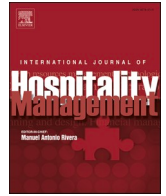





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## From click to plate: Exploring service characteristics that shape satisfaction in online food ordering

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## ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of online food delivery (OFD) services has intensified scholarly interest in understanding how service design shapes customer satisfaction in digitally mediated food services. Despite the expanding empirical literature, existing research remains conceptually fragmented, largely because service attributes are examined through aggregated service quality constructs. At the same time, customer satisfaction is often treated as a secondary or mediating variable rather than as a focal evaluative mechanism. Consequently, there is limited theoretical clarity regarding how different service attributes function in the formation of satisfaction within platform-based food services. To address this gap, this study conducts a systematic literature review following the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, synthesising evidence from peer-reviewed journal articles retrieved from Web of Science and Scopus. Adopting a theory-driven and customer-centric perspective, the review examines how service attributes have been conceptualised and empirically linked to customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. The findings show that service attributes operate through role-differentiated mechanisms rather than uniform or additive effects. Core service attributes establish baseline evaluative security by ensuring functional reliability, whereas differentiating service attributes generates variation in satisfaction through experiential and relational mechanisms. In addition, technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes emerge as reconfiguring conditions that reshape how customers interpret and prioritise service attributes, rather than acting as independent drivers of satisfaction. Building on these insights, the study develops an integrative framework that reconceptualises customer satisfaction as a central evaluative mechanism embedded in digitally mediated platform service systems. The framework advances theoretical understanding of satisfaction formation and offers guidance for future research and service design in online food delivery contexts.

## 1. Introduction

The digital transformation of consumer markets has profoundly reshaped the food service industry, with online food delivery services emerging as central actors in contemporary consumption practices (Ray et al., 2019; Yeo et al., 2017). These services increasingly mediate how consumers search for, order, and experience food, offering heightened convenience, accessibility, and efficiency through digitally enabled service encounters. The rapid expansion of the online food delivery

sector is reflected in its strong and sustained global growth trajectory. Recent industry reports indicate that global revenues in the online food delivery market are expected to exceed USD 1.5 trillion by the mid-2020s and to continue growing steadily in the coming years, underscoring the increasing economic and strategic significance of digitally mediated food services (Statista, 2025). This expansion has intensified academic and managerial interest in understanding how service design decisions influence customer experiences and satisfaction outcomes in online food delivery contexts (Annaraud and Berezina,

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2020; Macias et al., 2023; Nikzadask et al., 2026). Empirical studies increasingly link OFD service qualities to satisfaction and post-adoption behaviours, highlighting satisfaction as a central evaluative outcome (Seo and Roh, 2025; Wu et al., 2024; Nikzadask et al., 2026). Customer satisfaction has long been recognised as a critical determinant of success in food service settings, particularly in technology-enabled environments where service encounters are increasingly mediated through digital interfaces (Chang et al., 2014; Suhartanto et al., 2019). Prior research consistently demonstrates that service quality plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer evaluations and behavioural intentions in online food delivery services (Annaraud and Berezina, 2020; Suhartanto et al., 2019). However, empirical findings remain fragmented regarding the relative importance of specific service attributes, with prior studies reporting inconsistent effects across technical, convenience-related, and experiential dimensions (Koay et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2024a; Zhuang et al., 2021). While some studies emphasise technical and system-related features such as platform usability and interface design (Berraies et al., 2015), others highlight convenience-oriented attributes, including delivery speed, order accuracy, and ease of ordering, as primary drivers of customer satisfaction (Lin et al., 2024). While some studies emphasise technical and system-related features such as platform usability and interface design (Berraies et al., 2015), others highlight convenience-oriented attributes, including delivery speed, order accuracy, and ease of ordering, as primary drivers of customer satisfaction (Lin et al., 2024). As online food delivery markets mature and service features become increasingly standardised across competing platforms, the differentiating power of previously innovative attributes diminishes, reshaping customer expectations and satisfaction formation processes (Ma et al., 2024a; Malekpour et al., 2022). Importantly, a closer examination of the existing literature reveals that many studies prioritise behavioural intentions, adoption decisions, or usage metrics, while treating customer satisfaction as a secondary or intermediate construct rather than as a focal evaluative outcome (Alalwan, 2020; Cheng et al., 2021; Nikzadask et al., 2026). As a result, service attributes are frequently modelled as isolated predictors within broader explanatory frameworks, limiting theoretical insight into how different service elements jointly shape satisfaction formation in digitally mediated food services. This pattern contributes to a fragmented understanding of customer satisfaction by privileging downstream behavioural outcomes over the evaluative processes through which customers assess service performance. Several systematic literature reviews have sought to synthesise the rapidly expanding online food delivery literature by mapping dominant research themes, methodological approaches, and theoretical foundations. For instance, Shroff et al. (2022) provide a comprehensive overview of online food delivery research, identifying key streams related to consumer behaviour, platform adoption, service operations, and ecosystem dynamics. Similarly, Ashraf and Bardhan (2025) synthesise decision-oriented and optimisation-focused studies to advance understanding of order fulfilment and operational efficiency in online food delivery platforms. While these reviews offer valuable macro-level and operational insights into the OFD sector, they largely treat service attributes as descriptive variables or supporting factors, rather than theorising them as evaluative mechanisms through which customer satisfaction is actively constructed, differentiated, and reconfigured across platform-based service encounters. In contrast, the present review adopts a customer-centric and theory-driven perspective by systematically synthesising service attributes based on their functional role in satisfaction formation, thereby moving beyond descriptive mappings toward an integrative conceptual framework. To clarify the positioning of the present review relative to prior systematic literature reviews on online food delivery, a comparative overview is provided in Appendix A (Table A1). Building on this clarified positioning, the present review formulates a set of research questions that systematically examine how service attributes have been conceptualised, differentiated, and reconfigured in shaping customer satisfaction within online food delivery services. Within the existing review literature, service-related factors are

typically treated as one theme among many rather than being positioned as the central analytical mechanism through which customer satisfaction is constructed and explained. As a result, service attributes are frequently examined in isolation, leading to a fragmented understanding of how different service elements jointly shape customer evaluations and satisfaction outcomes (Ma et al., 2024a; Macias et al., 2023). Moreover, despite their distinct functional roles, prior studies rarely differentiate between foundational service attributes that secure baseline performance and differentiating attributes that contribute to experiential variation and competitive positioning, further limiting conceptual clarity in satisfaction formation (Malekpour et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2024b). Recent platform research suggests that such fragmentation also overlooks the role of platform-level orchestration, whereby customer experience and perceived value emerge from how service attributes are coordinated and distributed across actors and stages of the online food delivery ecosystem, rather than from isolated service features alone (Oh et al., 2025). More importantly, prior systematic literature reviews have not yet provided an integrative and theory-informed synthesis that conceptualises service attributes as designable mechanisms through which customer satisfaction is constructed in digitally mediated online food delivery services. This limitation mirrors concerns raised in adjacent service and sustainability domains, where systematic reviews have highlighted persistent conceptual fragmentation and the absence of integrative analytical frameworks despite a growing volume of empirical studies (Elhoushy et al., 2025). In particular, limited attention has been paid to how traditional service quality attributes are reconfigured through their interaction with technology-enabled service features, including automation and algorithmic decision-making, as well as through their interaction with sustainability-related service practices that are becoming increasingly salient in shaping customer expectations and evaluations (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Stewart, 2003; Malekpour et al., 2024). This fragmented treatment constrains theoretical development and limits managerial understanding of how service design decisions translate into customer satisfaction outcomes in contemporary online food delivery contexts. Consistent with prior research, this review adopts the term online food delivery services as an overarching concept referring to digitally mediated service systems that enable consumers to search for, order, and receive food through online platforms (Annaraud and Berezina, 2020; Shroff et al., 2022). Within this broad domain, online food delivery platforms operate as multi-sided digital intermediaries that coordinate interactions among consumers, restaurants, and delivery providers by integrating ordering, payment, and fulfilment processes within a single service ecosystem (Shroff et al., 2022; Ashraf and Bardhan, 2025). Although terms such as online food ordering, food delivery platforms, and online food delivery services are often used interchangeably, prior studies implicitly distinguish between these concepts by emphasising different stages of the service process. In line with this stream of research, the present review uses the term online food delivery services to capture the complete digitally mediated service experience through which customer satisfaction is formed. To ensure terminological clarity and avoid the interchangeable use of related concepts, a concise overview of key terms and their analytical scope adopted in this review is provided in Appendix B (Table B1). To address the identified gaps, the present study adopts a systematic literature review approach to reposition service attributes as the core explanatory mechanisms through which digital transformation and sustainability considerations reshape customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. Drawing on the TCCM framework (Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019) and following the SPAR-4-SLR protocol (Paul et al., 2021), this review offers a structured and transparent synthesis of prior research. By integrating insights across theories, contexts, service characteristics, and methods, the study develops an integrative conceptual framework that advances theoretical understanding of online food delivery service design and provides a coherent foundation for future research and managerial decision-making. Building on the identified gaps in prior systematic reviews, this study is guided by three research questions that

progressively structure the analysis from conceptual clarification to thematic synthesis and integrative framework development.

RQ1. *How has prior research approached the conceptualisation and measurement of service attributes in explaining customer satisfaction within online food delivery services?*

RQ2. *Which service attributes emerge as core and which function as differentiating elements in shaping customer satisfaction across digitally mediated online food delivery contexts?*

RQ3. *How do technology-enabled and sustainability-related service attributes reconfigure the role of traditional service quality dimensions in shaping customer satisfaction in contemporary online food delivery services?*

## 2. Review methodology

This study adopts a systematic literature review approach to synthesise and consolidate existing knowledge on service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services, while identifying research gaps and directions for future inquiry (Donthu et al., 2021; Paul et al., 2021). By adopting an attribute-centric analytical logic, the review aligns with prior calls for theory-driven synthesis that moves beyond descriptive aggregation toward explanatory integration in service research (Palmatier et al., 2018). The review is explicitly guided by

clearly defined research questions and an attribute-centric analytical logic, ensuring a coherent alignment between the review objectives, the synthesis process, and the reported findings. To ensure transparency, rigour, and replicability, the review follows the Scientific Procedures and Rationales for Systematic Literature Reviews (SPAR-4-SLR) protocol (Paul et al., 2021), which has been increasingly adopted in management and service research to support analytically oriented reviews that emphasise synthesis, conceptual development, and theory building (Tsiotsou and Boukis, 2022). In line with established review practices, the TCCM framework (Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019) is employed as a structuring and reporting device to organise prior research across theories, contexts, characteristics, and methods, rather than as the primary analytical lens. This approach is consistent with recent systematic reviews that distinguish between descriptive profiling frameworks and analytically driven synthesis logics (Paul et al., 2021; Lim et al., 2021). Fig. 1 illustrates the SPAR-4-SLR protocol and its application in the current review. The analytical framework and coding strategy underpinning the synthesis of service attributes and customer satisfaction outcomes are detailed in Section 3.4.

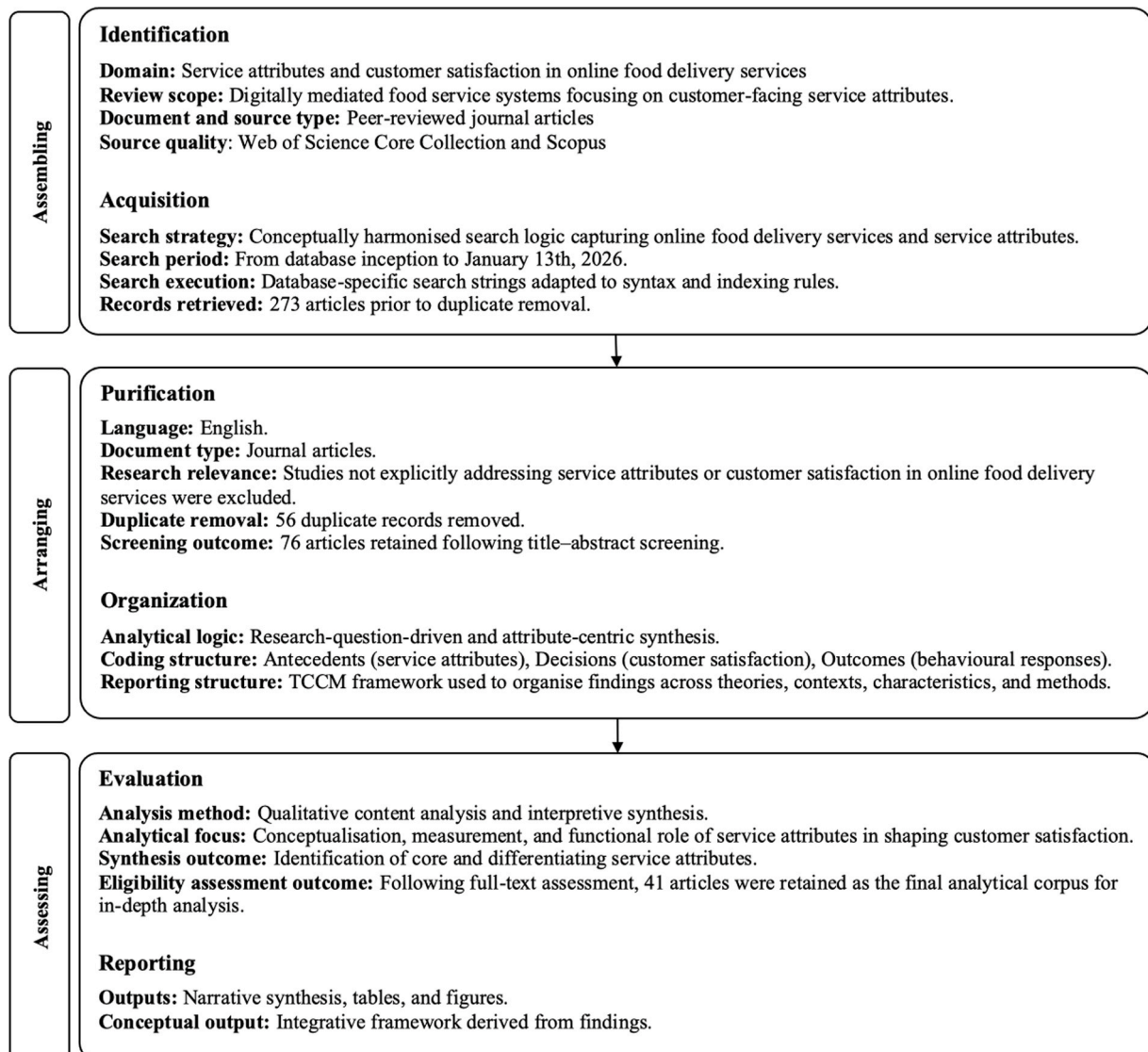


Fig. 1. The SPAR-4-SLR protocol was adapted from Paul et al. (2021).

2.1. Review design and protocol

This study adopts a domain-based and research-question-driven systematic literature review to synthesise existing knowledge on service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. To ensure transparency, methodological rigour, and replicability, the review follows the Scientific Procedures and Rationales for Systematic Literature Reviews (SPAR-4-SLR) protocol proposed by Paul et al. (2021), which provides a structured framework for review planning, execution, screening, and synthesis. In line with the SPAR-4-SLR logic, the review process was organised into three sequential stages: *assembling*, *arranging*, and *assessing*. The assembling stage involved the identification and acquisition of potentially relevant studies through systematic database searches. The arranging stage focused on purification and organisation through multi-step screening and eligibility assessment. The assessing stage comprised the analytical synthesis and structured reporting of findings in relation to the research questions. Specifically, an initial pool of records was identified through database searches and subsequently refined through duplicate removal. The remaining studies were then subjected to a title–abstract screening to exclude articles that were not conceptually aligned with the focus on service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. Studies retained after this stage underwent full-text eligibility assessment to confirm their analytical relevance and empirical focus. Finally, a subset of studies meeting all inclusion criteria was selected for in-depth content analysis and synthesis. Throughout the review process, the TCCM framework (Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019) was employed solely as a structuring device to organise and report prior research across theories, contexts, characteristics, and methods. It did not guide the analytical logic of the synthesis, which remained explicitly driven by the research questions and an attribute-centric perspective. Fig. 1 summarises the full review design and screening process adopted in this study in accordance with the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, including the number of records identified, screened, assessed for eligibility, and retained for final analysis.

2.2. Search strategy and data sources

A systematic and conceptually guided search strategy was developed to identify relevant studies addressing service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. A unified conceptual search logic was first established around three core constructs: online food delivery services, service attributes, and customer satisfaction in digitally mediated contexts. This logic ensured conceptual coherence throughout the search process and guided study identification across databases. To ensure comprehensive coverage of high-quality and peer-reviewed research, two major bibliographic databases, Web of Science Core Collection and Scopus, were selected due to their extensive journal coverage and established use in systematic literature reviews within marketing, hospitality, and service research (Donthu et al., 2021; Akbari et al., 2022). While the same conceptual logic underpinned searches in both databases, the search strings were adapted to accommodate differences in database syntax, field codes, and indexing practices. To enhance analytical focus and reduce conceptual noise, the initial exploratory search strings were deliberately refined. This refinement involved narrowing both service-related and platform-related keywords to concentrate on core online food delivery configurations and central service-related constructs, such as service attributes, service quality, and digital service quality. This step helped to limit the inclusion of tangential technological or operational studies not directly aligned with the review objectives. Database-specific search strings were therefore developed and applied for each database using conceptually equivalent keyword combinations. The full search strings and database-specific filtering procedures are reported in Appendix C to ensure transparency and replicability. The refined search process resulted in a total of 273 records retrieved across the two databases before duplicate removal.

Consistent with the analytical objective of avoiding construct-level aggregation, established composite service quality dimensions (e.g., SERVQUAL categories) were not used as primary search terms. This deliberate choice allowed the review to capture granular, designable service attributes and to examine their evaluative role in satisfaction formation rather than reproducing pre-aggregated quality frameworks.

2.3. Screening and eligibility criteria

Following duplicate removal across databases, a structured screening procedure was implemented to refine the initial pool of studies. Consistent with the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, the screening process comprised two stages: title–abstract screening and full-text eligibility assessment. In the first stage, title abstract screening was conducted to assess conceptual alignment with the review objectives. In line with prior methodological recommendations, particular emphasis was placed on retaining studies that treated customer satisfaction or closely related evaluative constructs as a focal outcome of analysis, rather than merely as mediating or peripheral variables (Chang et al., 2014; Suhartanto et al., 2019). Accordingly, studies were retained if they met all of the following criteria: (i) explicit focus on online food delivery platforms or services, rather than general e-commerce or logistics settings; (ii) examination of specific service attributes, service characteristics, or service quality dimensions; (iii) conceptual and empirical treatment of customer satisfaction (or closely related evaluative constructs) as a core outcome variable; (iv) publication as a peer-reviewed journal article; and (v) adoption of a consumer-facing perspective, excluding studies primarily focused on operational optimisation. The operational screening criteria applied at this stage are summarised in Table 1.

Application of these criteria resulted in the retention of 76 articles deemed conceptually relevant for further assessment. In the second stage, the retained articles underwent full-text eligibility assessment to ensure substantive alignment with the review focus. This step involved examining each article’s conceptual framing, empirical focus, and treatment of service attributes in relation to customer satisfaction. Articles were excluded if service attributes were only tangentially mentioned, if satisfaction was not analytically examined, or if the study’s primary emphasis lay outside the scope of digitally mediated online food delivery services. Following full-text assessment, 41 peer-reviewed journal articles were retained as the final analytical corpus (Appendix G). The full screening and eligibility process is summarised in Fig. 1.

2.4. Analytical framework and coding strategy

To ensure a coherent and theory-informed synthesis, the analysis followed a research-question-driven and attribute-centric analytical framework. Rather than applying a single predefined theoretical lens, the review adopted an interpretive synthesis approach aimed at identifying how service attributes have been conceptualised, operationalised, and empirically linked to customer satisfaction across online food delivery studies. The analytical process was structured around an Antecedents–Decisions–Outcomes logic, which has been widely employed in

**Table 1**  
Title abstract screening criteria applied to identify eligible studies.

Criterion	Description
Focus	Explicit focus on online food delivery platforms or services
Attributes	Examination of service attributes or service quality dimensions
Outcome	Customer satisfaction or closely related evaluative constructs are treated as a core outcome
Perspective	Consumer-facing perspective
Publication type	Peer-reviewed journal article

**Note:** These criteria guided the initial refinement of the dataset during the title–abstract screening stage.

service and consumer research to capture evaluative mechanisms linking service design elements to customer responses (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019). Within this framework, service attributes and service quality dimensions were coded as antecedents, customer satisfaction and closely related evaluative constructs were coded as decisions, and behavioural responses such as continuance intention, repurchase intention, and loyalty were coded as outcomes. This structuring reflects empirical evidence showing that satisfaction functions as a central evaluative node linking service perceptions to multiple downstream behavioural responses, including repurchase intention, recommendation, and willingness to pay more (Merniawanda and Sfenrianto, 2023). To ensure consistency and comparability of data extraction across the final set of studies, a structured coding framework was applied to systematically capture the focal service attributes examined, the analytical positioning of customer satisfaction within each study, and the associated behavioural outcomes. The coding schema used during the extraction stage is reported in Table 2.

During the coding process, each study was examined to extract the types of service attributes investigated, their conceptual role within the analytical model, and their reported relationship with customer satisfaction. Coding was conducted iteratively, allowing categories to be refined as patterns emerged across studies. This process facilitated the identification of recurring attribute configurations as well as underexplored or inconsistently treated service dimensions. Building on the cross-study synthesis, service attributes were subsequently differentiated based on their functional role in satisfaction formation. Attributes that appeared consistently across studies and formed the foundational basis of customer evaluations were classified as core service attributes. In contrast, attributes that contributed to differentiation, experiential enhancement, or contextual variation in satisfaction were classified as differentiating service attributes. To ensure transparency and replicability of this role-based classification, explicit analytical criteria were applied, as summarised in Table 3.

To enhance interpretability, the role-based distinction was further supported through illustrative examples drawn from the reviewed literature. These examples are presented in Table 4 and indicate how commonly studied attributes were mapped onto core versus differentiating categories based on their evaluative function in satisfaction formation.

Finally, the TCCM framework (Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019) was employed solely as a descriptive and reporting device to profile the reviewed studies across theoretical foundations, empirical contexts, conceptual characteristics, and methodological approaches. The TCCM framework did not inform the analytical logic or the interpretation of service attributes and satisfaction mechanisms, which remained explicitly driven by the research questions and the attribute-centric perspective. The resulting TCCM profiling of the reviewed corpus is reported in Appendix D.

### 3. Findings

Building on the analytical framework and coding strategy outlined in

**Table 2**  
Conceptual coding framework used to extract service attributes and related constructs.

Coding category	Description
Service attributes	Specific service-related features examined in the study
Satisfaction construct	Conceptualisation and measurement of customer satisfaction
Behavioural outcomes	Continuance intention, repurchase intention, loyalty, or related outcomes
Analytical role	Antecedent, decision, or outcome within the study's analytical model

**Note:** This coding framework enabled systematic extraction of evaluative mechanisms across the reviewed studies.

**Table 3**  
Analytical criteria used to classify service attributes as core or differentiating.

Criterion	Core attributes	Differentiating attributes
Empirical consistency	Consistently examined across studies	Examined selectively or contextually
Evaluative role	Foundational to satisfaction judgments	Enhances or modifies satisfaction evaluations
Conceptual positioning	Embedded within basic service performance	Linked to experience, innovation, or context
Functional contribution	Necessary conditions for satisfaction	Sources of differentiation and added experiential value

**Note:** These criteria informed the role-based classification of service attributes reported in Section 3.2.

**Table 4**  
Classification of service attributes into core and differentiating categories.

Attribute	Classification	Illustrative focus in prior studies
Delivery timeliness	Core	Reliability and fulfilment performance
Order accuracy	Core	Error-free service execution
Platform usability	Core	Ease of navigation and transaction
Personalisation features	Differentiating	Algorithmic recommendations and tailoring
Sustainability practices	Differentiating	Environmentally responsible packaging and disclosure

**Note:** These examples illustrate how service attributes were differentiated based on their functional role in satisfaction formation.

Section 2.4, the findings are structured to address the three research questions in a progressive and interpretive manner. Specifically, the Antecedents–Decisions–Outcomes logic adopted in the analysis provides the organising principle through which service attributes are examined as explanatory mechanisms of customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. Rather than presenting a descriptive catalogue of variables, the synthesis explicitly follows the three research questions to examine (i) how service attributes have been conceptualised and measured, (ii) how they function differently in satisfaction formation, and (iii) how emerging technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes reconfigure these evaluative roles (Basile, 2026). This approach enables a theoretically informed distinction between core service attributes that form the foundation of customer evaluations and differentiating attributes that contribute to experiential variation and competitive differentiation across platforms. The following sections present the findings accordingly. A bibliometric and descriptive overview of the final corpus, including temporal publication trends, journal distribution, keyword co-occurrence, and thematic evolution, is provided in Appendix E.

#### 3.1. Conceptualisation and measurement of service attributes

A first step in addressing the research questions involved examining how prior studies have conceptualised and operationalised service attributes in explaining customer satisfaction within online food delivery services. Although the reviewed literature frequently refers to service attributes as key explanatory variables, the analysis reveals substantial heterogeneity in how these attributes are defined, theorised, and measured across studies. At a conceptual level, service attributes are predominantly framed as antecedent conditions shaping customer evaluations of online food delivery experiences. However, a systematic examination of the reviewed articles indicates that many studies adopt implicit or loosely specified conceptualisations, often drawing on established service quality paradigms without clearly articulating how individual attributes function within digitally mediated service encounters. In several cases, service attributes are treated as broad, aggregated constructs, limiting insight into the specific mechanisms through which customer satisfaction is formed. From a measurement perspective, the literature displays a strong reliance on adapted multi-

item scales, frequently inspired by traditional service quality frameworks and extended to digital contexts. These measures typically capture attributes related to system performance, order fulfilment, and interaction quality, yet differ markedly in scope and granularity across studies. While some contributions operationalise service attributes at a detailed level, distinguishing among multiple functional and experiential dimensions, others employ composite indices that obscure the relative importance of individual attributes. This variation in measurement practices contributes to inconsistent empirical findings and hampers cumulative knowledge development. The analysis further indicates that customer satisfaction is not uniformly positioned within empirical models. In a substantial proportion of studies, satisfaction functions as an intermediate or mediating construct linking service attributes to behavioural outcomes, rather than as a focal explanatory endpoint. As a result, the evaluative role of specific service attributes is often examined indirectly, reinforcing conceptual fragmentation in the literature (Chang et al., 2014; Alalwan, 2020). This pattern is consistent with insights derived from the title, abstract, and full-text screening, which revealed that many studies reference service attributes without explicitly theorising their role in satisfaction formation. Taken together, these findings suggest that existing research lacks a coherent and integrated approach to conceptualising and measuring service attributes in online food delivery services. The absence of consistent definitions, coupled with divergent measurement strategies and model specifications, constrains theoretical advancement and limits comparability across studies. These conceptual and methodological imbalances provide the foundation for the subsequent analytical distinction between core service attributes that consistently underpin customer satisfaction and differentiating attributes whose effects are more context-dependent and experiential in nature. The following sections build on this synthesis to further unpack these patterns and advance an integrative understanding of service attribute-driven satisfaction in online food delivery contexts. The temporal evolution of dominant research themes in online food delivery satisfaction studies, highlighting shifts from early consumer- and e-commerce-oriented concerns to more recent service quality and platform-centric themes, is summarised in Appendix E (Table E1).

### 3.2. Core and differentiating service attributes in online food delivery services

Building on the conceptual and measurement patterns identified in Section 3.1, the analysis reveals that service attributes do not contribute to customer satisfaction in a uniform manner. Rather, the reviewed literature indicates a functional differentiation among service attributes based on the role they play in shaping evaluative judgments in online food delivery services. This distinction provides the basis for categorising service attributes into core and differentiating attributes. From a process-oriented perspective, the reviewed studies implicitly position service attributes along different stages of the online food delivery service journey, ranging from ordering and transaction (click) to fulfilment and consumption (plate). Recent evidence further indicates that customer satisfaction itself unfolds across these stages, with evaluations of mobile application quality spilling over into subsequent assessments of delivery and service performance, rather than remaining confined to a single interaction point (Lin et al., 2024). Core service attributes are predominantly associated with transaction execution and fulfilment reliability, including ordering accuracy, payment convenience, system stability, and delivery performance, which collectively underpin baseline satisfaction across service encounters. In contrast, differentiating service attributes tends to emerge more strongly in interactional and experiential stages of the journey, such as communication transparency, service recovery, interface aesthetics, and experiential design elements that shape affective evaluations beyond functional performance. Technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes cut across multiple stages of the service journey by reconfiguring how customers interpret efficiency, responsibility, and value throughout the

experience. Anchoring service attributes to these process stages clarifies their distinct evaluative roles and reinforces the analytical distinction between foundational service execution and experiential differentiation in online food delivery services.

#### 3.2.1. Core service attributes

Core service attributes refer to those attributes that consistently underpin customer satisfaction across online food delivery contexts and are treated as foundational evaluative criteria in the majority of reviewed studies. These attributes are primarily functional and operational in nature and relate to the reliable execution of the service promise. Commonly examined core attributes include delivery timeliness, order accuracy, system reliability, payment convenience, information availability, and basic platform usability. Across studies, these attributes are recurrently operationalised and exhibit stable associations with customer satisfaction, regardless of platform type or market context. Importantly, core service attributes tend to function as minimum performance expectations rather than as sources of differentiation. Their absence or failure is strongly associated with dissatisfaction, whereas their adequate provision typically results in neutral or baseline satisfaction evaluations (Chang et al., 2014; Ma et al., 2024b). As a consequence, core attributes establish the necessary conditions for customer acceptance of online food delivery services but are insufficient on their own to generate enhanced satisfaction or sustained competitive advantage. The consistent empirical attention devoted to these attributes reflects their central role in satisfaction formation, while also signalling a degree of conceptual saturation within the literature.

#### 3.2.2. Differentiating service attributes

In contrast, differentiating service attributes contributes to variation in customer satisfaction beyond baseline expectations and is more sensitive to contextual, experiential, and relational factors. These attributes are less consistently examined across studies and are often operationalised in fragmented or exploratory ways. Examples include communication quality and transparency, service recovery and complaint handling, interface aesthetics, experiential design features, promotional framing, perceived value and fairness, and interactive platform functionalities. Unlike core attributes, differentiating attributes are not universally expected by customers. Instead, they function as value-creating mechanisms that shape affective evaluations, perceived enjoyment, and platform attachment. Empirical evidence suggests that these attributes help explain why customers report divergent satisfaction and loyalty outcomes even when core service performance is comparable across platforms. However, differentiating attributes are frequently examined in isolation or embedded within broader constructs, which limits theoretical clarity regarding their distinct evaluative role.

#### 3.2.3. Emerging technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes

A further layer of differentiation emerges with the growing incorporation of technology-enabled and sustainability-related service attributes in recent studies. These include algorithmic personalisation, artificial intelligence-supported coordination, automated customer service interactions, environmentally responsible packaging, and sustainability-related information disclosure. Such attributes reflect evolving customer expectations in digitally mediated service environments and extend beyond traditional service quality dimensions. The analysis indicates that technology-enabled and sustainability-related service attributes are rarely integrated into established measurement frameworks or systematically linked to core service attributes. Instead, they are often introduced as context-specific extensions or exploratory variables within empirical models. This fragmented treatment leaves the evaluative role of technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes theoretically underdeveloped within the online food delivery satisfaction literature (Malekpour et al., 2022).

### 3.2.4. Synthesis and implications for attribute-based classification

Taken together, the distinction between core and differentiating service attributes provides a role-based understanding of how service attributes function in shaping customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. Core attributes establish the functional baseline required for satisfaction, while differentiating attributes introduce experiential and contextual variation that can elevate customer evaluations beyond minimum expectations. Emerging technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes further complicate this landscape by reshaping how customers interpret service value and responsibility. This classification moves the literature beyond descriptive listings of service variables and offers a structured foundation for integrative framework development. By clarifying the functional roles of different service attributes, the synthesis addresses conceptual fragmentation in prior research and sets the stage for the integrative framework presented in the following section.

### 3.3. Integrative framework linking service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services

Building on the role-based distinction between core and differentiating service attributes identified in the preceding sections, this review proposes an integrative framework that explains how service attributes collectively shape customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. Rather than treating service attributes as isolated predictors, the framework conceptualises them as interrelated design mechanisms operating at different evaluative levels within digitally mediated service encounters. At the foundation of the framework are core service attributes, which represent the functional prerequisites of online food delivery services. These attributes relate to the reliable execution of the service promise and establish the minimum conditions under which customer satisfaction can occur. Consistent with the reviewed literature, core attributes primarily influence cognitive evaluations by shaping perceptions of service dependability, efficiency, and procedural adequacy. Their presence mitigates dissatisfaction and enables service acceptance, whereas their absence or failure directly undermines satisfaction judgments. Once baseline expectations are met, further improvements in core attributes tend to yield diminishing marginal effects on satisfaction. Differentiating service attributes operates at a distinct evaluative level. These attributes extend beyond functional adequacy and shape how customers experience, interpret, and emotionally respond to online food delivery services. Differentiating attributes influence satisfaction through experiential, affective, and symbolic mechanisms, contributing to perceived value, enjoyment, and platform attachment. Their impact is therefore contingent on user expectations, contextual conditions, and competitive dynamics. Unlike core attributes, differentiating attributes are not universally expected but can substantially elevate satisfaction when effectively aligned with customer needs and platform positioning. The framework further incorporates technology-enabled and sustainability-related service attributes as dynamic modifiers of satisfaction formation. These attributes interact with both core and differentiating attributes by reshaping evaluative reference points and expanding the criteria through which customers assess service performance. Technology-enabled attributes, such as algorithmic personalisation and automated interactions, influence how service delivery is interpreted and customised, while sustainability-related attributes introduce normative and ethical considerations into satisfaction judgments. Rather than functioning independently, these attributes recalibrate the relative importance and interpretation of existing service attributes. Customer satisfaction occupies a central position within the framework as an evaluative outcome that integrates functional performance and experiential assessment. Importantly, prior empirical research suggests that satisfaction rarely translates into loyalty outcomes directly, but instead operates through sequential evaluative and relational mechanisms, reinforcing its role as a processual rather than terminal construct within platform-based service systems (Mittal and

Kaur, 2023). Satisfaction subsequently serves as a key mechanism linking service attributes to behavioural outcomes, including continuance intention, repurchase intention, and loyalty. Importantly, the framework clarifies that satisfaction formation is not driven by the additive accumulation of service attributes, but by their differentiated functional roles and interactive effects within digitally mediated service systems. Fig. 2 synthesises these relationships by illustrating the distinct roles of core and differentiating service attributes and the modifying influence of technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes on satisfaction formation and behavioural outcomes. This integrative synthesis consolidates patterns identified across the reviewed studies and provides a coherent foundation for the discussion of theoretical contributions, managerial implications, and future research directions.

## 4. Discussion

Building on the integrative, role-differentiated framework derived from the findings (Fig. 2), this section interprets the results in relation to existing theory and discusses their broader theoretical and managerial implications for understanding how service attributes shape customer satisfaction in online food delivery services.

### 4.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study makes a theoretical contribution to the literature on online food delivery services by reframing customer satisfaction as a role-differentiated evaluative mechanism and by explicating how service attributes operate through distinct functional logics rather than additive effects. By addressing this gap, the present review responds to broader calls within the systematic review literature for integrative, theory-building syntheses that move beyond descriptive aggregation toward explanatory coherence (Elhoushy et al., 2025). First, the study moves beyond the dominant tendency in prior online food delivery research to treat service attributes as interchangeable indicators embedded within aggregated service quality or technology acceptance constructs. By distinguishing between core service attributes and differentiating service attributes, the proposed framework clarifies why previous empirical findings have often appeared fragmented or inconsistent. This role-based perspective advances conceptual precision by specifying how and why particular attributes matter for satisfaction formation, rather than merely whether they exhibit statistically significant effects. Second, the framework reconceptualises customer satisfaction as a central evaluative outcome rather than as a residual or intermediate mediator. While much prior research positions satisfaction primarily as a predictive link between service-related variables and behavioural intentions, the present synthesis restores satisfaction to its theoretical role as a judgment formation mechanism through which customers assess service adequacy and distinctiveness. This repositioning enables a more meaningful interpretation of how service design choices translate into post-adoption evaluations and behavioural outcomes. Third, the study advances theory by introducing a reconfiguration logic for technology-enabled and sustainability-related service attributes. Rather than treating these attributes as additional or peripheral service dimensions, the framework demonstrates how they reshape the evaluative role of traditional service attributes. Technology-enabled attributes, such as algorithmic personalisation and automated interactions, together with sustainability-related attributes, influence how customers interpret, prioritise, and value both core and differentiating service attributes. This perspective extends existing service quality frameworks, which typically assume stable and additive attribute effects, by highlighting the dynamic interplay between foundational and emergent service attributes in digital service environments. Fourth, the integrative framework contributes by bridging service quality research with emerging scholarship on digital platforms and technology-mediated service delivery. Rather than treating digitalisation and sustainability as peripheral contextual factors, the framework embeds these attributes

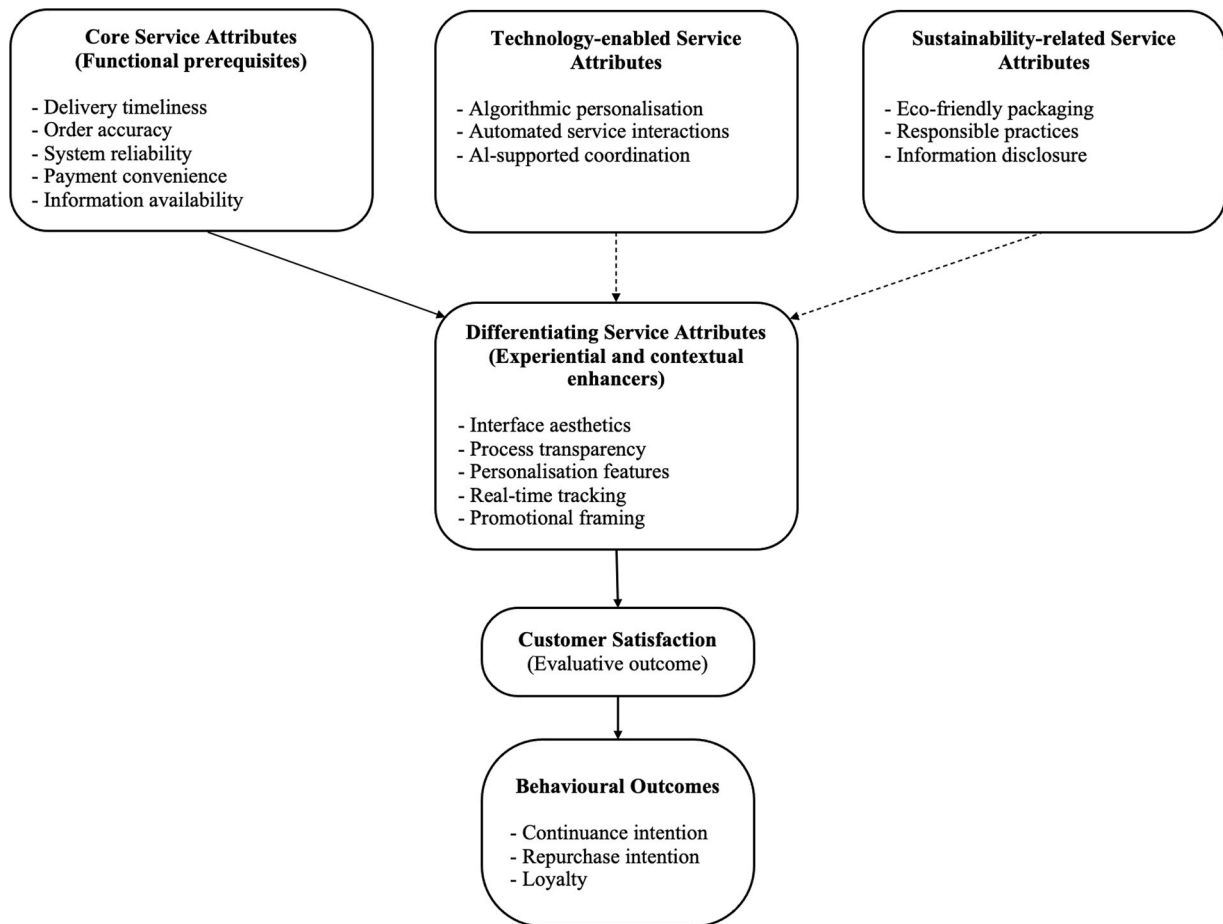


Fig. 2. Integrative framework linking service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services.

within the core logic of satisfaction formation. This integration offers a more holistic theoretical account of online food delivery services, where satisfaction emerges from the interaction between functional prerequisites, experiential enhancers, and broader contextual signals. In doing so, the study provides a conceptual foundation capable of accommodating ongoing technological and institutional changes within platform-based food services. Finally, the framework provides a transferable analytical template that can inform future research beyond the online food delivery context. By articulating clear functional distinctions among service attributes and specifying their respective roles in satisfaction formation, the study supports cumulative theory development in digitally mediated service environments characterised by rapid technological evolution and shifting customer expectations.

#### 4.2. Managerial implications

The findings of this review offer actionable managerial insights by clarifying how different categories of service attributes should be prioritised and orchestrated to shape customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. First, managers should recognise core service attributes as non-negotiable baseline conditions rather than as sources of differentiation. Attributes such as delivery timeliness, order accuracy, system reliability, payment convenience, and basic platform usability must be delivered consistently to prevent dissatisfaction and service rejection. Managerial attention should therefore focus on operational reliability, process standardisation, and continuous performance monitoring to ensure that minimum expectations are met across all customer touchpoints. Second, the framework reconceptualises customer satisfaction as a central evaluative outcome rather than as a residual or intermediate mediator, a positioning that aligns with recent empirical

evidence showing how satisfaction in online food delivery emerges from customers' lived service experiences and directly shapes post-adoption evaluations and behavioural responses (Nikzadask et al., 2026; Seo and Roh, 2025; Wu et al., 2024). Third, technology-enabled service attributes require a reconfiguration-oriented managerial approach. Features such as algorithmic personalisation, automated customer interactions, and intelligent coordination systems should not be treated as standalone innovations, but as mechanisms that reshape how customers interpret service performance and convenience. Managers should align these technologies with core service delivery processes and experiential design choices to ensure coherence between automation, personalisation, and perceived service quality. Fourth, sustainability-related service attributes should be managed as interpretive signals that influence how customers evaluate service quality and platform responsibility. Practices such as environmentally responsible packaging, ethical sourcing, and transparent sustainability information can positively shape satisfaction when they are clearly communicated and meaningfully embedded within the service experience. Managers should avoid treating sustainability initiatives as peripheral or symbolic additions. Instead, sustainability attributes should be integrated into ordering interfaces, delivery options, and post-purchase communication. For example, enabling customers to select environmentally responsible delivery options or providing clear information on packaging choices can enhance satisfaction by aligning service performance with customer values. Overall, the framework highlights that effective satisfaction management in online food delivery services depends not on maximising performance across all service attributes, but on strategically coordinating their distinct evaluative roles. By aligning operational reliability, experiential differentiation, and contextual modifiers such as technology and sustainability, managers can more effectively shape

customer satisfaction in increasingly competitive and digitally evolving service markets. Taken together, these implications suggest that managerial resources should be allocated sequentially rather than uniformly, first ensuring core service reliability, then selectively investing in differentiating attributes, and finally leveraging technology- and sustainability-related initiatives to recalibrate customer expectations.

## 5. Future research directions

Building directly on the integrative framework developed in Section 3.3 (Fig. 2), this section delineates future research directions that extend the functional logic of satisfaction formation identified in the review. Rather than proposing generic or stand-alone research themes, the agenda is explicitly structured around the distinct functional roles of core and differentiating service attributes, as well as the reconfiguring influence of technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes as contextual modifiers. In line with the framework, future studies are encouraged to conceptualise satisfaction not as a simple cumulative outcome of multiple service attributes, but as an evaluative mechanism shaped by role-differentiated effects, interaction patterns, and expectation recalibration within digitally mediated service platforms. In addition, the descriptive TCCM profiling reported in Appendix D highlights theoretical, contextual, and methodological concentrations and omissions in the existing literature, providing a complementary basis for identifying targeted directions for future research.

### 5.1. Role-differentiated satisfaction formation

Future research should explicitly examine satisfaction as a role-differentiated evaluative mechanism, rather than as a uniform outcome of aggregated service attributes. The integrative framework (Fig. 2) suggests that core service attributes (e.g., delivery accuracy, timeliness, and order completeness) primarily operate as baseline conditions that secure functional reliability and reduce perceived risk. Once minimum performance expectations are met, the incremental contribution of these attributes to satisfaction is likely to stabilise, indicating their hygiene-like role in satisfaction formation. In contrast, differentiating attributes (e.g., service recovery quality, communication transparency, and experiential design elements) appear to account for meaningful variation in satisfaction by shaping affective evaluations and customer interpretations of service encounters. Building on this distinction, future empirical work should move beyond models that assume functional equivalence across service attributes and instead allow for asymmetric and conditional effects in satisfaction formation. Specifically, studies can investigate whether differentiating attributes exert stronger evaluative influence under conditions of adequate core performance, thereby functioning as value-creating mechanisms rather than compensatory substitutes. Such an approach would help reconcile inconsistent findings in prior OFD research, where core and experiential attributes have often been modelled as interchangeable predictors within composite service quality constructs. Importantly, the framework positions satisfaction not as an endpoint but as a mediating evaluative process linking service attributes to downstream behavioural outcomes. Future research should therefore examine how role-differentiated satisfaction formation translates into behaviours such as continued platform use, tolerance toward service failures, willingness to forgive operational disruptions, and adaptive coping strategies (e.g., planning or channel switching). By treating satisfaction as a mechanism through which core reliability and differentiating experiences jointly shape behavioural responses, future studies can offer a more process-oriented and theoretically coherent account of customer behaviour in digitally mediated food delivery platforms.

### 5.2. Technology and sustainability as reconfiguring conditions

Building on the role-differentiated logic of satisfaction formation

outlined in Section 5.1, future research should conceptualise technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes as reconfiguring conditions that alter how core and differentiating attributes are interpreted and evaluated by customers. Rather than functioning as additive predictors of satisfaction, these attributes appear to reshape the salience, meaning, and evaluative weight of existing service attributes within digitally mediated food delivery platforms. From a technological perspective, future studies can examine how digital features such as real-time tracking, algorithmic order management, and AI-enabled communication tools recalibrate customer expectations regarding core service reliability. For example, enhanced visibility and predictive information may increase tolerance for minor delivery delays while simultaneously raising expectations for transparency and responsiveness. In this sense, technology acts not by directly increasing satisfaction, but by modifying the interpretive context through which baseline service performance is assessed. Similarly, sustainability-related attributes should be investigated as interpretive signals that influence how customers make sense of service encounters rather than as independent drivers of satisfaction. The framework suggests that sustainability cues such as eco-friendly packaging, ethical sourcing claims, or carbon-neutral delivery options may reframe customer evaluations by activating moral or symbolic considerations. Future research can explore whether such cues amplify the positive effects of differentiating attributes (e.g., empathetic service recovery) or mitigate dissatisfaction when core performance falls marginally short, thereby functioning as evaluative buffers rather than compensatory substitutes. Importantly, the reconfiguring role of technology and sustainability implies interaction-based research designs that focus on conditional and moderating relationships. Future studies are encouraged to examine how these modifiers shift the relative importance of core versus differentiating attributes across contexts, customer segments, and platform configurations. By treating technology and sustainability as conditions that reshape satisfaction formation rather than as standalone dimensions, future research can advance a more nuanced and theoretically coherent understanding of value creation (Basile et al., 2024) in platform-based food delivery services.

### 5.3. Boundary conditions and context sensitivity

While the integrative framework (Fig. 2) provides a general explanation of role-differentiated satisfaction formation in online food delivery platforms, future research should explicitly examine the boundary conditions under which these mechanisms operate. Satisfaction formation is inherently context-sensitive, and the relative salience of core, differentiating, and reconfiguring attributes is likely to vary across structural, market, and institutional environments. Rather than treating contextual variation as noise, future studies can leverage such differences to refine the explanatory scope of the framework. One important boundary condition concerns market maturity and the platform development stage. In early-stage or less digitally mature markets, core service attributes may dominate satisfaction formation by addressing basic concerns related to reliability and risk reduction. In contrast, in more mature or competitive markets, differentiating attributes may become more influential as baseline expectations stabilise and customers shift their attention toward experiential and relational cues. Examining how market maturity conditions the relative importance of role-differentiated attributes would enhance understanding of cross-context variability in customer satisfaction. A second boundary condition relates to institutional and cultural environments, including regulatory intensity, labour arrangements, and societal tolerance for service variability. Differences in consumer norms regarding punctuality, fairness, or responsibility may shape how service failures are interpreted and whether dissatisfaction translates into behavioural responses. Future research can explore how such institutional contexts moderate the link between satisfaction formation and behavioural outcomes, thereby extending the framework beyond platform-specific explanations. Finally, platform configuration and service design choices represent a

further source of contextual sensitivity. Variations in platform governance, degree of automation, and integration of sustainability initiatives may influence how customers weigh core versus differentiating attributes in their evaluations. By systematically examining these boundary conditions, future studies can test the robustness and transferability of the role-differentiated satisfaction framework across diverse online food delivery settings. To consolidate the proposed future research agenda and make explicit its alignment with the integrative framework, [Table F1 \(Appendix F\)](#) summarises key research gaps, illustrative research questions, and suitable research designs derived from each framework element.

## 6. Conclusion

This study concludes by consolidating the key insights derived from the systematic synthesis of prior research on service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services. Drawing on the integrative framework developed in this review, the conclusion revisits the study’s central contributions, clarifies its theoretical positioning within the broader service and digital platform literature, and reflects on the implications of adopting a role-based perspective on satisfaction formation in digitally mediated food services.

### Integrative summary and theoretical positioning

This study set out to address persistent fragmentation in the literature on customer satisfaction in online food delivery by moving beyond aggregated service quality constructs. Synthesising evidence from prior studies, the review demonstrates that service attributes do not contribute to satisfaction in a uniform or additive manner. Instead, satisfaction emerges through distinct functional roles, whereby core attributes establish baseline evaluative security, while differentiating attributes account for meaningful variation in customer evaluations. By further conceptualising technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes as reconfiguring conditions, the review clarifies that their primary role lies in reshaping how existing service attributes are interpreted rather than in directly generating satisfaction. This integrative

## Appendix A

**Table A1**  
Positioning of the present review relative to prior systematic literature reviews on online food delivery

Dimension	Shroff et al. (2022)	Ashraf and Bardhan (2025)	Present review
<b>Scope</b>	Domain-level mapping of online food delivery research, covering consumer behaviour, adoption, platform ecosystems, and service operations	Decision-oriented synthesis of order fulfilment, routing, and operational optimisation in online food delivery platforms	Theory-driven synthesis focused on service attributes as mechanisms shaping customer satisfaction
<b>Primary unit of analysis</b>	Platforms, consumers, and ecosystem-level phenomena	Platform operations and fulfilment processes	Satisfaction formation through service attributes across the digitally mediated service experience
<b>Analytical focus</b>	Broad thematic categorisation of research streams	Operational decision models and optimisation logic	Role-differentiated functioning of service attributes (core vs differentiating)
<b>Use of analytical frameworks</b>	TCCM used as an organising and reporting framework	Operations research and optimisation frameworks	TCCM used for reporting; analytical synthesis driven by role-based logic and evaluative mechanisms
<b>Treatment of service attributes</b>	Treated as one theme among multiple research streams	Addressed indirectly through operational performance variables	Positioned as the central analytical mechanism explaining satisfaction formation
<b>Treatment of technology</b>	Discussed as part of the digital platform context	Treated as enabling infrastructure for fulfilment optimisation	Conceptualised as a reconfiguring condition shaping evaluative processes
<b>Treatment of sustainability</b>	Largely peripheral or implicit	Not a primary focus	Conceptualised as an interpretive and reconfiguring condition influencing satisfaction evaluations
<b>Key output</b>	Taxonomy of research themes and future research agenda	Classification of operational decision problems and modelling approaches	Integrative conceptual framework explaining satisfaction formation ( <a href="#">Fig. 2</a> )
<b>Unresolved gaps identified</b>	Limited theory-driven synthesis of satisfaction mechanisms	Limited attention to customer evaluation and satisfaction processes	Addresses fragmentation by integrating service attributes, technology, and sustainability into a unified evaluative framework

positioning reframes customer satisfaction as an evaluative mechanism embedded in platform-based service systems, offering a coherent conceptual lens that bridges service quality research and digital platform studies without inflating theoretical claims.

### Limitations and concluding remarks

As with all systematic literature reviews, this study is subject to certain limitations. First, the synthesis is constrained by the scope and composition of the existing literature, which remains unevenly distributed across contexts, platforms, and stages of market development. Second, the conceptual distinctions advanced in this review are derived from prior empirical findings rather than tested directly, underscoring the need for future studies to empirically examine role-differentiated satisfaction mechanisms under varying conditions. These limitations do not detract from the central value of the review but instead delineate clear boundaries for interpretation and avenues for future inquiry. By offering a tightly integrated framework of satisfaction formation in online food delivery, the study provides a stable conceptual foundation upon which future research can build, refine, and test more context-sensitive explanations of customer behaviour in digitally mediated service environments.

### CRedit authorship contribution statement

**Vincenzo Basile:** Writing – review & editing, Visualization, Validation, Software, Project administration, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation. **Fabio Greco:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Formal analysis. **Mohsen Nikzadask:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Federica Caboni:** Supervision, Writing – review & editing.

### Declaration of Competing Interest

The Authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper. None. There are no interests to declare.

**Appendix B. Terminology and conceptual scope**

**Table B1**  
Terminological definitions and analytical scope adopted in this review

Term	Definition	Analytical scope in this review	Notes
Online food delivery services	Digitally mediated service systems enabling consumers to search, order, and receive prepared food via online interfaces	Primary analytical domain	Umbrella concept covering the full service experience
Online food delivery platforms (apps)	Multi-sided digital intermediaries coordinating consumers, restaurants, and delivery providers	Service interface and coordination layer	Platform-centric view
Online food ordering	Ordering and transaction stage within OFD services	Specific process stage	Not used as an overarching concept
Service attributes	Specific designable service features shaping customer evaluation	Core unit of analysis	Analysed as satisfaction mechanisms
Customer satisfaction	Consumer’s evaluative judgment of the overall OFD service experience	Focal outcome variable	Not treated as a secondary construct

**Note:** Definitions reported in this table are working definitions synthesised for analytical clarity in the present review, drawing on established usage in the online food delivery and service management literature (e.g., Annaraud and Berezina, 2020; Shroff et al., 2022; Ashraf and Bardhan, 2025).

**Appendix C. Database-specific search strings and screening outcomes**

**C1. Scopus search string and filtering procedure**

The Scopus database was searched using the following query applied to titles, abstracts, and keywords (TITLE-ABS-KEY): (*"online food delivery" OR "online food ordering" OR "food delivery platform\*" OR "food delivery service\*" OR "food delivery app\*" OR "platform-based food delivery" OR "on-demand food delivery" OR OFD*) AND (*"service attribute\*" OR "service characteristic\*" OR "service quality" OR "service dimension\*" OR "service feature\*" OR "e-service quality" OR "digital service quality" OR "platform service quality"*)

The initial Scopus search returned **164 documents**. Subsequent filtering steps were applied as follows:

- Language filter (English): -1 → **163 documents**
- Document type filter (Articles only): -34 → **129 documents**
- Subject area refinement to relevant research domains (e.g., business, management, hospitality, services, and related social sciences): -31 → **98 documents**

The final Scopus dataset, therefore comprised **98 peer-reviewed journal articles** eligible for further screening.

**C2. Web of Science search string and filtering procedure**

The Web of Science Core Collection was searched using a conceptually equivalent query adapted to the database syntax and indexing structure: (*"online food delivery" OR "online food ordering" OR "food delivery platform\*" OR "food delivery service\*" OR "food delivery app\*" OR "platform-based food delivery" OR "on-demand food delivery" OR OFD*) AND (*"service attribute\*" OR "service characteristic\*" OR "service quality" OR "service dimension\*" OR "service feature\*" OR "e-service quality" OR "digital service quality" OR "platform service quality"*).

The initial Web of Science search yielded **109 records**.

The following filters were then applied:

- Language filter (English): -0 → **109 documents**
- Document type filter (Articles only): -8 → **101 documents**
- Research area refinement to relevant subject categories: -11 → **90 documents**

The final Web of Science dataset, therefore, consisted of **90 peer-reviewed journal articles**.

**C3. Duplicate removal and final dataset**

Following database-specific searches, records retrieved from Scopus and Web of Science were merged into a single dataset. A duplicate check based on title, authorship, and publication year identified 56 overlapping records, which were removed. After duplicate removal, 217 unique articles remained. These records were subsequently subjected to title–abstract screening, resulting in 76 articles retained for full-text eligibility assessment. Following full-text evaluation, a final analytical corpus of 41 peer-reviewed journal articles was retained for in-depth analysis and synthesis.

**Appendix D**

**Table D1**  
TCCM profiling of studies on service attributes and customer satisfaction in online food delivery services

TCCM Dimension	Category	Observed pattern in reviewed studies	Representative studies
Theory	Service quality–based theories	Predominant reliance on service quality models and satisfaction–loyalty logics to explain post-adoption evaluations	Alam et al. (2025); Dsouza et al. (2021); Mat Hasan et al. (2025); Wu et al. (2024); Koay et al. (2022); Liu et al. (2023)
	Technology acceptance & post-adoption theories	Use of TAM, ECM, and UTAUT-based perspectives to explain continued use and satisfaction	Seo and Roh (2025); Chakraborty et al. (2024); Su et al. (2022).

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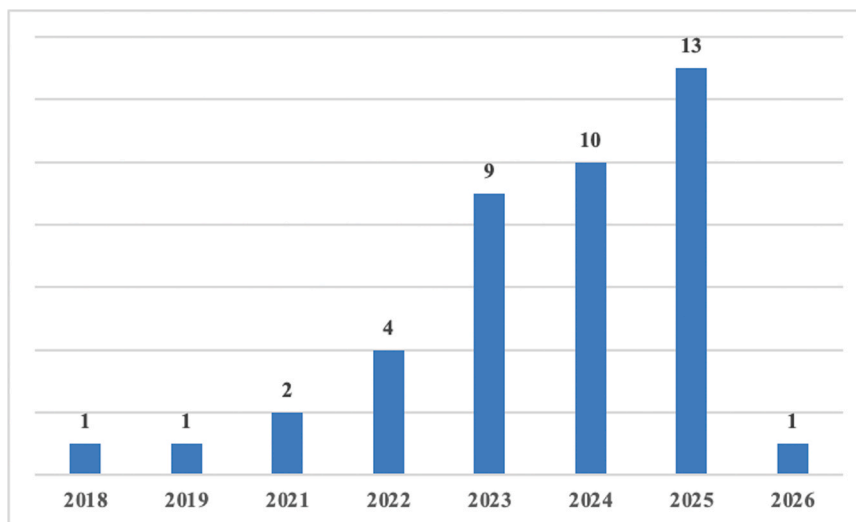
**Table D1** (continued)

TCCM Dimension	Category	Observed pattern in reviewed studies	Representative studies
<b>Context</b>	Trust, risk, and safety theories	Trust transfer, perceived risk, and food biosafety are used as mechanisms shaping satisfaction and loyalty	Mai and Nguyen (2025); Osman et al. (2024); Hoyos-Vallejo and Chinelato (2025); Chinelato & Vallejo (2024)
	Experience-oriented theories	Use of S-O-R, hedonic consumption, novelty seeking, and experience-based evaluation	Saha and Mukherjee (2025); Kalantarzadeh Tezerjany (2024); Nikzadask et al. (2026)
	Geographic focus	Strong concentration on Asian and emerging market contexts, with limited European evidence	Bonfanti et al. (2023)
<b>Characteristics</b>	Platform scope	Predominant focus on general OFD platforms; limited single-platform or quick-commerce contexts	Mai and Nguyen (2025); Harter et al. (2025)
	Role of satisfaction	Satisfaction is primarily modelled as a mediator or central outcome in service attribute-behaviour relationships	Lin et al.(2024); Siddiqi et al. (2024); Thuannadee and Praneetpholkrang (2025)
<b>Methodology</b>	Attribute focus	Emphasis on functional service attributes (delivery, accuracy, usability) over symbolic or sustainability attributes	Wu et al. (2024); Girija et al. (2019); Bonfanti et al. (2023)
	Data type	Dominance of cross-sectional survey data; minimal qualitative evidence	Nikzadask et al. (2026)
	Analytical techniques	Heavy reliance on SEM and PLS-SEM; emerging use of hybrid techniques (fsQCA, NCA, ML)	Koay et al. (2022); Dogra et al. (2023); Hoyos-Vallejo et al. (2023)

**Note:** The TCCM framework is used for descriptive profiling and reporting purposes only. It does not inform the analytical logic of the synthesis, which is driven by an attribute-centric and research-question-based approach.

**Appendix E. Bibliometric and descriptive mapping of the online food delivery satisfaction literature**

**E1. Temporal distribution of publications**



**Figure E1.** Temporal distribution of the core articles by publication year

The figure illustrates the growth trajectory of research on customer satisfaction in online food delivery services over time.

**E2. Journal distribution of core articles**

**Table E2**

Distribution of reviewed studies across academic journals (n = 41)

Journal	Frequency
British Food Journal	8
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights	2
International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management	2
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	2
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology	2
Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology	2
Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management	2
SAGE Open	1
International Review of Management and Marketing	1
Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism	1
Journal of Strategic Marketing	1
Journal of Islamic Marketing	1
Kybernetes	1
Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics	1
PLOS ONE	1

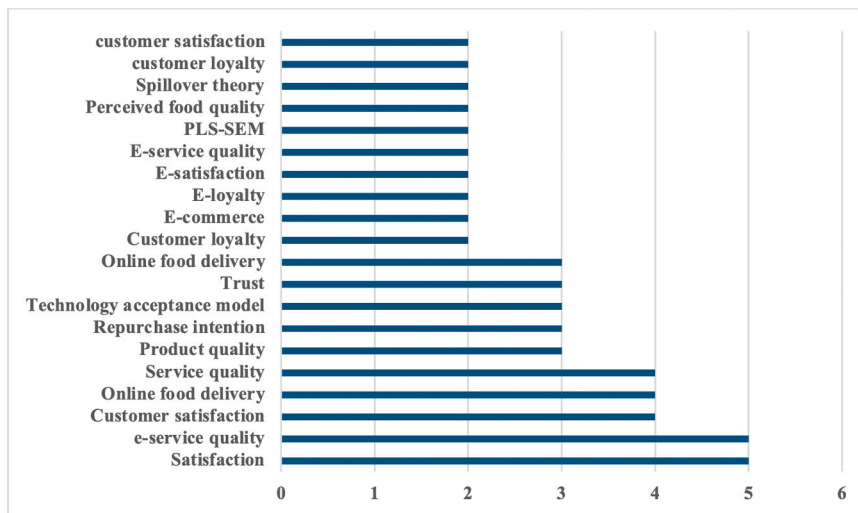
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**Table E2 (continued)**

Journal	Frequency
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	1
Cogent Business and Management	1
Asian Academy of Management Journal	1
Global Business Review	1
International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies	1
Estudios Gerenciales	1
International Journal of Innovation Science	1
International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering	1
Journal of Services Marketing	1
International Journal of Hospitality Management	1
Sustainability	1
Tourism and Hospitality Research	1
Journal of Service Research	1

The distribution highlights the concentration of research on online food delivery satisfaction in hospitality, service management, and marketing journals.

**E3. Keyword co-occurrence network**



**Figure E3.** Keyword co-occurrence network based on author keywords

The network illustrates dominant conceptual linkages surrounding customer satisfaction, service quality, and service attributes in online food delivery research.

**Appendix E4. Thematic evaluation of reviewed studies across time periods**

**Table E4**

Thematic evolution of online food delivery research across time periods

Pre-2020	2020–2021	2022–2025
Consumer reference	Business essentials	Online food delivery
Consumer satisfaction	Business model	Customer satisfaction
E-commerce	Customer growth	Satisfaction
E-loyalty	Delivery workers	e-service quality
E-satisfaction	Development	Service quality

Themes were identified through content analysis of the final sample (n = 41) and grouped by publication period.

**Appendix F. Framework-driven future research agenda**

**Table F1**  
Framework-driven future research agenda

Framework element	What remains underexplored (gap)	Example research questions	Suitable research designs
Core service attributes	Limited understanding of the threshold and saturation effects of core attributes once baseline performance is met	How do core service attributes transition from drivers of dissatisfaction to neutral hygiene factors across market maturity stages?	Longitudinal studies; nonlinear modelling; multi-country surveys
Differentiating service attributes	Fragmented evidence on how experiential attributes interact with core performance to shape satisfaction and loyalty	Under what conditions do differentiating attributes amplify or substitute for core service performance in satisfaction formation?	Experiments; configurational approaches (fsQCA); mixed methods
Technology-enabled and sustainability-related modifiers	Lack of theory-driven examination of how digitalisation and sustainability reshape evaluative mechanisms	How do technology-enabled and sustainability-related attributes reconfigure customer expectations and tolerance toward core service failures?	Multi-level designs; experimental vignette studies; qualitative inquiry
Boundary conditions and context sensitivity	Insufficient attention to contextual variation across cultures, market maturity, and regulatory environments	How do institutional, cultural, or infrastructural contexts moderate the evaluative role of service attributes in online food delivery?	Cross-cultural comparisons; comparative case studies; institutional analysis

**Note:** The future research directions summarised in this table are analytically derived from the integrative framework (Fig. 2) and the systematic synthesis of findings reported in Sections 3 and 4. They are not intended as a review of prior studies, but as a framework-driven agenda that consolidates unresolved issues identified across the reviewed literature.

**Appendix G. Framework-driven future research agenda**

**Table G1**  
List of articles included in the review (n = 41)

Number	Year	Authors	Title
1	2025	Ly	Understanding user behaviours toward food delivery app services: the moderating effects of generation and usage frequency
2	2025	Dsouza et al.	Factors Influencing Students' Satisfaction with Online Food Delivery Services: An Empirical Study
3	2025	Mat Hasan et al.	Drivers of Customer Satisfaction in Malaysia's Online Food Delivery Services: A Pilot Study
4	2025	Mai & Nguyen	Understanding users' trust transfer mechanism in food delivery apps
5	2025	Hoyos-Vallejo & Chinelo	Delivering trust: how food safety performance drives loyalty across the online ordering journey
6	2025	Ahmad et al.	Consumer Satisfaction and Reuse Intention of Food Delivery Apps: Integration of Service Quality Model and Expectation Confirmation Theory
7	2025	Seo & Roh	Online and offline delivery qualities: O2O satisfaction and loyalty through the technology acceptance model
8	2025	Saha & Mukherjee	The role of e-service quality and mediating effects of customer inspiration and satisfaction in building customer loyalty
9	2024	Osman et al.	Perceived service quality and risks towards satisfaction of online halal food delivery system: from the Malaysian perspectives
10	2024	Teng et al.	Impact of service innovation and digital supply chain capability on risk protection in supporting online food delivery
11	2024	Chakraborty et al.	Understanding the Drivers of Continued Use of Online Food Delivery Platforms among Indian Consumers
12	2024	Kalantarzadeh Tezerjany et al.	Appraise the role of novelty-seeking on consumers' satisfaction using online food delivery applications
13	2024	Wu et al.	Modelling the significance of food delivery service quality on customer satisfaction and reuse intention
14	2024	Lin et al.	Service quality of online food delivery mobile application: an examination of the spillover effects of mobile app satisfaction
15	2024	Siddiqi et al.	Investigating the factors influencing customer loyalty and the mediating effect of customer satisfaction in online food delivery services: empirical evidence from an emerging market
16	2023	Macias et al.	Determinants of satisfaction with online food delivery providers and their impact on restaurant brands
17	2023	Merniawanda & Sfenrianto	Factors Affecting Satisfaction, Intention to Repurchase, Intention to Recommend, and Willingness to Pay More in Online Food Delivery Applications
18	2023	Mittal & Kaur	Building e-loyalty towards online food delivery apps: A serial-mediation model
19	2023	Hoyos-Vallejo et al.	Consumer Perceptions of Online Food Delivery Services: Examining the Impact of Food Biosafety Measures and Brand Image
20	2023	Ali Akbar et al.	The Role of Communication on the Quality of E-Services and Food Quality: The Case of Online Food Delivery
21	2023	Rombach et al.	Determinants of customer loyalty to online food service delivery: evidence from Indonesia, Taiwan, and New Zealand
22	2022	Su et al.	Modelling consumers' trust in mobile food delivery apps: perspectives of the technology acceptance model, mobile service quality and personalisation-privacy theory
23	2021	Macias et al.	COVID-19 lockdown and the satisfaction with online food delivery providers
24	2021	Dsouza et al.	Online food delivery portals during COVID-19 times: an analysis of changing consumer behaviour and expectations
25	2019	Girija et al.	Influences of Website Quality and Service Quality on Consumer Satisfaction among Online Food Ordering Consumers
26	2018	Ilham et al.	Improve the quality of e-loyalty in online food delivery services: A case of Indonesia
27	2024	Ravichandran et al.	Feeding trust: exploring key drivers, moderators and consequences related to food app usage
28	2023	Liu et al.	Food at your doorstep? Examining customer loyalty towards online food delivery applications
29	2022	Lee & Han	Food delivery application quality in customer brand loyalty formation: Identifying its antecedents and outcomes
30	2027	Zaheer et al.	Digital Transformation of Enterprises to Enhance Sustainability (2024)
31	2022	Kwon & Ahn	Role of customers' multidimensional perceived equity in the mobile food delivery industry
32	2025	Ahn et al.	Foodservice mobile application quality determinants' impact on customer satisfaction and repeat usage intentions: The role of perceived risk
33	2025	Liao et al.	Perceived service quality and electronic word-of-mouth on food delivery services: extended theory of planned behaviour
34	2026	Nikzadask et al.	Online food delivery service strategies: a netnographic analysis on customer satisfaction
35	2025	Thuannadee & Praneetpholkhang	Effects of service quality, perceived value, customer satisfaction on behavioural intentions in platform-based online food delivery services
36	2024	Chinelo & Vallejo	Operational excellence in online food delivery service: the role of food biosafety measures
37	2025	Hoyos-Vallejo & Bosquez	Enhancing consumer experience in food delivery through hybrid analytical models
38	2023	Dogra et al.	Unravelling customer repurchase intention in OFDL context: An investigation using a hybrid technique of SEM and fsQCA

(continued on next page)

Table G1 (continued)

Number	Year	Authors	Title
39	2022	Koay et al.	A model of online food delivery service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty: a combination of PLS-SEM and NCA approaches
40	2025	Harter et al.	The Effect of Delivery Time on Repurchase Behaviour in Quick Commerce
41	2023	Bonfanti et al.	Improving online food ordering and delivery service quality by managing customer expectations: evidence from Italy

## Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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