

# THE EFFECT OF SERVICE *EXCELLENCE* AND *BRAND IMAGE* ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY IN SHOPEE DELIVERY SERVICE USERS IN KC KEDIRI

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## Abstract:

The success of delivery services in the e-commerce ecosystem is no longer determined solely by the speed of distribution, but by the ability of service providers to build a positive perception and consistent service experience in the eyes of customers. In the context of PT Pos Indonesia's partnership with the Shopee platform, this study examines how service quality and brand image contribute to the formation of customer satisfaction and its impact on the dedication of delivery service users at the Kediri Branch Post Office. This research was designed with a quantitative approach through a survey of 300 respondents who were selected purposively based on the experience of Shopee delivery service users. Primary data was obtained through a questionnaire and analyzed using *Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares* (SEM-PLS) which was processed using SmartPLS4 software. Obtained from the results of deepening the material that refers to service quality and brand image, it plays a significant role in increasing customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction has proven to be a major driver in supporting the loyalty of delivery service users. In addition, the quality of service has a direct contribution to customer retention, and the brand image does not show an essential direct impact. Nonetheless, customer satisfaction serves as an effective link in bridging the impact of service quality and brand image on customer loyalty. These findings confirm that the service quality improvement strategy that refers to customer experience is an important component to strengthen loyalty to e-commerce-based delivery services at the Kediri Branch Post Office.

**Keywords:** Service Quality, Brand Image, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty.

## 1. Introduction

Significant changes in people's consumption patterns, one of which is reflected in the rapid expansion of the e-commerce sector. In Indonesia, this phenomenon places logistics services as a strategic element in building a comprehensive customer experience (Google et al., 2023). Delivery service companies no longer play a limited role as a provider of goods transportation, but are required to provide services that are fast, reliable, and able to form a *positive Brand Image* in the minds of customers.

As a company engaged in the delivery sector, PT Pos Indonesia, faces increasingly intense competition pressure from private logistics companies. Top Brand Index (2025) data shows that PT Pos Indonesia's Brand Image perception (4.10%) is still lagging behind when compared to main competitors such as JNE Express (11.40%) and J&T Express (51.50%). In an effort to increase competitiveness, PT Pos Indonesia has established strategic partnerships with various e-commerce platforms, including Shopee, which are implemented up to the operational level of branches such as the Kediri Branch Post Office. Although the volume of Shopee deliveries at the Kediri Branch Post Office experienced a significant increase of 179.96% in the period of January - September 2025 when compared to the same number of months in the previous year, the number of customer complaints actually increased by 216.67%. This condition reflects the imbalance between customer expectations and perspectives on the quality of service received, and has the opportunity to reduce the value of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The results of empirical research in the logistics sector show mixed findings. A number of studies indicate that the influence of *Brand Image* on loyalty can become insignificant when customers emphasize more functional aspects such as price and speed of service (Islam et al., 2020). In addition, there are still limitations in studies that examine simultaneously the role of service quality and brand image on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the context of e-commerce delivery services run by State-

Owned Enterprises at the regional branch level. Previous research tends to focus on private logistics companies or e-commerce platforms in general, so the dynamics of collaboration between Shopee and PT Pos Indonesia (Persero) at the local operational level, such as at the Kediri Branch Post Office, are not studied in detail.

Based on the description mentioned above, this study is aimed at finding out the impact of customer satisfaction and its implications in relation to customer loyalty of Shopee delivery service users at the Kediri Branch Post Office. Theoretically, this research is expected to increase the literature on service marketing, as well as in the context of synergy between e-commerce and logistics of State-Owned Enterprises. Practically, the research findings are expected to be the basis for evaluating and formulating strategies to improve service quality and strengthen *the Brand Image* of PT Pos Indonesia (Persero) in a sustainable manner.

## 2. Research Methods

### 2.1. Object, Time, and Place of Research

The object of this study is customer satisfaction and loyalty of Shopee delivery service users, which is studied in the context of increasing shipping volume accompanied by an increase in the number of customer complaints. This phenomenon became the basis for research focusing on two main determinants, namely service quality (*Service Excellence*) and *Brand Image*. The research was carried out at the Kediri Branch Post Office as an operational unit of PT Pos Indonesia (Persero) which acts as a delivery partner of Shopee. The selection of this location is intended to directly observe the dynamics of services at the operational level of the branch. The research was carried out in the period of October to December 2025, ranging from pre-field procedures, excavation of evidence, reductive analysis, to the preparation of report artifacts.

### 2.2. Data Collection Techniques

This study utilizes a mixed data collection approach with a structured questionnaire as the main instrument to obtain primary data. The questionnaire was compiled based on research variable indicators that included service excellence, brand reputation, fulfillment of expectations, and customer retention. The entire coverage was measured using a likert scale to capture respondents' perceptions quantitatively. Before the distribution of the questionnaire, the research instrument was tested for validity and reliability through statistical testing and expert judgment to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurements.

In addition to primary data, this study also utilizes secondary data sourced from the review of related literature and document analysis, including internal reports and operational documents of the Kediri Branch Post Office. The simultaneous use of primary and secondary data aims to obtain a comprehensive picture of customer perceptions and the operational context of delivery services.

### 2.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out by means of a quantitative approach using statistical techniques adapted to the purpose of the research. The initial stage of analysis includes descriptive analysis to describe the characteristics of respondents and the tendency of answers to each indicator of the research variable. Furthermore, data quality testing is carried out through validation procedures and reliability tests are taken to verify the feasibility of measuring instruments.

The relationship between variables was tested using *the Structural Equation Modeling* method based on *Partial Least Squares* (SEM-PLS). Analyzing complex causal relationships, supporting mediation variable testing, not requiring normal data distribution, and suitable for intermediate sample measurements includes testing the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ), path coefficient, and significance of relationships between variables using *the Bootstrapping technique*. Testing the mediating effect was carried out by analyzing the direct and indirect influences between constructs. The application of this analytical approach aims to obtain methodologically sound and scientifically tested factual findings

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Research Results

#### 3.1.1. Inferential Analysis

The PLS-SEM method was chosen because it has the ability to analyze the relationships between variables in a complex model and does not require normal data distribution. In addition, this approach is suitable for testing causal relationships between latent constructs involving mediating variables. The conceptual model in this study can be seen in Figure 1, which illustrates the relationship between latent variables including service excellence, brand reputation, Fulfillment of expectations, and customer retention.

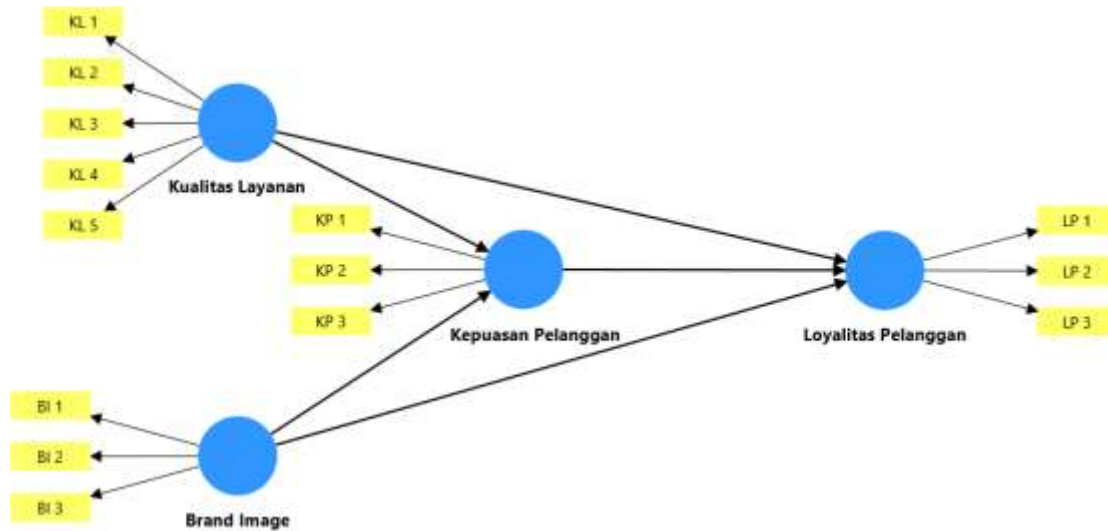


Figure 1. Latent Model Research Variables Source : SMART PLS 4

The Outer Model aims to assess the level of validity and reliability of indicators in representing latent constructs, namely Convergent Validity, Discriminat Validity and Construct Reliability tests and how the Inner Model is focused on testing the relationship between latent conceptualizations and the impact of the intensity produced. This test was carried out through the analysis of the path coefficient and the level of significance of the relationship between variables.

### 3.1.2. Outer Model

The Outer Model plays a role in ensuring the accuracy of indicators as an empirical embodiment of a latent construct. The measurement model verification process in the PLS-SEM approach is carried out through testing on the main aspects, namely Convergent Validity, Discriminated Validity, and Construct Reliability.

#### 1. Convergent Validity

Indicator is declared to meet the criteria if  $\geq 0.70$ . The results of the *Outer Loading* test can be seen in Table 1.

Instrumen	Brand Image	Kepuasan Pelanggan	Kualitas Layanan	Loyalitas Pelanggan	Keterangan
BI 1	0.818				Valid
BI 2	0.818				Valid
BI 3	0.847				Valid
KP 1		0.787			Valid
KP 2		0.846			Valid
KP 3		0.805			Valid
KL 1			0.829		Valid
KL 2			0.781		Valid
KL 3			0.827		Valid
KL 4			0.834		Valid
KL 5			0.825		Valid
LP 1				0.758	Valid
LP 2				0.763	Valid
LP 3				0.805	Valid

Table 1. Outer Loading Convergent Validity Test  
 Source : SMART PLS 4

The results of the analysis show that all indicators in the variables of service quality, Brand Image, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty have an Outer Loading value above the minimum

required limit. These findings indicate that all indicators are able to adequately represent latent constructs, so that the Convergent Validity in the measurement model is fulfilled.

2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) The AVE score meets the criteria if  $\geq 0.50$  and the score is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** AVE Convergent Validity Test

Variabel	Average variance extracted	Keterangan
Brand Image	0.685	Valid
Kepuasan Pelanggan	0.661	Valid
Kualitas Layanan	0.671	Valid
Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.602	Valid

Source : SMART PLS 4

Based on the test results, all research variables showed AVE values above the required minimum limit. The Brand Image variable has an AVE value of 0.685, Customer Satisfaction of 0.661, Service Quality of 0.671, and Customer Loyalty of 0.602. These values indicate that more than half of the indicator variants in each construct can be explained by the latent construct being measured. These findings show that the indicators used have been able to adequately represent the research construct. With the fulfillment of the AVE criteria on all variables, the measurement of the Convergent Validity model was achieved. Therefore, the construct used in this study is considered feasible and can be continued at the structural model evaluation stage.

3. Discriminat Validity Discriminat Validity was used in this study, Discriminat Validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion approach.

**Tabel 3.** Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Variabel	Brand Image	Kepuasan Pelanggan	Kualitas Layanan	Loyalitas Pelanggan
Brand Image	0.827			
Kepuasan Pelanggan	0.390	0.813		
Kualitas Layanan	-0.075	0.422	0.819	
Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.235	0.486	0.317	0.776

Source : SMART PLS 4

Based on the results of the analysis, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) score on the main line of the table is greater than the value of interconnection between other theoretical ideas. These findings show that each construct has an adequate level of uniqueness in representing the variables being measured. In addition, the entire construct also shows a good level of internal consistency, which is reflected in the reliability value above the minimum required limit.

Analysis of correlations between variables showed that Brand Image had a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, although with relatively weak relationship strength. Conversely, customer satisfaction shows a stronger relationship with service quality and customer loyalty. This relationship pattern indicates that service excellence has a strategic function in linking the perception of service quality with customer loyalty. Meanwhile, Brand Image in the context of this study has not shown a strong relationship with the perception of service quality felt by customers.

Overall, the results of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion test confirm that the Discriminat Validity of the measurement model has been met, so that the constructs in this study result are empirically and adequately differentiated in the analysis at the structural model stage.

4. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Declared to meet the Discriminat Validity criteria if below the limit of 0.85 can be seen in table 4.

**Tabel 4.** Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Variabel	Brand Image	Kualitas Layanan	Kepuasan Pelanggan	Loyalitas Pelanggan
<b>Brand Image</b>				
<b>Kualitas Layanan</b>	0.094			
<b>Kepuasan Pelanggan</b>	0.513	0.522		
<b>Loyalitas Pelanggan</b>	0.315	0.412	0.679	

Source : SMART PLS 4

Based on the results of the analysis, all construct pairs in this study showed HTMT values that were below the set threshold. The smallest HTMT value is found in the relationship between service quality and brand image of 0.094, which indicates that the two constructs have a very strong level of difference. The highest HTMT value was obtained in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty of 0.679. Although the value is relatively larger compared to other construct pairs, the lift is still within acceptable limits and does not indicate a violation of Discriminat Validity.

Thus, the results of the HTMT test confirm that all research constructs have met the criteria of Discriminat Validity. Each latent variable is precisely measured and represents a different concept, so that the measurement model can be declared feasible for use at the next stage of analysis.

#### 5. Construct Reliability

Construct Reliability Testing The results of the test based on Cronbach's Alpha can be seen in table 5.

**Table 5.** Cronbach's Alpha Values

Variabel	Cronbach's alpha	Keterangan
<b>Brand Image</b>	0.770	Reliabel
<b>Kualitas Layanan</b>	0.878	Reliabel
<b>Kepuasan Pelanggan</b>	0.743	Reliabel
<b>Loyalitas Pelanggan</b>	0.671	Reliabel

Source : SMART PLS 4

Based on the results of the analysis, most of the constructs show a value of Cronbach's Alpha  $\geq$  0.70, while one construct has a value above 0.60, which is still acceptable in exploratory research and model development. Based on the criteria applied, all research variables qualified as the required realities.

**Table 6.** Composite Reliability (rho\_c) Value

Variabel	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Keterangan
<b>Brand Image</b>	0.867	Reliabel
<b>Kualitas Layanan</b>	0.911	Reliabel
<b>Kepuasan Pelanggan</b>	0.854	Reliabel
<b>Loyalitas Pelanggan</b>	0.819	Reliabel

Source : SMART PLS 4

In addition to Cronbach's Alpha, the Construct Reliability evaluation is also strengthened through the Composite Reliability (rho\_c) test, as shown in Table 6. This measure is considered more representative in the context of PLS-SEM because it considers the weight of each indicator. All of the values in table 6 have exceeded the minimum limit of 0.70, so it can be concluded that each part of this study has a usable internal consistency.

#### 3.1.3. Internal Structural Model

Inner Model evaluation was carried out to determine the predictive ability of the research model as a whole.

1. R Square (R2)

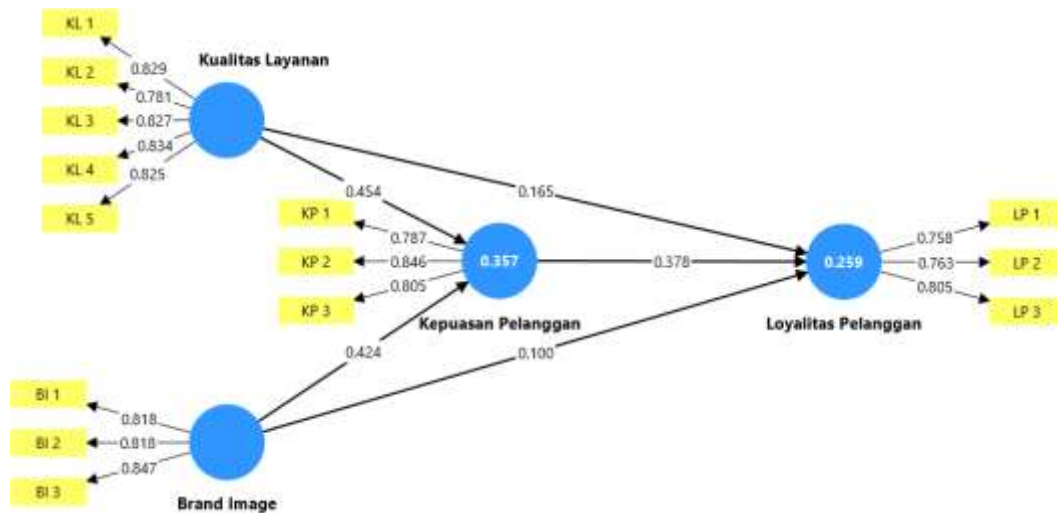
This coefficient is used as the main indicator to assess the strength of the model, with values from 0 to 1 can be seen in table 7.

**Table 7.** Test R Square (R2)

Variabel Dependen	R-square	R-square adjusted
Kepuasan Pelanggan	0.357	0.353
Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.259	0.252

Source : SMART PLS 4

Based on the results of the analysis, customer satisfaction was recorded at R Square 0.357, R Square Adjusted value was recorded at 0.353. These findings show that constructs recorded 35.7% variation in customer satisfaction and 25.9% variation in customer loyalty. Predictive ability is quite adequate in defining the two endogenous variables. The visualization of the results of the R Square estimate was obtained through the output of the PLS-SEM Algorithm. This can be visualized in Figure 2 below:



**Figure 2.** Output PLS-SEM Algorithm Source : SMART PLS 4

2. Significance The test used in this study was 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) seen in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Path Coefficient Bootstrapping Direct Effect

Koefisien Jalur	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Keterangan
Brand Image -> Kepuasan Pelanggan	0.424	0.425	0.041	10.260	0.000	Signifikan
Brand Image -> Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.100	0.102	0.057	1.758	0.039	Tidak Signifikan
Kepuasan Pelanggan -> Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.378	0.378	0.060	6.330	0.000	Signifikan
Kualitas Layanan -> Kepuasan Pelanggan	0.454	0.456	0.041	11.013	0.000	Signifikan
Kualitas Layanan -> Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.165	0.168	0.054	3.041	0.001	Signifikan

Source : SMART PLS 4

**The Impact of Brand Image on Customer Satisfaction.**

An increasingly positive perception of brand image makes a tangible contribution to improving customer satisfaction levels. A strong brand image can foster positive perceptions and build customer trust in the services received.

**The Influence of Brand Image on Customer Loyalty.**

Testing the direct relationship between *Brand Image* and customer loyalty showed results that were not statistically significant. The path coefficient was recorded as 0.100 with a t-statistic value of 1.758 and a p-value of 0.039. Although the P-value is below 0.05, the T-Statistic value that has not exceeded the critical limit indicates that the direct influence of *Brand Image* on customer loyalty is not strong enough. These findings show that the formation of customer loyalty does not occur directly through *Brand Image*, but tends to be mediated by other variables, especially customer satisfaction.

**The effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty.**

There is a strong relationship between the two constructs and can be concluded to affirm that if a person is served wholeheartedly, there will be a higher tendency to show fidelity behavior, reuse the service and give advice to others.

**The effect of service quality on customer satisfaction.**

This suggests that the rise in service aspects, such as speed, accuracy, and service attitude, plays an important role in creating direct customer satisfaction.

**The effect of service quality on customer loyalty.**

Good service quality not only increases loyalty through satisfaction, but is able to build customer loyalty directly through a consistent and positive service experience.

**Tabel 9.** Path Coefficient Bootstrapping indirect effect

Koefisien Jalur	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Keterangan
Brand Image -> Kepuasan Pelanggan -> Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.160	0.161	0.029	5.441	0.000	Full Mediation
Kualitas Layanan -> Kepuasan Pelanggan -> Loyalitas Pelanggan	0.172	0.172	0.031	5.453	0.000	Partial Mediation

Source : SMART PLS 4

**The mediating effect of service excellence on the relationship of brand image to customer retention.**

This condition indicates that customer satisfaction plays a major role as a *full mediator*. Thus, increasing *Brand Image* will only have an impact on customer loyalty if it is first able to increase customer satisfaction, without any meaningful direct influence.

**The mediated effect of customer satisfaction on the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty.**

The value of the indirect influence coefficient was recorded at 0.172 with a t-statistic value of 5.453 and a p-value of 0.000. At the same time, the direct impact of service quality with regard to customer loyalty has also proven significant. Service excellence functions as *Partial Mediation*. This means that service excellence is able to increase customer retention directly and increase customer satisfaction as an indirect mechanism.

Overall, the results of hypothesis testing on the theoretical framework and previous research that have been described in the introductory section. The quality of service is in line with the theory found by (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988), and is reinforced by the view (Lovell and Wirtz, 2011) and (Kotler and Keller, 2016), which places service performance as the main determinant of customer satisfaction.

In addition, the findings regarding the significance of the impact of Brand Image on customer satisfaction strengthen the argument that Brand Image induces an important factor in the formation of an affective evaluation of customers, especially in the intangible service sector, such as logistics services. However, the insignificance of the direct impact of Brand Image on customer loyalty shows that in the context of a competitive and performance-oriented logistics industry, symbolic factors such as Brand Image are not necessarily directly driving brand loyalty supported by a satisfactory service experience. Previous empirical results apply the dominance of functional factors compared to image factors in the formation of customer loyalty.

Furthermore, the contribution of customer satisfaction as a full mediator in the relationship between Brand Image and loyalty, as well as as a partial mediator in the relationship between service quality and loyalty, makes a relevant empirical contribution to the understanding of the mechanism of forming customer loyalty. These findings also answer research gaps related to loyalty dynamics in the context of collaboration between e-commerce platforms and logistics State-Owned Enterprises at the branch operational level. Thus, the achievement of established theories and enriches the evidence in the field and the specific context of Shopee's delivery service through the Kediri Branch Post Office.

### 3.2. Discussion

The results of this study are discussed by relating them to the theoretical framework and previous empirical findings in order to provide a comprehensive meaning of the relationship between the variables tested. First, the findings are that service excellence has a great effect on the fulfillment of expectations ( $\beta = 0.454$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) in line with the SERVQUAL framework proposed by (Parasuraman et al; 1988) and strengthened by studies (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2011). In the context of delivery services that are functional and utility-oriented, customers tend to rate services based on tangible operational performance, such as reliability, speed, and responsiveness. Second, the positive and significant impact of Brand Image on customer satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.424$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) strengthens the view that Brand Image is an external signal that reduces consumer uncertainty about intangible services. This is consistent with the argument (Tjiptono, 2015) which emphasizes the role of Brand Image in shaping customer expectations and initial evaluation of service quality.

On the other hand, the findings of brand image were not shown to have a direct effect on customer loyalty ( $\beta = 0.100$ ;  $t = 1.758$ ) making an important contribution to the development of the literature. These results are different from some studies that assume a strong direct relationship, but are in line with studies in the logistics industry that are highly competitive and performance-oriented (Hapsari et al., 2017; Islam et al., 2020). In this context, customer loyalty is more determined by actual experiences that are functional and emotional when compared to image perception alone. These findings also confirm the position of customer satisfaction as the main predictor of loyalty ( $\beta = 0.378$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) as found by (Griffin, 2010).

Significant theoretical impiliation was also seen in the results of the mediation analysis. The full role in the correlation between Brand Image and customer loyalty shows that Brand Image serves as a precursor factor that must first translate into a satisfying experience in order to form loyalty. Meanwhile, the contribution of customer satisfaction as a mediator in part on the correlation between service quality and loyalty indicates the existence of two lines of correlation, namely direct and indirect correlation. This pattern confirms that in the logistics services industry, service quality is the most central construct and determinant in building long-term relationships with customers. Overall, these findings not only support an established theory, but also confirm how the relationship between variables works in the context of e-commerce and logistics services collaboration.

### 3.3. Relevance to Research Objectives

The explanation that is linked in the results and discussion succeeded in formulating an essential answer to the initial goal, by directly verifying the influence of service quality and brand image on the satisfaction and retention construct of Shopee customers. This finding also provides an empirical explanation for the phenomenon of increasing delivery volume followed by a surge in complaints at the Kediri Branch Post Office.

Confirmation that the most reputable service quality explains this condition, because the experience of the service that is directly felt has a major contribution in generating customer satisfaction and loyalty. On the other hand, the finding that Brand Image does not automatically generate loyalty without being mediated by satisfaction provides a more nuanced understanding in the context of collaboration between e-commerce platforms and companies in the field of logistics. This shows that the strength of the Brand Image of an e-commerce platform is not enough to retain customers if it is not followed by the quality of operational execution of the logistics partner.

Thus, this research not only successfully answers the research questions asked, but also provides relevant strategic direction for delivery service managers. These findings underscore the importance of aligning customer expectations formed by Brand Image with the realities of service quality in the field to create continuous customer satisfaction and loyalty.

#### 4. Conclusion

Service quality and Brand Image are crucial in shaping customer satisfaction of Shopee delivery service users at the Kediri Branch Post Office, while customer loyalty is mainly determined by the satisfaction and quality of service that is felt directly. Brand image has not been proven to affect loyalty directly but works towards customer satisfaction as a mediation flow, while service quality has a direct and indirect effect on loyalty. These findings confirm that in the context of e-commerce logistics services, a reliable and consistent service experience is the most crucial factor in creating a continuous relationship with customers. Practically, the results of this study imply the need for managerial focus on improving operational service performance and customer satisfaction management as the basis for strengthening loyalty, while the development of Brand Image needs to be directed towards creating a real service experience. The limitations of this study are based on the limited scope of objects in one branch unit, so further research is suggested to expand the research context and include other relevant variables to deepen the understanding of the formation of customer loyalty in e-commerce logistics services.

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