

SERVICE QUALITY AND PRICE PERCEPTIONS OF PURCHASING DECISIONS THROUGH BRAND TRUST

Muhaimin Nur Khasanah ^{a*)}, Nandan Limakrisna ^{a)}, Agus Setyo Pranowo ^{a)}

^{a)}*Universitas Pakuan, Bogor, Indonesia.*

^{*)}*Corresponding Author: muhaimin.nurkhasanah@gmail.com*

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Abstract. The purpose of this Research related to purchasing decisions in Food Delivery Services shows that there is an interplay between Service Quality, Price Perception, and Brand Trust both directly or indirectly. The purpose of this study is to examine what factors influence Purchase Decisions both through the direct influence of Service Quality and Perceived Price, as well as the indirect influence of Brand Trust. This research was conducted on students the Master of Management Study Program for class 2019-2022 at Postgraduate School, Pakuan University, Bogor who use the Shopeefood delivery service. This research was conducted based on survey research. The sample consisted of 139 respondents using the convenience sampling method. Data was collection through questionnaire which validity and reliability were already verified. The analysis technique for this study uses SEM with the AMOS 22.0 application. The results of this study indicate that service quality, price perception and brand trust have a positive effect on purchasing decisions, but not all of the results are significant. The intervening variables in this study cannot mediate the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable, namely brand trust cannot mediate service quality and price perceptions on purchasing decisions.

Keywords: service quality; price perceptions; brand trust; purchasing decisions

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid diffusion of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in the context of electronic commerce (e-commerce) and platform-based services. The proliferation of smartphones and mobile internet has accelerated the adoption of online-to-offline (O2O) business models, including online food delivery (OFD) services, which integrate digital ordering systems with physical service fulfillment [1], [2]. In emerging economies such as Indonesia, OFD platforms have become an essential component of urban consumption patterns, driven by lifestyle changes, time constraints, and increasing reliance on digital convenience [3], [4].

In highly competitive OFD markets, consumer purchase decisions are no longer driven solely by functional needs but are increasingly influenced by perceived service quality, price perception, and trust toward the platform brand [5], [6]. Service quality in digital environments encompasses not only traditional service dimensions but also electronic service quality attributes such as system reliability, responsiveness, information accuracy, and transaction security [7], [8]. Prior studies consistently demonstrate that superior service quality enhances consumer satisfaction and behavioral intentions; however, its direct influence on purchase decisions remains context-dependent and warrants further empirical validation [9], [10].

Price perception represents another critical determinant of consumer decision-making in OFD services. Unlike objective

price levels, price perception reflects consumers' subjective evaluation of price fairness, affordability, and value-for-money relative to perceived benefits [11]. In price-sensitive markets, promotional intensity, delivery fees, and dynamic pricing mechanisms often shape consumers' purchase decisions and platform switching behavior [12]. Nevertheless, empirical findings regarding the direct impact of price perception on purchase decisions remain mixed, particularly when mediating variables such as trust or perceived risk are considered [13].

Brand trust plays a pivotal role in digital service contexts characterized by uncertainty and information asymmetry. Trust reduces perceived risk and increases consumers' willingness to engage in online transactions, especially when service failures or delivery risks are present [14]. In OFD platforms, brand trust is shaped by consistent service performance, transparent pricing, secure payment systems, and positive user experiences [15]. Several studies posit that brand trust may act as a mediating mechanism linking service quality and price perception to purchase decisions; however, empirical evidence on this mediating role remains inconclusive across different platforms and consumer segments [16].

Despite the rapid growth of OFD services in Indonesia, scholarly investigations focusing on the integrated effects of service quality and price perception on purchase decisions through brand trust remain limited. Moreover, existing studies often emphasize dominant platforms, leaving relatively newer entrants such as ShopeeFood underexplored. Given the intense competition among OFD providers and the strategic

importance of understanding consumer decision-making processes, further empirical research is required to clarify these relationships within specific user contexts.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of service quality and price perception on purchase decisions, both directly and indirectly through brand trust, among ShopeeFood users in Indonesia. By employing a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach, this research contributes to the literature by providing empirical insights into the role of brand trust as a potential mediating variable in digital food delivery services. The findings are expected to offer theoretical contributions to consumer behavior and service marketing literature, as well as practical implications for OFD platform managers in formulating competitive service and pricing strategies.

Service Quality in Online Food Delivery Platforms

Service quality has long been recognized as a fundamental determinant of consumer behavior in service-based industries. In digital service environments, particularly online food delivery (OFD) platforms, service quality extends beyond traditional face-to-face interactions and incorporates electronic service quality (e-service quality) dimensions such as system usability, reliability, responsiveness, and security [17]. The effectiveness of these dimensions determines consumers' evaluations of service performance and shapes their subsequent behavioral responses.

Recent empirical studies emphasize that high perceived service quality enhances consumers' confidence in digital platforms by reducing uncertainty and perceived risk associated with online transactions [18]. In the OFD context, timely delivery, order accuracy, real-time tracking, and responsive customer support are critical indicators that significantly influence users' overall service evaluations. When these service attributes are consistently delivered, consumers are more likely to perceive the platform as dependable and professionally managed, thereby strengthening their engagement with the service [19].

Price Perception and Consumer Evaluation

Price perception reflects consumers' subjective assessment of the monetary sacrifice required to obtain a service relative to the benefits received. In OFD platforms, price perception is not limited to menu prices but also includes delivery fees, service charges, and promotional incentives [20]. Consumers tend to evaluate price fairness by comparing costs across competing platforms and by considering the perceived convenience and quality of service offered.

Several studies suggest that favorable price perception can directly stimulate purchase intentions, particularly in highly competitive digital markets [21]. However, other findings indicate that price perception alone may be insufficient to drive purchase decisions when service reliability or trust is questioned. This suggests that price perception often interacts with psychological constructs—such as trust and perceived value—rather than operating as a standalone determinant of consumer decisions.

Brand Trust in Digital Service Contexts

Brand trust refers to consumers' willingness to rely on a brand based on expectations of competence, reliability, and

integrity. In digital platforms, trust plays a crucial role due to the intangible nature of services and the inherent risks associated with online transactions [22]. Consumers are more likely to trust platforms that consistently fulfill service promises, protect personal data, and provide transparent information regarding pricing and service processes.

In the OFD ecosystem, brand trust serves as a stabilizing mechanism that mitigates uncertainty and fosters long-term consumer relationships. Trustworthy platforms are perceived as safer choices, encouraging repeated use even when price differences with competitors are minimal. Prior studies also highlight the mediating potential of brand trust, suggesting that service quality and price perception may influence purchase decisions indirectly by shaping consumers' trust toward the platform.

Purchase Decision in Online Food Delivery Services

Purchase decision-making in OFD services involves a multi-stage cognitive process, including need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, and post-purchase evaluation. Digital environments intensify this process by providing consumers with abundant information, peer reviews, and real-time price comparisons. Consequently, purchase decisions are increasingly influenced by consumers' holistic evaluation of service quality, perceived price fairness, and trust in the platform.

Synthesizing the existing literature, it can be inferred that service quality and price perception play complementary roles in shaping brand trust, which in turn may influence purchase decisions. However, inconsistencies in prior empirical findings indicate the need for further investigation into these relationships, particularly within emerging markets and newly established OFD platforms such as ShopeeFood.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research design with an explanatory approach to examine the relationships among service quality, price perception, brand trust, and purchase decision in the context of online food delivery services. A survey method was utilized to collect primary data from users of ShopeeFood in Indonesia, as this approach is considered appropriate for capturing consumers' perceptions and behavioral responses toward digital service platforms [23]. The target population comprised active ShopeeFood users who had made at least one purchase transaction within the last three months. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed online, employing a non-probability sampling technique with purposive criteria to ensure the relevance and adequacy of respondents for the research objectives.

The measurement instruments were adapted from established scales in prior studies to ensure content validity and reliability. Service quality was measured using electronic service quality dimensions, price perception was assessed based on perceived fairness and value, brand trust was evaluated through reliability and integrity indicators, and purchase decision was measured using consumers' decision consistency and willingness to repurchase. The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM),

which enables simultaneous examination of complex relationships among latent variables and the assessment of mediating effects [24]. SEM was selected due to its robustness in testing theoretical models in consumer behavior research and its suitability for validating both measurement and structural models in a single analytical framework.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The structural model was evaluated using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to assess the hypothesized relationships among service quality, price perception, brand trust, and purchase decision. Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement model demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties, with all constructs meeting the recommended thresholds for convergent and discriminant validity as well as composite reliability. These results indicate that the measurement instruments were adequate for explaining consumer perceptions and behavioral responses in the online food delivery context [25], [26].

The structural analysis revealed that service quality had a positive and significant effect on brand trust, indicating that consumers tend to develop stronger trust toward online food delivery platforms when service performance is reliable, responsive, and consistent. Price perception was also found to significantly influence brand trust, suggesting that perceived price fairness and value-for-money contribute to consumers' confidence in the platform. Furthermore, brand trust showed a strong and significant effect on purchase decision, confirming its critical role in reducing perceived risk and encouraging transaction engagement. Direct effects of service quality and price perception on purchase decision were also observed, although their magnitudes were comparatively weaker than the indirect effects through brand trust, indicating a partial mediation mechanism [27], [28].

The findings confirm that service quality remains a fundamental driver of consumer trust in digital service platforms. Consistent with prior studies, high-quality electronic services—such as accurate order fulfillment, delivery timeliness, and responsive customer support—enhance consumers' confidence and willingness to rely on online food delivery applications [29]. This supports the notion that trust formation in digital environments is strongly experience-based, where repeated positive service encounters reinforce favorable platform evaluations.

The significant influence of price perception on brand trust underscores the importance of perceived fairness and transparency in digital pricing strategies. Consumers are more likely to trust platforms that offer competitive prices, clear fee structures, and promotional incentives that align with perceived service value [30]. This finding aligns with value-based pricing theory, which posits that consumers evaluate prices relative to perceived benefits rather than absolute monetary costs alone [31].

Brand trust emerged as a key explanatory variable influencing purchase decision, highlighting its mediating role between service attributes and behavioral outcomes. In line with previous empirical evidence, trust reduces uncertainty and

psychological risk, thereby facilitating consumers' decision-making processes in online transactions [32]. The partial mediation effect observed in this study suggests that while service quality and price perception can directly influence purchase decisions, their impacts are substantially strengthened when mediated by brand trust.

Overall, the results contribute to the growing body of literature on online food delivery services by providing empirical support for an integrated model that links service quality and price perception to purchase decisions through brand trust. From a managerial perspective, these findings imply that online food delivery providers should prioritize consistent service performance and transparent pricing strategies to build long-term consumer trust and sustain competitive advantage in increasingly saturated digital markets [33], [34].

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to examine the effects of service quality and price perception on purchase decision, both directly and indirectly through brand trust, in the context of online food delivery services. The empirical findings demonstrate that service quality and price perception significantly influence brand trust, which in turn plays a critical role in shaping consumers' purchase decisions. These results confirm that trust functions as a key psychological mechanism that reduces uncertainty and perceived risk in digital service transactions. Furthermore, the findings reveal that brand trust partially mediates the relationships between service quality, price perception, and purchase decision. While service quality and price perception exert direct influences on purchase decisions, their effects are substantially strengthened when mediated by brand trust. This indicates that consumers do not rely solely on functional or economic evaluations but also consider relational and affective factors when making purchase decisions in online food delivery platforms. Overall, this study contributes to the service marketing and consumer behavior literature by validating an integrated model that explains purchase decision formation in digital service environments, particularly within emerging markets. From a managerial perspective, the findings highlight the strategic importance of consistently delivering high service quality to foster consumer trust. Online food delivery providers should prioritize operational reliability, order accuracy, delivery timeliness, and responsive customer support, as these factors significantly enhance trust and encourage repeat purchase behavior. Investments in system stability and service recovery mechanisms are also essential to maintain positive consumer perceptions. In addition, pricing strategies should emphasize transparency and perceived fairness. Clear information regarding delivery fees, promotional terms, and price structures can strengthen consumers' trust and mitigate negative perceptions related to hidden costs. Managers should therefore adopt value-based pricing approaches that align service quality with perceived benefits, rather than competing solely on price reductions. By strengthening brand trust through superior service performance and fair pricing, online food delivery platforms can enhance

customer retention and sustain competitive advantage in increasingly saturated markets.

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