

THE INFLUENCE OF DISCOUNT VOUCHERS AND FREE SHIPPING ON THE FREQUENCY OF ONLINE FOOD PURCHASES AMONG STUDENTS USING SHOPEEFOOD AT UNIVERSITAS NEGERI JAKARTA

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to analyze the impact of discount vouchers plus shipping free on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases on the ShopeeFood platform with respondents from the Economics Faculty and Business Jakarta State University (FEB UNJ). This work employs a quantitative methodology using structural equation modeling based on partial Least Squares-Based. (SEM-PLS) method processed using SmartPLS. Questionnaires were used to gather data to FEB UNJ students who actively use ShopeeFood. The results show that discount vouchers and free shipping have a favorable and substantial impact on purchase frequency, with the influence of free shipping being more dominant. These findings indicate that promotional strategies focused on reducing transaction costs are effective in encouraging increased repeat purchases in the student segment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technology's quick development has drastically changed how consumers behave, particularly in online purchasing activities. According to the 2024 We Are Social & DataReportal report, Indonesia has 222.3 million internet users, accounting for 79.5% of the population, positioning Indonesia among the fastest-growing digital markets in Southeast Asia. This digital expansion has contributed to the rise of e-commerce and, notably, the online food delivery service industry.

In recent years, the online food delivery sector in Indonesia has experienced substantial growth. Data from Statista (2024) shows that the gross merchandise value (GMV) of food delivery services reached USD 6.4 billion in 2024, growing by 25% from the previous year. Major platforms such as GoFood, GrabFood, and ShopeeFood continue to compete by offering innovations and price-based promotions to attract consumers. ShopeeFood, launched widely in 2021, rapidly gained traction among young consumers due to its aggressive promotional strategies, particularly voucher discounts and free shipping. Previous studies indicate that promotional tools, such as voucher discounts and free shipping, are some of the best tactics for influencing consumers' online buying decisions (Marlena, 2020; Istiqomah & Marlena, 2022). ShopeeFood, which has expanded significantly since 2021, is known for aggressively utilizing these promotional instruments to attract users, especially young consumers.

University students represent one of the most active user segments for food delivery applications, and this trend is evident among students at Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ). Research by Putri et al. (2024) highlights that students frequently rely on ShopeeFood for daily consumption needs due to convenience, time efficiency, convenience, and economic considerations. Marlena (2020) also found that free shipping promotions effectively reduce perceived transaction costs, thereby increasing consumers' intention to make repeat purchases. Empirical

findings by Istiqomah and Hartono (2022) further emphasize that free shipping promotions are a dominant visual and strategic element on Shopee's platform, reinforcing consumer attention and purchase motivation.

In the context of UNJ students, understanding purchase frequency is highly relevant. As digital natives, students are sensitive to promotional stimuli, often adjusting consumption patterns based on the availability of voucher discounts and free shipping. This suggests that promotional strategies not only attract consumers but may also influence consistent transaction behavior.

Given this background, there is a need for empirical evidence regarding how voucher discounts and free shipping affect purchase frequency among ShopeeFood users at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. While promotions are widely recognized as influential in shaping online consumer behavior, their specific effect on transaction frequency within the university student context remains underexplored. Therefore, This research attempts to examine the impact of these promotional tools on actual purchase behavior, contributing both conceptually and practically to the area of e-commerce consumer behavior.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discusses the theoretical foundation and previous research relevant to the research variables, namely discount vouchers, free shipping, and the frequency of online food and beverage purchases. This literature review is compiled to strengthen the study's conceptual framework and serves as the basis for formulating the research hypotheses.

2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Background

Studies in the field of e-commerce and consumer behaviour emphasize that promotional strategies play an important role in influencing users' purchasing behaviour on digital platforms. In the context of online food and beverage services delivery, consumer interaction with the platform is not only transactional but also involves a psychological process involving value perception, cost considerations, and evaluation of the benefits received. In this study, discount vouchers and free shipping are positioned as stimuli that have potential to influence the frequency of online food and beverage purchases. Understanding the relationship between discount vouchers, free shipping, and frequency of online food purchases is important for explaining the purchasing behaviour of online food and beverage users, especially for students at Universitas Negeri Jakarta Faculty of Economics and Business.

2.1.1 Discount Vouchers

Research by Setyagustina et al. (2022) explains that a price reduction is a form of price decrease provided by seller with the aim of attracting consumers to acquire a specific good or service. The provision of discounts can vary depending on the conditions and sales strategies set. In general, a discount is understood as a reduction in price from the normal price, so that consumers pay the final price which has been reduced from the initial or gross of the product. Sonata (2019); Kusnawan et al. (2019); Sutisna in Warnerin & Dwijayanti (2020) explains, discounts can influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions.

Based on the questionnaire used in this study, discount vouchers were measured using primary data collected through a Likert scale with five points. The measurement of the discount voucher variable was carried out using these several following indicators:

1. The level of interest in using discount vouchers,
2. Perception of the value of the offered discount,
3. The tendency to choose ShopeeFood as a food and beverage purchasing platform due to the availability of discount vouchers.

These indicators were used to assess the extent to which discount vouchers influence students' purchasing perceptions and behavior on the ShopeeFood platform.

2.1.2 Free Shipping

Free shipping is a form of sales promotion aimed at encouraging consumers to make online purchases without incurring shipping costs. In the study, Marlina (2020); Istiqomah & Marlina (2022); Sari (2019) in Putri et al. (2023), mentioned this promotion can reduce consumers' perception of objections to the total transaction cost as well as increase purchase interest and frequency. Istikomah & Hartono (2022) explains, free shipping promotions are seen as one of the main strategies highlighted by Shopee, which is reflected in the placement and visibility of the free shipping symbol consistently displayed on the application's main page as a form of promotion strategy reinforcement to users.

Based on the questionnaire used in this study, the free shipping variable measured using primary data through a Likert scale with five points. The measurement of the free shipping variable is carried out with these following indicators:

1. The intensity of ShopeeFood usage due to free shipping promotions,
2. Preference for restaurants that offer free shipping promotions,
3. The increase in food and beverage purchases due to ShopeeFood's free shipping program.

2.1.3 Frequency of Online Food Purchases

Nabila et al. (2024) explain in the research, purchase frequency refers to the rate at which consumers make purchases of products or services within a certain period of time. This variable is an important parameter in consumer behavior analysis because it can provide insight into shopping habits, product preferences, and the effectiveness of strategies implemented by service providers. In the context of food and beverage delivery services, purchase frequency can increase with the intensity of user interaction with the app, such as opening the platform to view menu options, placing orders, and providing reviews or recommendations to other users.

In this study, purchase frequency is positioned as a dependent variable reflecting students' behavioral implemented by ShopeeFood. Based on the questionnaire used in this study, purchase frequency is measured using primary data through a Likert scale with five points with indicators that include the intensity of food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood, the consistency of using ShopeeFood over a certain period, and the tendency to make repeated purchases as a result of promotions offered.

2.2 Empirical Review and Hypothesis

Previous studies have shown that price-based promotion strategies play an important role in influencing online shoppers' decisions especially when it comes to food and beverage delivery services. Regarding the e-commerce of food then promotions such as discount vouchers and free shipping act as stimuli that can influence perceived value and encourage consumers to increase purchase frequency. Therefore, empirical studies are needed to strengthen the relationships between variables in this research and serve as a basis for formulating hypotheses.

2.2.1 The Influence of Discount Vouchers on Purchase Frequency (H1)

Research by Kusumaningati et al. (2024) shows that discounts possess a favorable and noteworthy impact on decisions to buy on the Shopee marketplace. Similar findings were also reported by Razali et al. (2022) and Auli et al. (2021), who stated that giving discounts can increase consumers' interest in making transactions. Discounts make product prices feel more affordable, encouraging consumers to purchase. In the context of food online delivery on ShopeeFood, discount vouchers not only influence initial purchase decisions but also have the potential to encourage consumers to make repeat purchases, especially among students of Universitas Negeri Jakarta who have practical consumption patterns who have practical consumption patterns and are price sensitive.

H1: Discount vouchers have a positive and significant influence on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood among students of Universitas Negeri Jakarta.

2.2.2 The Influence of Free Shipping on Purchase Frequency (H2)

Shipping costs are often one of the factors that hinder consumers from purchasing food and beverages online. Therefore, free shipping promotions serve as a strategy to reduce transaction costs and increase the attractiveness of purchasing. On the Shopee platform, free shipping has even become one of the most prominent and easily recognizable promotions for users. Istikomah and Hartono (2022) mention that the free shipping program is Shopee's flagship strategy, consistently featured on the app's main page. Additionally, Marlina (2020) and Istiqomah and Marlina (2022) in Putri et al. (2023) have proven that free shipping can increase consumer interest and purchase volume. In the context of students at Universitas Negeri Jakarta as ShopeeFood users, free shipping promotions are expected to encourage consumers to purchase food and beverages more frequently.

H2: Free shipping has a positive and significant influence on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood among students of Universitas Negeri Jakarta.

2.2.3 The Influence of Discount Vouchers and Free Shipping on Purchase Frequency (H3)

Promotional strategies on e-commerce platforms generally do not stand alone but rather complement each other to create a stronger appeal for consumers. The combination of discount vouchers and free shipping is considered capable of increasing perceived value and reducing cost barriers in online food delivery. Studies by Kusumaningati et al. (2024) and Auli et al. (2021) demonstrate that discounts as well as free shipping simultaneously possess a substantial influence on consumers' decisions about purchases on the Shopee platform. These Results show that customers are more motivated to make a purchase when both promotions are offered together. Therefore, on ShopeeFood services, the combination of discount vouchers and free shipping is expected to increase the frequency of online food purchases among Universitas Negeri Jakarta students.

H3: Discount vouchers and free shipping have a positive and significant influence on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood among students of Universitas Negeri Jakarta.

Table 1. Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Statement
Voucher Discount → Purchase Frequency	Voucher discount has a positive and significant influence on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood among Universitas Negeri Jakarta students.
Free Shipping → Purchase Frequency	Free shipping has a positive and significant effect on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood among Universitas Negeri Jakarta students.
Voucher Discount and Free Shipping	Voucher discount and free shipping simultaneously have a positive and

Hypothesis	Statement
→ Purchase Frequency	significant effect on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood among Universitas Negeri Jakarta students.

Source: Authors (2025)

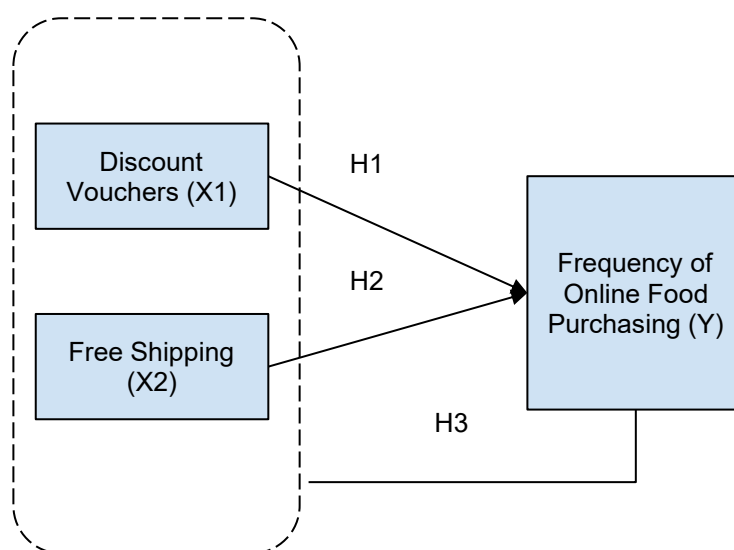


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Study

Source: Authors (2025)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative methodology using structural equation modeling based on partial least squares (SEM-PLS) method, processed using SmartPLS software. The selection of the SEM-PLS method is based on its ability to analyze relationships between variables simultaneously and to test the direct effects among latent variables. In addition, the SEM-PLS approach is predictive does not need data that is routinely distributed and is suitable for research with a relatively small sample size.

This research attempts to analyze the result of discount vouchers as well as free shipping on the frequency of online food and beverage purchases among ShopeeFood users. Through the SEM-PLS approach, this Research is anticipated to identify the strength of relationships between variables and explain students' purchasing behaviour patterns in response to the promotional strategies implemented by the ShopeeFood platform.

3.2 Population and Sample

The study's population consists of Students in the Economics Faculty and Business at Universitas Negeri Jakarta who use ShopeeFood services. Purposive sampling is the method employed, and it meets the following requirements:

1. Active students of the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Negeri Jakarta
2. Have purchased food and/or drinks through ShopeeFood,
3. Have used discount vouchers and/or free shipping in ShopeeFood transactions.

3.3 Data Collection Method

Research Information was gathered via structured questionnaires distributed to respondents online. The research the tool included closed ended questions that measured using Likert scale with five points ranging 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The survey was designed to measure respondents' perceptions of discount vouchers, free shipping, as well as the frequency of purchasing food and beverages through ShopeeFood.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Multiple linear regression analysis was used to analyze the data with the help of SmartPLS software. Regression analysis was chosen because the objective objective this research is to investigate the impact of discount vouchers and shipping free as independent variables on purchase frequency as the dependent variable.

Questionnaire data were processed by calculating the composite score (mean value) of each variable based on respondents' answers to the measurement indicators. Each research variable was then represented by a single composite value, which was used as input in the regression model. This regression analysis in this study focuses on evaluating the magnitude and importance of the correlations between the factors through coefficients of determination and regression coefficients (R^2) and significance testing.

3.4.1 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The study employed multiple linear regression analysis to examine the simultaneous effect of discount vouchers and free shipping on purchase frequency. The regression model in this study examines the direction and strength of the connection between the dependent and independent variables variable. The result of the regression analysis are interpreted based on:

- Regression coefficient values, to show each independent variable's impact on the dependent variable, along with its direction and strength.
- t statistic and p value, which are used to ascertain the statistical significance of the relationships.
- Determination coefficient (R^2), that calculates the percentage of the dependent variable's variance that the independent variables can account for.

3.4.2 Structural Model (Inner Model)

The determination coefficient (R^2) is used to assess the explanatory power of the regression model. The R^2 value indicates the percentage of variation in purchase frequency that can be explained by discount vouchers and free shipping. An R^2 A score nearer 1 denotes the model's greater capacity for explanation, whereas a value nearer 0 implies a weaker explanatory ability. In this study, the R^2 value is interpreted as an indicator of how well the independent variables collectively explain changes in purchase frequency.

3.5 Hypothesis Testing

Testing hypothesis is conducted using the results of the regression coefficient analysis generated by the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. The hypotheses are tested by examining the t-statistic and p-value values for each independent variable. The hypotheses are also tested to determine whether discount vouchers and free shipping significantly influence purchase frequency. The decision criteria used in hypothesis testing are as follows:

- A hypothesis is accepted if the p-values is less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant effect,
- Whereas a negative regression coefficient suggests an inverse association, a positive coefficient shows a positive relationship between the variables.

3.6 Influence Analysis

Influence analysis is conducted to examine the relative strength of each independent variable's effect on purchase frequency. The magnitude of the influence is evaluated by comparing the regression coefficient values obtained from the regression analysis. A higher regression coefficient indicates a stronger influence of the independent variable on purchase frequency. By comparing the coefficients of discount vouchers and free shipping, this study identifies which promotional strategy has a more dominant effect in influencing the frequency of food purchases online through ShopeeFood.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

This study involved students from Economics and Business Faculty Jakarta State University (FEB UNJ) who actively use ShopeeFood for online food and beverage purchases. This study sought to analyze the effect of discount vouchers and shipping free shipping on purchase frequency. Data were obtained utilizing questionnaires and multiple linear regression analysis with the SmartPLS application.

The initial stage of the analysis was conducted by constructing a multiple linear regression model to examine the effect of discount vouchers free delivery on orders frequency. The analysis focused on evaluating the direction, magnitude, and statistical significance of variable relationships utilising regression the coefficients and p values where a relationship is considered significant if the p value is less than 0.05. The result show that both independent variables have positive and statistically significant effects on purchase frequency, indicating that the regression model is appropriate for explaining variations in ShopeeFood purchase frequency among students.

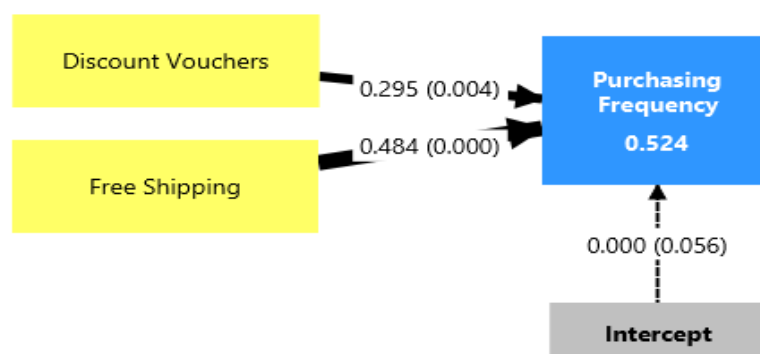


Figure 2. Regression Model Result

Source: Authors (2025)

Collinearity statistics - VIF		
		VIF
Discount Vouchers		2.011
Free Shipping		2.011

Figure 3. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Result

Source: Authors (2025)

The multicollinearity test shows VIF values for both independent variables of 2.011, which are below the critical threshold of 10. This indicates that there is no multicollinearity problem between discount vouchers and free shipping, and the regression model is free from redundancy among independent variables.

R-square	
	Purchasing Frequency
R-square	0.524
R-square adjusted	0.514
Durbin-Watson test	1.839

Figure 4. R-SquareTest Result

Source: Authors (2025)

After the regression model was established, the goodness of fit was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2). The analysis results show that the R^2 value for the purchase frequency variable is 0.542, with an adjusted R^2 value of 0.514. This indicates that 52.4% of the variation in ShopeeFood purchase frequency can be explained by discount vouchers and free shipping. The Durbin-Watson value of 1.839 indicates that there is no serious autocorrelation problem, suggesting that the regression model meets the basic assumptions and is statistically acceptable.

Summary coefficients								Copy to Excel/Word	Copy to R
	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	SE	T value	P value	2.5 %	97.5 %		
Discount Vouchers	0.345	0.295	0.117	2.952	0.004	0.113	0.576		
Free Shipping	0.465	0.484	0.096	4.847	0.000	0.274	0.655		
Intercept	0.679	0.000	0.352	1.933	0.056	-0.018	1.377		

Figure 4. Regression Coefficients Result

Source: Authors (2025)

Hypothesis testing was conducted using regression coefficient analysis. The results show that discount vouchers (X1) have positive and statistically substantial impact on purchasing frequency with a standardized coefficient (β) value of 0.295, a t-value of 2.952, and a p-value of 0.004, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that H1 is accepted. Meanwhile, free shipping (X2) also shows a positive and statistically significant effect on purchase frequency with a higher standardized coefficient (β) value of 0.484, a t-value of 4.847, and a p-value of 0.000. These results indicate that free shipping has a stronger influence on purchase frequency compared to discount vouchers. Therefore, H2 is accepted.

The regression equation formed based on the analysis results is as follows:

$$\text{Purchase Frequency} = 0.679 + 0.345 (\text{Discount Vouchers}) + 0.465 (\text{Free Shipping})$$

This equation indicates that an increase in discount vouchers and free shipping promotions will increase ShopeeFood purchase frequency, with free shipping contributing more strongly to the increase.

Overall Regression analysis shows that both discount vouchers and free shipping have positive then statistically significant effects on ShopeeFood purchase frequency among FEB UNJ students, as indicated by p-values of less than 0.05. The magnitude of the standardized regression coefficients shows that free shipping has a stronger influence on purchase promotional strategies related to shipping cost reduction are more effective in encouraging repeat food and beverage purchases on ShopeeFood. Therefore, the regression model provides empirical evidence that discount vouchers and free shipping are important determinants of ShopeeFood purchase frequency in this study.

Table 2. Relationships between Research Variables

Relationship of Variables	Standardized Coefficient (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Description
X1→ Y (Voucher Discount → Purchase Frequency)	0.295	> 1.96	< 0.05	Significant
X2→ Y (Free Shipping → Purchase Frequency)	0.484	> 1.96	< 0.05	Significant

Source: Author (2025)

Table 2 above shows that all relationships between variables in this study are positive and significant. Discount vouchers and free shipping variables were shown to influence the frequency of food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood. Of the two variables, free shipping had a more dominant influence than discount vouchers.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 The Influence of Discount Vouchers on Purchase Frequency

This study shows that discount vouchers have a positive and substantial impact on frequency of food and beverage purchases through ShopeeFood among FEB UNJ students. This finding indicates that the more frequently and attractively discount vouchers create the perception of more affordable prices, encouraging consumers to delay purchases and make more frequent transactions.

Theoretically, this finding aligns with the concept of sales promotion, where incentives in the form of price cuts can influence consumer purchasing behavior in the short term. Discounts act as an economic stimulus that directly reduces consumer financial sacrifice, thereby increasing purchase intention and frequency. For students who generally have limited budgets, the availability of discount vouchers is an important consideration in their decision to purchase food online. Therefore, discount vouchers can be considered an effective promotional strategy in encouraging ShopeeFood purchase frequency among FEB UNJ students, although based on the value of their influence, their contribution is still relatively small compared to other promotional variables.

4.2.2 The Influence of Free Shipping on Purchase Frequency (H2)

The study showed that free delivery had a good and significant impact on ShopeeFood purchase frequency among FEB UNJ students. In fact, compared to discount vouchers, free shipping demonstrated a greater impact on increasing purchase frequency. This indicates that shipping costs are highly sensitive factor for consumers when purchasing food online.

Conceptually, free shipping can reduce consumers' psychological barriers to total costs. Even when the product is relatively affordable, additional shipping costs are often a reason for consumers to cancel or postpone purchases. By eliminating these costs, consumers perceive a greater benefit and are encouraged to make more frequent purchases.

For FEB UNJ students, the free shipping promotion made transactions feel easier and more rational, thus encouraging increased frequency of food purchases through ShopeeFood. Therefore, free shipping can be considered the most dominant promotional strategy influencing student purchasing behavior in this study.

4.2.3 Implications of the Research Findings

The results overall show that both discount vouchers and free shipping play a role in increasing ShopeeFood purchase frequency, but free shipping has stronger influence. This finding indicates that FEB UNJ students are more sensitive to shipping costs than product discounts. Therefore, promotional strategies focused on eliminating shipping costs are considered more effective in encouraging repeat purchases among the student segment.

The results of this study provide practical implications for ShopeeFood to continue optimizing its free shipping program as a primary strategy to increase transaction frequency, while maintaining discount vouchers as a supporting strategy. Furthermore, this research also enriches empirical studies on student consumer behavior in the context of online food delivery services.

5. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that promotional strategies implemented by ShopeeFood, particularly discount vouchers and free shipping have a positive and statistically substantial impact on purchase frequency of students at Economics and Business Faculty, Universitas Negeri Jakarta. The results of the Multiple linear regression shows both independent variables strongly affect purchase frequency, as evidenced by p-values of less than 0.05. However, free shipping shows a stronger influence compared to discount vouchers, reflected by its higher standardized regression coefficient. This finding suggest that the elimination of delivery costs is perceived as more valuable by students than price reductions alone in encouraging repeat food online purchases.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the literature on consumer behavior in digital food delivery platforms by providing empirical evidence that different cost-related promotional strategies have varying levels of influence on purchasing frequency. The findings reinforce the notion that, for student consumers, transactional costs such as delivery fees play a more critical role in purchase decisions than product price discounts. This research extends previous studies by highlighting the dominant role of free shipping incentives in shaping repeated purchasing behavior within the online food delivery context.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the research sample is limited to students of FEB UNJ This may limit findings generalisability to other demographic groups or institutional contexts. Second, the study focuses only on two promotional variables—discount vouchers and free shipping—without incorporating other potential determinants of purchase frequency, such as service quality, delivery speed, user experience, brand loyalty, or lifestyle factors. Additionally, the use of cross-sectional data makes it difficult to track purchase behaviour changes.

Future research is encouraged to expand the scope of respondents to include different universities, age groups, or occupational backgrounds in order to enhance the external validity of the findings. Subsequent studies may also incorporate additional variables, such as perceived value, customer satisfaction, or trust, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of purchasing behavior on food delivery platforms. Longitudinal research designs could further provide deeper insights into how promotional strategies affect consumer behaviour in long term.

From a managerial and practical perspective, the findings of this study suggest that ShopeeFood should prioritize free shipping programs as a core promotional strategy, particularly when targeting the student market segment. While discount vouchers remain effective as a supporting promotional tool, strategies aimed at reducing or eliminating delivery costs are likely to generate a stronger impact on purchase frequency. Platform managers may also consider optimizing subsidy schemes and partnerships with merchants to sustain free shipping initiatives without compromising operational efficiency. Overall, this study offers practical insights for promotional strategy formulation and platform development within the rapidly growing online food delivery ecosystem.

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