

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Nasi Padang is a signature dish from the Minangkabau people, particularly from Padang, West Sumatra. Loved by almost all Indonesians, Nasi Padang refers not only to the meal itself but also to the traditional restaurants run by the Minangkabau community. This dish is served with a variety of flavourful side dishes such as vegetables, eggs, chicken, fish, beef, and spicy sambal. Each dish is cooked with rich, aromatic spices, giving Nasi Padang its bold and distinctive taste. The strong flavours and spiciness make it especially popular among Indonesians, who enjoy well-seasoned food. One of the unique aspects of Padang restaurants is the "hidang" serving style, where multiple small plates of different side dishes are placed on the table, similar to a mini buffet. This stimulates their appetite and the desire to try more than one type of dish. Customers can freely choose what they want and only pay for the dishes they eat. (Lyliana, 2021)

We can see that, currently there are many Nasi Padang restaurant spread out in Indonesia. Starting from big chain Nasi Padang restaurants like 'Sederhana' and 'Pagi Sore' to small and medium scale family restaurants. The large number of Padang restaurants in Indonesia makes the competition in the industry tight. Not only in Indonesia, Nasi Padang is also famous in other countries. The presence of Padang rice restaurants in various countries is one of the factors that makes Padang

rice increasingly known in the world. In Malaysia and Singapore, Padang rice has become part of the local culinary culture. Likewise, in countries such as the Netherlands and the United States, Padang rice restaurants have become a special attraction, especially for those who want to enjoy typical Indonesian food. (Dinda, 2024).

With the increasing number of restaurants in Indonesia, particularly in Medan, consumers are presented with an expanding array of dining options, which often complicates their decision-making process. The act of making a purchase decision plays a critical role in marketing strategies, as it directly influences the revenue and overall profitability of restaurants. (Victor & Yu, 2018).

Consumer trust in a business is known as consumer faith or a believe that customer have towards business. It demonstrates faith in a business's ability to keep its word and act in the best interests of its clients (Zendesk, 2024). Trust demonstrates faith in the business's ability to keep its word and act morally toward its clients. It is the guarantee that the company will act honourably in its interactions with clients and will provide the quality, service, and overall experience that it offers. Any successful connection, including that between a company and its clients, is built on trust. It is developed gradually via ethical behaviour, open communication, and recurring pleasant experiences.

For a restaurant to be successful, there needs to be promotions like discount and collaboration with delivery applications, such as Gojek, Grabfood and Shopeefood. It assists companies in informing clients about their goods and services. Additionally, the campaign raises awareness and persuades consumers to

buy. A successful campaign can increase sales and establish a company's reputation (Meshram, 2024). Participating in discount events from the applications can attract customers to purchase their food and attract new customers to try the food. Promotions become one of the most important factors because they have a significant impact on many aspects of business success. Sales can be increased by offering discounts, exclusive deals, eye-catching advertising campaigns, and other promotions. Companies that implement strategic marketing initiatives might increase revenue and expand their business operations. Loyalty programme promotions, particularly those that utilise membership cards or reward points, have the potential to cultivate enduring relationships and enhance customer retention.

Word of Mouth (WOM) has a significant impact on the business community. Mainly because suggestions from trusted sources are generally more compelling than direct ads or promotions. WOM is the process by which knowledge about a product, service, or company is spread from one person to another, usually through personal experiences or testimonials. We are more likely to trust recommendations from our family or closest friends than other people because it is regarded an honest opinion and free of economic motives. Positive word of mouth acts as social proof that others have had positives experiences with a product or service, which reinforces the perception of quality and dependability. Consistently positive WOM gradually improves brand's reputation, signalling trustworthiness and consumer happiness. Negative word of mouth, on the other hand, can undermine trust by spreading swiftly and influencing opinions. WOM in the digital era includes social media posts, online reviews, and testimonials. The way our brains

process information is what makes word-of-mouth so effective. When we hear information from someone we know and trust, our brain's reward regions are activated, releasing dopamine and other feel-good neurotransmitters. This increases our ability to remember and act on the information we receive (Alton, 2023).

E-Service Quality (E-SQ) refers to the quality of services offered via online platforms, namely restaurant services sold through meal delivery apps like Gofood, Grabfood and Shopeefood. E-service quality also includes customer satisfaction, which requires organizations to deliver a satisfactory experience for consumers in order for them to return to utilize the service in the future (Simplydots, 2023). In the restaurant industry, E-SQ is crucial for attracting and retaining online orders. Restaurants must make sure that each order is delivered to customers according to their orders without any mistakes. To avoid order cancellations, the menu listed in the applications should always be updated particularly in the price, product availability and food description information. Customers are reassured by reliability that their expectations will be fulfilled. It is important to resolve problems / concern of customers immediately to increase customer satisfaction and to gain their trust.

These 3 factors above complement each other which encourage customers to make purchases. Promotions attract new customers by offering an incentive to try new restaurants for the first time, Consumers are more likely to try new restaurants if they are offered enticing promotions such as discounts or free shipping. Customers who notice high ratings or positive feedback are more likely to purchase. In apps like Gofood and Grabfood, word of mouth is in the form of customer feedback which can be both text and ratings, it plays an important role in the final

decision of customers. The quality of digital services, such as easy-to-find menus, clear product descriptions, and appealing photo displays, helps customers make decisions. Good E-Service quality ensures that clients can make purchases easily and promptly.

Below are some examples of promotions in the Grab and Gojek applications which are available in Nasi keriting Sutomo. During the participation in the promotion voucher provided by Grab / Gojek, Nasi keriting Sutomo are charged whenever customer purchase using the promotion voucher.

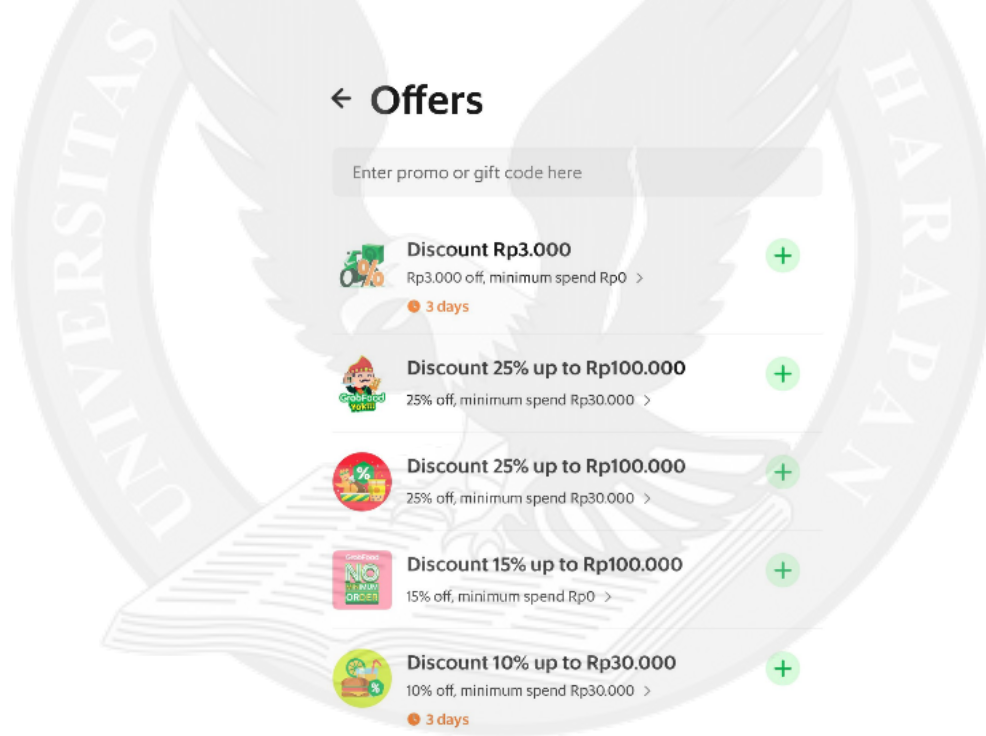


Figure 1.1 Promotion of Nasi Keriting Sutomo from Grab Application

Source : Grab Application

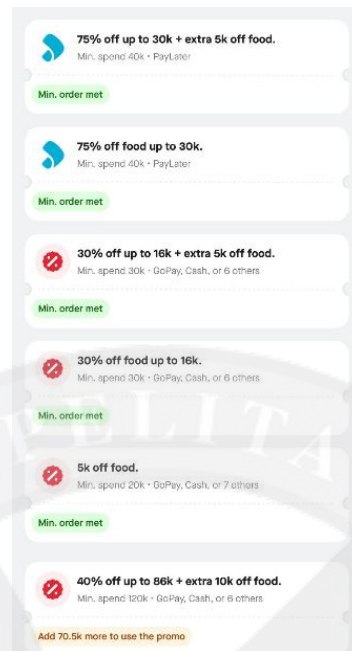


Figure 1.2 Promotion of Nasi Keriting Sutomo from Gojek Application

Source : Gojek Application

Based on the 'Grab', 'Gojek' apps and Google review, below are some reviews and ratings of Nasi Keriting Sutomo within 1 year.

Table 1.1 Customer Review About Nasi Keriting Sutomo

No	Comments	English Translation	Rating
1.	<i>Buruk .karyawan kerja banyak main main .makanan lama di sajikan hampir 45 menit</i>	Bad. The employees were playing around a lot. The food took almost 45 minutes to be served	1/5
2.	<i>Beli 2bgks pake telur harus nunggu 1/2jam lebih.baru x ni jumpa resto padang bisa segitu lamanya. Kasian sama driver harus nunggu lama sy kasi tips buat driver yg ambil orderan sy. kecewa bgt sy beli makanan di resto ini.</i>	I buy 2 packs with eggs, you have to wait more than 1/2 hour. The last time I saw a Padang restaurant, it could take that long. I feel sorry for the driver who has to wait a long time. Let me give you some tips for the driver who took my order. I was really disappointed when I bought food at this restaurant.	1/5
3.	<i>Sebagai resto yg terkenal seharusnya layanan online lebih diutamakan karena harus lebih cepat diantar ke</i>	As a well-known restaurant, online service should be prioritized because it has to	1/5

	<i>pelanggan e ini malah lama kali kalo dibilangi karyawannya marah2 padahal kan biar restonya lebih maju ke depan pelayanannya mohon di perbaiki</i>	be delivered to customers more quickly. In fact, it takes a long time to say that the employees are angry, even though in order for the restaurant to move forward, the service needs to be improved.	
4.	<i>Menu kosong lamban nutupnya..</i>	The empty menu is slow to close	3/5
5.	<i>Servicanya lama. Bisa menunggu sampai 1 jam</i>	The service is long. Can wait up to 1 hour	3/5
6.	<i>Tidak sesuai pesanan</i>	Not according to order	3/5
7.	<i>Kuah aja pelit, uda di bilang basah berkali kali masih aja kering</i>	The sauce is stingy, I've said it's wet many times and it's still dry	1/5
8.	<i>Perhatikan orderan nya dari catatan kecil pelanggan</i>	Pay attention to the order from the customer's small notes	2/5
9.	<i>Pesan yg ad indomie tp tidak di kasih indomie nyaa.. !</i>	The message said Indomie but the Indomie was not given	1/5
10.	<i>Saya pesan ayam goreng dada tapi dikasih ayam bakar dada</i>	I ordered fried chicken breast but was given grilled chicken breast	4/5

Source: Prepared by the writer (2025)

From the table above we can see several complaints and problems within Nasi Keriting Sutomo. Customers' orders are served too long and do not match the order that are placed. There is even food that is sold out but still available to order in the menu apps, which causes disappointment in customer's expectation. Online service quality is no maximized, customer's complaint and feedback are not accepted well by the employee.

Table 1.2 Transaction of Nasi Keriting Sutomo Yearly

Year	Transaction in a year	% Year on Year
2020	32850	-
2021	34675	5.56
2022	27375	-21.05

2023	25550	-6.67
2024	25550	0

Source: Prepared by writer (2021) with interview the Owner

There is still not much research that includes the variables, which are promotion, word of mouth, and e-service quality, affecting customer purchase decision, mediated by customer's trust. There is also not much research about the context of the paper, specifically focusing on local food industry in Medan, which is Nasi Keriting Sutomo Medan. From the previous research by (Febriyanti & Dwijayanti, 2022) on the journal titled "The Influence of E-service quality And Electronic Word Of Mouth (E-WOM) Towards Customer Purchase decision of Emina cosmetic (Study about teenager of Surabaya City)", the variables E-service quality and E-WOM shown a partially or simultaneously influenced on customer purchase decisions.

Also, previous research by (Victor & Yu, 2018), with paper titled "Analisis Pengaruh Citra Merek dan Harga Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Pada Rumah Makan Nasi Keriting Medan", The variables of brand image and price have a positive and significant influence, collectively accounting for 61.5% of the variance in consumer purchase decisions. To address this research gap, the present study proposes a model that investigates the influence of promotion, word of mouth, and e-service quality on customer purchase decisions, with customer trust serving as a mediating variable. These factors are particularly relevant in the current digital landscape, where consumer choices are increasingly shaped by online marketing efforts, user-generated content, and digital service experiences. Furthermore, the inclusion of customer trust as a mediator offers a more understanding of how

marketing strategies can foster consumer confidence and, subsequently, influence purchasing behaviour.

This research is a development of the study by (Astutik & Purwanto, 2024), on the journal titled “THE INFLUENCE OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH (E-WOM), E-SERVICE QUALITY AND SALES PROMOTION ON PURCHASE DECISION AT E-COMMERCE SOCO BY SOCIOLLA IN SURABAYA. There is not much research yet about customer trust as a mediating variable, this research will examine how customer trust influences the impact of promotion, word of mouth and e-service quality on purchase decisions.

Based on the phenomenon above, the writer is going to analyse 3 independent variables which are promotion, word of mouth and e-service quality toward 1 dependent variable, mediated by 1 Intervening variable. The title of the research will be **“THE EFFECT OF CUSTOMER TRUST AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN PROMOTION, WORD OF MOUTH, AND E-SERVICE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER PURCHASE DECISION OF NASI KERITING SUTOMO MEDAN”**.

1.2 Problem Limitation

Problem limitation while researching this paper are if the population of sample is too small, it can affect the validity of the research study. Sample selection that is not done in random, may results in bias as it may be over or underrepresented

certain demographic groups. In comparison to qualitative approaches like interviews, surveys and questionnaires have limits, including the possibility of low response rates, respondents misunderstanding the questions, and limitations on the amount of data that can be obtained.

The short timeframe for the research may limit its depth of analysis and its capacity to identify long-term trends in consumer behavior. Since Nasi Keriting Sutomo is the only subject of the study, the findings might not apply to other establishments of a similar nature. The study solely examines Nasi Keriting Sutomo's current customers, which restricts its ability to shed light on prospective clients or general market attitudes. Future research could broaden the scope by involving additional businesses, a larger sample size, and a longer research period for more thorough results. These limitations should be considered when evaluating the findings.

1.3 Problem Formulation

- a. Does promotion have any significant influence on customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo?
- b. Does word of mouth have any significant influence on customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo?
- c. Does e-service quality have any significant influence on customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo?
- d. Does promotion have any significant influence on customer purchase decision through customer trust of Nasi Keriting Sutomo?

- e. Does word of mouth have any significant influence on customer purchase decision through customer trust of Nasi Keriting Sutomo?
- f. Does e-service quality have any significant influence on customer purchase decision through customer trust of Nasi Keriting Sutomo?
- g. Does customer trust have any significant influence on customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo?

1.4 Objective of The Research

Below are the study objectives that can be used to address the problems that have been identified:

- a. To analyse the effect promotion towards customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo.
- b. To analyse the effect word of mouth towards customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo.
- c. To analyse the effect e-service quality towards customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo.
- d. To analyse the effect promotion towards customer purchase decision through customer trust of Nasi Keriting Sutomo.
- e. To analyse the effect of word of mouth towards customer purchase decision through customer trust of Nasi Keriting Sutomo.
- f. To analyse the effect of e-service quality towards customer purchase decision through customer trust of Nasi Keriting Sutomo.

- g. To analyse the effect of customer trust towards customer purchase decision of Nasi Keriting Sutomo.

1.5 Benefits of The Research

Through this research, we can determine what impact can promotion, word of mouth and E-service quality have on customer purchase decision. This can be an insight for companies or future business owner in the industry. This research is significant because it helps the business identify which factors most effectively build customer trust and drive purchase decisions.

By understanding these relationships, Nasi Keriting Sutomo can developed targeted strategies to enhance promotions, encourage positive word of mouth, and improve e-service quality, ultimately leading to increased customer trust and higher purchase rates.

1.5.1 Theoretical Benefits

The research contributes to the theoretical development of consumer behaviour studies by emphasizing the mediating role of customer trust in the relationship between promotion, word of mouth (WOM), and e-service quality and purchase decisions. By integrating trust as a mediator, the study provides a more in-depth knowledge of how relational aspects influence consumer decisions. Furthermore, it broadens existing marketing theories by including digital service quality in the context of local food service firms.

1.5.2 Practical Benefits

The intended benefit of this study is to help companies:

- a. For writer: This research provides deeper insights into promotional, and service quality process in a workplace. It can help the writer to improve skills in handling customers service, and promotional techniques.
- b. For the company: The study assists Nasi Keriting Sutomo in improving its marketing strategy by demonstrating that promotion, word of mouth, and e-service quality may have significant effects on purchase decisions, particularly when combined with consumer trust. customers service, and promotional techniques. This can help company make better promotional techniques that are more customer-focused and appealing. This understanding allows the company to more strategically target its marketing efforts, resulting in greater results.
- c. For the reader: To add knowledge in areas of management particularly related to restaurant sector. Gives a better understanding of how promotion, word of mouth, and e-service quality affect consumer behavior, particularly where trust is involved.
- d. For future research: To add references for other researchers who are on the same topic about Customer Trust as Mediating. It provides a foundation for investigating other variables, applying the model to other industries, or using larger samples to validate the conclusions.