

E-SERVICE QUALITY, CONSUMER INNOVATIVENESS AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND TRUST AMONG ONLINE FOOD DELIVERY USERS

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ABSTRACT: Indonesia's online food delivery market continues to expand, yet intense competition from established platforms prevails. This study contributes to the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework by explaining how e-service quality and consumer innovativeness build customer loyalty through brand trust. A quantitative causal survey was conducted among 130 Shopee Food users in Malang City, Indonesia, using purposive sampling and a structured five-point Likert questionnaire. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4. The findings show that e-service quality and consumer innovativeness strengthen both brand trust and customer loyalty. Brand trust also increases customer loyalty and mediates the effects of e-service quality and consumer innovativeness on loyalty. These results indicate that customer loyalty in the online food delivery context develops when reliable digital services and consumers' openness to innovation generate trust. Shopee Food managers should improve service reliability, introduce relevant digital innovations, and reinforce brand credibility to sustain customer loyalty.

Keywords: E-Service Quality; Consumer Innovativeness; Brand Trust; Loyalty; Online Food Delivery

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INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has transformed consumption practices by shifting many everyday transactions from physical settings to website- and platform-based exchanges. Globalization and mobile connectivity have accelerated this transformation because consumers can now access products and services through digital platforms with greater convenience, speed, and flexibility (Sajjad & Umer, 2020). E-commerce has therefore become a promising business model because it allows companies or brands to sell products through their own online platforms in a market environment shaped by rapid internet development (Opiida, 2014). In Indonesia, this transformation is visible in the continued growth of e-commerce users, which reached 58.63 million in 2023 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). Shopee occupies a particularly strong position in this environment because it recorded the highest share of e-commerce visitors in Indonesia at 44%, followed by Tokopedia at 27%, Lazada at 17%, and Bukalapak at 12% (Databoks, 2023). This strong top-of-mind position provides Shopee with an opportunity to extend users' digital consumption behavior from marketplace shopping to Shopee Food, its online food delivery service (Databoks, 2023).

Online food delivery has become one of the most competitive areas of Indonesia's digital economy because it combines mobile transactions, location-based services, restaurant networks, and consumer demand for convenience. Indonesia is the largest online food delivery market in Southeast Asia, with gross transaction value reaching US\$4.6 billion, or approximately Rp76.15 trillion (Databoks, 2023). Increasing internet penetration and digitalization are expected to sustain this growth, while the expansion of online food delivery services into wider regions creates further market opportunities (Ivantan et al., 2024). Online transactions are attractive because they save time and effort compared with visiting physical stores, making consumers more likely to choose practical and efficient purchasing methods (Kim et al., 2025). Indonesia's online food delivery market includes earlier platforms such as GoFood and GrabFood, while Shopee Food entered the Indonesian market in 2021 as a service that allows users to select menus from nearby merchants through location activation (Rakuten Insight, 2023; Pertiwi, 2021).

Despite Shopee's broader dominance in Indonesian e-commerce, Shopee Food still faces a strategic loyalty challenge in the online food delivery sector. Shopee Food's market share remains relatively low at 18%, compared with GrabFood at 47% and GoFood at 35% (Momentum Works, 2024). This gap indicates that broad brand visibility in e-commerce does not automatically translate into loyalty in food delivery services, where customers evaluate specific service experiences, transaction security, delivery reliability, and brand credibility. Loyalty is especially important in this context because it reflects a deeply held commitment to repurchase or reuse preferred products or services despite situational pressures and competitor marketing efforts (Kotler, Keller, & Chernev, 2022). Loyalty can also be understood as customer commitment to a brand, store, or supplier based on a positive attitude reflected in long-term repeat purchasing (Tjiptono, 2004). Thus, Shopee Food's competitive problem concerns not only customer acquisition but also the formation of durable loyalty.

Malang City provides an appropriate setting for examining this problem because it is a digitally active urban market with a large and diverse consumer base. The city has the second-highest population density in East Java, with a population of 855,270 people (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). It also recorded the highest e-purchasing transaction value in East Java, Indonesia in 2023, exceeding Rp40 billion (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). These characteristics make Malang City relevant for analyzing online food delivery behavior because consumers in such environments are likely to interact frequently with mobile platforms, promotional features, and digital payment systems. In this setting, the central research problem is how Shopee Food can strengthen customer loyalty when competing against established online food delivery platforms. The study focuses on two antecedents of loyalty—e-service quality and consumer innovativeness—and examines whether brand trust explains how these antecedents are converted into loyalty.

E-service quality is one of the most frequently discussed determinants of loyalty in electronic service environments. Parasuraman et al. (2005) define e-service quality as electronic-based services used to facilitate shopping, purchasing, and product or service delivery effectively and efficiently. Nguyen et al. (2022) note that e-service quality differs from traditional service quality because it emphasizes ease of information access from electronic providers and involves

consumer participation in service delivery. However, empirical findings remain inconsistent. Ivantan et al. (2024) found that e-service quality does not significantly affect loyalty when customer expectations before using electronic services do not differ from perceived brand performance. Mauliza and Zuhra (2024) similarly reported an insignificant effect, indicating that service recovery and problem resolution may influence loyalty more strongly than general service quality. In contrast, Bohorquez et al. (2024) found that e-service quality significantly affects loyalty because electronic service development enables consumers to evaluate internet-based service value. Chao et al. (2024) and Utomo and Hidayat (2023) also found significant effects, arguing that application usability, transaction security, response speed, positive user experience, and responsive customer support encourage repeat use and loyalty.

Consumer innovativeness provides a second theoretical route for explaining loyalty toward a relatively new digital service such as Shopee Food. Consumer innovativeness refers to consumers' tendency to try new products or services and to show curiosity and willingness to explore new consumption experiences (Li, Lixu, et al., 2021). Innovative consumers actively seek information about special interests through informal sources and mass media, making them more receptive to new services and technologies (Dai, Hua, et al., 2015). Yet research again shows mixed results. Al-Jundi et al. (2019) found that consumer innovativeness did not significantly influence brand loyalty, even though firms recognize its importance in the diffusion of new products and services. Persaud and Schillo (2017) similarly argued that innovative consumers may not become loyal when they do not emotionally align with a brand's values or positioning. Conversely, Kim et al. (2025) emphasize that consumer innovativeness reflects the tendency to explore new service ideas, while Ghali et al. (2024) argue that innovative service use can become part of consumer self-identity. Hwang et al. (2021) and Sajjad and Umer (2020) further show that consumer innovativeness can significantly affect loyalty when innovations meet expectations and when brands continue to innovate.

These inconsistencies suggest that the relationship between e-service quality, consumer innovativeness, and loyalty may depend on an internal psychological mechanism, particularly brand trust. Consumer loyalty often emerges when customers trust a brand's products or services, making brand trust a suitable mediator for explaining loyalty formation (Vuong et al., 2024). Trust encourages consumers to continue using a brand over time, whereas perceived benefits without trust may not generate sustained brand use (Paulo et al., 2019). Brand trust reflects consumers' sense of security that a brand will meet their needs and expectations (Wottrich et al., 2017), and it is a primary factor in deciding whether to purchase products or services from an online store (Fortes et al., 2017). It arises from communication, satisfaction, and brand value, and it reflects belief that a brand is reliable, honest, and capable of fulfilling business promises (W. Jedsada, 2022). Brand trust also has a positive impact on loyalty because it motivates customers to maintain long-term relationships with brands, they perceive as dependable (Sohaib & Han, 2023). Theoretically, this mediating logic is consistent with Stimulus-Organism-Response theory, which explains how external stimuli influence internal states such as feelings, thoughts, and perceptions before producing behavioral responses (Hovland et al., 1953). The SOR model describes communication processes that produce specific reactions (Effendy, 2003), and recent applications use it to explain how external customer stimuli influence internal states and ultimately loyalty behavior (Shahzad et al., 2024; Sohaib & Han, 2023).

This study therefore aims to examine the effects of e-service quality and consumer innovativeness on Shopee Food customer loyalty in Malang City, both directly and indirectly through brand trust. Its novelty lies in integrating e-service quality, consumer innovativeness, brand trust, and loyalty into a single Stimulus-Organism-Response-based model for the online food delivery context. E-service quality and consumer innovativeness are treated as stimuli because they represent external service experience and consumer orientation toward new digital services. Brand trust is positioned as the organism because it captures the internal belief that Shopee Food is reliable, honest, secure, and valuable. Loyalty is treated as the response because it reflects continued use, repurchase commitment, and favorable behavioral intention. By focusing on Shopee Food users in Malang City, Indonesia the study addresses a contextual gap in Indonesian online food delivery research and a theoretical gap in prior studies that produced inconsistent findings on the direct effects of e-service quality and consumer innovativeness on loyalty. The article contributes by clarifying whether brand trust functions as the psychological

bridge through which digital service quality and innovative consumer tendencies become durable customer loyalty.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Stimulus Organism Response Theory (SOR Framework Theory)

The present study is grounded in the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework, which explains how external stimuli are processed through internal psychological states before producing behavioral responses. Originally developed in psychology and later applied in marketing, the SOR model is useful for examining how customers respond to digital service environments because it links external platform attributes with internal evaluations and subsequent behavioral outcomes (Hovland et al., 1953). In communication and consumer-behavior contexts, the SOR model explains how stimuli generate specific reactions and how messages or environmental cues may align with consumer responses (Effendy, 2003). Recent interpretations further position the model as a framework for understanding how external factors influence customers' internal states and ultimately shape loyalty behavior (Shahzad et al., 2024).

Within this study, e-service quality and consumer innovativeness are conceptualized as stimuli. These stimuli represent, respectively, customers' perceptions of Shopee Food's electronic service performance and customers' tendency to explore new digital services. Brand trust functions as the organism because it reflects the internal evaluative state through which customers assess whether the brand is reliable, honest, and capable of fulfilling promises. Loyalty is positioned as the response because it represents a behavioral outcome involving repurchase intention, recommendation, and continued commitment. This configuration is consistent with the SOR logic in which stimulus triggers evaluation, organism captures psychological processing, and response reflects final action or behavioral reaction (Sohaib & Han, 2023).

Marketing management provides the broader managerial foundation for this model. It is commonly defined as the process of planning, implementing, analyzing, and controlling marketing programs to achieve organizational goals efficiently and effectively (Sudarsono, 2020). Kotler and Keller (2016) describe marketing management as both an art and a science of attracting, retaining, and growing customers by selecting target markets and creating superior customer value. Similarly, Indrasari (2019) emphasizes the role of creating, delivering, and communicating superior customer value, while Assauri (2013) highlights the importance of designing programs to establish, maintain, and develop profitable exchange relationships. These definitions support the present study because loyalty in online food delivery depends not only on platform availability but also on a firm's ability to manage customer value, digital experience, trust, and long-term relationships.

Loyalty

Loyalty is generally understood as a strong commitment to repurchase, reuse, or continue subscribing to a preferred product or service despite situational influences and marketing efforts that may encourage switching (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020). Tjiptono (2004) defines loyalty as customer commitment to a brand, store, or supplier based on a very positive attitude and reflected in consistent repeat purchasing. Santos and Schlesinger (2021) similarly describe loyalty as a commitment to continue buying the same brand despite factors that may cause behavioral change. In digital platforms, loyalty is strategically important because customers can easily compare alternatives and switch providers when service quality, trust, or value declines.

This study measures loyalty through willingness to pay more, word of mouth, and repurchase intention, following Kohli and Khandai (2021). Willingness to pay more indicates perceived value and emotional commitment, word of mouth reflects customers' readiness to recommend the brand to others, and repurchase intention captures future usage commitment. These dimensions are relevant to Shopee Food because platform loyalty is not limited to repeated orders; it also includes recommendation behavior and the willingness to remain with the brand despite competitive alternatives.

E-Service Quality

According to Chao et al., (2024), e-service quality is a service available on the internet as an E-service quality refers to the quality of services delivered through electronic channels such as websites, mobile applications, and online platforms. Chao et al. (2024) define it as an internet-based service that extends a website's ability to facilitate shopping, purchasing, and distribution effectively and efficiently. Bohorquez et al. (2024) similarly describe e-service quality as the public's overall evaluation of electronic service delivery in online markets. In the same direction, Anser et al. (2021) define it as the overall service quality provided to customers through virtual organizational operations, while Rita et al. (2019) emphasize the efficiency of online stores in processing orders and delivering products.

The relevance of e-service quality is especially strong in digital food delivery platforms, where users rely on system accessibility, order accuracy, payment security, delivery information, and complaint handling. Tjiptono (2004) describes e-service quality as a comprehensive and integrative construct because it contains indicators suitable for evaluating electronic services as a whole. Raza et al. (2020) argue that e-service quality can be assessed by examining how effectively a service meets its objectives, how easily the system can be accessed, and how well it protects users' personal information. In this study, e-service quality is measured through four dimensions: efficiency, fulfillment, system availability, and contact, following Utomo and Hidayat (2023). Efficiency captures ease and speed of access, fulfillment refers to the platform's ability to deliver what has been promised, system availability concerns system reliability and data protection, and contact reflects the availability of communication channels for customer support.

Previous research provides mixed evidence regarding the effect of e-service quality on loyalty. Several studies show that e-service quality has a positive and significant influence on behavioral intention, continued use, or loyalty (Bohorquez et al., 2022; Chao et al., 2024; Utomo & Hidayat, 2023; Vatolkina et al., 2020). However, other studies report insignificant effects, suggesting that service quality does not automatically produce loyalty when platforms fail to resolve customer problems or when customer expectations are not clearly differentiated from perceived performance (Ivantan et al., 2024; Mauliza & Zuhra, 2024). This inconsistency justifies the need to examine whether brand trust helps explain how e-service quality becomes loyalty in the Shopee Food context.

H1: E-Service quality has a positive and significant effect on loyalty.

H3: Consumer innovativeness has a positive and significant effect on loyalty.

Consumer Innovativeness

Consumer innovativeness refers to consumers' tendency to accept, explore, and adopt new products, services, technologies, or shopping practices more readily than others. Hwang et al. (2021) define consumer innovativeness as the tendency to accept innovative technology more frequently and faster than other consumers. Ghali et al. (2024) identify customer innovativeness as an important variable for determining whether customers actively seek knowledge about new services or products and prefer innovative offerings that support unique value creation. Raskovic et al. (2016) further associate innovative consumers with openness to trends and a strong desire for new things, while Persaud and Schillo (2017) emphasize internal motivation to try, purchase, and consume new products or services.

In the digital service context, consumer innovativeness is important because customers who enjoy novelty may be more willing to explore new platform features, evaluate service updates, and continue using platforms that satisfy their need for useful innovation. Sajjad and Umer (2020) describe innovative consumers as individuals open to new ideas and willing to adjust to changing situations. Kim et al. (2025) operationalize consumer innovativeness through four dimensions: hedonic, functional, cognitive, and social. Hedonic innovativeness reflects enjoyment from novelty, functional innovativeness refers to perceived usefulness, cognitive innovativeness involves intellectual curiosity and information processing, and social innovativeness captures the desire to differentiate oneself through new products or services.

Empirical findings on consumer innovativeness also remain varied. Some studies find that consumer innovativeness positively influences behavioral intention, purchase behavior, customer happiness, or loyalty-related outcomes (Ghali et al., 2024; Hwang et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2025;

Sajjad & Umer, 2020). These findings suggest that innovative consumers are more responsive to new service features and more likely to form favorable attitudes toward innovative platforms. However, Persaud and Schillo (2017) and Al-Jundi et al. (2019) report insignificant effects on purchase intention or loyalty-related behavior, indicating that innovativeness alone may not guarantee loyalty. Innovative consumers may try new services without remaining committed unless the brand provides reliability, value, and trust.

H2: Consumer innovativeness has a positive and significant effect on loyalty.

H4: Consumer innovativeness has a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

Brand Trust

Brand trust is a central relational construct in this study. It refers to customers' willingness to rely on a brand because they believe the brand is capable of performing its promised function. Luk and Yip (2008) define brand trust as the average consumer's willingness to depend on a brand's ability to perform its stated function. Hur et al. (2011) explain that brand trust arises from communication, satisfaction, and brand value, reflecting the belief that a brand is reliable, honest, and capable of fulfilling its business promises. Kotler and Armstrong (2016) add that customers trust a brand despite risk when they expect the brand to provide positive outcomes.

Brand trust is particularly important in online food delivery because transactions involve uncertainty related to payment security, delivery accuracy, food condition, data protection, and service recovery. Vuong et al. (2024) argue that trust is influenced by the alignment between company values and consumer values, while Jedsada (2022) measures brand trust through brand reliability and brand intention. Brand reliability refers to customers' belief that a brand can deliver promised value, whereas brand intention reflects confidence that the brand prioritizes consumer interests. Prior studies consistently identify brand trust as a significant antecedent of loyalty (Sohaib & Han, 2023; Vuong et al., 2024; Jedsada, 2022). Other studies also show that e-service quality and innovativeness can strengthen trust because good service performance and meaningful innovation reduce uncertainty and improve customer experience (Dai et al., 2015; Paulo et al., 2019; Srisathan et al., 2024; Yin & Jessica, 2016). Figure 2 displays all hypothesized paths.

H2: Consumer innovativeness has a positive and significant effect on loyalty.

H5: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on loyalty.

H6: Brand trust mediates the effect of e-service quality on loyalty.

H7: Brand trust mediates the effect of consumer innovativeness on loyalty.

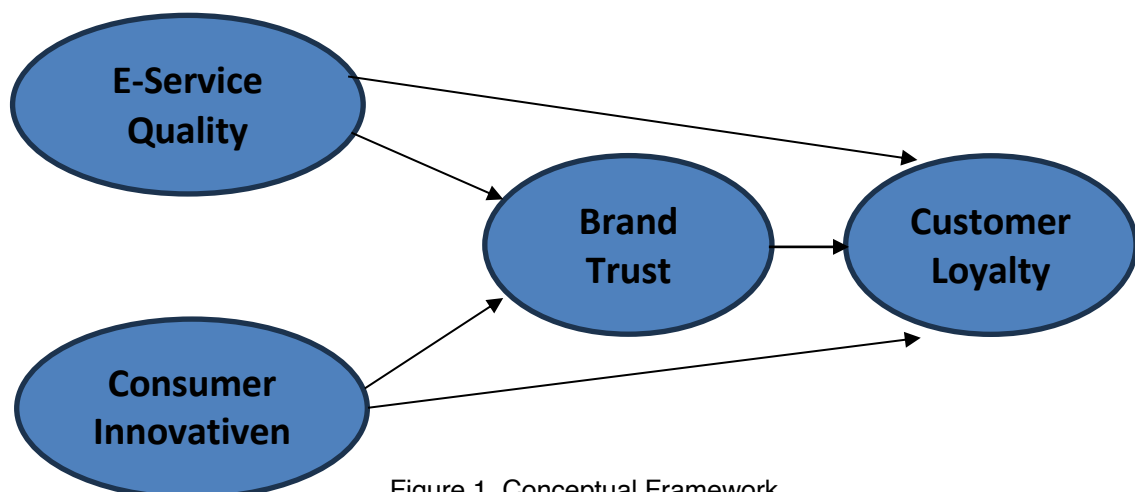


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative causal survey design to examine the relationships among e-service quality, consumer innovativeness, brand trust, and loyalty among ShopeeFood users in Malang City. A quantitative approach was selected because the study collected numerical data

and interpreted the results statistically, consistent with the view that quantitative research uses numbers for data collection and interpretation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The study was causal because it aimed to test cause-and-effect relationships between independent, mediating, and dependent variables, as causal research is designed to establish whether one variable influence another (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The survey method was appropriate because it enables researchers to collect information from respondents about their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In this study, the survey was administered through structured questionnaires distributed directly to Shopee Food users.

The research was conducted in Malang City, Indonesia. This setting was selected because Malang City has a population of 855,270 people and recorded the highest e-purchasing transaction value in East Java in 2023, exceeding Rp40 billion (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023, 2024). These conditions indicate that Malang City represents an active digital consumption environment suitable for examining online food delivery behavior. Data collection targeted Shopee Food users by approaching respondents around restaurants, campuses, and business locations associated with Shopee Food. This procedure was intended to ensure that respondents had direct experience using the platform and could evaluate the service, innovation, trust, and loyalty constructs based on actual use.

The target population comprised all residents of Malang City who had used Shopee Food. Population refers to a generalization area consisting of subjects or objects with specific characteristics determined by the researcher for study and conclusion drawing (Hair et al., 2014). Because the total number of Shopee Food users in Malang City was unknown, the study treated the population as unlimited or difficult to identify precisely. An infinite population is one whose size cannot be known and tends to be unlimited (Hendryadi & Zannati, 2019). Accordingly, this study used non-probability purposive sampling, where selected respondents met criteria determined by the researcher. Non-probability sampling means that population elements do not have a known or predetermined chance of being selected (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), while purposive sampling restricts respondents according to specific research criteria (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Respondents were required to meet three inclusion criteria: they had to be older than 17 years, domiciled in Malang City, and experienced in using Shopee Food. The age criterion was used because individuals aged 17 years are considered to have personal identity documentation and responsibility for themselves (UU No. 22 Tahun 2009, Article 8 Paragraph 2). The sample size was calculated by multiplying the 13 research indicators by 10, following the recommendation that when the population is unknown, sample size can be determined based on research indicators (Hair et al., 2014). This produced a final sample of 130 respondents, which also exceeded the minimum sample recommendation of more than 100 respondents (Hair et al., 2014).

The study used primary and secondary data. Primary data are original data collected specifically to answer the research problem (Sunyoto, 2013), or first-hand information related to variables for the specific purpose of a study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In this study, primary data were obtained from offline questionnaire responses completed by ShopeeFood users in Malang City. Secondary data are data obtained indirectly through documents or other sources (Sugiyono, 2016), and may include processed data presented by prior data collectors or other parties (Husein Umar, 2013). Secondary data in this study came from books, journal articles, previous studies, company profiles, and relevant literature used to support the theoretical framework and research context.

A research variable is anything that can distinguish or change values (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), and variable formulation is important because it determines the data used to test hypotheses and answer research problems (Ferdinand, 2014). This study measured four constructs: e-service quality, consumer innovativeness, brand trust, and loyalty. E-service quality and consumer innovativeness were independent variables, brand trust was the mediating variable, and loyalty was the dependent variable. E-service quality refers to the extent to which a digital service or online platform can meet user needs and expectations (Utomo & Hidayat, 2023). Consumer innovativeness refers to consumers' tendency to purchase or use new and different products or brands rather than remain with previous choices (Kim et al., 2025). Brand trust represents a business's ability and willingness to fulfill promises through capability, integrity, and

predictable performance (W. Jedsada, 2022). Loyalty refers to a strong commitment to repurchase or reuse a preferred product or service consistently in the future despite situational influence or competitor marketing efforts (Kohli & Khandai, 2021). A five-point Likert scale was used to measure all research constructs, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The scale was adjusted to the specific objectives of the study. The validity and reliability of the instruments were tested using Pearson's validity test and Cronbach's alpha with the help of SmartPLS 3.0, while data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares (PLS) based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS 3.0 software to test hypotheses and variable mediation testing. Hypothesis testing used the bootstrapping technique with a significance criterion of t-statistic > 1.96 at a significance level of 5%. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between variables in the context of ShopeeFood consumer behavior in Malang City.

RESULTS

This section presents the empirical results of the study on ShopeeFood users in Malang City. Shopee is described as a major e-commerce platform operating in Southeast Asia and Taiwan, founded in 2015 under Sea Group. The platform provides online shopping services supported by digital payment options, bank transfer, cash-on-delivery, discounts, cashback, free shipping, Shopee Live, Shopee Games, and customer reviews. Shopee Food is positioned as one of Shopee's service innovations in Indonesia's online food delivery market. The research object was Shopee Food users in Malang City. Malang was selected because it is an urban and university city with heterogeneous consumers, including students, families, young professionals, and digitally literate users. These characteristics make the city relevant for observing online food delivery behavior, especially in relation to service quality, innovation acceptance, brand trust, and customer loyalty.

In this study, respondent characteristics are measures used for research objects that are useful for achieving the right research objectives and expectations as in Table 1. The use of respondent characteristics in this study aims to determine the suitability of the sample used so that it can represent the entire research population.

Table 1. Respondent characteristics

Criteria	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	48	37
Female	82	63
Vulnerable age group		
17–25 years old	48	37
26–35 years old	73	56
>35 years old	9	7
Using the Shopee food platform		
1 time	6	5
2–4 times	27	20%
>5 times	97	75

Source: Author Compilation (2025)

Based on Table 1, it shows that the characteristics of respondents based on gender are dominated by females with a total of 84 people or 63%. The vulnerable age category is dominated by those aged 26-35 years, with a total of 73 or 56%. Finally, the category of those who have used the Shopee Food platform is dominated by those who have used it more than 5 times, with a total of 97 or 75%.

The measurement model in this study was used to test the reliability and validity of each latent construct with the aim of determining the appropriate items to include. This study involved four latent constructs, namely eSQ, CI, BT, and L, which had 9, 8, 6, and 7 items, respectively. All items in the four constructs were retained in the measurement model evaluation because the

outer loading value of each item exceeded 0.5. Table 1 presents details of the latent constructs and related items, outer loading values, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach Alpha (CA), and Composite Reliability (CR). Hair et al., (2014) suggest that the minimum acceptable CA and CR values are 0.7. Based on Table 2, the composite reliability values range from 0.705 to 0.965, while the AVE values range from 0.644 to 0.847, which meet the minimum AVE criterion of 0.5. Following the model quality sufficiency, the model presents the structural model evaluation as in hypothesized paths in Table 3.

Table 2. Reliability and validity of the instrument

Variable	Outer loadings	CR	CA	(AVE)
eSQ	0.747 – 0.821	0.936	0.923	0.619
CI	0.704 – 0.798	0.909	0.886	0.556
BT	0.727 – 0.803	0.898	0.868	0.558
L	0.712 – 0.793	0.898	0.863	0.594

Note: eSQ – e-service quality, CI – consumer innovativeness, BT – brand trust, L – loyalty.

Source: Author, 2025

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	t-value	p-values	Decision
H1: eSQ → L	2.591	0.010	Supported
H2: CI → L	2.824	0.005	Supported
H3 eSQ → BT	3.824	0.000	Supported
H4: CI → BT	4,962	0	Supported
H5: BT → L	4,274	0.000	Supported
H6: eSQ → BT → L	2,050	0.041	Supported
H7: CI → BT → L	3,734	0.000	Supported

Note: eSQ – e-service quality, CI – consumer innovativeness, BT – brand trust, L – loyalty.

Source: Author, 2025

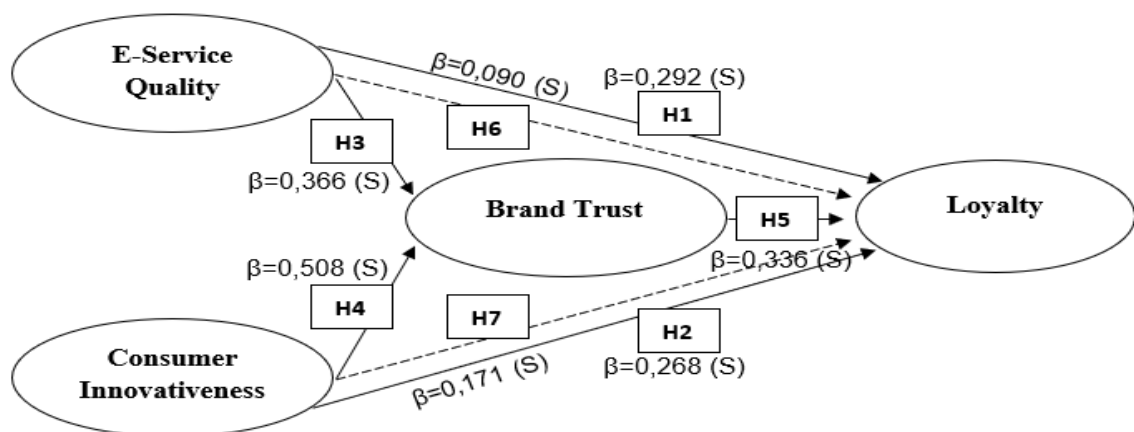


Figure 2. Path coefficient

Source: Author, 2025

Table 3 and Figure 4 show that e-service quality has a significant positive relationship with loyalty, supported by a coefficient value of 0.292, t-statistic of 2.591, and p-value of 0.010, which means H1 is supported. Similarly, consumer innovativeness is also proven to have a significant positive relationship with loyalty with a coefficient value of 0.268, t-statistic of 2.824, and p-value of 0.005, which means H2 is supported. In addition, a significant positive relationship was also found between e-service quality and brand trust with a coefficient value of 0.366, t-statistic of 3.824, and p-value of 0.000, which means H3 Supported. The relationship between consumer innovativeness and brand trust has a coefficient of 0.508 with a t-statistic of 4.962 and a p-value of 0.000, which means H4 is supported, thus reinforcing that consumer innovativeness has a significant positive relationship with loyalty. Similarly, the relationship between brand trust and

loyalty with a coefficient of 0.336 is supported by a t-statistic of 4.274 and a p-value of 0.000, which means H5 is supported, indicating a significant positive relationship between the two. In addition to the direct relationship, this study also tested the indirect relationship. The hypothesis testing results show that brand trust positively mediates the relationship between e-service quality and loyalty with a coefficient value of 0.090, t-statistic of 2.050, and p-values of 0.041, which means H6: Supported. In addition, brand trust also positively mediates the relationship between consumer innovativeness and loyalty with a coefficient value of 0.171, t-statistic of 3.734, and p-values of 0.000, which means H7: supported.

DISCUSSION

The finding indicates that customer loyalty toward Shopee Food is shaped by complementary direct and indirect mechanisms. Both e-service quality and consumer innovativeness strengthen customer loyalty while simultaneously reinforcing brand trust, which subsequently enhances loyalty. These findings support the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework, where external stimuli influence consumers' internal psychological states before generating behavioral responses (Effendy, 2003; Shahzad et al., 2024). In the context of online food delivery, e-service quality and consumer innovativeness represent the external stimuli, brand trust functions as the organism, and customer loyalty emerges as the behavioral response. The findings therefore demonstrate that loyalty is not merely a consequence of repeated platform usage but develops through customers' evaluation of service performance and the trust established through those experiences.

The positive relationship between e-service quality and customer loyalty suggests that Shopee Food users are more likely to remain loyal when they perceive the platform as reliable, responsive, secure, and capable of delivering orders accurately. In online food delivery services, customers evaluate the entire service process rather than the application interface alone, making consistent order fulfillment and dependable delivery critical determinants of loyalty. This finding supports Chao et al. (2024), who argued that e-service quality enables customers to perceive greater value from digital services. It is also consistent with Vatolkina et al. (2020), who reported that service quality influences loyalty both directly and indirectly through customers' evaluations of the service experience. Likewise, Utomo and Hidayat (2023) and Bohorquez et al. (2024) demonstrated that superior electronic service quality enhances customer commitment by improving user experience. In contrast to the insignificant relationships reported by Ivantan et al. (2024) and Mauliza and Zuhra (2024), the present findings suggest that e-service quality becomes a stronger driver of loyalty when customers consistently experience reliable service performance, accurate order fulfillment, and responsible service recovery.

Consumer innovativeness also contributes positively to customer loyalty, indicating that individuals who readily adopt new technologies and appreciate service innovations are more inclined to maintain long-term relationships with Shopee Food. This finding supports Sajjad and Umer (2020), who argued that innovative consumers are more receptive to change and tend to remain loyal to brands that continuously introduce meaningful innovations. It also aligns with Hwang et al. (2021), who found that consumer innovativeness positively influences behavioral intention, and Kim et al. (2025), who emphasized that innovative consumers evaluate new services according to their ability to satisfy practical needs. The findings imply that innovation alone is insufficient to sustain loyalty; instead, customers remain loyal when innovations improve convenience, efficiency, and everyday consumption experiences. This interpretation also explains the weaker or insignificant relationships reported by Persaud and Schillo (2017) and Al-Jundi et al. (2019), suggesting that consumer innovativeness generates loyalty only when service innovations create tangible value that aligns with customer expectations.

The findings further demonstrate that e-service quality plays a significant role in developing brand trust. Customers become more confident in Shopee Food when the platform consistently provides reliable transactions, protects personal information, responds effectively to service failures, and delivers dependable service performance. This interpretation is consistent with Paulo et al. (2019), who argued that trust in online commerce depends not only on sellers but also on the reliability of digital transaction systems. Similarly, Raza et al. (2020) emphasized that service effectiveness, accessibility, and information security are fundamental dimensions of electronic service quality that foster trust, while Yin and Jessica (2016) found that improvements in online

service quality strengthen customer trust toward a brand. Within the online food delivery context, brand trust therefore develops through repeated positive experiences that demonstrate reliability, accountability, and service consistency rather than through brand reputation alone.

Consumer innovativeness also exerts a positive influence on brand trust, suggesting that innovative consumers place greater trust in platforms capable of continuously delivering relevant and valuable innovations. This finding supports Konuk (2019), who demonstrated that retailer innovativeness strengthens loyalty through trust, and is consistent with Srisathan et al. (2024) and Dai et al. (2015), who likewise reported positive relationships between innovativeness and trust. Consumers who actively seek new technologies and digital experiences tend to evaluate brands based on their ability to adapt to changing needs while providing meaningful improvements. Consequently, innovation enhances trust when customers perceive new features and services as practical, useful, and consistent with their expectations.

Brand trust also emerged as a significant determinant of customer loyalty, reinforcing its central role in platform-based digital services. Customers are more willing to continue using Shopee Food when they believe the platform is reliable, honest, and capable of consistently fulfilling its promises. This finding supports Vuong et al. (2024), who argued that customer loyalty develops when brands consistently satisfy customer expectations, and Sohaib and Han (2023), who emphasized that trust strengthens long-term relationships between firms and consumers. Similarly, Jedsada (2022) explained that perceptions of reliability and benevolence encourage customers to repurchase and maintain enduring relationships with a brand. Because online food delivery involves uncertainty regarding merchants, delivery personnel, and transaction processes, trust functions as an important mechanism for reducing perceived risk and encouraging continued platform usage and recommendation.

The mediating role of brand trust represents the principal theoretical contribution of this study. Brand trust partially mediates the relationships between e-service quality and customer loyalty as well as between consumer innovativeness and customer loyalty, indicating that both service quality and innovation strengthen loyalty directly while simultaneously enhancing customers' confidence in the platform. These findings support Paulo et al. (2019) and Vuong et al. (2024), who argued that superior service quality reinforces loyalty by strengthening trust. They also extend the SOR framework by demonstrating that customers' evaluations of digital service quality and innovation are transformed into loyal behavior through trust formation (Effendy, 2003; Shahzad et al., 2024). Likewise, the mediation between consumer innovativeness and loyalty indicates that customers do not remain loyal merely because they appreciate innovation; instead, loyalty develops when innovation consistently demonstrates the platform's competence, dependability, and ability to deliver valuable customer experiences. This interpretation is consistent with Srisathan et al. (2024) and Vuong et al. (2024), who emphasized that trust converts favorable perceptions of innovation into sustained customer commitment.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STUDY

This study demonstrates that customer loyalty toward Shopee Food is influenced by both e-service quality and consumer innovativeness, with brand trust serving as a complementary mechanism that strengthens these relationships. The findings extend the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework by showing that e-service quality and consumer innovativeness function as external stimuli whose effects on loyalty are partially transmitted through brand trust. These results contribute to the digital marketing and online food delivery literature by clarifying the interrelationships among service quality, innovativeness, trust, and loyalty, while highlighting the pivotal role of trust in transforming positive service experiences into sustained customer commitment. However, this study is limited by its cross-sectional design, its focus on Shopee Food users in Malang City, and its reliance on self-reported survey data, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings and the ability to capture changes in customer behavior over time.

Future research should employ longitudinal designs, integrate behavioral usage data with survey responses, compare multiple online food delivery platforms, and validate the proposed model across different regions and digital service contexts to improve external validity and theoretical generalization. From a managerial perspective, Shopee Food should strengthen customer loyalty by simultaneously enhancing e-service quality, delivering meaningful service innovations, and reinforcing brand trust through reliable order fulfillment, secure transactions,

responsive service recovery, transparent communication, and consistent platform performance. An integrated strategy that combines operational excellence with trust-building initiatives is essential for sustaining customer loyalty in the increasingly competitive online food delivery market.

ETHICAL DISCLOSURE

All participants provided written informed consent prior to participation. They were informed about the study's purpose, their voluntary participation, the right to withdraw at any time, and the confidentiality of their responses.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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