

**ASSESSING ONLINE-SHOPPING  
INFLUENCES ON CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR  
AND BRAND LOYALTY IN SETAPAK  
DISTRICT, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA.**

**TAN YI SIANG**

**ASIA e UNIVERSITY  
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ASSESSING ONLINE-SHOPPING INFLUENCES ON CUSTOMER  
BEHAVIOUR AND BRAND LOYALTY IN SETAPAK DISTRICT, KUALA  
LUMPUR, MALAYSIA.

TAN YI SIANG

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the intricate relationship between customer behaviour and brand loyalty within the context of online shopping for organic food in the Setapak District, Wilayah Persekutuan, Malaysia. As the e-commerce landscape continues to evolve, understanding the dynamics of consumer interactions and their impact on brand allegiance becomes paramount for businesses operating in this digital era. The research employs a quantitative approach to gather comprehensive insights into the online shopping habits of consumers in Setapak District. Through a careful analysis of customer behavior patterns, the study aims to identify key factors influencing purchasing decisions, including product preferences, user experience, and perceived value. Furthermore, the investigation delves into the concept of brand loyalty in the online shopping environment. By examining the factors that contribute to customers' allegiance to specific brands, the research sheds light on the strategies that businesses can employ to foster and maintain customer loyalty in the competitive online marketplace. The findings of this study hold implications for businesses, policymakers, and marketers seeking to optimize their strategies in the digital retail landscape. Understanding the value of customer behaviour and brand loyalty not only enhances the effectiveness of marketing efforts but also contributes to the long-term sustainability and success of online businesses in the Setapak District and beyond.

**Keywords:** Customer behaviour, brand loyalty, online shopping, organic food, Setapak District.

## **APPROVAL**

This is to certify that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, for the fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Business Administration.

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25 April 2024

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the DBA is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited.

I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

**Name: Tan Yi Siang**

The image shows a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tan". The letters are cursive and fluid.

**Signature of Candidate:**

**Date: 25 April 2024**



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
AR	Augmented Reality
ASCI	American Customer Satisfaction Index
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CB-SEM	Covariance Based Structural Equation Modeling
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CI	Concept Innovation
CMB	Common Method Bias
CR	Composite Reliability
CSI	Customer Satisfaction Index
CVM	Common Method Variance
DSL	Digital Subscriber Line
DV	Dependent variable
EDP	Expectancy-Disconfirmation Paradigm
EDT	Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory
FVIFs	Factor and Full Collinearity Variance Inflation Factors
GDP	Gross domestic product
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
GoF	Goodness of Fit
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISPs	Internet Service Providers

MCMC	Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission
MSS	Management System Standards
MSs	Management Systems
MYR	Malaysian Ringgit
OLS	Ordinary Least Square
PI	Process Innovation
PLS-SEM	partial least squares structural equation modelling
QR	Quick Response
RO	Research Objective
RQ	Research Question
SEM	Squares structural equation modelling
SERVQUAL	Service quality
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TI	Technology Innovation
TLI	Tucker-Lewis index
TM	Telekom Malaysia
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
VR	Virtual Reality
WWW	World Wide Web

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter sets the stage by delving into the historical context, presenting the problem statement, discussing the significance of the research, posing research questions, and outlining the study objectives. This structured approach aims to lay a strong foundation for deeper exploration into the complexities of online shopping in Setapak District, Kuala Lumpur. It begins with providing a background on the study, offering insight into the evolution and importance of customer behavior and brand loyalty in online shopping, paving the way for a focused discussion on the key issues driving the research. Following this, the problem statement is introduced to identify crucial challenges and gaps in existing literature, underscoring the necessity of investigating customer behavior and brand loyalty within online shopping platforms. Subsequently, the study's significance is emphasized, shedding light on the broader implications of studying customer behavior and brand loyalty in the digital shopping realm, particularly within the unique context of Setapak District. This section highlights the potential impact and practical applications of the research findings. Crafting relevant research questions is imperative for steering the inquiry towards specific objectives and outcomes. These pivotal questions are outlined to drive the investigation into customer behavior and brand loyalty, shaping the research direction and informing the analytical framework. Lastly, the chapter culminates with an overview of the study's objectives, defining the goals and desired outcomes. These objectives act as guiding principles for the research journey, setting the parameters for success and directing the exploration of online shopping dynamics within Setapak

District. By structuring Chapter 1 in this meticulous manner, the thesis aims to construct a coherent framework for examining customer behavior and brand loyalty in online shopping, laying a robust groundwork for subsequent chapters to build upon.

## **1.1 Background of the Study**

Online shopping is becoming more popular in the twenty-first century as more individuals use their smartphones and the internet to shop. According to the World Economic Forum annual report (WEF, 2020), online shopping is forecasted to be used by 2.14 billion people worldwide in 2021. Further, global ecommerce sales are expected to reach \$4.891 trillion in the year of 2021. Furthermore, according to estimates, global ecommerce sales will reach \$6.4 trillion by 2024. Online shopping has become more popular because customers find it extremely convenient and simple to buy from their homes and workplaces (Kawa, 2020; Noorazlin et al., 2021). The acceptance of online shopping has also increased the webstores. Therefore, the webstores are opening every day. The change in the lifestyle of customers is the new norms due to increase in technology, ease of access and busy life.

Online shopping is easier for customers because of convenience, lower costs, 360-degree product views, product detailed information. Further, customers are able to get secured and reliable information through google search. Technological advancement has decreased the experience gap between online and offline shopping. The statistics revealed that 63 perception of offline shopping trips start with a search on internet (Aw et al., 2021). Therefore, people rely more on internet searches as compared to offline shopping. Online shopping is defined as the act of trading goods and services via the Internet (Setiawan et al., 2020; Sharma et al., 2020).



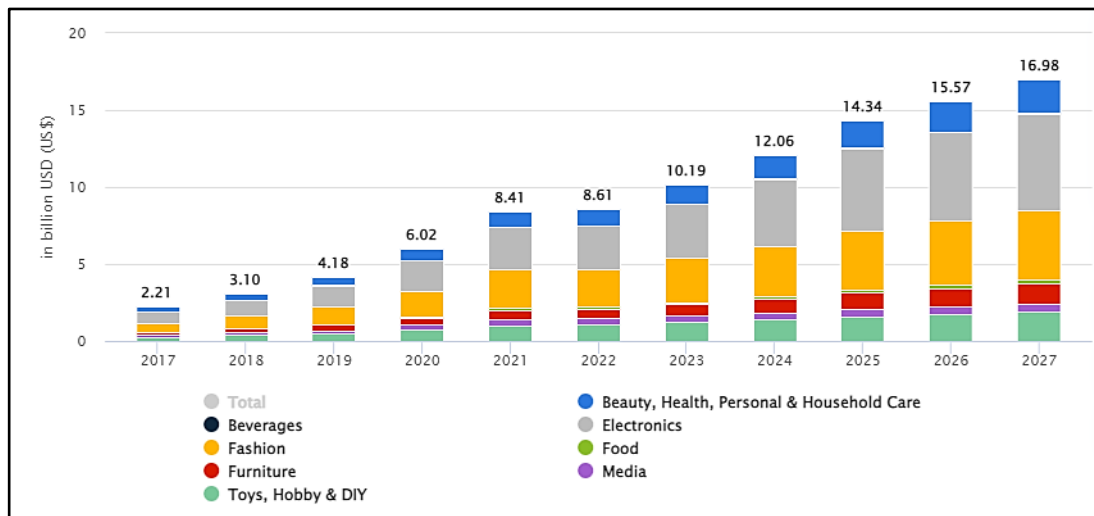
In the dynamic realm of e-commerce, there has been a significant rise in the worldwide demand for organic food (Lin et al., 2020). This trend reflects a growing awareness of the importance of health and sustainability. With the growing global demand for pesticide-free options, various online platforms have emerged to provide easy access to a wide range of organic products (Mack et al., 2023). These platforms are designed to meet the needs of individuals who have refined palates and are looking for nutritious and eco-friendly options, offering a wide range of fresh produce and pantry staples. As we explore the world of online organic food shopping, the combination of customer demand for healthier choices and the convenience of digital platforms presents an intriguing image of a rapidly expanding market that knows no geographical limits.

Satisfied customers are considered as most profitable customers for online shopping providers (Nguyen et al., 2021; Almahdi & Alsayed, 2021; Yasmin et al., 2023). Further, satisfied customers are beneficial because of their repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and positive word of mouth (Tjahjaningsih et al., 2020; Torabi et al., 2021). For example, Taobao, China's largest online marketplace, has a Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of \$515 billion (Van Gelder, 2024). Tmall and Amazon, are second and third with \$432 billion and \$344 billion per year (Frazier et al., 2022). The global online sales in 2018 were \$1.66 trillion. Half of the total online sales were captured by Alibaba, Amazon, and eBay globally. Therefore, the statistics reveal that there is an increase in online satisfied customers. Despite the increase in sale and customer satisfaction, Weinstein (2020) posited that the emerging online shopping platforms are experiencing customer dissatisfaction issues. These dissatisfied customers generate losses for the webstores. Poor service costs companies more than \$75 billion annually.

The innovation in online shopping has also changed the customer behavior. Further, COVID pandemic changed the habits of customers. The customers need everything at their doorstep. More than 150 million people are turning to online grocery services (Pandey, 2022). Therefore, the existing online stores are stepping in to provide organic food such as Walmart + InHome and Amazon Fresh (Pandey, 2022). Furthermore, new businesses are entering specifically in organic food such as the misfits market (Pandey, 2022).

Interestingly, like in other countries, online shopping is also increasing in Malaysia every day (Amartuvshin, et al., 2021; Ghazalle & Lasi, 2021; Tjiptono et al., 2020). Malaysia is one of the most influential countries regarding economy and trade (Nurgazina et al., 2021). Malaysia is the 3rd largest economy in Southeast Asia, and the 35th largest economy in the world (Arumsari et al., 2021; Bhaskaran, 2020). Further, Malaysia was ranked the 25th most competitive country in the world in 2018 and 2019 (Gerstl, 2020; Taskinsoy, 2020). Despite these statistics, the Malaysian online market still needs to improve its customer satisfaction strategy, especially in the food and beverages industry (Husin et al., 2021; Kumar et al., 2020). Most of the customers fail to finish online transactions due to the availability of multiple choices (Alzoubi et al., 2022; Shahid et al., 2020). During COVID-19 the customer were more attracted towards online shopping due to movement control orders. However, the adoption of online shopping became a new norm after COVID-19. Therefore, customers shop online for every need, even food and beverages. Figure 1.1 presents the statistical analysis of products purchased online for the last few years and future predictions.

**Figure 1.1: Revenue of Malaysian online shopping**



*Source: Van Gelder (2024)*

The graph (Figure 1.1) illustrates a consistent increase in revenue across all commodities annually, with food demonstrating a particularly steady growth trajectory. This sustained growth in the online food sector can be attributed to shifting consumer behaviors driven by factors such as time constraints and convenience preferences (Li & Zhang, 2023). As modern lifestyles become increasingly fast-paced, many consumers find themselves with limited time for home cooking, opting instead to order meals online for quick and hassle-free solutions. Despite the convenience offered by online food ordering platforms, a significant portion of customers express dissatisfaction with their ordering experiences. Recent research indicates that common reasons for customer dissatisfaction include late deliveries, inaccurate orders, poor food quality, and subpar customer service (Prasetyo et al., 2021; Teoh et al., 2022). These issues can significantly impact customer loyalty and repeat business, highlighting the importance of addressing customer concerns in the online food delivery sector. One key rationale behind customer dissatisfaction post-online food orders stems from high expectations set by seamless user experiences in other e-

commerce sectors. Customers expect timely and accurate deliveries, coupled with responsive customer support, mirroring the convenience and efficiency they experience in other online transactions. When these expectations are not met, it can lead to frustration and negative perceptions of the online food ordering platform (Chen et al., 2021). Moreover, the intangible nature of food quality poses a unique challenge in online food ordering, as customers rely heavily on visual representations and previous reviews to gauge the taste and freshness of the dishes. Discrepancies between customer expectations and the actual delivered product can result in disappointment and dissatisfaction, underlining the need for transparent communication and quality control measures within the online food delivery ecosystem.

Moving forward, this work is focused in Setapak district, Kuala Lumpur, the e-commerce landscape reflects a blend of global trends and localized preferences unique to this urban locale. Setapak District, known for its vibrant community and commercial activities, presents both challenges and opportunities in the space of online shopping. Consumers in Setapak District exhibit distinct behaviors influenced by factors such as urban demographics, cultural diversity, and technological infrastructure. One of the primary reasons for the growth of online shopping in most of Kuala Lumpur districts is the convenience it offers. Busy urban lifestyles in the city drive consumers to opt for online shopping, saving time and effort compared to traditional retail experiences (Yasmin et al., 2023). An examination of online shopping trends in Setapak District which is also a part of busy Kuala Lumpur city unveils a dynamic environment where consumers demand personalized shopping experiences, seamless transactions, and efficient delivery services. Despite the popularity of online shopping, some Kuala Lumpur consumers express concerns about cybersecurity, data privacy, and the trustworthiness of online sellers. Building trust and ensuring secure transactions are

critical factors for businesses operating in the online space. Considering the customers' dissatisfaction towards online shopping, is it significant to address the main contributing factors so that businesses can refine their strategies, optimize service offerings, and prioritize customer-centric approaches to enhance overall customer satisfaction levels in the competitive e-commerce landscape of the city. As such, the current study is undertaken to investigate the major factors influencing customer satisfaction for online organic food shoppers.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The global prevalence of online shopping has been significantly accelerated by technological advancements and the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak (Modgil et al., 2022; Renu, 2021). Online stores are advantageous for service providers as they save operational costs. In contrast, service providers face a significant challenge in meeting customer satisfaction in a virtual environment (Li et al., 2021; Yaqoob et al., 2023). Enhancing customer satisfaction is a crucial aspect for service providers. Research suggests that satisfied customers tend to become advocates of online services.

Moreover, dissatisfied customers have been found to result in significant financial losses for service providers, amounting to billions of dollars (Jauhar et al., 2023; Sharif & Mohammed, 2022). The variability of customer satisfaction is dependent on the specific product or service being offered. Research suggests that customers experience higher satisfaction levels when purchasing products online that do not require a tactile component (Mishra et al., 2021; Wilfling et al., 2023). Likewise, research suggests customers may hesitate to order food online from unfamiliar establishments (Cai et al., 2021; Yen, 2023). The description of customer satisfaction may vary depending on the context and the desired level of analysis. Thus, it can be observed that customers exhibit a high degree of selectivity when choosing

their food options. Food selection is influenced by various factors such as hunger level, mood, and taste preferences. Food delivery services' speed and cost-effectiveness are crucial factors influencing customer dependency. Customers prioritize timely and affordable delivery options to ensure the food they receive is hot and fresh.

The online food delivery sector in Malaysia has grown substantially recently, with numerous firms vying to entice and maintain their customer base (Dang & Vu, 2020; Kavitha et al., 2023; Ling, 2023). In Malaysia, a variety of food delivery companies operate, offering online food delivery services to customers. Notable players in the market include FoodPanda, known for its pioneering efforts in Malaysia's food delivery sector, along with other prominent companies like DeliverEat, Uber Eats, Honestbee, Running Man Delivery, FoodTime, Dahmakan, Mammam, and Shogun2U. These food delivery services primarily serve urban areas such as Kuala Lumpur, Klang Valley, Penang, and Johor Bahru. Unlike some e-commerce services that can easily scale up using third-party logistics for delivery, food delivery services face challenges related to geographical coverage and maintaining high customer satisfaction through timely on-demand deliveries. Perhaps this is the reason that there are only few strong players in this industry without anyone being entirely dominant (Chai & Yat, 2019). In this view, the Setapak District in Kuala Lumpur (Klang Valley) presents a unique landscape for online food shopping characterized by diverse consumer behaviors and preferences that significantly impact customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Understanding the specific dynamics of online food shopping in this urban demographics, cultural diversity, and technological infrastructure in this region is crucial for businesses to tailor their strategies effectively which is scanty in the literature.

There is growing evidence suggesting that customers in Malaysia especially from urban regions such as Klang Valley are facing challenges and expressing dissatisfaction with current online shopping platforms especially online food services. Issues such as late deliveries, product inaccuracies, and poor customer service have been reported, impacting overall customer satisfaction levels. In line with this, Tan & Kim (2021) revealed that food quality has the most positive impact on consumer satisfaction, among other factors. Food quality is essential for restaurants to satisfy their customers and keep them coming back. It includes how the food looks, tastes, the variety on the menu, and how fresh and healthy it is. Research has shown that the taste of the food is crucial for a great dining experience. Studies have also revealed that when the food is of high quality, customers are happier and more likely to return. People believe that good food quality means the food is fresh, tasty, and looks appealing. Customers judge food quality based on factors like price, taste, and appearance (Zhong & Moon, 2020; Petrescu et al., 2020; Tan & Kim, 2021). Apart from that, service quality including riders' professionalism and waiting time significantly influences customer satisfaction in Klang Valley. Late deliveries especially in urban cities such as Klang Valley with huge traffic can contribute to user frustration with the food delivery companies, which leads to unrepeated ordering (Nurul Hidayah et al., 2021). Also, Tan & Kim (2021) pointed out that the delivery fee also affects consumers' reluctance to order food online because they are unwilling to pay the delivery fee. Apparently, price is a crucial factor that influences customers' decisions when choosing a product or service. Customers tend to assess the value of a service based on its price. Chai & Yat (2019) demonstrated that how customers perceive the price directly impacts their satisfaction levels. Additionally, Susanti (2019) mentioned that price greatly affects customer satisfaction because consumers

evaluate whether the service they receive is worth the price they paid. If customers feel that prices are unfair, they may consider switching brands, especially in expensive cities such as Klang Valley. Taken together, online food delivery (OFD) services can enhance customer retention by improving service quality, meeting customer needs through fair pricing, enticing repeat orders with discounts, and ensuring convenience in access and transactions through innovative solutions.

Having said that, online food companies have endeavoured to distinguish themselves from their rivals and enhance their service offerings in response to heightened competition. Innovation is a potential strategy for companies to achieve their goals. It manifests in different forms, including new concepts, processes, and technological innovations. The concept of innovation involves implementing fresh ideas, menu items, or service offerings to entice and retain customers (Lai et al., 2020; Tribhuvan, 2020; Yun et al., 2020). One potential strategy for companies seeking to differentiate themselves in the food industry is introducing novel cuisine options or innovative services, such as customized meal plans or subscription-based offerings. The introduction of novel concepts by companies has the potential to enhance customer engagement and satisfaction, which in turn can foster greater customer loyalty and brand recognition.

The study focuses on developing novel process innovation techniques that aim to enhance the internal processes companies utilise to deliver their services, including but not limited to order processing and delivery time. Companies can employ various methods to enhance their processes, including automation, logistics improvement, and advanced tracking systems. Enhancing delivery speed and accuracy, cost reduction, and increased customer satisfaction are some benefits companies can achieve by improving their processes.