CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, E-SERVICE QUALITY, AND LOYALITY IN ONLINE FOOD DELIVERY: THE CASE OF MIE GACOAN

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Abstract

Background: The increasing popularity of online food delivery (OFD) services has prompted many restaurants, including Mie Gacoan, to adopt these platforms. However, in practice, Mie Gacoan frequently encounters customer complaints regarding order discrepancies when placing orders through various OFD platforms.

Purpose: This study aims to analyze the factors contributing to customer complaints by examining customer experience and customer satisfaction, particularly in minimizing order discrepancies in online food delivery services. By understanding these factors, Mie Gacoan can enhance customer loyalty while maintaining a positive brand image on the OFD platforms it utilizes.

Design/methodology/approach: This study employs a non-probability voluntary sampling method, successfully gathering data from 173 qualified respondents to ensure validity. A descriptive analysis and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach are used to test the hypotheses, allowing for the evaluation of multiple relationships among the variables within the research model.

Findings/Result: The findings indicate that customer experience and e-service quality significantly influence customer satisfaction, which in turn impacts customer loyalty. The study emphasizes that strengthening customer loyalty requires first enhancing customer satisfaction by improving problem-solving mechanisms within the customer experience and refining compensation policies in e-service quality.

Conclusion: The results highlight that customer satisfaction plays a crucial mediating role in fostering customer loyalty, as customer experience and e-service quality exert a stronger influence on satisfaction than on loyalty.

Originality/value (State of the art): This study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical insights into the role of customer experience and e-service quality in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty in the online food delivery sector. The findings offer practical recommendations for service providers to improve their operational strategies and enhance customer retention.

Keywords: customer experience, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, e-service quality, online food delivery

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INTRODUCTION

The advancement of digital technology has brought significant transformations across various sectors, including the culinary industry. One of the most notable changes is the increasing popularity of online food delivery (OFD) services, which provide convenience for consumers to order food without the need to visit restaurants physically (Chang & Meyer, 2021; Li et al., 2023). These services serve as a solution for individuals prioritizing time efficiency and ease of access (Kim et al., 2022). Shopee Food, Grab Food, and Go Food are among the leading platforms in Indonesia that offer such services. Indonesia has emerged as one of the largest markets for online food delivery services in Southeast Asia, driven by shifting consumer behavior and the rapid adoption of digital technologies (Handayani, Anggraeni, & Munajat, 2021). The growing demand for these services indicates that consumers are increasingly relying on online platforms to meet their culinary needs in a practical and efficient manner. In this context, technology-mediated service encounters have enabled businesses to offer customer experiences that are faster, more efficient, and personalized (Wirtz, Zeithaml, & Gistri, 2021).

The availability of e-commerce and marketplace platforms allows food service businesses to operate without the need to develop proprietary digital infrastructure, as they can simply join existing platforms to reach their customers (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Malhotra, 2002). In the city of Bogor, one notable restaurant that has successfully leveraged this digital transformation is Mie Gacoan. Renowned for its spicy noodle offerings with varying levels of heat and affordability, Mie Gacoan has become a favorite among local consumers, particularly younger demographics. In addition to dine-in services, the restaurant also offers online food delivery options to serve customers who are unable to visit the physical location (Sun, Liu, & Zhao, 2021). This illustrates how the integration of online service quality and customer experience plays a pivotal role in cultivating customer loyalty in this growing industry.

In recent years, consumer expectations for online food delivery services have evolved beyond basic functionality, placing greater emphasis on seamless digital experiences, service reliability, and post-purchase satisfaction. Factors such as user-friendly interfaces, real-time tracking, order accuracy, and customer service responsiveness have emerged as critical determinants of perceived service quality (Alalwan, 2020; Kapoor & Vij, 2021). Moreover, customer reviews and digital word-of-mouth significantly influence purchasing decisions, especially in a high-competition environment where consumers can easily switch between service providers (Prasetyo, Castillo, & Salazar, 2021). The roles of trust, convenience, and platform usability have also been highlighted as key elements driving customer retention and loyalty in online food delivery ecosystems (Yeo, Goh, & Rezaei, 2017). As such, for businesses like Mie Gacoan operating within digitally mediated contexts, maintaining high standards of digital service quality is not only a competitive advantage but a strategic necessity.

However, despite its popularity, Mie Gacoan often encounters customer complaints regarding order inaccuracies when using online food delivery services, particularly through the Shopee Food platform (Handayani et al., 2021). An analysis of customer reviews with one-star ratings on Shopee Food reveals frequent complaints about order discrepancies, such as incorrect spice levels, missing or substituted items, and decreased product quality upon delivery (Kim et al., 2022). These issues are not isolated to a single outlet but are prevalent across six Mie Gacoan branches in Bogor City registered on Shopee Food, indicating a systemic problem that could negatively impact overall customer satisfaction (Chang & Meyer, 2021; Li et al., 2023). Order fulfillment errors are a common challenge faced by many online food delivery providers.

Sun et al. (2021) indicate that high-quality service has a positive influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, ensuring order accuracy and alignment with customer expectations is a fundamental aspect that online food delivery providers must prioritize. The millennial generation not only seeks quality products but also places significant emphasis on their overall shopping experience.

In relation to this, electronic service quality (e-service quality) emerges as a critical factor in the operation of e-commerce businesses. E-service quality encompasses the standards of interaction between producers and consumers through web-based platforms to conduct business efficiently and effectively. Order discrepancies, such as mismatches between the ordered and delivered products, can diminish customer satisfaction and

negatively impact their loyalty to the service. To address this research gap, this study explores the impact of Customer Experience and E-Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty in the context of Mie Gacoan's online food delivery services in Bogor City.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the factors influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty in the online food delivery service of Mie Gacoan in Kota Bogor. Specifically, this research aims to: Analyze the impact of customer experience on customer satisfaction with Mie Gacoan's online food delivery service; Examine the effect of e-service quality on customer satisfaction with Mie Gacoan's online food delivery service; Investigate the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the context of Mie Gacoan's online food delivery service; Develop managerial implications to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, particularly by improving service quality and overall consumer experience in the online food delivery sector.

By addressing these objectives, this study seeks to provide practical insights for businesses operating in the online food delivery industry, enabling them to optimize service quality, enhance customer experience, and foster long-term consumer loyalty.

METHODS

The research was conducted in the City of Bogor during the period of November to December 2024. This study employed a quantitative approach by utilizing primary data obtained directly from respondents. Data collection was carried out through an online questionnaire distributed via various social media platforms, using a Google Form to ensure ease of access and wide reach. The questionnaire was designed to capture both the demographic characteristics of consumers and their perceptions related to the research variables. These variables included customer experience, e-service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty, which were measured using a series of structured indicators to ensure data validity and reliability.

This study employed a non-probability sampling method using voluntary sampling. According to Zeithaml et al. (2010), this technique allowed respondents to participate voluntarily in the study. The respondents in

this study were selected based on the following criteria: Customers aged 18–40 years old, Customers who used the Shopee Food, Grab Food, and Go Food applications and resided in Kota Bogor, and Customers who had made at least one purchase through Shopee Food, Grab Food, or Go Food in the last three months. Respondents who met the criteria were given open opportunities to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. This method was chosen to maximize outreach through online questionnaire distribution. The sample size in this study followed the guideline suggested by Hair et al. (2010), which stated that the minimum required sample size should be at least five times the number of indicators used. Since this study consisted of 29 indicators, the minimum required sample size is 145 respondents. To enhance data validity, a total of 173 respondents who met the criteria were successfully collected. This study employed the descriptive analysis and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method to test the hypotheses, as it allowed for the assessment of multiple relationships among variables within the research model.

Hypothesis

Relationship between Customer Experience and Customer Satisfaction (H1)

Customer experience refers to the overall perception customers develop based on their interactions with a brand, which plays a critical role in shaping customer satisfaction (Ladhari, 2020). Positive emotional experiences during the service encounter significantly enhance customer satisfaction in digital platforms (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Based on these insights, we hypothesize:

H_{01}: Customer experience does not significantly influence customer satisfaction.

H_{a1}: Customer experience significantly influences customer satisfaction.

Relationship between E-Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction (H2)

E-service quality refers to the effectiveness of an online platform in delivering reliable, responsive, and user-friendly services to customers (Zeithaml et al., 2010). Recent studies also emphasize the role of perceived security and website aesthetics in shaping online satisfaction (Amin, 2016). Based on these findings, we hypothesize:

H_{02}: E-service quality does not significantly influence customer satisfaction.
H_{a2}: E-service quality significantly influences customer satisfaction.

Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty (H3)

Customer satisfaction is a key driver of customer loyalty, particularly in the service industry (Ali et al., 2021). Satisfaction enhances emotional bonds, which play a vital role in promoting customer advocacy and repeat usage (Rather, 2018). Based on these insights, we hypothesize:

H_{03}: Customer satisfaction does not significantly influence customer loyalty.
H_{a3}: Customer satisfaction significantly influences customer loyalty.

Relationship between Customer Experience and Customer Loyalty (H4)

Customer experience plays a crucial role in fostering customer loyalty, as a positive experience leads to emotional attachment and repeated engagement with the brand (Ladhari, 2020). Furthermore, holistic and consistent experience across channels significantly drives behavioral loyalty (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Based on this, we hypothesize:

H_{04}: Customer experience does not significantly influence customer loyalty.
H_{a4}: Customer experience significantly influences customer loyalty.

Relationship between E-Service Quality and Customer Loyalty (H5)

E-service quality is a critical factor influencing customer retention and loyalty in digital businesses (Roy et al., 2020). Dimensions such as responsiveness, ease of navigation, and system reliability are shown to be strong predictors of loyalty (Shankar & Jebarajakirthy, 2019). Based on this, we hypothesize:

H_{05}: E-service quality does not significantly influence customer loyalty.
H_{a5}: E-service quality significantly influences customer loyalty.

Relationship between Customer Experience and Customer Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction (H6)

Customer satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between customer experience and loyalty, as a satisfying experience strengthens consumer trust and brand commitment. Mediation analysis confirms that satisfaction transmits the effect of experience into sustained loyalty behavior (Bilgihan, 2016). Based on this reasoning, we hypothesize:

H_{06}: Customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between customer experience and customer loyalty.
H_{a6}: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between customer experience and customer loyalty.

Relationship between E-Service Quality and Customer Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction (H7)
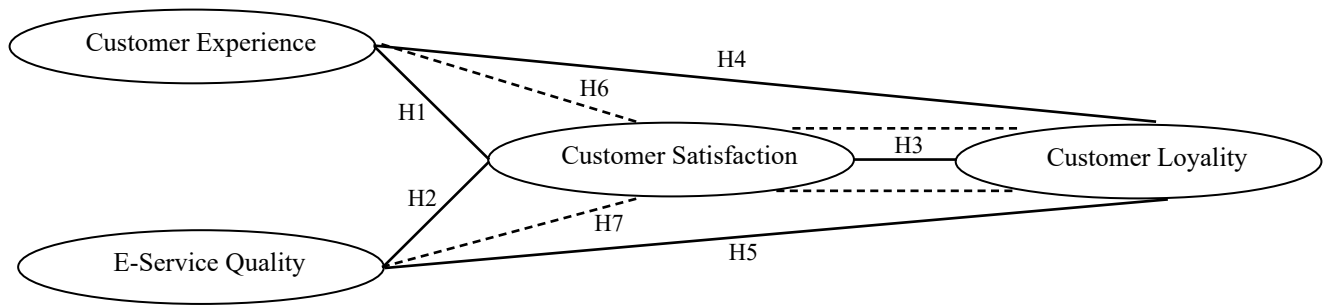
E-service quality enhances customer satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens customer loyalty (Ladhari, 2020). Based on these insights, we hypothesize:

H_{07}: Customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between e-service quality and customer loyalty.
H_{a7}: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between e-service quality and customer loyalty.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study, which examines the impact of customer experience and e-service quality on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the context of online food delivery services. This framework provides a structured approach to understanding how service quality and customer interactions influence consumer behavior in the online food delivery industry.

RESULTS

The total number of respondents in this study was 173, obtained through an online questionnaire distribution. The respondents were residents of Bogor City who had used online food delivery services. This sample size met the minimum requirements for analysis using the SEM-PLS method. According to Hair et al. (2010), the minimum sample size required for this study was 145 respondents; however, this research successfully gathered 173 respondents to enhance validity (Table 1).

Figures 1. Conceptual framework

The findings of this study indicate that the majority of Mie Gacoan online food delivery customers in Bogor were female (55%) and belonged to the 25–35 age group (59%). This suggests that women and young adults with high mobility were the dominant users of online food delivery services. The largest occupational group among respondents was private-sector employees (31%), followed by students (25%) and entrepreneurs (16%), reflecting the preference for convenience and time efficiency among working professionals and students. Furthermore, the majority of respondents had an income of less than IDR1,500,000 (28%), indicating that Mie Gacoan's online food delivery service was predominantly used by individuals in the low- to middle-income segments.

In terms of purchasing behavior, most respondents ordered Mie Gacoan 1–3 times in the last three months (46%), demonstrating sporadic or occasional consumption patterns. The most popular purchasing location was Pajajaran (30%), likely due to its strategic location and 24-hour operation. Regarding online platforms, GoFood was the most frequently used application (40%), highlighting its strong market presence among Mie Gacoan customers. In terms of spending, the majority of customers spent between Rp. 20,000 – Rp. 40,000 per transaction (31%), further confirming the affordability of Mie Gacoan's products for middle-income consumers. Customer satisfaction analysis revealed that 53% of respondents had experienced dissatisfaction with Mie Gacoan's service, mainly related to waiting times. A significant portion of respondents reported waiting 30–40 minutes for their orders (32%), while only 5% received their orders in under 10 minutes. These findings indicate that long wait times were a critical issue affecting customer satisfaction. Addressing this concern by improving order fulfillment efficiency and reducing delivery delays could enhance the overall customer experience and strengthen Mie Gacoan's competitive position in the online food delivery market.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) - Partial Least Squares (PLS) Analysis

This section presented the results of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis utilizing the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique, which was employed to assess both the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The main objective of this analysis was to evaluate the validity and reliability of the research instruments, as well as to examine the relationships between the constructs proposed in the conceptual model.

Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

According to Hair et al. (2014), discriminant validity refered to the extent to which a construct was truly distinct from other constructs within a model (reliable). The reliability of a construct could be determined using two main methods: the average variance extracted (AVE) value and the square root of AVE (Fornell-Larcker criterion). Based on Chin and Dibbern (2010), a construct's AVE value should exceed 0.5 to be considered valid (Table 2).

The analysis results show that the fulfillment of all criteria by the analyzed construct indicated good internal consistency in this research model.

Table 1. Description of respondent characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Percentage (%)	Characteristic	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	45		Gunung Batu	21
	Female	55		Sholeh Iskandar	9
Age	18-24 years	32		Batu Tulis	5
	25-35 years	59	Mie Gacoan Purchase Platform	Shopee Food	36
	36-40 years	9		Grab Food	24
Occupation	Unemployed	10		Go Food	40
	Student	25	Total Spending on Mie Gacoan	Below IDR 20,000	6
	Housewife	13		IDR 20,000 – IDR 40,000	31
	Civil Servant	5		IDR 40,000 – IDR 60,000	29
	Entrepreneur	16		IDR 60,000 – IDR 80,000	20
	Private employee	31		Above IDR 80,000	14
Income	< IDR 1,500,000	28	Customer Dissatisfaction Issues	Yes, experienced dissatisfaction	53
	IDR 1,500,000 – IDR 3,000,000	19		No, never experienced dissatisfaction	47
	IDR 3,000,000 – IDR 5,000,000	23			
	IDR 5,000,000 – IDR 10,000,000	22			
	IDR 10,000,000	8	Order Waiting Time	Below 10 minutes	5
Purchase Frequency in the Last 3 Months	Less than 1 time	24		10 – 20 minutes	14
	1–3 times	46		20 – 30 minutes	29
	4–5 times	15		30 – 40 minutes	32
	More than 5 times	16		Above 40 minutes	20
Purchase Location	Pajajaran	30			
	Yasmin	19			
	Tajur	15			

Table 2. Value AVE, Composite Reliability, and Cronbach Alpha

Construct	AVE	CR	Cronbach Alpha
Customer Experience	0.542	0.904	0.879
E-Service Quality	0.563	0.939	0.929
Customer Satisfaction	0.955	0.991	0.870
Customer Loyalty	0.899	0.867	0.771

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Once the measurement model was assessed, the next step was to evaluate the structural model. The structural model aimed to examine the relationships among the constructs and assess the model's predictive power. Key tests conducted in this analysis included the R-Square (R^2) and F-Square (f^2). The R-Square (R^2) values indicated the extent to which the independent variables explained the variance in the dependent variables. Higher R^2 values suggested stronger explanatory power of the model. In this study, the customer satisfaction variable had an R-square value of 0.567, meaning that 56.7% of the variation in customer satisfaction could be explained by customer experience and e-service quality, while the remaining 43.3% was influenced by other factors outside the research model. Meanwhile, the customer loyalty variable had an R-square value of 0.400, indicating that 40% of the variation in customer loyalty could be explained by customer satisfaction, while the remaining 60% was influenced by external factors beyond this model. These R-square values demonstrated that customer experience and e-service quality played a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction, which ultimately contributed to increased customer loyalty toward Mie Gacoan in Bogor City. However, there were still external factors beyond this model that might also influence customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Direct Effect

The first hypothesis (H1) proposed that customer experience positively influenced customer satisfaction. The analysis confirmed this hypothesis, as the path coefficient was 0.365 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant positive effect (Table 3). This finding suggests that the better the customer experienced in interacting with Mie Gacoan's services, the higher their level of satisfaction. Positive experiences encompassed aspects such as accessibility, competence, problem-solving, promise fulfillment, and value for time. These elements collectively contributed to enhancing customer satisfaction, reinforcing the notion that a superior customer experience was a key determinant of satisfaction. This result aligns with previous studies, such as those conducted by Becker and Jaakkola (2020), which emphasized that customer experience significantly affected satisfaction by shaping consumers' emotional and cognitive perceptions.

The second hypothesis (H2) posited that e-service quality positively affected customer satisfaction. The analysis supported this hypothesis, with a path coefficient of 0.464 and a p-value of 0.000, signifying a strong and significant impact (Table 3). This result indicates that the higher the quality of digital services provided—measured through dimensions such as efficiency, system availability, fulfillment, privacy, responsiveness, compensation, and contact—the greater the level of customer satisfaction. In the context of Mie Gacoan, customers who perceived digital services as responsive and reliable were more likely to be satisfied with their overall ordering experience. These findings align with the study by Kuppelwieser and Finsterwalder (2016), which found that e-service quality enhanced customer satisfaction by improving transaction efficiency and reducing service friction.

The third hypothesis (H3) suggested that customer satisfaction had a positive effect on customer loyalty. The analysis confirmed this relationship, with a path coefficient of 0.445 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant and positive effect (Table 3). This result suggests that the higher the level of customer satisfaction with Mie Gacoan's services and products, the more likely they were to remain loyal. Satisfied customers were more inclined to make repeat purchases and recommend the brand to others. These findings are consistent with research by Rather and Hollebeek (2021), which showed that customer satisfaction was a fundamental driver of loyalty, particularly in service-based industries.

The fourth hypothesis (H4) proposed that customer experience directly influenced customer loyalty. However, this hypothesis was rejected, as the path coefficient was 0.165 with a p-value of 0.074, indicating no significant effect (Table 3). This finding suggests that while a positive customer experience contributed to satisfaction, it did not directly translate into customer loyalty. In other words, customers who had a good experience with Mie Gacoan did not necessarily become loyal customers unless they also developed a higher level of satisfaction with the products and services offered. These results were in line with research by Klaus et al. (2022), who found that while customer experience was a crucial factor in shaping perceptions, its direct impact on loyalty was often mediated by satisfaction.

Table 3. Hypothesis testing

Relationship	Path Coefficient	P-Value	Result
Direct Effects			
Customer Experience → Customer Satisfaction	0.365	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
E-Service Quality → Customer Satisfaction	0.464	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty	0.445	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
Customer Experience → Customer Loyalty	0.165	0.074	Hypothesis Rejected
E-Service Quality → Customer Loyalty	0.083	0.363	Hypothesis Rejected
Indirect Effects (via Customer Satisfaction)			
Customer Experience → Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty	0.163	0.006	Hypothesis Accepted
E-Service Quality → Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty	0.207	0.001	Hypothesis Accepted

The fifth hypothesis (H5) proposed that e-service quality had a direct impact on customer loyalty. However, this hypothesis was also rejected, as the path coefficient was 0.083 with a p-value of 0.363, indicating no significant effect (Table 3). This result implies that although digital service quality played a role in enhancing customer satisfaction, it was not sufficient to directly foster customer loyalty. Customers might appreciate the efficiency and reliability of e-service features, but these aspects alone did not guarantee long-term loyalty unless overall satisfaction was achieved. This finding was consistent with research by Wirtz et al. (2018), which found that e-service quality improved customer experience but did not directly lead to loyalty unless it was complemented by strong brand engagement and satisfaction.

Indirect Effects

The results of the indirect effect testing indicated that customer experience had an indirect influence on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. The path coefficient (original sample) was 0.163, with a p-value of 0.006 (significant at α = 5%) (Table 3), suggesting that a more positive customer experienced in using Mie Gacoan's online food delivery services led to higher customer satisfaction. Additionally, the results also demonstrate that e-service quality had a significant indirect effect on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. The path coefficient (original sample) was 0.207, with a p-value of 0.001 (significant at α = 5%) (Table 3), indicating that the higher the quality of digital services provided by Mie Gacoan, the greater the increase in customer satisfaction. This enhanced satisfaction, in turn, positively impacted customer loyalty.

Implications Managerial

To enhance customer experience, Mie Gacoan should improve the clarity of complaint procedures by ensuring that customers could easily find information regarding issue resolution, whether on purchase receipts or within the online food delivery application. Additionally, the complaint resolution process should be more efficient and responsive, ensuring that customers feel heard and valued. Optimizing order processing time was also crucial to maintaining efficiency, ensuring order accuracy in line with customer expectations, and providing a seamless and swift transaction experience through the online food delivery platform. Furthermore,

improvements in kitchen management and online order processing systems were necessary to prevent order backlogs that could lead to delivery delays. In terms of e-service quality, Mie Gacoan should focus on refining its compensation policies, as customer satisfaction with issue resolution remained relatively low. This indicates that the current compensation or reimbursement schemes offered by both Mie Gacoan and its online food delivery platforms were insufficient. Enhancing customer satisfaction was a critical step toward fostering customer loyalty. By consistently improving digital service quality and customer experience, Mie Gacoan could strengthen customer retention. Key factors such as order accuracy, service responsiveness, and user-friendly applications should be prioritized to ensure long-term customer loyalty.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study examined the impact of customer experience and e-service quality on customer satisfaction and loyalty in Mie Gacoan's online food delivery service in Bogor. The findings highlight that customer satisfaction served as a key mediator in fostering customer loyalty, as customer experience and e-service quality had a more substantial impact on satisfaction than on loyalty. This suggests that enhancing customer satisfaction should be prioritized before focusing on loyalty-building strategies. Additionally, while accessibility, competence, system availability, and privacy contributed positively to satisfaction, problem-solving mechanisms and compensation policies remain areas of concern that required improvement. Strengthening these aspects would be crucial in ensuring a more satisfying customer experience, which, in turn, would enhance long-term customer loyalty.

Recomendations

To improve customer satisfaction and strengthen loyalty, Mie Gacoan must optimize operational efficiency by ensuring accurate order fulfillment, minimizing service delays, and enhancing customer interactions. Establishing a more structured and transparent complaint-handling process within online food delivery platforms is essential to improving responsiveness and issue resolution. Additionally, refining compensation policies to provide fair and timely redress for service

failures will help build greater customer trust. Beyond these operational improvements, future research should consider additional factors influencing loyalty, such as perceived product quality and comparative assessments between online and in-store experiences. A deeper understanding of these elements will enable Mie Gacoan to develop more effective strategies for sustaining long-term customer engagement and retention.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: The author declares that there were no conflicts of interest associated with this research. Throughout the entire research process, the author maintained full independence and was not influenced by any financial, institutional, or personal relationships. There were no affiliations or involvements that could be perceived as having biased the interpretation of data or presentation of results. This declaration was made to ensure transparency and uphold the ethical standards of academic publishing. The integrity and credibility of the research were prioritized at all stages of the study.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI STATEMENT: The authors would like to declare that in the preparation of this manuscript, generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools were employed in a limited manner. Specifically, AI was utilized to assist in improving the clarity and fluency of the English language, as well as to provide suggestions and ideas for structuring arguments and refining the narrative flow. These applications were strictly supportive in nature, intended to enhance readability and presentation without altering the originality or substance of the research content. Apart from these supportive functions, all core elements of the study including the conceptual framework, literature review, methodology, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, and the formulation of conclusions were entirely conducted, written, and critically evaluated by the authors. Thus, the intellectual contributions, scholarly insights, and overall academic integrity of the paper remain the sole responsibility of the authors. By including this statement, the authors affirm their compliance with journal policies on the ethical use of generative AI tools and uphold transparency in the research and publication process. The role of AI was only supplementary, and the substantive academic work presented in this article fully reflects the authors' independent research, critical thinking, and scholarly judgment.

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