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WEBSITE QUALITY, BRAND TRUST, AND PRICE PERCEPTION IN SHOPEE CUSTOMER LOYALTY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SATISFACTION

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Abstract
This study investigates how website quality, brand trust, and price perception influence customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction positioned as a mediating variable among Shopee users in Indonesia. The study responds to the growing competitiveness of the e-commerce sector, where retaining loyal customers depends not only on attractive prices but also on reliable platform performance and strong brand credibility. A quantitative research design was applied by distributing questionnaires to 300 active Shopee users selected through purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The findings reveal that website quality, brand trust, and price perception significantly improve customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Price perception shows the strongest direct contribution to loyalty. Customer satisfaction also acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between the three independent variables and customer loyalty. These results highlight the importance of creating satisfying shopping experiences to strengthen long-term customer loyalty in e-commerce.

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Penelitian ini menganalisis pengaruh kualitas website, kepercayaan merek, dan persepsi harga terhadap loyalitas pelanggan, dengan kepuasan pelanggan sebagai variabel mediasi pada pengguna Shopee di Indonesia. Kajian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh semakin ketatnya persaingan dalam industri e-commerce, sehingga perusahaan perlu mempertahankan pelanggan melalui layanan digital yang andal, citra merek yang terpercaya, dan strategi harga yang sesuai dengan harapan konsumen. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan menyebarkan kuesioner kepada 300 pengguna aktif Shopee yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kualitas website, kepercayaan merek, dan persepsi harga berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kepuasan dan loyalitas pelanggan. Persepsi harga menjadi faktor yang memiliki pengaruh langsung paling kuat terhadap loyalitas. Selain itu, kepuasan pelanggan terbukti memediasi secara parsial hubungan antara ketiga variabel independen dan loyalitas pelanggan. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya pengalaman belanja yang memuaskan dalam membangun loyalitas pelanggan jangka panjang.

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INTRODUCTION

The growth of digital technology has brought major changes to the retail sector, particularly through the expansion of e-commerce platforms. In Indonesia, online commerce continues to develop rapidly as internet access becomes wider, smartphone usage increases, and consumers increasingly prefer shopping methods that are practical, fast, and efficient. Shopee has become one of the most prominent e-commerce platforms in the country by providing various digital features, attractive pricing, and intensive promotional activities. In a market where competition among platforms is increasingly intense, building and maintaining customer loyalty is an important strategy for long-term business continuity and profitability (Wilson, 2021).

Loyalty in e-commerce has different characteristics from loyalty in traditional retail. In online marketplaces, customers depend heavily on platform performance, brand reliability, and pricing transparency because they cannot directly interact with products or sellers. This situation may increase perceived risk and make website quality and brand trust essential elements in influencing customer behavior (Albayrak et al., 2020). Furthermore, consumers in Indonesia often compare prices among different platforms before making purchase decisions. Therefore, price perception becomes an important factor that can shape customer decisions and loyalty (Park & Putra, 2020; Prihatini & Gumilang, 2021).

Website quality is one of the main aspects that determines consumer responses in online shopping. It covers several elements, such as system performance, accuracy of information, ease of navigation, visual attractiveness, responsiveness, and transaction security. Previous studies have shown that high website quality can increase customer satisfaction and support loyalty development (Quan et al., 2020; Sun et al., 2022).

In the case of Shopee, the website and mobile application are the primary channels through which users interact with the platform. Therefore, weaknesses such as unattractive design, slow access, incomplete product information, or inadequate security may reduce satisfaction and weaken customers' intention to repurchase.

Brand trust is also a critical factor in digital marketplace activities. Online transactions involve several uncertainties, including product authenticity, seller credibility, payment safety, and delivery reliability. Trust helps reduce these uncertainties and increases customers' confidence in using a platform (Seo et al., 2020; Sohail et al., 2020). Prior studies have demonstrated that brand trust contributes positively to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Badriyyah & Setyadi, 2025; Lestari & Sharif, 2023). For Shopee, strengthening brand trust is highly important because customers can easily move to other platforms that provide similar products, services, and promotions.

Price perception is another important consideration in e-commerce consumer behavior. Online marketplaces allow customers to compare product prices, discounts, and promotional offers quickly. Through this process, customers evaluate whether the prices offered are fair, affordable, and consistent with the benefits they receive. A favorable perception of price can improve satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases (Park & Putra, 2020). This issue is particularly relevant in emerging markets such as Indonesia, where many consumers are sensitive to price differences and promotional incentives.

Although previous research has discussed the influence of website quality, brand trust, and price perception on customer loyalty, the interaction among these variables still needs further examination, especially in the Indonesian e-commerce setting. Several scholars argue that customer satisfaction may function as a mediating variable that links service-related factors with loyalty outcomes (Adnyana & Iswanto, 2021; Alimin & Marco, 2023; Othman et al., 2021). Customer satisfaction reflects the overall evaluation of users' shopping experiences and can explain how positive perceptions are transformed into stronger loyalty.

Nevertheless, many prior studies have examined these variables separately or in different industries, such as hospitality, telecommunications, and business-to-business services. Research that combines website quality, brand trust, and price perception within a single model focusing specifically on Shopee users in Indonesia remains limited. In addition, the mediating role of customer satisfaction in explaining the relationship between these variables and customer loyalty has not been sufficiently explored in the Indonesian e-commerce market.

To address this gap, this study develops an integrated research model that places customer satisfaction as a mediating variable between website quality, brand trust, price perception, and customer loyalty. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to relationship marketing and digital service quality literature by applying the model to the Indonesian e-commerce context. From a practical perspective, the findings are expected to provide insights for Shopee in formulating strategies to improve customer satisfaction and strengthen long-term loyalty.

Based on the background and research gap, this study aims to examine the effects of website quality, brand trust, and price perception on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty among Shopee users in Indonesia. This study also investigates the influence of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty and analyzes whether customer satisfaction mediates the relationships between website quality, brand trust, price perception, and customer loyalty in the Indonesian e-commerce context.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with an explanatory design to examine the causal relationships among website quality, brand trust, price perception, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty among Shopee users in Indonesia.

This design was considered appropriate because the study aims to test hypotheses based on theoretical and empirical foundations and to analyze relationships among latent variables through statistical modeling. Quantitative research enables consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions to be measured objectively in digital marketing and loyalty studies (Othman et al., 2021; Alimin & Marco, 2023).

Primary data were collected through an online survey of Shopee users. Customer satisfaction was positioned as a mediating variable linking website quality, brand trust, and price perception to customer loyalty. Prior studies suggest that satisfaction can act as a psychological bridge between service attributes and loyalty outcomes (Adnyana & Iswanto, 2021; Bae et al., 2020). Therefore, Structural Equation Modeling was used to test direct and indirect relationships simultaneously.

The research was conducted in Indonesia and involved Shopee users from various regions. Since Shopee operates as a nationwide digital marketplace, the study was not limited to a specific geographical area. Data were collected online over approximately two to three months, which was suitable for reaching active users in a digital platform context.

The population consisted of Shopee users in Indonesia who had made at least one purchase within the last six months. This criterion ensured that respondents had recent shopping experience and could evaluate website quality, brand trust, price perception, satisfaction, and loyalty accurately. Experienced users are considered more reliable in evaluating digital platform performance (Quan et al., 2020; Wilson, 2021).

This study applied purposive sampling because the population size was large and undefined. Respondents were required to be Indonesian citizens, active Shopee users, at least 17 years old, and to have made at least one Shopee purchase within the previous six months. These criteria ensured that participants had sufficient experience and were able to make independent purchasing decisions.

The sample size followed Hair et al. (2021), who recommend that SEM studies use five to ten times the number of research indicators. This study used five constructs—website quality, brand trust, price perception, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty—with nine reflective indicators for each construct, resulting in 45 indicators. Thus, the minimum sample size was 225 respondents, while the recommended maximum was 450 respondents. To improve statistical power and model stability, this study targeted 250 to 400 respondents.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed through Google Forms and social media. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: respondent demographics, including gender, age, purchase frequency, and duration of Shopee usage; and measurement items for the five research constructs. The items were adapted from validated studies and adjusted to the Indonesian e-commerce context to maintain content validity and theoretical consistency (Sun et al., 2022; Sohail et al., 2020).

All responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. This scale is commonly used in marketing and consumer behavior research because it effectively captures attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral intentions (Febriani, 2021; Othman et al., 2021). A pilot test was conducted before the main survey to assess item clarity and initial reliability, and necessary revisions were made.

All constructs were treated as reflective latent variables. Website quality was adapted from Park and Putra (2020), Sun et al. (2022), Akasreku et al. (2023), and Wilson (2021), covering ease of navigation, information accuracy, visual design, system reliability, loading speed, transaction security, mobile responsiveness, accessibility, and feature completeness. Website quality has been associated with satisfaction and loyalty in digital platforms (Albayrak et al., 2020; Quan et al., 2020).

Brand trust was adapted from Sohail et al. (2020), Seo et al. (2020), and Badriyyah and Setyadi (2025), including reliability, honesty, security assurance, brand credibility, consistency, promise fulfillment, risk reduction, transaction confidence, and brand integrity. Trust is important in online loyalty because digital transactions involve uncertainty and perceived risk (Zhou et al., 2020).

Price perception was adapted from Park and Putra (2020) and Prihatini and Gumilang (2021), including price fairness, competitive pricing, value for money, discount attractiveness, price transparency, price consistency, affordability, promotional appeal, and price-quality suitability. Price perception is important in e-commerce because it influences satisfaction and repurchase intention (Febrian & Vinahapsari, 2020).

Customer satisfaction was adapted from Othman et al. (2021) and Adnyana and Iswanto (2021), covering overall satisfaction, expectation fulfillment, service satisfaction, transaction satisfaction, product satisfaction, emotional satisfaction, decision satisfaction, comparative satisfaction, and post-purchase satisfaction. Customer loyalty was adapted from Wilson (2021), Albayrak et al. (2020), and Alajarmeh et al. (2024), including repurchase intention, recommendation intention, positive word of mouth, resistance to switching, competitor preference, long-term commitment, emotional attachment, advocacy, and continued usage intention.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. PLS-SEM was selected because the model includes multiple latent constructs, numerous indicators, and mediation paths that require simultaneous estimation. It is also suitable for predictive and theory-development research in digital commerce (Wang & Lundquist, 2022) and is widely used in digital marketing and loyalty studies (Magatef et al., 2023).

The analysis consisted of measurement model and structural model evaluation (Hair et al., 2021). The measurement model was assessed through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability. Convergent validity was confirmed when factor loadings exceeded 0.70 and AVE values exceeded 0.50. Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratio, while reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable.

The structural model was evaluated using R^2, f^2, Q^2, and path coefficient significance through bootstrapping. A relationship was considered significant when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 at the 5% significance level. The mediating effect of customer satisfaction was also tested using bootstrapping, while Variance Accounted For analysis was used to determine whether the mediation was partial or full (Alimin & Marco, 2023).

Based on the conceptual framework and previous studies, this research proposed ten hypotheses. Website quality, brand trust, and price perception were expected to positively affect customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction was also expected to influence customer loyalty and mediate the relationships between website quality, brand trust, price perception, and customer loyalty among Shopee users in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section reports the empirical results obtained from 300 active Shopee users in Indonesia who served as respondents in this study. The analysis covers the characteristics of respondents, descriptive statistical results, measurement model assessment, structural model evaluation, and mediation testing. The results are discussed in relation to the proposed hypotheses and previous studies concerning website quality, brand trust, price perception, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in the e-commerce context.

The respondent profile shows that the majority of participants are female, accounting for 64% of the total sample. This finding is consistent with Budiman (2021), who noted that female consumers tend to show higher engagement in online shopping platforms. In terms of age, most

respondents, representing 54%, are between 17 and 25 years old. This age group reflects digitally native consumers who are familiar with mobile commerce, digital transactions, and online shopping activities. The dominance of younger respondents supports Koay et al. (2021), who stated that younger consumers are generally more responsive to digital platform features and online brand interactions.

Furthermore, 52% of respondents have used Shopee for one to three years, indicating that most participants have adequate experience with the platform. This level of experience enables them to assess website quality, price perception, and brand trust more accurately. In addition, 58% of respondents make purchases at least three times per month, suggesting a relatively high level of platform engagement and potential behavioral loyalty among Shopee users.

Table 1
Respondent Profile

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (Persons)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	108	36
	Female	192	64
	Total	300	100
Age	17–25 years	162	54
	26–35 years	96	32
	> 35 years	42	14
	Total	300	100
Monthly Purchase Frequency	1–2 times	126	42
	3–5 times	114	38
	> 5 times	60	20
	Total	300	100
Duration of Shopee Usage	< 1 year	48	16
	1–3 years	156	52
	> 3 years	96	32
	Total	300	100

Source: Research Data, 2026

Table 2
Composite Reliability and Internal Consistency

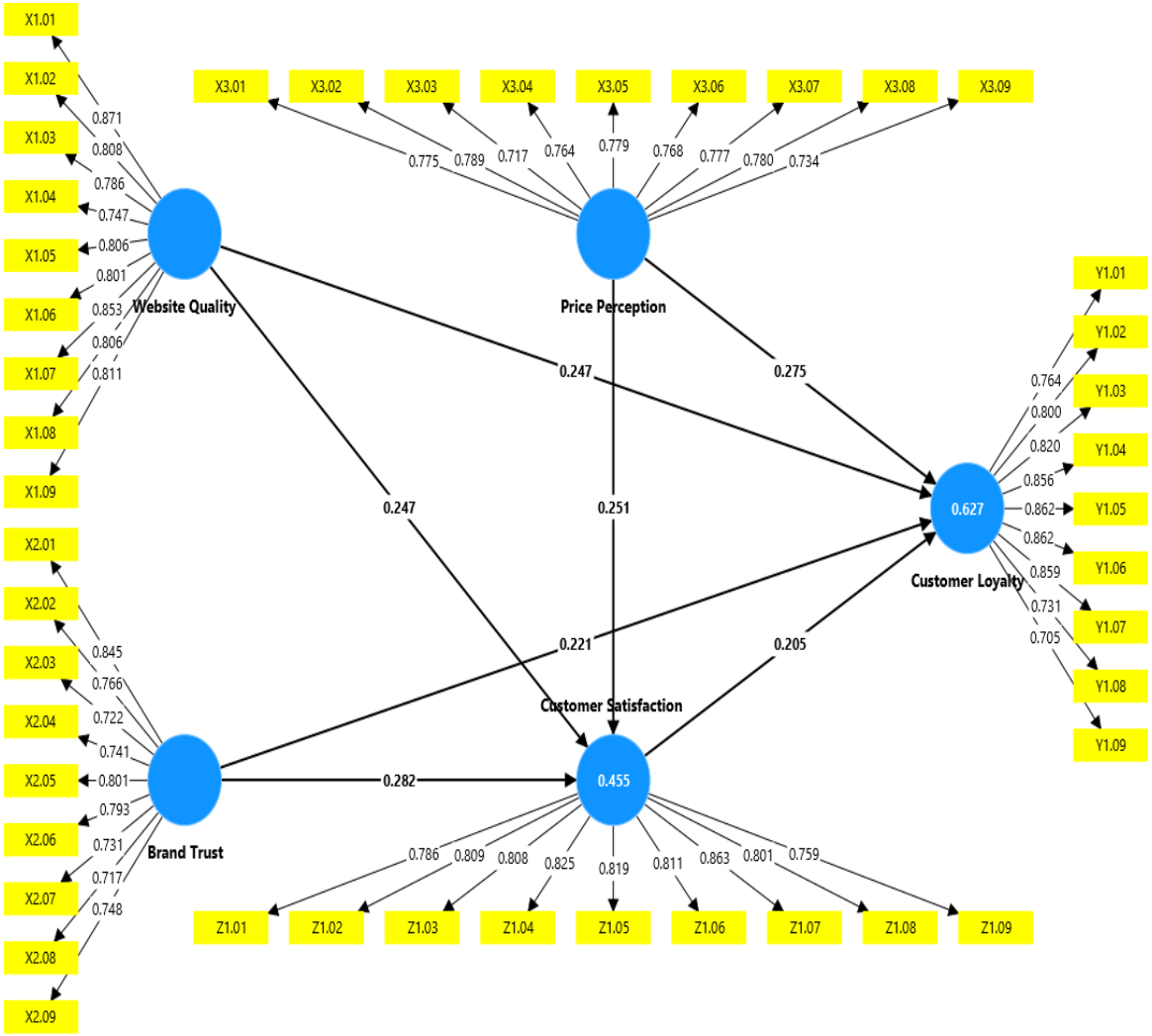
Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	AVE	Remark
Brand Trust	0.910	0.911	0.926	0.584	Reliable
Customer Loyalty	0.933	0.936	0.944	0.654	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	0.934	0.934	0.945	0.655	Reliable
Price Perception	0.911	0.913	0.927	0.585	Reliable
Website Quality	0.934	0.935	0.945	0.657	Reliable

Source: Research data, 2026

The measurement model results show that all constructs meet the criteria for reliability and validity. Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.910 to 0.934, exceeding the minimum threshold of

0.70, which indicates strong internal consistency. Composite reliability values also range from 0.926 to 0.945, confirming that all constructs are reliable.

The AVE values range from 0.584 to 0.657, which are above the recommended value of 0.50. This indicates that each construct has adequate convergent validity and is able to explain more than half of the variance in its indicators. Therefore, the measurement model is considered valid, reliable, and appropriate for structural model testing.



Source: Research Data, 2026

Figure 1
Outer Loading and Path Coefficient

The R-square results indicate that the structural model has moderate to strong explanatory power. Customer Satisfaction has an R^2 value of 0.455, meaning that 45.5% of its variance is explained by Website Quality, Brand Trust, and Price Perception. Meanwhile, Customer Loyalty has an R^2 value of 0.627, showing that 62.7% of its variance is explained by Website Quality, Brand Trust, Price Perception, and Customer Satisfaction.

Table 3
R-Square Results

Variable	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Customer Satisfaction	0.455	0.450
Customer Loyalty	0.627	0.622

Source: Research data, 2026

These results demonstrate that the proposed model has good predictive ability in explaining customer loyalty among Shopee users. The relatively high R^2 value for Customer Loyalty suggests that website quality, brand trust, price perception, and satisfaction jointly provide a strong explanation of loyalty formation in the e-commerce context.

Table 4
Direct Effects (Path Coefficients)

Path Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Conclusion
Brand Trust→Customer Loyalty	0.221	2.467	0.014	Significant
Brand Trust→Customer Satisfaction	0.282	2.941	0.003	Significant
Customer Satisfaction→Customer Loyalty	0.205	3.541	0.000	Significant
Price Perception→Customer Loyalty	0.275	4.595	0.000	Significant
Price Perception→Customer Satisfaction	0.251	3.774	0.000	Significant
Website Quality→Customer Loyalty	0.247	3.094	0.002	Significant
Website Quality→Customer Satisfaction	0.247	2.740	0.006	Significant

Source: Research data, 2026

The hypothesis testing results show that all direct relationships are positive and statistically significant. Brand Trust significantly affects Customer Loyalty and Customer Satisfaction, indicating that stronger trust in Shopee increases user satisfaction and encourages loyalty. Customer Satisfaction also has a significant effect on Customer Loyalty, confirming that satisfied users are more likely to continue using and recommending the platform.

Price Perception has the strongest direct effect on Customer Loyalty, showing that perceived price fairness, affordability, and promotional attractiveness are important factors in encouraging loyal behavior. Price Perception also significantly increases Customer Satisfaction, meaning that positive price evaluation improves users' overall shopping experience. In addition, Website Quality significantly affects both Customer Loyalty and Customer Satisfaction, indicating that usability, system reliability, information quality, and transaction security are important in building satisfaction and long-term loyalty.

Table 5
Indirect Effects (Mediation Analysis)

Indirect Path	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Conclusion
Price Perception→Customer Satisfaction→Customer Loyalty	0.051	2.390	0.017	Significant
Website Quality→Customer Satisfaction→Customer Loyalty	0.051	2.052	0.040	Significant
Brand Trust→Customer Satisfaction→Customer Loyalty	0.058	2.270	0.023	Significant

Source: Research data, 2026

The mediation results confirm that Customer Satisfaction significantly mediates the effects of Website Quality, Brand Trust, and Price Perception on Customer Loyalty. Since all indirect effects are significant, customer satisfaction plays an important role in explaining how these three variables strengthen loyalty.

Because both direct and indirect effects remain significant, the mediation is categorized as partial mediation. This means that Website Quality, Brand Trust, and Price Perception can

influence Customer Loyalty directly, while their effects are also strengthened through Customer Satisfaction.

Discussion

The findings indicate that website quality, brand trust, and price perception are key determinants of customer loyalty among Shopee users in Indonesia. These variables affect loyalty both directly and indirectly through customer satisfaction.

This suggests that loyalty in e-commerce is formed through a combination of platform performance, brand reliability, and perceived price value. Shopee users do not evaluate the platform based on a single factor, but through an overall shopping experience involving usability, security, trust, and value for money.

Website quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. This means that users are more likely to feel satisfied when Shopee provides an interface that is easy to use, responsive, informative, and secure. This finding supports previous studies showing that website quality and e-service attributes contribute to satisfaction in online shopping contexts (Park & Putra, 2020; Sun et al., 2022). It is also consistent with Quan et al. (2020), who emphasized that digital experience can strengthen e-loyalty through customer satisfaction. Practically, this implies that improvements in navigation, system performance, information accuracy, and transaction security are important in shaping positive user experiences.

Website quality also directly influences customer loyalty. A reliable platform can encourage users to continue using Shopee because it reduces obstacles during the shopping process. Clear information, stable system performance, secure payment systems, and smooth transactions can increase repeat usage. This finding is in line with Wilson (2021) and Albayrak et al. (2020), who stated that website quality is closely related to loyalty in digital service settings. The presence of both direct and indirect effects also supports the view that satisfaction strengthens the influence of website quality on loyalty, although it does not fully replace the direct role of platform quality (Quan et al., 2020; Venkatakrishnan et al., 2023).

Brand trust is also found to positively affect customer satisfaction and loyalty. This confirms that trust plays an important role in reducing perceived risk in online transactions. In e-commerce, customers may face uncertainty regarding product authenticity, seller reliability, payment security, and delivery performance. When customers trust Shopee, they are more likely to evaluate their shopping experience positively and continue using the platform. This result supports previous studies that identify trust as an important factor in building satisfaction and loyalty in online markets (Albayrak et al., 2020; Wilson, 2021). It is also consistent with relationship marketing perspectives, which argue that trust strengthens commitment and customer retention in digital interactions (Alajarmeh et al., 2024; Magatef et al., 2023). In addition, trust remains essential in digital marketing because consumers rely on credibility and reliability when deciding whether to stay engaged with a platform (Seo et al., 2020; Sohail et al., 2020).

Price perception shows the strongest direct effect on customer loyalty and also significantly influences customer satisfaction. This indicates that Shopee users are highly sensitive to price fairness, discounts, promotions, and value for money. In online marketplaces, customers can easily compare prices across platforms, making price perception an important factor in loyalty formation. This finding supports Park and Putra (2020), who found that price perception affects satisfaction and loyalty in online retail. It is also consistent with Prihatini and Gumilang (2021), who stated that favorable price evaluations can improve satisfaction and repurchase behavior. Thus, fair and competitive prices can strengthen users' satisfaction and encourage them to remain loyal to Shopee.

Customer satisfaction has a significant effect on customer loyalty. This shows that satisfied users are more likely to make repeat purchases, recommend Shopee to others, and continue using the platform. This result supports Othman et al. (2021), who explained that satisfaction is an

important antecedent of loyalty. It also aligns with e-loyalty models suggesting that satisfaction transforms positive digital experiences into continuous engagement (Quan et al., 2020). In e-commerce markets where switching to competitors is easy, satisfaction becomes a crucial factor in maintaining customer retention.

The mediation results show that customer satisfaction significantly mediates the effects of website quality, brand trust, and price perception on customer loyalty. This means that users' perceptions of platform quality, brand reliability, and price value become stronger in shaping loyalty when they lead to satisfaction. The mediating role of satisfaction between website quality and loyalty is consistent with Quan et al. (2020), while the mediation between trust and loyalty supports relationship marketing logic, where trust enhances satisfaction and later strengthens loyalty (Alajarmeh et al., 2024; Magatef et al., 2023). The mediation between price perception and loyalty also indicates that perceived economic value encourages loyalty partly by increasing satisfaction (Febrian & Vinahapsari, 2020).

Since both direct and indirect effects are significant, customer satisfaction acts as a partial mediator. This indicates that website quality, brand trust, and price perception can directly influence loyalty, but their effects become stronger when customers are satisfied. Loyalty is therefore shaped by both cognitive evaluations, such as quality, trust, and price, and affective responses, such as satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous digital marketing studies showing that satisfaction plays a central role in loyalty formation, while key antecedents may still have direct effects (Quan et al., 2020; Venkatakrishnan et al., 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, this study confirms that customer loyalty in e-commerce is influenced by multidimensional evaluations. Functional quality, relational credibility, and perceived economic value all contribute to loyalty formation. Although prior studies have emphasized communication-based and brand equity-related factors in digital marketing (Koay et al., 2021; Lim et al., 2020; Momen et al., 2020), this study shows that Shopee users still base loyalty decisions on platform quality, brand trust, and price value. This finding complements digital brand equity literature, which argues that customer outcomes are shaped by digital interaction quality and perceived platform value (Akasreku et al., 2023; Quan et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that website quality, brand trust, and price perception significantly influence customer satisfaction and customer loyalty among Shopee users in Indonesia. All direct relationships in the research model are supported, indicating that platform usability, brand reliability, and perceived value are important factors in forming loyalty in the e-commerce context. Among the three independent variables, price perception has the strongest effect on customer loyalty, showing that price fairness, affordability, and competitive pricing remain highly influential in digital marketplace competition.

Customer satisfaction is also proven to significantly influence customer loyalty. In addition, satisfaction partially mediates the relationships between website quality, brand trust, price perception, and customer loyalty. This means that loyalty is shaped not only by customers' direct evaluation of platform attributes, but also by their overall satisfaction with the shopping experience. The partial mediation result indicates that cognitive factors, such as quality, trust, and price perception, work together with affective responses, such as satisfaction, in strengthening long-term customer loyalty.

Theoretically, this study contributes to relationship marketing and digital service quality literature by integrating functional, relational, and economic factors into a single structural model in the Indonesian e-commerce context. Practically, the findings suggest that Shopee should maintain website performance, strengthen brand credibility, and provide competitive pricing strategies to improve customer satisfaction and long-term loyalty.

Future research may include additional variables such as perceived value, switching costs, customer engagement, or digital experience to provide a broader understanding of customer loyalty formation in emerging digital markets.

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