various studies have been conducted on online business ethics, there are gaps in the understanding of the specific dynamics that occur in Medan City. Medan's unique characteristics as a city with ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as the strong influence of religious values in business practices, create a different context from other major cities in Indonesia. In addition, there is no comprehensive research that integrates the perspectives of business actors, consumers, and sharia economic experts in analyzing the phenomenon of online business ethics violations in Medan City.

A study also conducted by (Panja & Mondal, 2023) underlines the importance of approach in understanding online business ethics violations, by considering technological, social, and cultural aspects simultaneously. It further emphasizes that effective solutions to address online business ethics violations should be based on a deep understanding of the local context and specific socio-economic dynamics of a region. These two studies reinforce the urgency of conducting a special study on the phenomenon of online business ethics violations in Medan City (Wu et al., 2024).

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of three main perspectives - business actors, consumers, and sharia economic experts - in analyzing the practice of online business ethics violations in Medan City. This multiperspective approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of online business ethics violations, their driving factors, as well as their impact on the digital trade ecosystem in Medan City. In addition, this research also makes a significant contribution in identifying the specific characteristics of online business ethics violations in the context of a society with strong religious values.

The significance of this research is further strengthened by the context of Medan City as one of the growth centers of the digital economy in Sumatra (Ismail, 2024). An in-depth understanding of the practice of online business ethics violations in this city is not only important for the development of effective policies and regulations, but can also be a reference model for other cities with similar socio-cultural characteristics. This research also provides an important contribution in the development of literature on sharia business ethics in the context of the digital economy.

Based on the urgency and research gaps that have been identified, this study aims to comprehensively analyze the practice of online business ethics violations in Medan City, identify its driving factors, and examine its impact on the digital trade ecosystem. Through a qualitative approach with a case study method, this research seeks to uncover the complex dynamics that occur in online business practices in Medan City, by considering the perspectives of various stakeholders.

This research is based on the assumption that the practice of online business ethics violations in Medan City has unique characteristics that are influenced by specific social, cultural, and religious factors. This research proposes that an in-depth understanding of these characteristics is important to develop effective solutions in addressing online business ethics violations. In addition, this research also assumes that the integration of the perspectives of business actors, consumers, and Islamic economics experts can provide a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

2. Research Methods

This research was conducted in Medan City, which is one of the centers of the digital economy in Sumatra. Medan City was chosen as the research location due to the high level of online business activities as well as the diverse socio-cultural complexity of its people. The selection of this location aims to deeply understand the dynamics of online business ethics violations in a region that has unique characteristics (Hutagalung, 2024).

The sample in this study was *purposively* selected, involving three main groups of informants: online business operators, active consumers, and Islamic economics experts. The criteria for selecting informants included business owners who have been running online businesses for at least two years, consumers who have transacted online at least ten times in

the last six months, and experts who have experience and expertise in sharia economics. The total number of informants in this study was nine people.

The measurement of research instruments is adjusted to the type of qualitative research, namely *in-depth interview guide*. This interview guide was designed to explore information about informants' experiences, views, and perceptions regarding the practice of online business ethics violations. The instrument also includes open-ended questions that allow in-depth exploration of the research topic (Wette, 2017).

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with each group of informants. The interview process was semi-structured, allowing flexibility in exploring topics relevant to the research. In addition to the interviews, additional data was collected from documents and literature related to online business ethics and sharia economics.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques using *mind maps* to visualize the relationships between key findings. The analysis process included coding of interview data, identification of key themes, and interpretation of patterns that emerged. The results of this analysis were then used to develop a comprehensive understanding of online business ethics violation practices in Medan City as well as recommendations for potential solutions (Panja & Mondal, 2023). This research was conducted in Medan City, which is one of the centers of the digital economy in Sumatra. Medan City was chosen as the research location due to its high online business activities as well as the socio-cultural complexity of its diverse community. The selection of this location aims to deeply understand the dynamics of online business ethics violations in a region that has unique characteristics (Hutagalung, 2024).

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3. Results and Discussion

Results

This study collected data through in-depth interviews with three different groups of informants to understand the dynamics of online business in the perspective of sharia economics. The first group of informants consisted of five online business owners who have been running their business for at least two years, providing insights into operational practices, challenges, and adaptation strategies in running a business according to sharia principles. The second set of informants involved active consumers who have conducted online transactions at least ten times in the last six months, providing perspectives on their experiences, satisfaction, and concerns in transacting online. Meanwhile, an expert in sharia economics from a leading university in Indonesia acted as the third informant who provided an in-depth analysis of the suitability of online business practices with the principles of sharia economics, as well as providing recommendations for the improvement of the existing transaction system. The data can be seen below:

Table 1. Respondent data

No.	Participant Name	Age	Field	Description
1	Anggraini	30 Years	Online Boutique Business Entrepreneurs	Owner
2	Maya	30 Years	Skincare and Care Online Business	Owner
3	Ismail	30 Years	Book Business Actors	Owner
4	Rifka	28 Years	Online Clothes Business	Owner
5	Supendi Dani Koto	47 Years	Online Business Consumer	Consumer
6	Muhammad Anto	49 years old	Online Business Consumer	Consumer
7	Dhandi	25 Years	Online Business Consumer	Consumer
8	Dr. Muhammad	43 Years	Sharia Economics Expert	Chairman of Azhar Center
9	Prof. Dr. M. Yasir Nasution	74 Years	Sharia Economics Expert	Professor of UIN SU

Data source: Processed by the author, 2024

Violation of online business ethics in Medan City

The development of information technology has changed the trade landscape in Medan City, with the rise of online business activities that offer various convenience transactions for the community. However, behind this rapid growth, various practices of violations of online business ethics began to emerge and caused unrest among consumers (Warto & Samsuri, 2020). This phenomenon is a serious concern given its potential to create public distrust of the digital trading system, which in turn could hinder the development of

the digital economy in Medan City (Choi, 2020). This study seeks to uncover various forms of ethical violations in online business practices and their impact on consumers and the digital business climate in Medan City.

Interview Results: Based on the results of in-depth interviews with nine participants consisting of consumers, business actors, and experts in Medan City, it was revealed several patterns of online business ethics violations that often occur. The main violations identified include fraud through product photos that do not match the real goods, price manipulation by including fake discounts, misuse of consumers' personal data for commercial purposes without permission, deliberate delivery delays without confirmation, to *ghosting* practices when receiving complaints from consumers. Participants also revealed the phenomenon of fake *reviews* created to increase the reputation of online stores, as well as non-transparent *dropshipping* practices where sellers do not disclose their status as dropshippers to buyers. These findings illustrate the complexity of ethical issues in the digital business ecosystem in Medan City that requires serious attention from various stakeholders.

From the results of the interview above can be explained through *Mindmaps* obtained from the above interview with the help of *mindmaps chart* as follows:

Figure 1: Mindmaps of Interview Results with participants related to the practice of violating ethics in online business.



Data source: Results of data analysis using *mindmaps*, 2024

Factors in the occurrence of violations of Online Business Ethics in Medan City

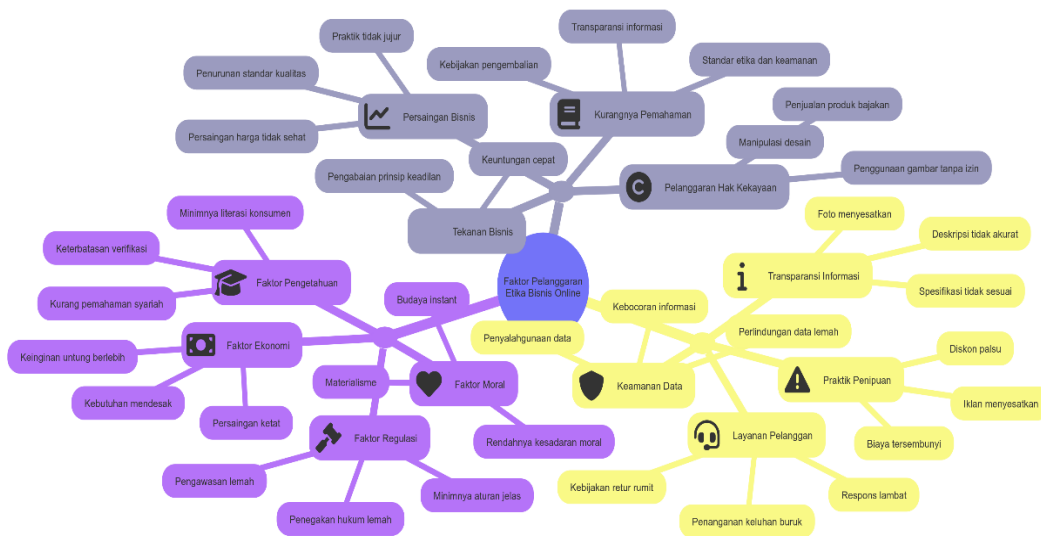
The phenomenon of ethical violations in online business in Medan City has become an endless problem. Various interrelated factors have contributed to the rampant practice of ethical violations in digital transactions. This research reveals that violations of online business ethics are not only caused by a single factor, but are the result of interactions from various aspects that include the dimensions of knowledge, economy, regulation, morals, to data security issues and customer services.

Mindmaps of Interview Results Based on the mapping of interview results that visualized in the *mindmap*, five main factors that encourage the occurrence of violations of online business ethics in Medan City were identified. First, the Knowledge Factor which is characterized by the weakness of verification, the lack of consumer literacy, and the lack of

understanding of sharia. Second, Economic Factors which include limited capital, unfair competition, and weak supervision. Third, Regulatory Factors which include weak law enforcement and lack of clear rules. Fourth, Moral Factors which are shown through low moral awareness and neglect of the value of neighborliness. Lastly, the aspect of Data Security and Customer Services which involves misuse of personal data, information fraud, and fraudulent practices such as inaccurate descriptions, fake discounts, as well as slow response to customer complaints. The complexity of these factors suggests that a holistic approach and involvement of various stakeholders are needed to address ethical issues in online business in Medan City.

The results of the interview can be explained through *Mindmaps* obtained through participants with the help of *mindmaps charts* as follows:

Figure 2: *Mindmaps of Interview Results with participants related to the factors of the occurrence of practices of violating Ethics in online business*



Data source: Results of data analysis using *mindmaps*, 2024

Impact of Online Business Ethics Violation Practices in Medan City

The practice of ethical violations in online business in Medan City has caused various impacts that are not only detrimental to consumers but also affect the ecosystem of digital trade as a whole. These impacts have created a domino effect that affects various aspects, ranging from consumer confidence, financial stability of business actors, to the development of the digital economy in Medan City. The results of this study reveal how online business ethics violations have created complex and interrelated consequences in the digital business environment (Batubara et al., 2024).

Based on the *mindmap* analysis of the interview results with the participants, the impact of violation of online business ethics can be categorized into four main dimensions. First, the Financial impact which is characterized by a decrease in turnover, financial losses, trauma of consumers, and the difficulty of building *trust* which leads to *extra effort* to convince

buyers. Second, the impact on the Digital Economy which includes technological resistance, barriers to development, and the return of business actors to conventional systems due to the loss of trust in digital platforms. Third, the impact on the Business System which includes a crisis of trust and the emergence of new ethical business challenges. Fourth, the Psychological impact on consumers which includes online shopping trauma, excessive skepticism, and preference to switch to *offline* shopping even though they have to pay more. In addition, there is a material impact in the form of losses due to goods not as ordered or goods not delivered, which further worsens people's perceptions of online transactions. Results can be seen in *mindmaps* as follows:

Figure 3: *Mindmaps of Interview Results related to the impact of ethical violation practices*



Data source: Results of data analysis using *mindmaps*, 2024

Discussion

Violation of online business ethics in Medan City

In the growing digital era, Medan City is experiencing rapid growth in online business (Choi, 2020). However, behind this development, the practice of violations of online business ethics has become an increasingly prominent problem. These violations can include various aspects such as transparency, consumer data security, and honesty in transactions conducted by online business actors.

One form of ethical violation that often occurs is fraud in online transactions (Tarigan, 2016). This fraud often takes the form of delivery of goods that do not match with the description or even goods are not sent at all after payment is made. Such cases harm consumers and reduce the level of public trust towards online businesses in Medan.

In addition, violation of consumer data privacy is also an important issue. Many online businesses do not comply with data security standards, leaving consumers' personal data such as phone numbers, addresses, and financial information vulnerable to misuse. This not only violates business ethics, but also potentially violates personal data protection laws that have begun to be implemented in Indonesia.

Another ethical violation is dishonest or misleading marketing practices. Some businesses use false advertising to attract consumers, such as providing inappropriate price information or offering discounts that turn out to be full of hidden conditions. These actions worsen the image of online businesses and harm consumers who feel deceived (Zulfa et al., 2023).

Not to forget, the practice of copyright infringement in online business in Medan. Digital products such as *software*, music, or graphic design are often sold without the permission of the copyright owner. This violates ethics and the law, and harms the creative parties who should benefit from their work.

To address this issue, a shared consciousness between businesses, consumers, and the government is needed. The government should strengthen regulation and supervision, while businesses should commit to ethical business practices. On the other hand, consumers also need to increase their vigilance and knowledge about safe online transactions, so that violations of business ethics in Medan City can be minimized. Based on the *Mindmaps* from the interviews, I have mapped out ethical violations in online business from three main perspectives:

1. The *Business Owner* Perspective reveals the problems they face as business owners, mainly related to copyright infringement (photo and design plagiarism), unfair competition (fake reviews and *black campaigns*), and identity fraud (account falsification and *brand* name misuse).
2. The *Consumer* Perspective shows their direct experience as buyers, focusing on product fraud (non-conformity of goods), price manipulation (fake discounts and hidden fees), and poor service (unilateral ignoring of complaints and blocking).
3. The *Expert* Perspective provides a more systematic view and solutions, identifying violations from the sharia angle (*gharar*, *tadlis*, *riba*), problems of system transparency, and offering solutions in the form of strengthening regulation, education, and supervision.

Table 2. Types of online business ethics violations in Medan City

Perspective	Type of Violation	Impact	Key Issues
Business Owner	Plagiarized product photos and designs	Financial loss	Weak copyright protection
	Fake reviews and <i>black campaigns</i>	Decline in reputation	Unfair competition
	Account and brand falsification	Loss of customer trust	Weak digital security
Consumer	Product non-conformity	Material loss	Lack of consumer protection
	Price manipulation and discounts	Financial loss	No standardized pricing
	Complaint abandonment	Trauma of online shopping	Poor after-sales service

	Violation of sharia principles (<i>gharar, tadlis, riba</i>)	Distortion of the economic system	Weak supervision
Expert	Lack of transparency	System distrust	Inadequate regulation
	Weak monitoring system	Barriers to digital economy development	Lack of business education

Data source: processed by the author, 2024

The results of analyzing the perspectives of online business ethics violations in Medan City show problems involving various stakeholders. From the perspective of business owners, the main challenge lies in protecting their digital assets and business reputation. Visual content plagiarism and smear campaigns pose serious threats that are not only financially detrimental but also undermine the trust that has been built with customers. This situation is exacerbated by the rise of business identity forgery which is increasingly easy to do in the digital era according to research (Damanik et al., 2023).

From a consumer perspective, negative experiences in online transactions create trauma and reluctance to utilize digital platforms. Discrepancies between products received and those advertised, price manipulation through fake discounts, and difficulty getting resolution when problems occur are the main complaints. This phenomenon is not only materially detrimental but also creates distrust of the e-commerce system as a whole (Delgado-Guillena et al., 2024).

Expert views provide a more in-depth explanation by linking ethical violations to the principles of sharia and the broader economic system. The practices of *gharar* (uncertainty), *tadlis* (fraud), and usury not only violate business ethics but also religious principles that should guide transactions. Experts emphasize the importance of strengthening regulations and supervisory systems, as well as improving education for businesses and consumers to create a healthy and sustainable online business ecosystem (Jayadi, 2023).

The analysis of these three perspectives underscores the importance of addressing violations of online business ethics. The solutions needed should include aspects of regulation, technology, education, and strengthening moral values in digital business practices. Without serious and systematic handling, online business ethics violations have the potential to hamper the development of the digital economy in Medan City and create long-term distrust of the electronic commerce system.

Factors in the occurrence of violations of Online Business Ethics in Medan City

As time goes by, online business transactions have become an integral part of people's economic activities. Medan City, as one of the economic centers in Sumatra, has not escaped this phenomenon. The rapid growth of online business brings various challenges, especially in the aspect of business ethics in accordance with the principles of Sharia (Ronaghi, 2024).

The development of information and communication technology has transformed conventional transaction patterns into digital ones, creating both opportunities and risks in business practices. In Medan City, this digital transformation faces the complexity of a society that still holds traditional and religious values (Hai Anh & Vinh, 2024).

Online business ethics are of particular concern given the characteristics of

transactions that are not face-to-face, creating greater potential for violations than conventional businesses. This is exacerbated by the lack of understanding of business people about sharia business ethics which should be a guideline in transactions.

The dynamics of online business in Medan City shows a gap between the practice in the field and the ideal of sharia business ethics. This phenomenon is inseparable from various interrelated factors, ranging from internal aspects of business actors to external influences from the digital business environment.

In the context of Medan City, where the majority of the population is Muslim, the application of sharia business ethics should be a priority in every online business transaction. But in reality, there are still many practices that contradict sharia principles, indicating a gap between ideal values and implementation.

The identification of factors of violation of online business ethics involves various perspectives ranging from business actors, consumers, to sharia economic experts. In this study is important to get a complete picture of the existing problems. This study is also relevant to efforts to develop Islamic economics in Indonesia. As a city with great economic potential, Medan can be a model for implementing sharia business ethics in digital transactions (Ismail, 2024). The results of the author's interviews with several Online Business Actors, Consumers and Sharia economic experts related to the factors of the practice of violation of Ethics in online business in Medan City explained the factors of violation of online business ethics from three perspectives:

1. Business Owner Perspective

- a. Business competition drives unethical practices such as review manipulation and quality degradation
- b. Lack of understanding of ethical standards and product safety leads to misleading information
- c. Infringement of intellectual property rights occurs through unauthorized use of images and sale of pirated products
- d. Pressure to make a quick profit makes entrepreneurs ignore the principle of fairness

2. Consumer Perspective

- a. Information transparency issues include inaccurate product descriptions and misleading photos
- b. Fraudulent practices in the form of fake discounts and hidden fees harm consumers
- c. Weak data security leads to misuse of personal information
- d. Poor customer service as evidenced by slow responses and complicated return policies

3. Expert Perspective

- a. Regulatory factors: weak supervision and law enforcement
- b. Moral factors: *instant* culture and materialism ignore the value of honesty
- c. Knowledge factor: lack of sharia understanding and consumer literacy
- d. Economic factors: the pressure of need and the desire for excessive profits encourage ethical violations

The problem of these factors reflects the big challenges faced in the effort to create a

healthy online business ecosystem and in accordance with the values of ethics and sharia in Medan City. The following is a tabulation of the types of factors for the practice of violations of Online Business Ethics in Medan City.

Table 3. Types of Factors in the practice of violating Online Business Ethics in the City

Perspective	Aspects	Problems	Impact
Business Owner	Competition	Review manipulation, quality degradation	Market distortions
	Understanding of Ethics	Lack of standards and safety	Misleading information
	Intellectual Property Rights	Illegal use of pirated content & products	Copyright owner's loss
	Profit Orientation	Disregard for the principle of justice	Unfair business practices
Consumer	Transparency	Misleading descriptions & photos	Material loss
	Fraud	Fake discounts, hidden fees	Financial loss
	Data Security	Leakage of personal information	Data misuse
	Services	Slow response, complicated returns	Low customer satisfaction
Expert	Regulation	Weak supervision & law	Continuous offense

Data source: processed by the author, 2024

Impact of Online Business Ethics Violation Practices in Medan City

Ethical violations in online business have created serious adverse impacts on various parties in Medan city (Ritonga, 2021). This phenomenon affects the trust and development of the digital ecosystem as a whole. For businesses that conduct business ethically, this situation creates severe challenges in maintaining the sustainability of their business. They must struggle to face unfair competition from businesses that sell counterfeit products or engage in fraudulent practices, while at the same time must work extra hard to build consumer trust (Fahmi & Hutahayan, 2024).

From the consumer side, bad experiences shopping online have created trauma and reluctance to transact digitally. This encourages changes in consumer behavior who prefer to shop conventionally even though they have to spend more *effort* (Harahap & Pulungan, 2019).

Islamic economics experts see this phenomenon as a serious obstacle to the development of the digital economy in Medan. Violations of online business ethics not only contradict sharia principles, but also create societal resistance to the adoption of technology in transactions.

The impact of this violation of online business ethics has created a vicious circle that is difficult to break. Consumer distrust encourages the preference of conventional transactions, while ethical business actors have difficulty competing, which in turn further slows down the development of the digital economy in Medan city (Fau & Siagian, 2021). An

explanation of the impact of the practice of ethical violations in online business can be categorized as follows:

Table 4. Impact of Online Business Ethics Violation Practices

Category	Sub-Category	Impact
Financial	Revenue	- Decrease in turnover
	Business Sustainability	- Going out of business
	Operational Costs	- Verification surcharge
Trust	Consumer Perspective	- Consumer trauma
	Business Challenges	- The difficulty of building <i>trust</i>
	Operational	- <i>Extra effort to convince buyers</i>
Business Competition	Market Share	- Market share erosion
	Competition	- Difficulty competing with counterfeit products
	Price	- Unfair price competition
Sharia Value	Verification	- Difficulty of halal verification
	Technology	- Technology resistance
	Basic Principles	- Violation of the principle of antaradhin
	Social	- Barriers to benefit
Digital Economy	Development	- Developmental barriers
	Preferences	- Back to conventional
Business System	Operational	- Ethical business challenges
	Trust	- Crisis of trust
Material Loss	Shipping	- Goods not shipped
	Quality	- Products are not suitable
	Finance	- Financial loss
Psychological	Trauma	- Trauma of online shopping
	Trust	- Excessive skepticism
	System	- System distrust
	Behavior	- Extra verification
Consumer Behavior	Preferences	- <i>Offline</i> shopping preference
	Financial	- Paying more

Data source: processed by the author, 2024

The results of research through in-depth interviews with various stakeholders ranging from business actors, consumers, to sharia economic experts reveal the broad impact of the practice of violating online business ethics. These impacts are not only short term in the form of material losses, but also create long-term effects in the form of erosion of public trust in electronic commerce systems. An understanding of these various impacts is necessary to develop effective solutions in preventing and overcoming the practice of violations of online business ethics in Medan City.

4. Conclusion

This research reveals three main findings related to online business ethics violations in Medan City. The identified violations include fraud through inappropriate product photos, price manipulation with fake discounts, misuse of personal data, deliberate delays in delivery, and *ghosting* practices when receiving complaints. The contributing factors cover five main aspects: knowledge (weak verification and consumer literacy), economy (limited capital and unfair competition), regulation (weak law enforcement), morale (low awareness), and customer data and service security. The impact of breaches is manifested in financial, digital economy, business system, and psychological dimensions.

This research has several limitations, especially in terms of the geographical coverage limited to Medan City, the relatively small number of informants (9 people), and the focus of the research that is more inclined to the perspectives of business actors and consumers with limited representation of experts. These limitations affect the depth and breadth of research findings in understanding the complexity of online business ethics violation issues in a comprehensive manner.

To overcome these limitations, future research needs to expand geographical coverage to other cities in Sumatra, increase the number and variety of informants, especially from regulators and *marketplace* platforms, and triangulate data with quantitative methods. The development of this more comprehensive methodology will enable a deeper understanding of the dynamics of online business ethics violations in Indonesia.

Based on the research findings, several strategic policies are recommended, including strengthening consumer protection regulations in digital transactions, establishing an integrated supervision system involving various stakeholders, developing a digital literacy program for businesses and consumers, and standardizing the verification system for online businesses. For future research, it is recommended to examine the effectiveness of existing regulations, examine the role of *marketplace* platforms in preventing violations, and develop a *blockchain-based* verification system model. The implementation of these recommendations is expected to create a healthier and more sustainable online business ecosystem.

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