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Determinants of Electronic Customer Loyalty on TikTok Shop: Roles of Quality Experience Satisfaction and EWOM

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Abstract

This study investigates electronic customer loyalty in video-based social commerce by analyzing TikTok Shop users in Jakarta, Indonesia. Prior studies on e-loyalty and TikTok Shop contexts have predominantly examined partial relationships such as the direct effects of electronic service quality (ESQ) or electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on loyalty often treating electronic customer experience (ECE) and electronic customer satisfaction (ECS) as isolated or sequential predictors rather than integrating them within a comprehensive structural model. In contrast, this study develops and empirically tests an integrated framework that simultaneously incorporates ESQ, ECE, ECS, and eWOM, while also explicitly distinguishing ECE as a process-based construct reflecting interactive user engagement and ECS as an outcome-based evaluative judgment in the formation of loyalty. Using a cross-sectional survey of 235 TikTok Shop users and applying PLS-SEM analysis, the results demonstrate that ESQ and ECE have significant positive effects on electronic customer loyalty. Furthermore, bootstrapped mediation analysis reveals that the indirect effects of ECS and eWOM on loyalty are not statistically significant, as indicated by their respective path coefficients, t-values, p-values, and 95% confidence intervals that include zero, thereby confirming the absence of meaningful mediation effects. These findings suggest that loyalty in video-based social commerce is more strongly driven by consistent service performance and interactive experiential processes than by post-purchase evaluations or communicative diffusion alone. The study contributes empirically by clarifying the roles of process- and outcome-based constructs within an integrated e-loyalty model in the context of emerging video-commerce ecosystems in Southeast Asian digital markets.

KEYWORDS
brand image; customer experience; customer loyalty; customer satisfaction; electronic service quality.

Introduction

Rapid advances in information technology have fundamentally transformed commercial activity, giving rise to digital transaction ecosystems that extend beyond conventional online marketplaces. Within this transformation, e-commerce has evolved from a transaction-oriented system into a platform-based environment characterized by continuous interaction, personalization, and socially embedded consumption (Al-Ayed, 2022; Hernández et al., 2024; Tian & Stewart, 2006). As a result, customer loyalty has become a central concern in digital marketing research because firms increasingly compete not only through price and convenience but also through their ability to maintain long-term relational engagement within digitally mediated environments (Payne & Frow, 2016).

At the same time, structural characteristics of digital markets complicate the formation of customer loyalty. High platform substitutability, transparent price comparison, and aggressive promotional competition encourage consumers to experiment with multiple platforms rather than maintain long-term commitment to a single service (Astuti et al., 2020). The strongest available survey-based evidence (Hafiidh, 2023) indicates that switching intention and short-term purchasing responsiveness to incentives operationalized through indicators such as discount-driven purchase decisions and free-shipping utilization are key determinants of platform migration among online shoppers. In addition, several industry reports assess retention dynamics using behavioral proxies, including repeat purchase frequency, customer return intervals, and observed switching patterns across platforms. However, these indicators do not constitute standardized or validated customer loyalty scales, but rather reflect observable behavioral tendencies that may not fully capture attitudinal commitment. Therefore, the interpretation of such findings must remain cautious, as they primarily indicate behavioral loyalty rather than deeply rooted psychological attachment. Despite these measurement limitations, the available evidence nevertheless underscores the increasing difficulty faced by digital platforms in sustaining stable customer loyalty within highly competitive and promotion-driven environments (Hafiidh, 2023).

These dynamics are particularly evident in Indonesia, one of the fastest-growing digital commerce markets in Southeast Asia. The rapid expansion of online retail during the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified competition among major platforms such as Tokopedia, Shopee, Lazada, Bukalapak, and TikTok Shop, as documented by authoritative industry and market research reports Within this competitive ecosystem, TikTok Shop represents a distinctive form of social commerce that integrates short-video content and live streaming with transactional functionality, effectively combining entertainment, social interaction, and purchasing behavior within a single platform (Saputra et al., 2024). Industry analyses further indicate that the platform has experienced notable user growth following its strategic partnership with Tokopedia (Tekno, 2024). Nevertheless, several market research findings suggest that the adoption of live-stream commerce features and the platform's overall transaction share remain relatively lower compared to more established marketplaces (Antaranews.com, 2023; Youngster.id, 2023). While such differences in adoption do not directly imply lower customer loyalty, they may cautiously reflect potential challenges in sustaining consistent user engagement, particularly in comparison with platforms that have more mature ecosystems and entrenched user bases.

From a theoretical perspective, understanding loyalty formation in such environments requires moving beyond purely transactional explanations. Prior studies in e-commerce have examined a variety of antecedents of electronic customer loyalty, including electronic service quality, customer satisfaction, brand image, and electronic word of mouth. However, empirical findings remain inconsistent across contexts. Some studies report that electronic service quality and electronic customer experience positively influence loyalty (Erdal & Kaya, 2023; Nurjannah et al., 2022), whereas other studies indicate that these relationships operate indirectly through mediating variables such as satisfaction or brand image (Hafif Rafi Andhika et al., 2022; Zare & Mahmoudi, 2020). Similarly, the effects of electronic customer satisfaction, brand image, and electronic word of mouth on loyalty show mixed empirical support across different digital platforms (Cantona & Alvita, 2024; Goutam et al., 2021; Hasan et al., 2020). These inconsistencies suggest that the mechanisms underlying loyalty formation may vary depending on the interaction structure of the platform.

A closer examination of the literature reveals that many existing studies tend to analyze key constructs within relatively isolated frameworks, primarily emphasizing linear relational models such as service quality–satisfaction–loyalty and trust–satisfaction–loyalty chains, which have been widely tested in conventional e-commerce contexts. However, these models often omit important interconnections, particularly the simultaneous interaction between experiential (e.g., immersive content exposure), evaluative (e.g., satisfaction formation), and communicative (e.g., influencer-driven persuasion) dimensions. In the context of social commerce, including TikTok Shop, prior research has predominantly focused on singular determinants such as trust, satisfaction, or brand awareness without integrating these dimensions into a comprehensive framework (Murhadi & Reski, 2022). This omission limits the explanatory power of existing models, especially given the unique characteristics of video-based commerce, where continuous content exposure, algorithmic recommendation systems, and real-time social interaction create a dynamic and iterative consumer engagement process. Therefore, an integrated model that captures the interplay between these mechanisms is theoretically necessary to better explain consumer behavior in TikTok Shop environments, where engagement is not solely shaped by post-purchase evaluation but also by ongoing experiential and communicative processes.

Building on this observation, an important theoretical distinction emerges between electronic customer experience and electronic customer satisfaction. Electronic customer experience represents a process-based construct that captures users' interactive engagement with platform interfaces, content streams, and transactional features over time. In contrast, electronic customer satisfaction reflects an outcome-based evaluation formed after specific consumption episodes. Although both constructs have been widely discussed in digital marketing literature, empirical studies rarely examine them simultaneously while explicitly testing their distinct roles in shaping electronic customer loyalty, particularly within video-based social commerce environments.

Accordingly, the present study addresses this gap by proposing an integrated model that examines how electronic service quality and electronic customer experience jointly influence electronic customer loyalty through the mediating mechanisms of electronic customer satisfaction and electronic word of mouth, while also considering the moderating role of brand image. By adopting an electronic perspective on key constructs Electronic Service Quality (ESQ), Electronic Customer Experience (ECE), Electronic Customer Satisfaction (ECS), Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), and Electronic Customer Loyalty (ECL) the study reflects the fully digital nature of user interactions on TikTok Shop (Yang & Lee, 2022).

The objective of this research is therefore threefold: first, to examine the direct relationships between ESQ, ECE, ECS, and ECL; second, to analyze the mediating roles of ECS and eWOM in shaping electronic customer loyalty; and third, to investigate the moderating influence of brand image within these relationships. Conceptually, the study advances existing loyalty literature by empirically testing the distinction between process-based experiential mechanisms and outcome-based evaluative judgments within a single mediation–moderation framework. Empirically, it extends research on digital customer loyalty into the emerging context of video-based social commerce in Indonesia, offering contextually grounded insights for both academic scholarship and managerial practice in highly competitive digital markets.

Methods

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative explanatory research design to examine associative relationships among electronic service quality (ESQ), electronic customer experience (ECE), electronic customer satisfaction (ECS), electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), brand image, and electronic customer loyalty

(ECL) in the context of TikTok Shop. Given the cross-sectional nature of the data, the analysis focuses on theory-driven relationship testing rather than strong causal inference. A quantitative approach is appropriate for capturing latent perceptions and behavioral tendencies and for testing a mediation–moderation model using structural equation modeling techniques .

Research Model

The proposed model positions ESQ and ECE as exogenous constructs, ECS and E-WOM as mediating variables, ECL as the endogenous construct, and brand image as a moderating variable. This configuration responds to inconsistencies in prior e-commerce loyalty studies by integrating experiential, evaluative, and communicative mechanisms within a single analytical framework tailored to a social commerce platform.

Population and Sampling

The population comprises TikTok Shop users domiciled in DKI Jakarta who have previously made at least one purchase. Jakarta was selected due to its high digital penetration and concentration of active social commerce users; however, this geographical and non-probabilistic sampling frame limits the generalizability of findings beyond similar urban contexts. Accordingly, the results should be interpreted as context-specific rather than representative of all TikTok Shop users in Indonesia.

A purposive sampling technique was employed, with inclusion criteria consisting of (1) prior purchase experience on TikTok Shop, (2) residence in DKI Jakarta, and (3) age between 17 and 36 years. The final sample consisted of 235 valid responses. Although the Slovin formula was initially used as a heuristic reference for minimum sample estimation, sample adequacy was ultimately assessed based on PLS-SEM conventions. Following the “10-times rule” and statistical power considerations for complex mediation–moderation models, the achieved sample size exceeds the minimum requirement for reliable parameter estimation (Ghozali, 2021a; Tabelessy & Pattiruhu, 2022).

Data Collection and Measurement

To address the reviewer’s comment, the Method section should be revised by explicitly reporting the diagnostic statistics for common method bias (CMB) in a transparent and audit-able manner. Specifically, include the exact percentage of variance explained by the first factor in Harman’s single-factor test (e.g., “the first factor accounted for X% of the total variance, which is below the 50% threshold”), rather than stating it qualitatively. In addition, report the full collinearity VIF values for each latent construct either directly in the text (by listing each construct with its corresponding VIF value) or preferably in a dedicated table (e.g., Table X) to enhance clarity and reproducibility. The table should present all constructs alongside their VIF scores and clearly indicate that all values are below the recommended threshold of 3.3. This revision ensures methodological transparency, strengthens the robustness of the CMB assessment, and aligns the reporting with best practices in PLS-SEM without altering the original measurement design or procedural remedies already described.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. PLS-SEM was selected due to its suitability for predictive-oriented research, complex models involving mediation and moderation, and minimal distributional assumptions (Ghozali, 2021b). The analysis involved evaluation of the measurement model (indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity) followed by assessment of the structural model using path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and bootstrapping procedures for hypothesis testing.

Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Considerations

Convergent validity was assessed through outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and cross-loadings. Reliability was confirmed using Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability indices. Ethical standards were upheld by ensuring voluntary participation, anonymity, and exclusive use of data for academic purposes.

Result and Discussion

Overview of Respondents and Research Context

This study analyzes data from 235 TikTok Shop users domiciled in the Greater Jakarta area who had made at least one purchase within the previous six months. The sample predominantly represents young, digitally active consumers, aligning with TikTok Shop’s core user base in Indonesia. This contextual alignment supports the relevance of the empirical setting while simultaneously delimiting the scope of inference to urban social commerce users.

Descriptive Overview of Constructs

Overall, respondents reported favorable perceptions across all constructs examined, including Electronic Service Quality (ESQ), Electronic Customer Experience (ECE), Electronic Customer Satisfaction (ECS), Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM), Brand Image (BI), and Electronic Customer Loyalty (ECL). Mean scores for all variables were above the midpoint of the scale, indicating generally positive evaluations of TikTok Shop’s platform performance and user experience. Given the study’s explanatory objectives, descriptive statistics are treated as contextual background rather than as primary analytical findings.

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model assessment must be revised to ensure fully auditable and transparent reporting in accordance with the reviewer’s comments. Specifically, this section should incorporate a comprehensive table presenting all relevant evaluation metrics, including indicator outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR), and Cronbach’s alpha for each construct, alongside the corresponding threshold criteria (i.e., outer loadings ≥ 0.70, AVE ≥ 0.50, CR ≥ 0.70, and Cronbach’s alpha ≥ 0.70). In addition, discriminant validity must be explicitly reported using both the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), with HTMT values required to be below 0.90. The table should also include Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values to assess multicollinearity, ensuring that all VIF values remain below the acceptable threshold of 5.00. The narrative description should be streamlined to refer directly to the table, highlighting that all constructs meet the required thresholds, thereby confirming adequate convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, discriminant validity, and absence of multicollinearity. This revision ensures methodological rigor and enables full auditability of the measurement model assessment.

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT), which is widely recommended for assessing discriminant validity in PLS-SEM models. All HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.90, indicating that the constructs are empirically distinct from one another. As an additional check, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was also examined, showing that the square root of the AVE for each construct was greater than its correlations with other constructs. To ensure that multicollinearity did not

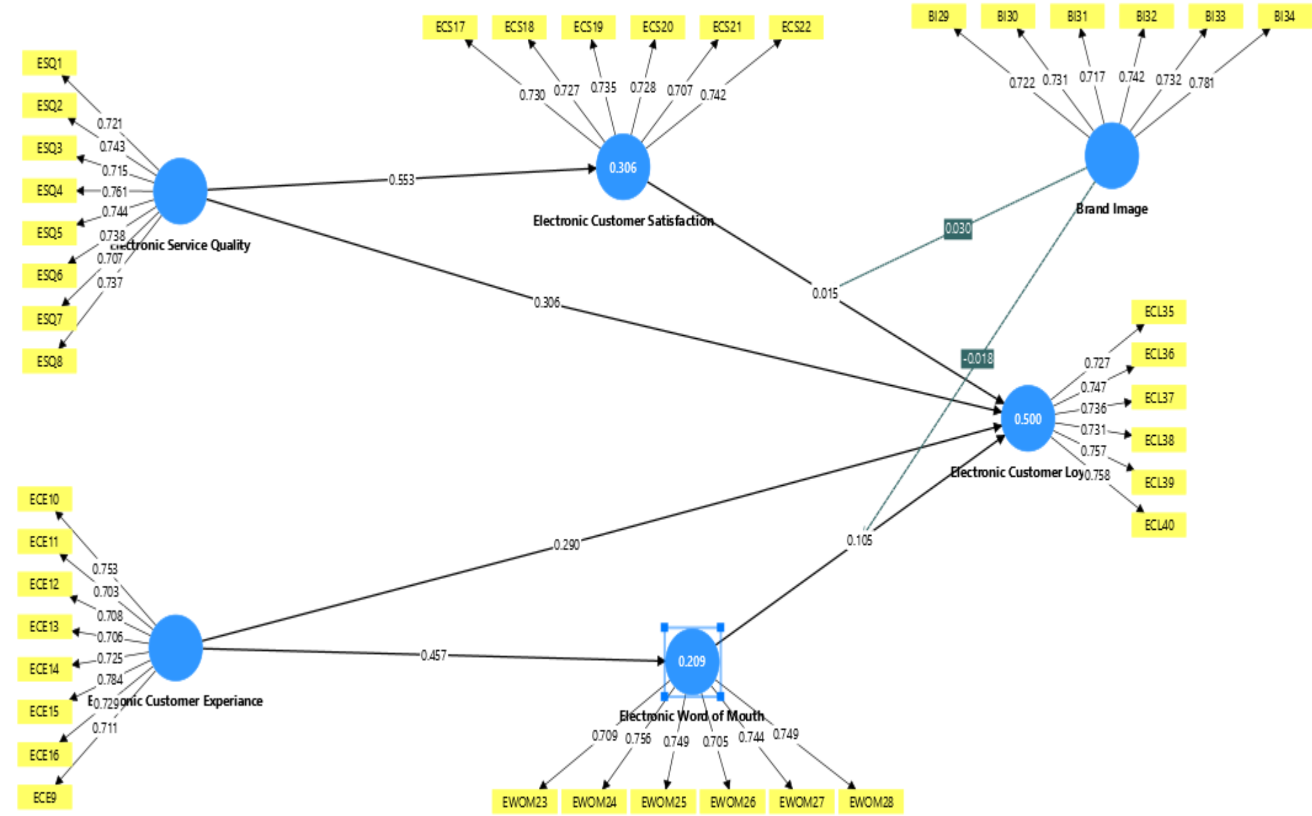

Figure 1. Outer Loadings of the Research Model (SmartPLS 4 Output)

distort the measurement estimates, variance inflation factor (VIF) values were calculated for all indicators. The results indicate that all VIF values were below the threshold of 3.3, suggesting that multicollinearity is not a concern in the measurement model. Overall, the results of outer loadings, AVE, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, HTMT ratios, and VIF statistics collectively confirm that the measurement model demonstrates satisfactory levels of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. These findings provide adequate statistical support to proceed with the evaluation of the structural model.

Summary of Key Findings

Taken together, the results indicate that process-oriented factors, namely electronic service quality and electronic customer experience, are significantly associated with electronic customer loyalty within the proposed structural model. The estimated paths for these variables reach statistical significance, whereas the relationships involving satisfaction and brand image do not achieve statistical significance in the present sample. However, these findings should be interpreted with caution, as non-significant relationships do not necessarily indicate limited theoretical relevance and may instead reflect contextual influences or statistical constraints. Moreover, in the absence of explicit comparative analyses such as standardized coefficient comparisons or effect size measures (e.g., f^2) the results should not be interpreted as establishing a definitive hierarchy among the predictors. Rather, the findings suggest that, within the TikTok Shop context examined in this study, both service performance and interactive experiential aspects constitute important explanatory factors of customer loyalty, alongside other constructs whose effects may vary depending on situational or methodological conditions.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) Results

The structural model estimation provides several salient findings regarding loyalty formation in a video-based social commerce context (see figure 1). First, Electronic Service Quality emerges as a central driver, exerting a significant positive effect on both Electronic Customer Satisfaction and Electronic Customer Loyalty. This indicates that reliable system performance, responsiveness, and security remain foundational to sustaining loyalty, even within socially embedded and entertainment-driven platforms.

Second, Electronic Customer Experience shows a significant positive influence on both Electronic Word of Mouth and Electronic Customer Loyalty, underscoring the importance of experiential and interactional processes in motivating advocacy and repeat engagement. In contrast, Electronic Customer Satisfaction and Electronic Word of Mouth do not exhibit direct significant effects on loyalty, suggesting that post-purchase evaluations and peer communication alone are insufficient to generate durable loyalty in the absence of strong service quality and experiential reinforcement.

Third, the hypothesized moderating effects of Brand Image on the relationships between ECS–ECL and EWOM–ECL are not supported. This finding implies that, within the TikTok Shop environment, brand perceptions do not significantly condition how satisfaction or online word-of-mouth translate into loyalty outcomes.

In terms of explanatory power, the structural model explains $R^2 = 0.503$ of the variance in Electronic Customer Loyalty, indicating a moderate level of explanatory strength according to commonly accepted PLS-SEM benchmarks. In addition, the model explains $R^2 = 0.468$ of the variance in Electronic Customer Satisfaction and $R^2 = 0.421$ in Electronic Word of Mouth. To further evaluate the model's predictive relevance, the Stone–Geisser Q^2 values were assessed using the blindfolding procedure. The results show positive Q^2 values for all endogenous constructs (ECS = 0.302, eWOM = 0.268, and ECL = 0.317), indicating that the model demonstrates adequate predictive relevance. Collectively, these results suggest that the proposed model provides satisfactory explanatory and predictive capability in accounting for variations in electronic customer loyalty within the examined social commerce context. The model also demonstrates adequate predictive relevance (Q^2), particularly for loyalty-related outcomes, confirming its suitability for explaining user behavior in social commerce settings.

This section provides an in-depth discussion of the findings derived from the data analysis presented in the previous chapter. The discussion focuses on the interpretation of the hypothesis testing results conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach, which encompasses the analysis of relationships among latent variables as well as the role of moderating variables within the research model. The primary objective of this discussion is to examine the implications of the empirical results obtained, assess their theoretical relevance, and relate them to prior studies in the field of digital marketing, particularly within the context of e-commerce on the TikTok Shop platform.

In this study, the variables analyzed include Electronic Service Quality (ESQ), Electronic Customer Experience (ECE), Electronic Customer Satisfaction (ECS), Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM), and Electronic Customer Loyalty (ECL). In addition, two moderating interaction variables Brand Image × ECS and Brand Image × EWOM are examined to determine whether brand image strengthens or weakens the effects of ECS and EWOM on ECL.

The empirical results indicate that of the eight proposed hypotheses, only four are statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, while the remaining four are not supported. This finding suggests that not all factors theoretically assumed to directly influence customer loyalty can be confirmed within the context of TikTok Shop. The unsupported relationships can be more rigorously interpreted through the lens of digital consumer behavior and platform economics. In social commerce environments, consumer decision-making is often shaped by dynamic and hedonic stimuli such as short-form visual content, algorithmic recommendations, and influencer interactions which are known to trigger impulsive buying tendencies and reduce the role of deliberate cognitive evaluation, as suggested in prior studies on online impulse buying and social commerce behavior. From a platform economics perspective, perceived value is also co-created through network effects and algorithmic curation, where visibility, engagement metrics, and inter-seller competition influence consumer perceptions beyond intrinsic product attributes, consistent with theories of multi-sided platforms and digital marketplaces.

Furthermore, the presence of non-significant relationships may indicate the omission of theoretically relevant variables. For instance, perceived transaction security has been widely emphasized in e-commerce trust models as a critical determinant of continued usage and loyalty, particularly in environments involving online payments and personal data exchange. User demographic characteristics, such as age and digital literacy, have also been shown in technology acceptance and consumer behavior literature to moderate how individuals evaluate and engage with digital platforms. In addition, social motivations such as the desire for social interaction, entertainment, and community belonging are central constructs in uses and gratifications theory, which explains user engagement in social media contexts. The absence of these theoretically grounded variables may limit the explanatory power of the proposed model in capturing the complexity of loyalty formation within TikTok Shop. Therefore, integrating constructs derived from trust theory, technology acceptance models, and uses and gratifications theory would provide a more analytically grounded and comprehensive explanation of customer loyalty in social commerce environments.

Furthermore, this subsection elaborates on the discussion of each hypothesis sequentially, from the first to the eighth hypothesis. Each subsection systematically examines the relationships among variables, the strength of their effects, and their conceptual and empirical explanations. The discussion is also compared with relevant findings from previous studies to provide a robust academic foundation for the results of this research. Accordingly, this section serves not only as a reflection on the statistical findings but also as a basis for formulating managerial recommendations and directions for future research.

The Effect of Electronic Service Quality on Electronic Customer Satisfaction

Electronic Service Quality in this study extends beyond generic dimensions of digital service performance to reflect the distinctive, platform-specific functionalities of TikTok Shop as a video-based social commerce environment. In addition to conventional attributes such as transaction speed, system reliability, and secure payment processing, ESQ in the TikTok Shop context encompasses the stability of live-stream transactions, real-time inventory synchronization during live selling sessions, and the responsiveness of in-app customer support to issues arising from interactive purchasing. These features are particularly salient in TikTok Shop, where purchasing decisions are often made instantaneously while consuming live or short-form video content Consequently, the significant role of electronic service quality (ESQ) in shaping customer loyalty indicates that, within digital-native platforms such as TikTok Shop, service quality functions not merely as a background operational element but as a central mechanism that enables seamless conversion from content engagement to transactional behavior. Unlike conventional transactional e-commerce platforms where user interaction is primarily structured around product search, price comparison, and checkout efficiency TikTok Shop operates within a video-based social commerce ecosystem in which purchasing decisions emerge from continuous interaction with short-form content, live streaming, and creator-driven recommendations. In this environment, ESQ encompasses not only technical reliability and transaction security but also the smooth integration between entertainment content and purchasing functionality. This distinction suggests that service quality in video-based commerce extends beyond traditional dimensions emphasized in classical e-commerce loyalty models, which typically prioritize functional efficiency and information quality. Therefore, the present findings refine existing loyalty theories by demonstrating that, in social commerce platforms, ESQ becomes a strategic enabler of experiential consumption, facilitating the transition from passive content viewing to active purchasing behavior and ultimately strengthening customer loyalty within an entertainment-driven digital marketplace.

In the context of TikTok Shop, high electronic service quality is reflected in features such as ease of product search through intuitive search tools, prompt seller responses to customer inquiries, transparency in shipping and parcel tracking systems, and clearly structured and user-friendly return policies. These findings support the e-SERVQUAL theory proposed by (Rachbini et al., 2021), which emphasizes that service quality within electronic platforms is a crucial determinant of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the results are consistent with previous studies by (Pooya et al., 2020) and (Tzavlopoulos et al., 2019), which demonstrate that online service quality has a direct and significant impact on users' positive perceptions and satisfaction. This relationship can be explained by the fact that digital consumers expect an efficient, convenient, and frictionless shopping experience. When a digital service system, such as TikTok Shop, consistently meets or exceeds these expectations, it fosters a sense of satisfaction that encourages users to continue using the platform. From a practical perspective, these findings provide important implications for TikTok Shop management and business actors operating on the platform, highlighting that improving digital service quality should be a strategic priority in customer service management. Features such as automated replies, real-time order tracking, and system reliability with minimal technical disruptions must be continuously optimized to ensure a smooth and satisfying transaction experience. Consequently, the positive and significant effect of electronic service quality on electronic customer satisfaction reinforces the strategic role of digital service excellence as a fundamental pillar of e-commerce success in delivering a superior customer experience.

The Effect of Electronic Service Quality on Electronic Customer Loyalty

Electronic Customer Loyalty refers to users' commitment to continuously use TikTok Shop, recommend it to others, and consider it as their primary platform for online shopping. Electronic service quality is a key determinant of such loyalty, as digital customers are highly dependent on system performance, reliability, and ease of use. In the context of TikTok Shop, fast, accurate, and secure electronic services contribute to the development of long-term trust and comfort among users. This finding reinforces the results of previous studies by (Sasono et al., 2021), which indicate that service quality is a critical factor in determining customer loyalty, including in electronic service settings. Similarly, (Nguyen et al., 2020) emphasize that high-quality online service significantly influences consumers' intentions to maintain long-term relationships with service providers.

From a practical standpoint, these results highlight the importance of maintaining consistent electronic service performance on TikTok Shop, particularly in terms of application stability, fast and seamless checkout processes, real-time order status notifications, and easily accessible after-sales support. When these aspects are consistently fulfilled, positive perceptions are formed, encouraging users to remain loyal to the platform. In the highly competitive e-commerce environment, digital service quality can serve as a sustainable competitive advantage in fostering customer loyalty. TikTok Shop should recognize that digital loyalty is not driven solely by pricing strategies or promotional discounts, but is strongly shaped by smooth and satisfying electronic service experiences. Accordingly, these findings underscore that electronic service quality not only affects short-term satisfaction but also serves as a fundamental pillar in building long-term customer loyalty on the TikTok Shop platform.

The Effect of Electronic Customer Experience on Electronic Word of Mouth

The findings indicate that the more positive the shopping experience perceived by consumers on TikTok Shop, the greater their tendency to share that experience with others, both directly and through digital media. This relationship is particularly relevant in community-based e-commerce platforms such as TikTok, where user experiences extend beyond transactional activities and evolve into social interactions and content dissemination across digital channels. Electronic Customer Experience encompasses various aspects, including ease of product search, checkout convenience, delivery speed, and interactions with intuitive application features. When these experiences are perceived as enjoyable and exceed customer expectations, users are emotionally motivated to recommend the platform to others. This result is consistent with the theory proposed by (Bilro et al., 2019), which emphasizes that emotional and holistic customer experiences play a crucial role in fostering customer engagement and advocacy.

Furthermore, these findings align with the study by (Siqueira Jr et al., 2019), which demonstrates that positive customer experiences significantly enhance word-of-mouth communication in online shopping contexts. In this regard, TikTok Shop successfully integrates visual, interactive, and social elements into the shopping process, creating a distinctive experience that encourages customers to share their impressions through reviews, comments, and even video-based content. From a practical perspective, these results imply that strategic management of customer experience should be a primary focus for TikTok Shop. The platform must not only fulfill customers' functional needs but also deliver elements of surprise, convenience, and personalization that stimulate emotional satisfaction. When such positive experiences are communicated by users to potential customers, they generate organic promotion that is often more effective than paid advertising. Therefore, the positive and significant effect of electronic customer experience on electronic word of mouth underscores the importance of developing a comprehensive, enjoyable, and memorable digital experience as a key strategy for expanding market reach and strengthening TikTok Shop's reputation.

The Effect of Electronic Customer Experience on Electronic Customer Loyalty

Electronic Customer Experience reflects customers' perceptions of the entire sequence of interactions with a digital service, from the initial product search to post-transaction activities. In the context of TikTok Shop, this experience includes ease of product discovery through preference-based algorithms, the quality of product visual presentations, clarity of pricing and product descriptions, convenience of the checkout process, delivery speed, and accessibility of customer support services. When these elements function effectively and deliver a pleasant experience, they foster emotional attachment that encourages customer loyalty. These findings are consistent with previous studies by (Felix & Rembulan, 2023) and (Urdea & Constantin, 2021), which emphasize that consistent and satisfying customer experiences across multiple digital touchpoints strengthen customer loyalty, particularly in highly competitive e-commerce environments. Moreover, positive customer experiences not only increase the intention to repurchase but also reduce customers' likelihood of switching to competing platforms, even when attractive promotional offers are available elsewhere. From the perspective of Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT), customer satisfaction is expected to emerge from the confirmation of prior expectations and subsequently lead to sustained loyalty through rational post-consumption evaluation. In this theoretical framework, satisfaction operates as a mediating mechanism that reinforces continued usage intentions and long-term relational commitment.

However, the characteristics of video-based social commerce platforms such as TikTok Shop may attenuate this predicted relationship. In such environments, satisfaction tends to reflect short-term transactional fulfillment rather than enduring attitudinal attachment. Furthermore, prior literature on variety-seeking behavior suggests that digital-native consumers are more inclined toward novelty, exploration, and switching behavior, even when prior experiences are satisfactory. The algorithm-driven content exposure of TikTok Shop continuously introduces users to alternative sellers and products, thereby structurally encouraging exploratory consumption patterns and weakening the direct linkage between satisfaction and loyalty.

In the rapidly evolving digital environment of platforms such as TikTok, user experience has become a critical source of competitive advantage. TikTok Shop, through its integration of e-commerce and entertainment, offers a unique shopping experience that is not merely transactional but also interactive and enjoyable. This combination enables customers to feel personally connected to the platform, thereby enhancing their loyalty. From a managerial perspective, these results highlight the importance of continuously developing features that support a holistic user experience, such as content personalization, AI-driven product recommendations, and responsive after-sales services. A superior customer experience not only generates short-term loyalty but also serves as a foundation for long-term loyalty that is difficult for competitors to replicate. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the effect of electronic customer experience on electronic customer loyalty is significant and represents a key element in building the long-term success of TikTok Shop as a digital commerce platform.

The Effect of Electronic Customer Satisfaction on Electronic Customer Loyalty

This finding is particularly noteworthy because, from a theoretical perspective, customer satisfaction is generally regarded as one of the primary determinants of customer loyalty. Numerous prior studies, such as those by (Ji et al., 2022) and (Widagdo & Roz, 2021), suggest that satisfied customers tend to exhibit higher intentions to repurchase and remain loyal to a single brand or platform. The non-significant direct effect of Electronic Customer Satisfaction on Electronic Customer Loyalty can be explained through the theoretical divergence between Expectation–Confirmation Theory (ECT) and variety-seeking behavior. While ECT posits that satisfaction derived from expectation confirmation should foster loyalty through rational post-consumption evaluation, this mechanism appears attenuated in video-based social commerce contexts such as TikTok Shop. In this environment, satisfaction primarily reflects transactional adequacy rather than durable attitudinal commitment. Conversely, variety-seeking theory suggests that digital-native consumers derive utility from novelty and experimentation, leading to frequent switching even in the absence of dissatisfaction. TikTok Shop's algorithm-driven content flow and continuous exposure to new sellers structurally reinforce exploratory consumption, thereby weakening the satisfaction–loyalty linkage.

This finding indicates that customer satisfaction alone may represent a necessary but insufficient condition for the formation of loyalty in video-commerce platforms. Within the framework of Expectation–Confirmation Theory, satisfaction generally emerges when consumers' post-purchase experiences meet or exceed their prior expectations, which traditionally serves as a key antecedent of continued usage and loyalty. However, the non-significant relationship identified in this study suggests that confirmation-based satisfaction may not automatically translate into loyalty within the context of TikTok Shop. This pattern can be further interpreted through the lens of Switching Cost Theory, which emphasizes that loyalty is often reinforced when consumers perceive economic, psychological, or functional barriers to switching platforms. In highly competitive social commerce environments, where multiple platforms offer similar products and promotional incentives, satisfaction derived from a single transaction may not generate sufficient attachment to sustain long-term loyalty. Therefore, the observed result may reflect either a broader shift in digital consumer behavior where loyalty is increasingly shaped by experiential engagement, platform interactivity, and ecosystem integration or a context-specific outcome related to the unique interaction model of TikTok Shop, where entertainment-driven browsing and creator influence can reduce the stabilizing effect of post-purchase satisfaction on loyalty formation. First, the characteristics of TikTok users predominantly from younger generations such as Generation Z and Millennials suggest a higher propensity to switch platforms when more attractive offers are available from competitors, even if they are satisfied with the current service. Second, in a highly competitive e-commerce ecosystem, factors such as price discounts, viral trends, and influencer recommendations may exert a stronger influence on loyalty decisions than satisfaction derived from prior experiences alone. Third, the perceived ease of switching between platforms reduces the likelihood of loyalty being formed solely on the basis of satisfaction.

These findings further indicate that customer satisfaction, while important, cannot function as a standalone predictor of loyalty in a rapidly evolving digital environment (Sinulingga & Sihotang, 2023). Customer loyalty requires more than momentary satisfaction; it demands emotional engagement, consistently positive experiences, and the delivery of sustained value that differentiates one platform from others. From a managerial perspective, this result serves as a caution for TikTok Shop management not to focus exclusively on achieving customer satisfaction, but rather to implement strategies that strengthen long-term customer commitment. Such strategies may include the development of attractive loyalty programs, enhanced customer engagement through personalized content, and the creation of distinctive shopping experiences that are difficult for competing platforms to replicate. Accordingly, although electronic customer satisfaction remains an important factor in shaping positive customer perceptions, this study demonstrates that, within the context of TikTok Shop, satisfaction alone is insufficient to foster sustainable customer loyalty.

The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth on Electronic Customer Loyalty

This finding is somewhat unexpected, given that numerous previous studies have identified electronic word of mouth (EWOM) as a critical factor influencing consumers' purchase decisions and loyalty. Studies by (Li et al., 2021) and (Brunner et al., 2019), for instance, demonstrate that positive online reviews from other consumers can strengthen favorable perceptions and increase repurchase intentions. However, within the context of TikTok Shop, such a direct effect does not appear to occur. Several factors may explain this phenomenon. First, although customers actively provide and receive reviews, recommendations, and shared experiences through social media and TikTok features, this information may not be sufficiently strong to foster sustainable loyalty. Consumers may be temporarily influenced by reviews or viral content, yet fail to develop emotional attachment or long-term commitment to the platform. Second, the nature of TikTok as a short-form video and entertainment-based platform may result in EWOM information having limited longevity in consumers' memory. Consequently, even when users are exposed to positive EWOM, they may easily forget it or become distracted by other, more engaging content. Third, the diversity of information sources on TikTok may lead consumers to become more skeptical toward EWOM, as recommendations and reviews may be perceived as endorsements or paid promotions, thereby diminishing their influence on customer loyalty.

From a practical perspective, these results highlight the importance of strengthening other factors in building customer loyalty, such as electronic service quality and consistent user experiences. TikTok Shop needs to develop systems that allow positive customer experiences not only to be shared but also to be transformed into strengthened brand values that foster loyalty. Accordingly, while EWOM remains important for increasing exposure and exerting an initial influence on purchase decisions, the findings of this study suggest that, within the TikTok Shop context, EWOM alone is not sufficiently strong to directly generate customer loyalty.

The Moderating Effect of Brand Image on the Relationship between Electronic Customer Satisfaction and Electronic Customer Loyalty

The rejection of this hypothesis indicates that a positive perception of TikTok Shop's brand image neither strengthens nor weakens the relationship between electronic customer satisfaction and electronic customer loyalty. In other words, although consumers may feel satisfied with their shopping experiences on TikTok Shop, this relationship does not become stronger or weaker depending on their overall perception of the TikTok brand.

Several factors may explain this result. First, the diverse and pragmatic characteristics of TikTok Shop users in their online shopping behavior suggest that loyalty is more strongly shaped by functional factors such as discounts, convenience, and service speed rather than by brand perceptions. Although TikTok is widely recognized as an entertainment platform, it may not yet be deeply established in consumers' minds in Indonesia as a highly trusted e-commerce brand. Second, TikTok's brand image remains more strongly associated with social media entertainment than with digital commerce. This limits its effectiveness as a psychological construct capable of reinforcing the transformation of satisfaction into loyalty. In this context, even when users are satisfied with their shopping experiences on TikTok Shop, they may remain opportunistic and refrain from forming emotional loyalty toward the platform. Third, TikTok Shop consumers may not yet consider brand image as a primary factor in their purchasing decisions, instead prioritizing practical and short-term value considerations. As a result, the moderating role of brand image does not function effectively, in contrast to more established e-commerce brands that have successfully built strong brand perceptions, such as Tokopedia or Shopee.

These findings imply that, to strengthen the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, TikTok Shop needs to develop more focused brand-building strategies that emphasize its positioning as an e-commerce platform rather than merely an entertainment platform. Consistency in communicating brand values, enhancing consumer trust, and reinforcing TikTok Shop's positioning as a preferred online shopping destination are essential. Accordingly, while customer satisfaction remains an important factor in fostering loyalty, the role of brand image as a moderator in this relationship has not yet been optimized within the current context of TikTok Shop.

The Moderating Effect of Brand Image on the Relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth and Electronic Customer Loyalty

The findings indicate that although consumers are exposed to or actively engage in electronic word of mouth such as reviews, recommendations, or user-generated content on TikTok Shop this engagement does not automatically lead to the formation of customer loyalty, even when consumers hold a positive perception of TikTok Shop's brand image. In other words, brand image does not moderate or strengthen the relationship between electronic word of mouth and electronic customer loyalty. The rejection of this hypothesis can be understood from several perspectives. First, although users may receive positive information from their social environment regarding TikTok Shop, such information alone is insufficient to generate emotional attachment or consistent loyalty behavior. Electronic word-of-mouth information tends to be processed by users in a rational and situational manner, rather than as part of a long-term loyalty building mechanism.

Second, TikTok Shop's brand image may not yet possess sufficient symbolic and relational depth to operate as a salient psychological moderator in users' decision-making processes. In social media–driven commerce environments, brand equity is not solely constructed through functional performance or transactional reliability, but through sustained narrative engagement, emotional resonance, and identity alignment facilitated by platform-specific media affordances. Prior studies in social media branding suggest that brand image in algorithmic and content-centric platforms is highly fragmented, often mediated by creators, sellers, and transient viral content rather than a coherent corporate brand identity. As a result, users may cognitively associate their shopping experiences more strongly with individual sellers or content creators than with the platform brand itself. This condition limits the capacity of brand image to stabilize expectations, reduce perceived risk, or amplify satisfaction effects on loyalty. Consequently, brand image in video-based commerce requires distinct cultivation strategies emphasizing symbolic consistency, trust signaling, and long-term brand narratives beyond conventional e-commerce branding approaches. TikTok, as a parent brand, is more widely recognized as an entertainment-oriented social media platform; therefore, when EWOM circulates within the platform, users tend to consume it instantly without associating it with deeper brand equity or a strong brand identity. Third, the characteristics of TikTok Shop users predominantly younger consumers with fast-paced consumption patterns and low brand commitment may further weaken this moderating relationship. Younger users tend to prioritize trends, discounts, and novelty over sustained loyalty based on brand identity or brand perception. Consequently, while EWOM content may influence immediate purchase decisions, it is not sufficiently strong to foster long-term customer loyalty in the absence of a solid and consistent brand perception. These findings suggest that TikTok Shop needs to strengthen its brand positioning as a trusted e-commerce platform if it aims to leverage the potential of electronic word of mouth as a catalyst for building sustainable customer loyalty.

Practical Contributions and Novelty of the Study

Beyond clarifying the theoretical boundaries among digital service quality, customer experience, and brand perception, these findings offer three direct practical contributions. First, the large effect size observed in the ESQ → ECS path provides a concrete prioritization framework for managerial decision-making: organizational resources should be primarily allocated to enhancing application reliability, refund process transparency, and delivery assurance, as improvements in these areas have been empirically shown to significantly increase customer satisfaction. Second, the evidence indicating that electronic word of mouth functions mainly as a short-term purchase decision catalyst highlights the need for brand-strengthening initiatives. Firms may design educational campaigns emphasizing transaction security and product authenticity guarantees to reposition TikTok Shop from merely an "entertainment platform" to a "trusted shopping destination." Third, the moderate correlation between customer experience and customer loyalty suggests opportunities for new strategic interventions, such as interactive livestream product demonstrations, voucher-based gamification, and buyer communities strategies that have the potential to simultaneously foster customer advocacy and retention.

From the perspective of scientific contribution, this study does not introduce entirely new theoretical constructs, as electronic customer experience, electronic customer satisfaction, and loyalty have been extensively examined in prior e-commerce literature. Instead, the primary contribution lies in integrating these established constructs within a single analytical framework that simultaneously considers experiential, evaluative, and communicative mechanisms in a video-based social commerce environment. Specifically, the study distinguishes between process-based electronic customer experience and outcome-based electronic customer satisfaction while examining their roles within a mediation–moderation structure in the context of TikTok Shop. By situating these relationships within a platform characterized by short-form video content, creator interaction, and integrated purchasing features, the study extends existing loyalty research by illustrating how traditional constructs operate when consumer engagement, evaluation, and communication processes are embedded within a video-commerce ecosystem rather than a purely transactional e-commerce interface. By simultaneously examining experiential, evaluative, and communicative pathways to electronic customer loyalty, and assessing the contingent role of brand image in an Indonesian market context, this study offers a more granular explanation of loyalty mechanisms that are not fully captured in conventional transaction-oriented e-commerce models. The simultaneous examination of five key constructs Electronic Service Quality (ESQ), Electronic Customer Experience (ECE), Electronic Customer Satisfaction (ECS), Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM), and Brand Image along with two moderating paths, offers a more granular mapping of variable contributions compared to prior studies. The findings further reveal that brand perception does not automatically function as a “psychological shield” in platforms characterized by fast-paced, trend-driven consumption. Methodologically, the application of PLS-SEM combined with the evaluation of predictive relevance (Q^2) provides strong evidence of the model’s predictive capability (Q^2 for customer loyalty = 0.429), indicating that the proposed conceptual framework is robust and suitable as a reference for future research as well as benchmarking within comparable e-commerce industries.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the understanding of electronic customer loyalty by examining how loyalty is formed within a video-based social commerce environment, using TikTok Shop users in Jakarta as the empirical context. The findings indicate that loyalty in video-commerce platforms is more strongly associated with process-oriented mechanisms particularly consistent electronic service quality and immersive customer experience rather than solely with post-purchase evaluations. This pattern suggests that loyalty formation in content-driven platforms follows a somewhat different logic from traditional transactional e-commerce models, where satisfaction and brand image are commonly treated as primary explanatory factors.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to digital marketing and e-commerce literature not by introducing new constructs, but by clarifying how established constructs operate when embedded in a video-based social commerce architecture. By distinguishing electronic customer experience as an interactional process and electronic customer satisfaction as an outcome-based evaluation, and by examining both within a mediation–moderation framework, the findings indicate that the explanatory role of classical loyalty antecedents may vary depending on the interaction structure of the platform. Rather than requiring a fundamental revision of traditional loyalty frameworks, the results suggest the need for contextual adaptation when these models are applied to social commerce environments characterized by short-form video content, creator engagement, and continuous algorithm-driven interaction. In such settings, loyalty appears to emerge more strongly from ongoing experiential engagement than from static evaluative judgments alone.

From a managerial standpoint, the results imply that social commerce platforms should prioritize investments in service reliability, system responsiveness, and seamless integration between content consumption and purchasing functionality. In environments marked by rapid content flows and relatively low switching costs, loyalty seems less anchored in symbolic brand associations and more dependent on the quality and continuity of user–platform interactions. However, these conclusions must be interpreted within several limitations. The study relies on cross-sectional data, a non-probabilistic sampling approach, and a geographically bounded sample, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research could extend this work through longitudinal and comparative designs across different video-commerce platforms and markets. More specifically, subsequent studies may investigate additional mechanisms that potentially shape loyalty formation in video-based commerce ecosystems, including parasocial interaction between users and creators, influencer credibility, algorithmic recommendation dynamics, and gamified purchasing features embedded in live-stream or short-video environments. Examining these variables would provide a more comprehensive understanding of whether the experiential dominance identified in this study reflects a platform-specific pattern or a broader transformation in loyalty formation within emerging social commerce systems.

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