

The Influence Of Employee Performance On Customer Loyalty Is Mediated By Service Quality And Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

One of the requirements for building client loyalty is being able to identify and evaluate the performance of its personnel. This study's objective is to investigate the relationship between staff performance and customer loyalty, which is mediated via service excellence and customer satisfaction. 50 respondents from each of the five Indonesian regions of Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua make up the sample, which is made up of 210 clients of contemporary retail stores. The validity and reliability of the research instrument, a questionnaire, have been examined using CFA analysis. The SEM method is used in this work to analyze a complex causation model. According to the research findings, the economic model that defines employee performance has a favorable and considerable direct impact on service quality that satisfies the fit criteria. Employee performance does not significantly and directly affect customer satisfaction. Customer loyalty and employee performance do not directly or significantly relate to one another. Customer loyalty and service excellence are not directly correlated. Client happiness has a direct impact on customer loyalty. Customer happiness is significantly influenced favorably by service quality. Furthermore, service excellence and customer satisfaction operate as a complete mediating factor in the relationship between staff performance and customer loyalty.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, Customer Loyalty, Employee Performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

The company's customers are its main source of income. Customers are the lifeblood of every business; their demand determines how much money is made and how quickly, thus they must be treated as the market king. For the company's products that gauge how well a product matches consumer expectations, customer satisfaction is currently a huge problem. (Aburayya et al. 2020). Because customers are happier with high-quality items at affordable costs, customer satisfaction will have an effect on the business and its products. Recognizing customer happiness will be the best strategy to lessen customer dissatisfaction and enhance revenues because research show that 99 percent of

disgruntled customers won't purchase the brands again. (Danish Ali et al. 2021). Prior to understanding what customers required, businesses used to place a greater emphasis on internal capabilities, stressing product quality, innovation, and technology (Bahadur et al. 2018). Customers have a wide range of options since there is so much rivalry among businesses to provide better goods and services based on market standards.

The idea of customer happiness, which is employed to draw in clients, is the most crucial factor in the corporate sector. Businesses must deliver the greatest degree of service quality in order to thrive and keep customers' trust. (Ghazi Mahafzah et al. 2020). Customer satisfaction can

result in positive interactions between a business and its clients, repeated business to deepen client loyalty, and favorable word-of-mouth recommendations for the business. (Farizan et al. 2019). Service quality is connected to customer happiness, attitude loyalty, and purchase intention. One of the tactics for succeeding in business in the service sector is to offer high-quality services. Businesses, especially those offering goods or services, must have the right approach to compete in the market.

Customer satisfaction is affected by staff performance as a whole as well as the quality of the services or goods they provide. Service quality and employee performance review are both crucial. The results of studies by Cahyadi et al. (2022) Employee performance is the accomplishment of particular job obligations, which is eventually represented in the volume and caliber of production. A team of workers in a corporation goes through the employee performance process to provide a good or service.

The attempts of contemporary retail business owners to build strong ties with their consumers were reinforced by service quality, which directly linked improved staff performance to enhanced customer loyalty. (Ajagbe et al. 2014). One of the keys to success for any organization, especially the current retail industry, is customer loyalty. If the corporate management is aware of the variables that affect service quality, then quality service may be delivered. (Andi et al. 2021). The performance of personnel in delivering services and goods that please customers is referred to as quality management. (Kim 2021). The dimension of service quality provides insight into the areas that should receive priority attention for service quality improvement since it encompasses the relative merits of the five dimensions in influencing overall customer impressions of service. (Abdullah et al. 2021). Enhancing service to remain competitive and instill customer trust, every institution must prioritize quality (Al-Ababneh et al. 2018). Numerous studies have revealed that how well employees perform when

providing services has a big impact on how satisfied and loyal customers are.

A company's ability to grow will be facilitated by improved staff performance, which will also increase consumer loyalty and service quality. Additionally, if employee performance increases dramatically, the profitability of the business's services might be increased. (Khan et al. 2022). Customers will be satisfied if the service performance matches what they had anticipated; however, they will become unsatisfied if the service performance falls short of what they had anticipated. (Lesmana et al. 2021). Customer satisfaction is an extrinsic characteristic that consumers perceive based on their experience with the services they receive when employees perform well. (Pawirosumarto et al. 2017). As a result, customers will be happy and devoted to retail stores. However, the situation on the ground so far has not been as great as anticipated. The state and condition of the company has a significant impact on employee performance. The goal of this study is to investigate and analyze the relationship between employee performance and customer loyalty in order to get data that businesses can utilize to enhance their operations. The objective of the research is to examine the relationship between employee performance and customer loyalty, which is mediated through service quality and customer satisfaction, in light of the backdrop of the study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Literature Review

A team of workers in a corporation goes through the employee performance process to provide a good or service. The following indicators are used to assess employee performance: Comfortable service, self-control, responsibility, speed and punctuality, friendliness and courtesy, and positive customer interactions between employees are the top priorities. (Diamantidis and Chatzoglou 2019).

The general opinion that customers have of products or services after utilizing them is known as customer satisfaction. One of the keys to corporate success is maintaining satisfied

customers because it enables the company to boost its profit margins. Following indicators are used to gauge customer satisfaction: 1) Service methods, 2) Service requirements, 3) Service skill, 4) Service fairness, and 5) Service schedule certainty (Maladi et al. 2019).

All of the elements and traits of a product or service that affect how well it can satisfy client needs are included in the concept of service quality. As stated by Helmi et al. (2022), A product of quality is one that is free of flaws or creates opportunities (target targets or requirements that can be defined, observed, and measured). service, based on Devia et al. (2018) "Any action or activity that that party may supply to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in any ownership," according to the definition in (a). The following factors are considered while evaluating service quality: 1) Concreteness; 2) Reliability; 3) Reaction Capacity; 4) Confidence; and 5) Empathy (Fuchs and Fangpong 2021).

Loyalty is described as a commitment to a particular thing. Customers that support a brand are dedicated to it, have a favorable outlook on it, and plan to keep doing business with it in the future. (Furoida and Maftukhah 2018). Customer loyalty is more closely linked to behavior than attitude. offered six metrics to gauge client loyalty, including: 1) Recurring purchases, 2) Brand consumption patterns, 3) Consistent brand liking, 4) Consistent brand selection, 5) Belief that the brand is the greatest, and 6) Trust in the firm to others (Lee and Kim 2021).

Hypotheses

The Influence of Employee Performance on Service Quality

Employee performance is the outcome of a person's work or work performance in carrying out the tasks or obligations that have been delegated to him in order to accomplish the objectives of an organization. It is impossible to separate an organization's human resources from its ability to achieve its goals. Because employees are what make an organization go, it is necessary to describe the degree to which an

activity, program, or policy has succeeded in attaining the organization's goals, objectives, mission, and vision. (Diamantidis and Chatzoglou 2019). The people in charge of delivering community services are what pushes for good service quality. The employees' work practices, attitudes, and behavior when providing services to the community or service customers play the biggest part in delivering high-quality services. (Li et al. 2019). Based on the explanation, the following research hypothesis is developed:

H1: Employee Performance has a positive and significant effect on Service Quality

The Effect of Employee Performance on Customer Satisfaction

If your employees do a good job serving your customers, they will be happy and devoted to you. The quality of the company's services will reflect its reputation and show whether it can satisfy its clients. (Atatsi et al. 2019). Based on the explanation, the following research hypothesis is developed:

H2: Employee Performance has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction

The Effect of Service Quality on Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is directly impacted by service quality in addition to customer satisfaction. According to research, service quality has a substantial impact on customer happiness, which fosters the growth of customer loyalty. Helmi et al. (2022). Setyadi (2022) based on his research, concluded that service quality plays a significant role in fostering client loyalty and indirectly influences consumer satisfaction. Service quality affects customer loyalty.

H3: Employee Performance has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty

The Effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction

Customer happiness and service quality both have an impact on the likelihood that a consumer will buy or reuse a product. This implies that the

quality of the service provided and the likelihood of client loyalty are inversely correlated. (Meesala and Paul 2018). In other words, the pleased the immediate customer is with the service, the better. Customers who are happy with the level of service they received will be happy because they will be satisfied because of their positive outlook. (Joudeh and Dandis 2018). The following research hypothesis is developed based on the explanation:

H4: Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction

The Effect of Service Quality on Customer Loyalty

When comparing a company's performance to its consumers' expectations, customer satisfaction is defined as a person's feelings of joy or dismay. When customers experience excellent service, they are more likely to come back. (Slack and Singh 2020). The study's research hypothesis is created based on the explanation:

H5: Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty

The Effect of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty

The business must keep up customer happiness in order to gain client loyalty. Therefore,

Research Framework

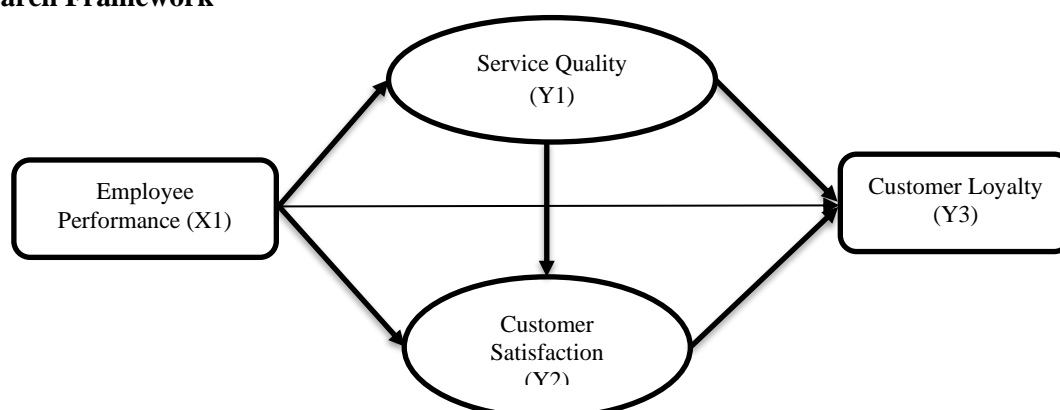


Figure 1. Research Model Framework

III. METHODOLOGY

This study uses quantitative descriptive research, which is a method of describing or summarizing

satisfied customers boost consumer loyalty and trust since corporations can deliver satisfaction by matching customer expectations. Loyal customers will continue to purchase the brand's goods and will readily suggest it to others. (Nyan et al. 2020). Aside from that, I will suggest the business to others. The following research hypothesis is developed based on the explanation.:

H6: Customer Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty

Service quality and customer satisfaction mediate the influence of employee performance on customer loyalty

Customer happiness and quality are strongly related in terms of influencing customer loyalty. A business that offers great quality is more likely to develop lasting relationships with its customers. Long-term, this kind of engagement enables the company to fully comprehend the demands and expectations of its clients. (Muharam et al. 2021). By providing delightful amenities, businesses may increase customer happiness, which will almost certainly result in high levels of customer loyalty. Based on the justification, the ensuing research hypothesis is developed.:

H7: Service quality and customer satisfaction act as mediators of the influence of employee performance on customer loyalty.

an object of study using sample data or a population of numbers. (Creswell 2012). The cross-sectional survey method is used in this study to conduct explanatory research.

Population dan Sample

People who have shopped at contemporary retail establishments like Indomaret, Alfamart, and Alfamidi in Indonesia make up the study's demographic. Customers who have visited a contemporary retail location are regarded as samples. When conducting a survey, it is not required to look at every person because doing so would be expensive and time-consuming. The first condition for a good sample is that it fairly and with little bias properly represents the characteristics of the population. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) can be used to predict interpretation when the sample size is 100–200 respondents, or 5–10 times the estimated number of indicators. (Hair et al. 2009). Based on the foregoing, there are 210 study samples in total, distributed throughout Pulau Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua. They were selected at random using a cluster random sampling technique. Each region had 50 responders total.

Data Analysis Instruments and Techniques

In the study, questionnaires on employee performance, customer happiness, service quality, and customer loyalty were employed. They were scored on a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (moderately agree), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree) (strongly disagree). Because SEM is a development of linear regression analysis that takes into account several complex variables, linear regression cannot be used in this study's data analysis when a complex causation model is being used. To calculate SEM, an analysis of variance through the covariance matrix is used, which produces more accurate findings than SEM for linear regression analysis.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect information. The respondents received surveys regarding service quality, employee

performance, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. After gathering the data, the researchers randomly chose a number of retail store patrons and contacted them to confirm that they had taken part in the study. And the outcomes are promising. The Alfamart, Alfamidi, and Indomaret modern retail outlets, which are already extensively available throughout Indonesia, are the subject of this study's sample. The chosen respondents have at least made a purchase at one of the planned modern retail stores, indicating that they are familiar with the services offered by the business and can be trusted to answer the research questionnaire. The LISREL software was utilized to evaluate the data. Confirmation factor analysis (CFA) was performed to evaluate the validity and reliability of the identified measurement items and the latent variables following the estimate of the structural equation model (SEM). Following extraction, there are four observed variables for staff customer involvement, four for service quality, and six for customer satisfaction. Both direct and indirect influence are employed to ensure that service quality and customer satisfaction play a mediating role.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Variable Description

The study's findings will be discussed in this section. Consider the following results for more information.

Table 1. Variable Description

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Category
Employee Performance	210	28.86	5.894	Good
Service Quality	210	25.05	5.111	Good
Customer Satisfaction	210	24.41	4.625	Good

Customer Loyalty	210	21.07	5.231	Good
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Table 1 shows that every variable falls into the "good" category. It may be concluded from this that respondents gave accurate descriptions of employee performance, service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. Additionally, it shows that the respondent gives thorough details for each item displayed.

Data Validity and Reliability Test

The reliability of the questionnaire was examined in a composite manner, that is, directly

on the construct, and the validity of the questionnaire items were tested using the Average Variance Extract (AVE). The Construct Reliability Price, which is based on the price of the regression coefficient, is used in this reliability test (loading factor). The price of each construct's validity and reliability index is displayed in the following table.

Table 2. AVE and CR Evaluation Value

Variables	AVE	Criteria	CR	Criteria	Category
Employee Performance	0.71		0.83		Valid and Reliable
Service Quality	0.65	0.5	0.80	0.80	Valid and Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	0.73		0.82		Valid and Reliable
Customer Loyalty	0.80		0.85		Valid and Reliable

According to table 2, all variables have an Average Variance Extract (AVE) value of 0.50 and a Construct Reliability (CR) value of 0.80, indicating that all items are valid and reliable.

between staff performance, customer happiness, service levels, and customer loyalty is shown by the model test results, which also include the development of each variable. The outcomes of the structural model are detailed below.

Goodness of Fit Model Test

In LISREL, an equation model was created and assessed. Whether there is a causal relationship

Table 3. The goodness of Fit Test

Model Fit Index Components	Critical Value	Analysis Result Value	Description
Chi-square	2 kali df= 183	722.48	Fit
Prob (significant)	> 0.05	0.00	Not Fit
RMSEA	0,05 - 0,08	0.12	Not Fit
SRMR	< 0.08	0.065	Fit
NFI	≥ 0,90	0.94	Fit
NNFI	≥ 0,90	0.95	Fit
PNFI	≥ 0,90	0.82	Not Fit
CFI	≥ 0,90	0.95	Fit
IFI	≥ 0,90	0.95	Fit
RFI	≥ 0,90	0.94	Fit

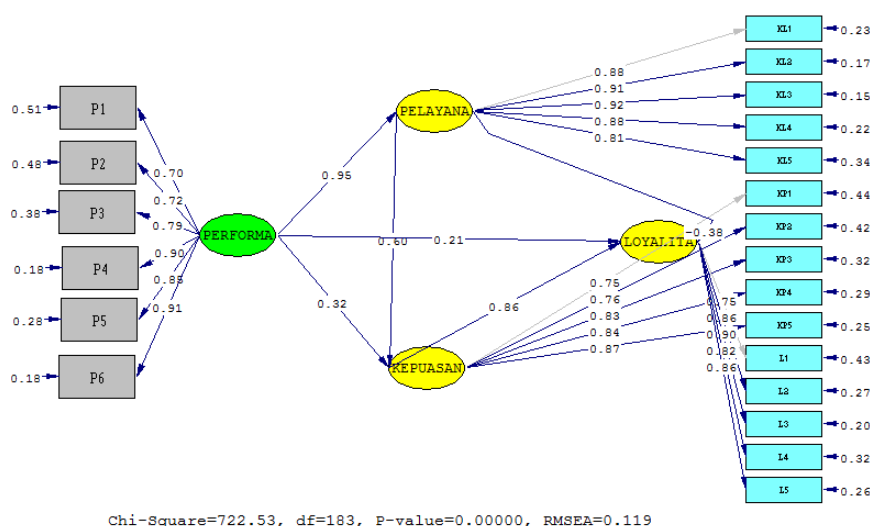


Figure 2. Model Fit Estimate

According to the findings of the structural model test, model indicators such SRMR, NFI, NNFI, PNFI, CFI, IFI, and RFI have satisfied the model fit requirements. On the other hand, the critical values for the Chi-square, probability, and RMSEA values are fixed. These findings show that the suggested model satisfactorily accounts for the actual data, since it is consistent with numerous goodness-of-fit models. It may be inferred that the suggested model more fully and accurately describes the process of attempting to influence staff productivity on customer loyalty through the use of customer satisfaction as a mediator.

Testing the Hypotheses: Structural Equation Models

Decisions based on the findings of a descriptive analysis are undoubtedly unpersuasive, but they might offer a basic picture. The data must be tested in accordance with the hypothesis put forth in this study in order to arrive at a more accurate result. In SEM analysis, testing hypotheses is sometimes referred to as structural model testing. The results of the general testing hypothesis for the direct influence of one parameter on some other variable are shown in the table below.

Table 4. Summary of Hypothesis Tests on Relationships

Hypothesis	Path	Parameter Estimation	t-value	Result
H1	EP → SQ	0.95	14.83*	Significant
H2	EP → CS	0.32	1.90	Not Significant
H3	EP → CL	0,21	0.83	Not Significant
H4	SQ → CL	-0.38	-1.35	Not Significant
H5	SQ → CS	0.60	3.51*	Significant
H6	CS → CL	0.86	4.34*	Significant

Note: *significant at critical ratio > 1.96.

- Based on the findings of the table 4 analysis, it is known that:
1. Employee performance has a positive and significant effect on service quality, with a t-value of $14.83 > 1.96$.
 2. There is no positive and significant effect of employee performance on customer satisfaction, with a t-value of $1.90 < 1.96$.

3. There is no positive and significant effect of employee performance on customer loyalty, with a t-value of $0.83 < 1.96$.
4. There is no positive and significant effect of service quality on customer loyalty, with a t-value of $-1.35 < 1.96$.
5. Service quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction with a t-value of $3.51 > 1.96$.
6. Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty with a t-value of $4.34 > 1.96$.

Testing mediation effects

Examining the influence of service quality and customer satisfaction in moderating the effect of employee performance on customer loyalty is one of the objectives of this study. There are several estimate channels in this intricate mediating impact. Calculating the indirect and overall effects can be done using the regression coefficient (standardized). The table below displays the findings of the analysis..

Table 5. Mediation Effect

Hypothesis	Path	Parameter Estimation	t-value	Result
H7	EP → SQ → CS → CL	0.51	6.18	Full Mediated

Table 5 demonstrates that, with a value of $6.18 > 1.96$ and a T value greater than 1.96, servqual now has an influence on the indirect relationship between staff accomplishment and customer loyalty. The results of the mediation test show that customer happiness and service quality completely mediate the relationship between job performance and customer loyalty. Therefore, the impact of staff effectiveness on customer loyalty is strengthened by the presence of these two or more variables.

V. DISCUSSION

This section will explain the proposed hypothesis one by one based on the research findings. The following is the explanation.

The level of service quality is significantly influenced by employee performance. This is evident in the client services offered, such as helping consumers who are having trouble locating the products they are seeking for and offering quick and efficient transaction services. If the business performs successfully, customers will enjoy outstanding service.. Vencataya et al. (2019) Support this conclusion by pointing out that productive staff strive to provide the highest level of customer service. Given that a person who works with passion and love for his or her profession would definitely enjoy it and provide the greatest service, this is a logical end.

Employee performance is unrelated to customer pleasure. Despite the employee's good performance, this finding suggests that the consumer is occasionally unsatisfied. Customers have diverse personalities, thus even when the personnel did a good job, the customers did not find it notable. This result is congruent with that of Bailey et al. (2016), He contends that there is no connection between staff performance and customer happiness because clients can become more satisfied with some services as a result of tangible proof of good service. Employees might not be able to satisfy the needs of the customer even if they have adhered to the procedure (SOP) to the letter.

Customer loyalty is unaffected by service excellence. This is because a customer's satisfaction with a service or the caliber of a product received results in the development of new customer loyalty. These results are corroborated by Khatab et al. (2019), who argue that the most influential factor on the level of client loyalty is customer satisfaction rather than the quality of the service provided by the company. This implies that a third variable, namely creating satisfaction with clients in order for clients to be loyal, is still required.

Customer satisfaction is significantly impacted by service quality. Customer satisfaction might rise as a result of excellent service. Service

quality influences customer satisfaction in that we can identify a relationship between degrees of client loyalty and contentment; on the other hand, the more satisfied a customer is, the more devoted they are likely to be. The findings (Khoo et al. 2017) suggest that the biggest factor affecting consumer happiness is the level of attention that organizations give to their quality of service, especially in major merchants. This is illustrated by the connection between the concepts of service quality and client satisfaction.

Customer loyalty is significantly influenced by customer happiness. This is easy to understand because pleased customers will stick with a brand or service. Customer loyalty can be measured in a number of ways, including repeat purchases, avoiding moving to another retailer for necessities, and word-of-mouth recommendations. Research that was suggested by supports this conclusion (Kristian and Panjaitan 2014) that satisfied customers will become loyal customers of stores or companies. Service excellence and customer satisfaction moderate the relationship between employee performance and client loyalty. This implies that by enhancing service quality and customer satisfaction, employee performance at work influences building customer loyalty as reinforcement. This discovery also reveals an integrated causality model. By raising performance, services will become of higher quality, which will make customers happier and more devoted to the business. This can be demonstrated by voluntarily promoting or recommending the store to others. These findings corroborate those of (Solimun and Fernandes 2018), who made the discovery that staff performance and customer loyalty are mediated by service quality and customer happiness. The 95 percent confidence interval results show that staff performance significantly increases consumer loyalty in an indirect manner. In contemporary retail establishments, customers develop loyalty through their contentment as well as the level of service they receive.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This study advances our knowledge of how staff performance affects customer loyalty and how service excellence and customer happiness play a moderating role in this relationship in the current retail store sector. This study is important because modern retail has spread throughout Indonesia's emerging regions, having a substantial negative influence on the local economy. These findings may be crucial for the growth of contemporary retail establishments because, if unaddressed, they may jeopardize their capacity to compete in this market and present opportunities for rivals to take advantage of these weaknesses, grow their market share, and strengthen their position in the local retail industry sector. The results of the mediation analysis show that customer satisfaction somewhat moderates the impact of employee performance on customer loyalty by lowering staff-based expectations for service quality and thus lowering customer loyalty. Finally, this study makes recommendations for where contemporary retail establishments should focus their limited corporate resources on marketing in order to serve, please, keep, and win over longer-lasting client loyalty in a very competitive Indonesia.

This study has a number of limitations, as well as some future research opportunities. To begin with, the findings only apply to customers in the modern retail sector, according to a survey of five major regions of Indonesia, the majority of which are urban. To better comprehend the reach of modern retail outlets and to broaden the sample size, future study may elect to include quasi-areas. Second, it will be fascinating to observe if the findings of this research appear to be consistent across different developing countries, given that the premise of this study is that cultural elements influence customer behavior, satisfaction, and fealty vary among countries. Finally, it is proposed that this research can assist local supermarkets in adjusting to the changing retail business and assist government policymakers in sequencing the transformation of the modern retail sector.

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