

## **E-COMMERCE'S MARKETING STRATEGY TO INCREASE CUSTOMER PREFERENCE AND SATISFACTION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In the midst of increasing e-commerce competition and the dynamics of consumer behavior, industry players need to think strategically to carry out systematic consumer preference research so as not to be left behind in business competition. This research aims to investigate the influence of service quality on brand preference and satisfaction, the influence of perceived risk on brand preference and satisfaction, the influence of perceived price on brand preference and satisfaction, and the influence of brand preference on satisfaction. There were 198 respondents in the research using purposive sampling, namely Lazada consumers who made at least one purchase. The results of this research are that service quality has a positive effect on brand preference and customer satisfaction, perceived risk has no effect on brand preference and customer satisfaction, the price has a positive effect on brand preference but has no effect on customer satisfaction, and brand preference has a positive effect on customer satisfaction. The managerial implication of this research is that e-commerce business players need to focus on service quality because it has the biggest influence on customer preferences and satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Service Quality; Perceived Risk; Perceived Price; Satisfaction Brand Preference

### **INTRODUCTION**

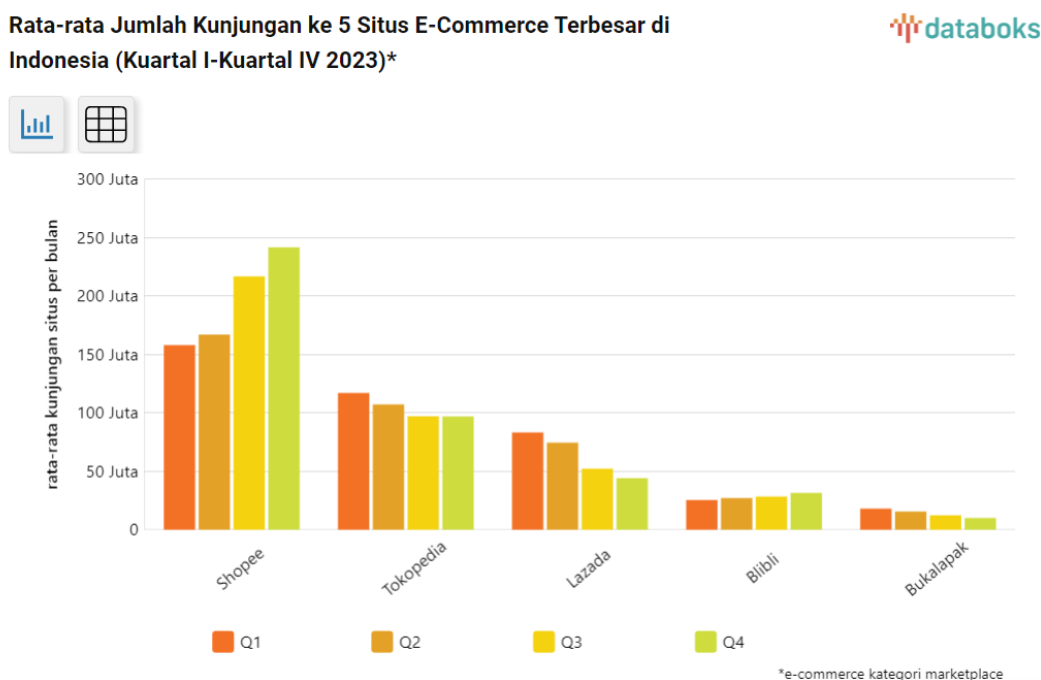
E-commerce is a dynamic business that has changed how we shop and do business. Technological developments and rapid changes in customer preferences mean that this business must continuously innovate and research to discover customers' preferences and views about them. This means that e-commerce players should change their marketing strategies to win the competition. According to Leeman (2024), e-commerce retail sales will increase from USD 6 trillion US to 8 trillion US in 2026. Based on Statista.com (2023), world e-commerce revenues are predicted to reach US\$ 3,226 billion in 2024 with an annual growth rate (CAGR 2024-2029) of 9.79%, resulting in a projected market volume of US\$5,145.00bn by 2029, number of users is expected to amount to 3.2bn users by 2029, User penetration will be 36.6% in 2024 and is expected to hit 44.4% by 2029. The average revenue per user (ARPU) is expected to be US\$1,408.00. In Indonesia alone, e-commerce revenue will reach US\$ 35.19 billion in 2024 with a growth rate of 9.28% (CAGR 2024-2029), market volume in 2029 will be US\$ 54.8 billion, user penetration will be 31.8% in 2024, and is expected to hit 47.0% by 2029, the average revenue per user is expected to amount to US\$404.10.

This figure is fantastic, and to survive in this business, e-commerce players must understand the industry trends and consumer behavior that shape e-commerce. Mobile shopping is the main determining factor that makes e-commerce proliferate due to its convenience, fast responsiveness, and user-friendly shopping experiences. In response to e-commerce industry trends like this, businesses are optimizing their mobile platforms, and implementing innovative features to cater to the ever-growing mobile-savvy audience. Besides that, the service becomes the brand at the moment of customer interaction (Leeman, 2024). For this reason, good service quality is needed. E-commerce players must continuously monitor the quality of the services from their platforms.

Apart from that, Sinelnikov (2024) revealed that there are several things that e-commerce

players need to pay attention to in order to re-sharpen their e-commerce business, one of which is using Augmented reality shopping experience, blockchain technology for supply chains, customized loyalty programs for customers, environmentally eco-friendly commerce, and personal solid data security. Personal solid data security, in this case, is how perceived risk is in e-commerce. Perceived risk is a factor that is still a concern for e-commerce. Besides service quality and perceived risk, perceived price can influence customer preferences regarding e-commerce (Leeman, 2024). Inflation is changing how people spend online. As consumers' budgets tighten, they will likely curb online spending to introduce barriers against impulse buys. They want to see the value of their purchases. Consumers have increasingly diverse ideas of what indicates quality in a product or service. As budget pressures force tighter trade-offs, consumers are becoming more realistic in their search for value, between quality received and cost. Based on the above phenomenon, this research focuses on how service quality, perceived risk, and perceived price influence customer preferences and their influence on customer satisfaction.

According to Ahdiat (2024a), the five largest e-commerce in Indonesia are Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, Blibli, and Bukalapak, with a number of visits throughout 2023, namely Shopee 2.35 billion visitors, Tokopedia 1.25 billion, Lazada 762.4 million, Blibli 338.4 million and Bukalapak 168.2 million. Million visitors. In Figure 1, the number of visitors to Shopee and Blibli increases quarterly. Although Tokopedia experienced a decline, the decline was not that significant. Lazada experienced a significant decline from the first quarter to the fourth quarter of 2023, namely 46.98%.



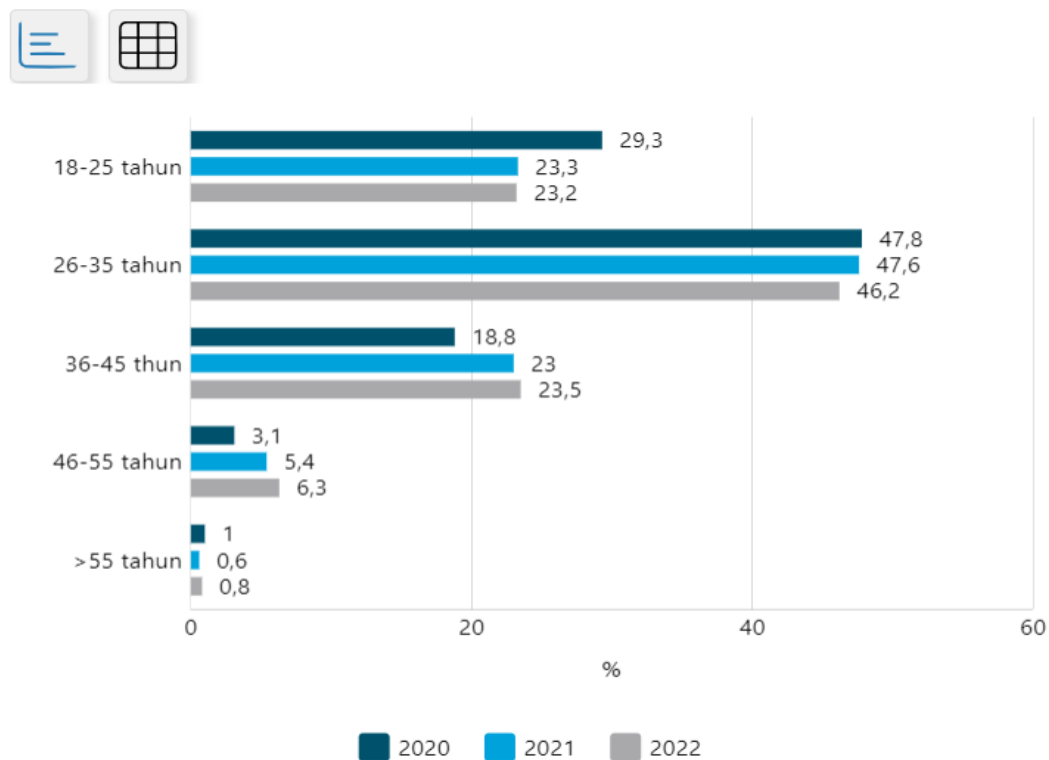
**Figure 1. Average Number of Visits to the 5 Largest E-commerce Sites in Indonesia (Quarter I-Quarter IV 2023)**

Source: Ahdiat (2024b)

Furthermore, according to Annur (2023) in Figure 2, the proportion of e-commerce transactions based on UISA groups has increased to generations above Generation Z and Millennials. Even though the millennial generation customers are still the most significant contributor to the proportion of e-commerce transactions throughout 2022, reaching 46.2%.

However, the trend has tended to decline in the last two years. Likewise, consumers aged 18-25 years or Generation X were the second largest contributor to the proportion of e-commerce transactions last year. However, the trend for the proportion of transactions in this age group will decrease from 2020-2022. On the other hand, the proportion of e-commerce transactions for the 36-45-year-old and 46-55-year-old age groups has tended to increase in the last two years. The proportion of e-commerce transactions for the two age groups has increased compared to 2021, namely to 23.5% and 6.3%, respectively, in 2022. This behavior change is, of course, that e-commerce players must carry out systematic research to find out their behavior and preferences. Based on the description above, this research focuses on Lazada e-commerce due to the significant decline in sales compared to other e-commerce.

**Proporsi Jumlah Transaksi E-commerce Berdasarkan Kelompok Usia (Januari-Desember 2022)** 



**Figure 2. Proportion of Number of E-commerce Transactions Based on Age Group (January-December 2022)**

Source: Annur (2023)

This research focuses on brand preference since limited previous empirical research on the antecedents or factors that influence brand preference. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the positive effect of service quality on brand preference and customer satisfaction, the positive effect of perceived risk on brand preference and customer satisfaction, the positive effect of perceived price on brand preference and customer satisfaction, and the positive effect of brand preference on customer satisfaction in Lazada.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Service Quality**

Service quality reflects subjective judgments on the overall service and its attributes (Grönroos, 2001). Parasuraman et al. (1988) defined *Service quality* as the overall assessment of service or the consumer's overall perception of an organization's services being better or worse than others. Maintaining high service quality is crucial for a company's or organization's long-term success. A firm needs to prioritize service quality to meet the expectations of customers.

### **Perceived risk**

Perceived product risk is related to the uncertainty of product purchase (Ha et al., 2019). In this research, the perceived risk referred to is the failure of customers to get the product they expected, the possibility of financial loss due to purchasing errors, the possibility of losing control over the loss or leakage of personal information and payment information, the insecurity of the e-commerce payment system and the possibility of losses occurring due to the absence of post-sales service.

### **Perceived Price**

Perceived price, from a customer's perspective, represents the amount of money consumers must give up to get the product/service and becomes the extrinsic cue of consumers in forming a prominent aspect of 'monetary value perception (Zeithaml, 1988). Price can be a positive or negative signal regarding customer satisfaction and preferences. Under a competitive environment, low prices (or reasonable prices) help businesses achieve a sustainable advantage within their product markets. In this research, perceived price is defined as the low price or reasonable price.

### **Brand Preference**

Brand preference is vital in product development and an essential prerequisite to brand equity (Alamro & Rowley, 2011). Brand preference is source of brand loyalty and equity (Keller & Lehman, 2006). *Brand preference* is defined as the extent to which the customer favors the designated service provided by a company compared to the designated service provided by other companies in his or her consideration set (Hellier et al., 2003).

### **Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is widely used in evaluating business performance Customer satisfaction is a generalized evaluation of a service based on the experience gathered during the provision of the service (Anderson, 1994). Satisfaction is the consumer's response to the assessment of the perceived difference between expectations and the result of consumption (Bayih & Singh, 2020; Kul et al., 2024). In this research, satisfaction is defined as customer satisfaction with a service.

### **Relationship between service quality, brand preference, and satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction has been shown in prior empirical research to be a crucial result of the quality of service, indicating that providing quality service was found to have a positive effect on preference critical for higher satisfaction (Giovanis et al., 2012). Service quality was found to have a positive effect on preference (Bahrapour et al., 2018; H. J. Chen, 2018; S. P. Singh et al., 2023; Tajima, 2012). Service quality was also found to have a positive effect on satisfaction with healthcare services in Greece (Giovanis et al., 2018), at restaurants in Lisbon (Ribeiro et al., 2024), at Islamic banking services in Tanzania (Khamis & AbRashid, 2018), at

students in Italy (Gabbianelli & Pencarelli, 2023), and in the tourism industry in India (R. Singh & Jena, 2023). The discussion leads to the hypothesis as follows:

H1: Service quality has a positive effect on preference.

H2: Service quality has a positive effect on satisfaction.

### Relationship between perceived risk, brand preference, and satisfaction

Alamro & Rowley (2011) study found that perceived risk has a negative effect on preference. Gan & Wang (2017) found that perceived risk has a negative effect on satisfaction with social commerce in China. This result is supported by Lee et al. (2022) on service context, Berlianto (2020) on purchasing via m-commerce in Indonesia, and (Biswas et al., 2023) on the retail banking sector in India. Therefore, we hypothesize as follows:

H3: Perceived risk has a negative effect on preference.

H4: Perceived risk has a negative effect on satisfaction.

### Relationship between Perceived price, brand preference, and satisfaction

The impact of price on customer preference is recognized (Alamro & Rowley, 2011). A higher perceived product risk means customers will likely get products that cannot meet their expectations. Price perception also has an impact on consumers' brand preference. Perceived price was found has a positive effect on customer satisfaction (Berlianto, 2019). The discussion leads to the hypothesis as follows:

H5: Price has a positive effect on preference.

H6: Price has a positive effect on satisfaction.

### Relationship between brand preference and satisfaction

Previous research found that customer preference has a positive effect on satisfaction (Tajima, 2012). This is also supported by (Cao & Wang, 2024) on food delivery platforms in China and Alamro & Rowley (2011) in the context of mobile telecommunications service providers in Jordan. Based on the description above, then:

H7: Brand Preference has a positive effect on satisfaction.

### Conceptual Framework

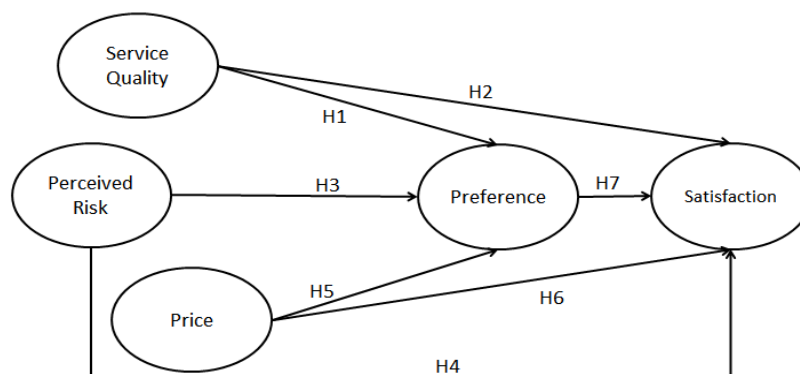


Figure 3. Research Model

## RESEARCH METHOD

The population in this study were individuals who had shopped at Lazada. This research uses primary data by distributing questionnaires to 180 respondents based on the number of indicators available, namely 18 times 10 (Hair Jr et al., 2019). Previously, a pretest will be carried out by distributing 40 questionnaires. The sampling technique in this research uses purposive sampling, with the criteria being that individuals have purchased at Lazada at least once and are over 17 years old.

The service quality construct consists of three indicators adopted from (Wu, 2014). The satisfaction construct consists of three indicators adopted from Ladhari (2009), the customer preference construct consists of three indicators adopted from Liu et al. (2014), and the perceived price consists of four indicators adopted from Lien et al. (2015). All questions use a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The data analysis method used in this research is the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling technique (PLS-SEM). To test validity, use a factor loading value of  $\leq 0.6$ . To test reliability, use Composite Reliability with a value of  $\geq 0.7$  and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of  $> 0.50$ . Hypothesis testing using one-tailed (t-stat $>1.65$ ) and p-value  $<0.05$  (Hair Jr et al., 2019).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

There were 198 respondents in this study; the respondent profiles can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Respondent Profile**

Statement	Total	Percentage (%)
<u>Gender</u>		
• Man	67	33,8%
• Female	131	66,2%
<u>Age:</u>		
• 17-27 (Gen Z)	33	16.7%
• 28-43 (Gen Y)	157	79.3%
• 44-59 (Gen X)	8	0.4%
<u>Education</u>		
• S1 (undergraduate)	88	44.44%
• S2 (post-graduate)	105	53.03%
• S3 (Doctoral)	5	2.53%
<u>Domicile</u>		
• Jakarta	134	67.68%
• Tangerang	51	25.76%
• Others	13	6.57%

Source: SPSS Output (2024)

All outer loading values for each indicator have values above 0.7 so that all indicators are declared valid. The composite reliability value for all variables is above 0.7, and the AVE value for each variable is above 0.5, so all variables are declared reliable.

**Table 2. Validity and Reliability Testing**

<b>Constructs &amp; item</b>	<b>Outer Loading</b>
Service Quality (CR= 0.894, AVE= 0.738)	
SQ1	0.841
SQ2	0.868
SQ3	0.869
Perceived Risk (CR= 0.956, AVE=0.785)	
PR1	0.794
PR2	0.844
PR3	0.937
PR4	0.938
PR5	0.918
PR6	0.876
Price (CR=0.936, AVE=0.785)	
P1	0.884
P2	0.905
P3	0.870
P4	0.885
Preference (CR= 0.921, AVE= 0.795)	
PRE1	0.924
PRE 2	0.877
PRE 3	0.873
Satisfaction (CR= 0.910, AVE= 0.772)	
SAT1	0.884
SAT2	0.868
SAT3	0.885

Notes: CR= Composite Reliability; AVE= average variance extracted.

Source: SmartPLS Output (2024)

Discriminant validity testing uses the Fornell-Larcker criterion in Table 3. The results show that all square roots of average variance extracted (AVE) are higher than the correlation coefficient between the constructs. This means that this study has adequate discriminant validity.

**Table 3. Discriminant Validity Testing**

	<b>Perceived Risk</b>	<b>Preference</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Service Quality</b>	<b>Satisfaction</b>
Perceived Risk	0.886				
Preference	0.376	0.892			
Price	0.326	0.611	0.886		
Service Quality	0.149	0.714	0.581	0.859	
Satisfaction	0.218	0.624	0.526	0.683	0.878

Source: SmartPLS Output (2024)

Table 4 shows that all VIF values for perceived risk, preference, price, and service quality are listed below 3. This shows that there are no multicollinearity problems.

**Tabel 4. Collinearity Statistics (VIF)**

	<b>Preference</b>	<b>Satisfaction</b>
Perceived Risk	1.122	1.251
Preference	-	2.579
Price	1.658	1.777

Service Quality	1.515	2.311
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Source: SmartPLS Output (2024)

Table 5 shows that the r-square value of brand preference is 61.2%. This means that the influence of service quality, perceived risk, and perceived price on brand preference is 61.2%. Other variables outside this research influence the remaining 38.8%. The r-square satisfaction value is 51.5%. This means that the influence of service quality, perceived risk, perceived price, and brand preference on satisfaction is 51.5%. Other variables outside this research influence the remaining 48.5%.

**Tabel 5. R-Square**

Variables	R Square
Preference	0.612
Satisfaction	0.515

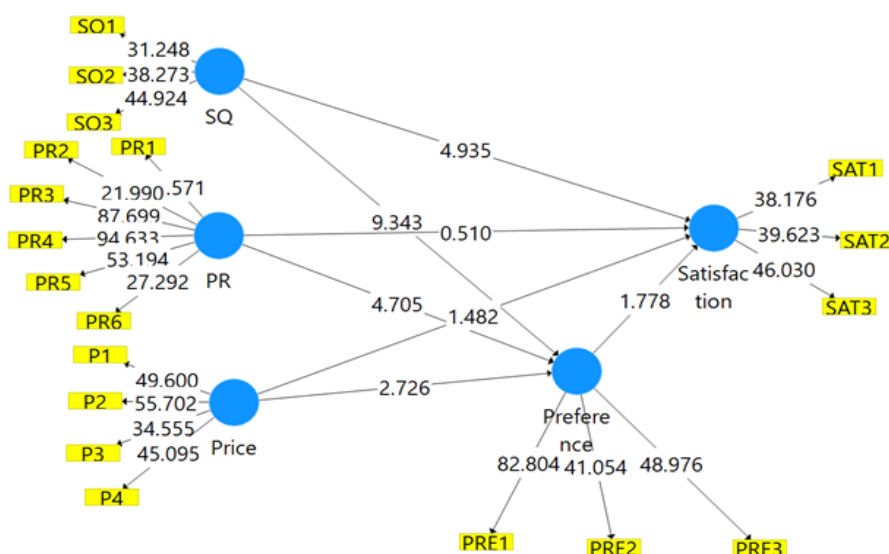
Source: SmartPLS Output (2024)

Hypothesis testing in Table 6 shows that four hypotheses are supported, and three hypotheses are not supported because they have a t-statistic value below 1.65 and a p-value above 0.005, namely hypothesis four and hypothesis six.

**Table 6. Hypotheses Testing**

Hypotheses	Path	t-statistic	P value	Result
H1	Service Quality → preference	9.343	0.000	Supported
H2	Service Quality → satisfaction	4.935	0.000	Supported
H3	Perceived Risk → preference	4.705	0.000	Not Supported
H4	Perceived Risk → satisfaction	0.510	0.305	Not Supported
H5	Price → preference	2.726	0.003	Supported
H6	Price → satisfaction	1.482	0.069	Not Supported
H7	Preference → satisfaction	1.778	0.038	Supported

Source: SmartPLS Output (2024)



**Figure 4. Results of the Structural Model Analysis**

Source: SmartPLS Output (2024)



The results of this research show that service quality has a positive effect on brand preference (t-stat 9.343 > 1.65; p-value < 0.05). It means that the higher the service quality, the higher the brand preference. This result is consistent with previous studies (Bahrapour et al., 2018; Chen & Lin, 2018; Giovanis et al., 2012; Shukla et al., 2023; Tajima, 2012). Hypothesis 2 shows that service quality positively affects satisfaction (t-stat 4.935 > 1.65; p-value < 0.05). This means that the higher the service quality, the higher the satisfaction level. This result is consistent with previous studies (Gabbianelli & Pencarelli, 2023; Giovanis et al., 2018; Khamis & AbRashid, 2018; Ribeiro et al., 2024; Singh & Jena, 2023). Hypothesis 3 states that perceived risk has a negative effect on brand preference. This hypothesis was not supported (t-stat 4.705 > 1.65; p-value < 0.05). This result does not align with previous studies (Alamro & Rowley, 2011). Hypothesis 4 states that perceived risk has a negative effect on satisfaction. This hypothesis was not supported (t-stat 0.510 < 1.65; p-value > 0.05). This result is not in line with previous studies (Berlianto, 2020; Biswas et al., 2023; Gan & Wang, 2017; I. T. Lee et al., 2022). Perceived price has a positive effect on brand preference (H5) (t-stat 2.726 > 1.65; p-value < 0.05). This means that the higher the perceived price, the higher the brand preference. This result is consistent with previous studies (Alamro & Rowley, 2011). Hypothesis 6 is not supported in this study since the perceived price does not affect satisfaction (t-stat 1.482 < 1.65; p-value > 0.05). This result is in line with previous studies (Berlianto, 2019). Lastly, brand preference was found to have a positive effect on satisfaction (t-stat 1.778 > 1.65; p-value < 0.05). This means that the higher the brand preference, the higher the customer satisfaction. This result is in line with previous studies (Alamro & Rowley, 2011; Cao & Wang, 2024; Tajima, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is service quality has a positive effect on brand preference and customer satisfaction, perceived risk has no effect on brand preference and customer satisfaction, the price has a positive effect on brand preference but no effect on customer satisfaction, and brand preference has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

This research succeeded in adding to the literature and supporting previous research regarding the influence of service quality on brand preference and customer satisfaction, the relationship between price and brand preference, and the relationship between brand preference and customer satisfaction.

The managerial implication of this research is that e-commerce business actors need to improve their marketing strategy, such as service quality because it was found to have a positive effect on brand preference and customer satisfaction. E-commerce players can improve service quality by providing good, high-quality service and superior service compared to competitors to customers. E-commerce players also need to pay more attention to the prices charged for the products they sell because it was found to affect brand preference, even though it did not affect satisfaction in this study. E-commerce players can increase the perceived prices by ensuring that they charge low prices, reasonable prices, and affordable prices in line with the e-commerce target market, as well as reasonable prices. E-commerce players also need to pay attention to brand preference because it influences satisfaction. Brand preference can be increased by developing a brand that customers like creating a good and unique brand image compared to competitors.

The limitation of this research is that perceived risk was found to have a positive effect on brand preference. In subsequent research, further studies were carried out regarding these results in different e-commerce industries.

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