

The Effect of Consumer Satisfaction on Loyalty and Word of Mouth in Fast Food Restaurants Among Gen Z

Rika Amelia¹, Puspita Chairun Nisa²

^{1,2} Esa Unggul University, Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: estherikamelia@gmail.com¹, puspita@esaunggul.ac.id²

Correspondence Authors: estherikamelia@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Customer satisfaction a very important role in marketing strategies that can be implemented by fast food restaurants by presenting high-quality menus and providing optimal service to consumers, fast food restaurants strive to create positive experiences that can increase customer trust. The purpose of this study was to determine how much influence customer satisfaction has on consumer loyalty and Word of Mouth in fast food restaurants among generation Z. This type of research is quantitative with a purposive sampling technique distributed through questionnaires fast food consumer's restaurant respondents aged 18-27 years and domiciled in the Bekasi area. Primary data analysis was carried out using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method. The results of this study indicate that the food quality variable has the greatest direct influence on customer satisfaction, then the trust variable does not moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This study contributes to fast food restaurants in maintaining and increasing customer satisfaction can be seen from several factors, namely prioritizing food quality as an effort to improve restaurant quality, especially related to the menu offered. High quality will provide greater customer satisfaction, of course it will be more in demand by generation Z. For further research, researchers plan to expand the research area and look for objects in other fields.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Trust, Word of Mouth.

INTRODUCTION

In fast food restaurants, increasingly fierce competition requires business actors to continue to improve the quality of food and service in order to meet customer expectations and create long-term loyalty (Javed, Rashidin, Zhu, et al., 2021). Customer satisfaction is the main key in building sustainable business relationships (Zhang et al., 2019). Factors such as food quality, service quality, price, physical environment play a significant role in shaping customer satisfaction, which ultimately has an impact on customer loyalty (Uslu & Eren, 2020). This study is important to provide insight to fast food restaurant owners in understanding how much influence these variables have on customer satisfaction and loyalty, so that the right strategy can be formulated to maintain market share and win the competition (Le et al., 2022).

Customer satisfaction is a vital element that reflects the extent to which services and products meet or exceed customer expectations (Clara et al., 2022). In fast-food restaurants, customer satisfaction not only increases repeat purchases but also encourages positive recommendations to other potential customers (Adeinat, 2019). Without adequate satisfaction, restaurants risk losing customers to competitors, especially in fast-food restaurants that offer similar options (Chun & Ochir, 2020). Therefore, a deep understanding of the factors that influence customer satisfaction is the basis for restaurants to design strategies to improve

quality and service (Rochmatulaili, 2020).

Food quality is a core aspect that differentiates fast food restaurants in the eyes of customers. Delicious, fresh, and high-quality food not only creates instant gratification but also enhances customers' positive perceptions of the restaurant (Zhong & Moon, 2020). Amidst fierce competition, food quality is a major determinant that influences customer choice (Hidayat et al., 2020). Restaurants that fail to meet customer expectations regarding food taste and presentation will struggle to retain their customer base (Zaw & Nuangjamnong, 2023). Therefore, maintaining food quality is a priority that cannot be ignored (Sunaryo et al., 2019).

Service quality in fast food restaurants plays a key role because it is directly related to customer experience. Fast, friendly, and professional service can provide significant satisfaction, even if the food or price does not fully meet customer expectations (Shafiq et al., 2019). In this modern era, customers increasingly demand responsive and consistent service in every visit (Arli et al., 2024). Failure to provide optimal service quality can result in customer dissatisfaction and loss of loyalty. Thus, service quality is an important factor that must be continuously improved (Elciano et al., 2023).

Price is a major consideration for fast food restaurant customers who are looking for the best value for their money (Syah et al., 2022). Amidst fierce price competition, customers tend to choose restaurants that offer a balance between affordable prices and satisfying food quality and service (Yi et al., 2018). Satisfied customers will be willing to buy even at different prices. Restaurants that are unable to adjust prices to the value provided will find it difficult to attract customers, especially in price-sensitive markets (Edwin et al., 2024). Therefore, a competitive pricing strategy that is in line with customer value perceptions is a crucial step in attracting and retaining customers (Uddin, 2019).

Some of the factors that people consider are space, physical environment, and many more (Le et al., 2022). Customer retention involves providing a pleasant and relaxing dining environment (Wu et al., 2018). In addition, Syah et al. (2022) emphasized the substantial impact of the restaurant environment on customers, customers seek a pleasant physical atmosphere to enhance their overall dining experience. The impact of the dining atmosphere extends to customer motivation, who tend to make more purchases in a better environment (Jang & Lee, 2020).

Trust is also an important aspect in maintaining customer loyalty in order to compete with competitors in the same fast food restaurant (Sheikh et al., 2019). Trust in fast food restaurants is an important aspect that involves positive expectations and convinces customers in providing responses (Buechner, 2020). Partnerships with customers in fast food restaurants are built on trust and commitment (Cole et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food Quality

According to Konuk (2019) Food quality is the customer's perception of the taste, freshness, presentation, and nutritional value of food provided by a food service provider. Uddin (2019) defines food quality as the most important criterion in a customer's overall evaluation of a restaurant. Furthermore, according to Zhong & Moon (2020) food quality is recognized as an important component in the operation of every restaurant, and has a significant influence on customer satisfaction and future repurchase intentions. Furthermore, according to Rochmatulaili (2020) food quality is an important ingredient that must be

provided by restaurants to meet customer needs and satisfaction. According to Gao (2024) food quality is the characteristics of food that are acceptable to consumers, such as taste, texture, color, consistency, shape, and size.

Service Quality

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2018) service quality is all forms of activities carried out by a company to meet customer expectations. Service quality is defined as satisfying customer needs and desires and accuracy in delivery in balancing customer expectations (Saulina & Syah, 2018). Service quality is an effort made by a company to meet customer expectations for the services they receive so that the company can survive in the market and gain customer trust. Then Fajarini & Meria (2020) define service quality as a benchmark between real services carried out by servants and customer expectations. According to Chikazhe et al. (2020) service quality is defined as a strong competitive advantage in competition in the service industry, and the advantage in question is that if the service provided is good, it will have an impact on the quality and reliability of a company.

Price

According to Kotler & Keller (2016) Price is an amount of money that contains the utility needed to obtain a number of combinations of goods or services exchanged to obtain property rights. According to Porral & Mangin (2017) price is defined as the overall sacrifice that consumers are willing to make in order to obtain a specific product or service. In the study of Qalati et al. (2019) defines price as an amount of money charged for a product or service, or the amount of value exchanged by consumers for the benefits of owning or using the product. According to Le et al. (2022) price is defined as what customers pay to get a product or service. Price is something that must be given by customers to get a product, in other words, price can be interpreted as the exchange value of goods or services expressed in monetary units (Moorthy et al., 2018). Based on the understanding above, it can be concluded that price is the value that must be spent by customers to obtain goods that are in accordance with the needs or benefits of the goods or services (Javed, Rashidin, Zhu, et al., 2021).

Physical Environment

According to Wu et al. (2018) the physical environment is part of the customer's emotional response, which refers to the customer's emotional response to the psychological benefits they expect from the experience during their visit. According to Avan et al. (2019) the physical environment is a place where people interact with each other during the process of producing and delivering products or services to consumers. Zhong & Moon (2020) define the physical environment in a restaurant as one of the main factors that impacts a guest's decision to eat there. Then Rajput & Gahfoor (2020) said that the physical environment is the condition of the place intended to provide products and services in a restaurant. According to Radzi et al. (2023) the physical environment is a combination of objects and physical factors that are controlled by the company and have the potential to influence both employees and customers.

Customer satisfaction

According to research conducted by Han et al. (2018) customer satisfaction can be defined as cumulative satisfaction, which consists of the final assessment of customers based on their

experience with a brand or product. According to Darmawan (2019) customer satisfaction is an emotion resulting from comparing one's expectations with the perceived performance of a product or result and feeling happy or disappointed. According to Benoit et al. (2020) customer satisfaction is defined as the sum of customers' perceptions, evaluations, and psychological reactions to their experience with a product or service determines customer satisfaction. Since only customers can measure their level of satisfaction with a product, customer satisfaction is subjective (Benoit et al., 2020). Then according to Ho & Chung (2020) customer satisfaction is a method to achieve customer loyalty, customer satisfaction is the process of building deeper relationships with customers. While according to Lai et al. (2021) customer satisfaction can be defined as feelings such as joy, happiness, curiosity, surprise, and various other expressions.

Trust

According to Sheikh et al. (2019) trust is defined as a psychological relationship that can be formed between an application and a user created by trust, which is an intangible component of the quality of communication with customers. Then according to Lenggono et al. (2019) states that trust is the belief that others can be trusted and will produce strong, fair, and profitable cooperation. Meanwhile, according to Buechner (2020) states that trust is a relationship between humans that can show boundaries and normative expectations to know each other in the context of trust. Trust according to Cole et al. (2021) is a general understanding of trust that crosses disciplinary boundaries. From the perspective of Kivijärvi & Virta (2021) trust is an important component in the formation of relationships and social structures, and the core of successful transactions and exchanges in a business-to-business context. According to Elistia et al. (2023) trust can be defined as the average consumer's willingness to rely on a brand's ability to meet their needs and wants.

Customer Loyalty

Güzel & Baş (2020) define customer loyalty as a guarantee for competition between small, medium, and large businesses, can be achieved by paying special attention to customers, communicating actively with them, and trying to increase their loyalty to the company. According to Khajeheian & Ebrahimi (2020) customer loyalty is when customers frequently buy certain goods, services, or brands. Customer loyalty is a customer's commitment to a brand, store, or supplier based on very positive traits in long-term purchases (Clara et al., 2022). According to Yum & Yoo (2023) customer loyalty is a customer's persistent commitment to re-subscribe or repurchase certain products/services consistently in the future, even though situational influences and marketing efforts have the potential to cause behavioral changes. Then according to Patel et al. (2024) defines customer loyalty as a commitment made by a company to reach its customers while making them addicted to the company's products and making competitors look ordinary in the eyes of customers.

Word of Mouth

According to El-baz (2016) word of mouth is a communication about a product between people who are considered independent of the company, who provide and provide information directly related to the product. Furthermore, according to Yuan & Peluso (2019) word of mouth is a communication process in the form of providing recommendations either individually or in groups for a product or service that aims to provide personal information. Then Khoo (2022)

defines word of mouth communication as informal person-to-person communication between non-commercial communicators and recipients based on brands, products, organizations, or services. In addition, according to Khan & Fatma (2023) word of mouth is defined as a post-purchase phenomenon that contains informal communication directed at other consumers regarding the ownership, use, or characteristics of a product or service. Besides that, Nguyen et al. (2024) defines word of mouth as a communication activity that is directly related to customer comments about the shortcomings or advantages of a service which is individual behavior after use.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Relationship between Food Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Food quality is an important factor to consider, and is often proven to be a key factor in a customer's decision to dine at a fast food restaurant (Chun & Ochir, 2020). Food quality is a major component in making customers feel satisfied in the fast food restaurant business. In fast food restaurants, food quality is the most important factor in ensuring customer satisfaction (Rochmatulaili, 2020). Food quality characteristics such as freshness, delicious food, temperature, and cleanliness can affect customer satisfaction (Sari et al., 2024). The results of previous studies (Zhang et al., 2019; Hidayat et al., 2020; Ali & Lee, 2019) have proven that food quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction. Based on the statement above, the hypothesis that researchers can propose is:

H₁: Food Quality has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

The relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality has received much attention in the literature (Winasis & Sembel, 2023). Expectations and perceptions are the gaps that form the basis for customers' assessment of service quality, in other words, service quality is the result of the difference between service and actual service performance perceived by customers (Uslu & Eren, 2020). A positive and significant relationship between customer perceptions of service quality and their desire to recommend the company (Soerjanto et al., 2024). The results of empirical research from (Oktaviani & Nisa, 2024; Shafiq et al., 2019; Arli et al., 2024) have proven that service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction. Based on the description above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Service Quality has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

The Relationship between Price and Customer Satisfaction

Prices are determined in the market according to the demand and supply of a particular service or product. Customer perception of pricing is an attribute of service or product quality (Ali & Lee, 2019). Price as a tool to inform customers about the value of a product, above all, price determines the quality of the product that customers get for what they pay (Yi et al., 2018). Customers tend to feel satisfied when they perceive the price offered as reasonable, which often encourages them to make repeat purchases (Baş & Güzel, 2020). This price perception plays an important role in shaping consumer behavior (Lin et al., 2022). Thus, price perception can not only create satisfied customers, but can also result in dissatisfied customers (Javed, Rashidin, Zhu, et al., 2021). The results of empirical research from (Zhong & Moon, 2020; Moorthy et al., 2018; Djayapranata & Setyawan, 2023) state that price perception in the fast food sector has a significant influence on customer satisfaction. Based on the results of the presentation, the

following hypothesis was made:

H₃: Price has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Relationship of Physical Environment and Customer Satisfaction

In fast food restaurants, the impact of the physical environment in creating an image and influencing customer behavior is invaluable (Rajput & Gahfoor, 2020). A well-designed physical environment is considered important in influencing consumers when assessing their satisfaction with the quality of the service provider's products and services (Rajput & Gahfoor, 2020). One of the important factors that influence the dining experience is the physical environment, which includes the restaurant's function, space, design color, and highlighting (Singh et al., 2021). Consumers judge the quality of a restaurant based on how clean, unique, friendly, good the physical environment is, and other factors that contribute to the atmosphere (Syah et al., 2022). If customers have a positive perception of the location, feel comfortable, and enjoy the atmosphere, they are likely to want to spend more time and money in that place (Yilmazel, 2024). The results of studies conducted by (Uddin, 2019; Zaw & Nuangjamnong, 2023) state that the physical environment has a significant impact on customer satisfaction. Thus, based on the description above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₄: Physical Environment has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Customer satisfaction has several aspects, for example customer loyalty occurs when satisfied customers are interested in buying products from companies whose performance is as expected (Harriet et al., 2024). Because they are satisfied with the company's performance that can meet customer expectations, these customers are difficult to persuade by competitors (Firdaus & Rachmawati, 2024). This study is supported by Sunaryo et al. (2019) that customer satisfaction affects customer loyalty so that this means that satisfied customers can increase customer loyalty. Because customers will feel satisfied or happy and continue to make repeat purchases when the product purchased is in accordance with their expectations, the desires conveyed regarding the product are due to the nature of current customers who tend to choose products that have special features with better advantages. The results of empirical research from (Basith & Sugiyanto, 2023; Susanto & Indrawati, 2024; Yum & Yoo, 2023) have proven that customer satisfaction has a positive effect on customer loyalty. Based on the explanation above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅: Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Customer Loyalty.

The Relationship between Trust on Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Trust plays an important role in increasing customer satisfaction, which then has an impact on customer loyalty. When customers have trust in a brand or company, they are more likely to feel satisfied with the products or services provided (Lenggono et al., 2019). When customers have high trust, the satisfaction they feel will have a greater impact on loyalty (Guo et al., 2023). Joshi & Garg (2021) found that trust in a brand functions as a moderator in building customer loyalty, when customers trust a brand, they are more likely to stay and make repeat purchases. If this loyalty has been built in the hearts of customers, it will be easy for a business to gain loyalty from them (Joshi & Garg, 2021). Javed et al. (2021) argue that trust can reduce the negative impact when dissatisfaction occurs, if customers believe that the company has

good intentions and will correct mistakes, they are more likely to give a second chance than immediately switching to competitors. Trust plays a very important role in determining the level of customer satisfaction, if customers have felt what they want it will end in customer loyalty (Menidjel et al., 2017). Empirical results from the study (Abadi & Nurpratiwi, 2021; Syah et al., 2022; Biswas et al., 2023) found that trust moderates the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Based on the results of the explanation above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₆: Trust moderates the relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty.

Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Word of Mouth (WoM)

Customer satisfaction refers to the end state of a process in which customers evaluate the perceived benefits obtained from using a service (Fitria & Yuliati, 2020). This shows that when customer needs are met efficiently, satisfaction will encourage them to spend more money and make more repeat purchases (Velázquez et al., 2015). A high level of satisfaction with the company results in the spread of positive news from WoM about the company (Su et al., 2015). Describing information from WoM as an informal conversation which is the oldest mechanism used to develop, express, and disseminate opinions about products and brands, in other words, satisfied customers are more likely to provide good references to the company (Song et al., 2021). Empirically, from the research conducted (Abadi & Nurpratiwi, 2021; Khoo, 2022; Biswas et al., 2023) verified that customer satisfaction is positively related to information from WoM in full-service restaurants. The results of the above statement, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H₇: Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Word of Mouth.

Relationship between Customer Loyalty and Word of Mouth (WoM)

Online communication allows more time for thoughtful expression, leading to deliberate actions compared to offline communication (Ahmadi, 2019). Thus, customer loyalty may have a much stronger impact on traditional WoM in person (Choi & Choi, 2014). Positive information about a product, spread from one customer to another, indicates brand loyalty (Hyun et al., 2023). In addition, consumer loyalty encourages them to recommend the product and brand to others as well (Ko, 2020). Thus, loyalty to such customers provides an advantage in developing positive recommendations (Choi & Choi, 2014). Customers who are loyal to a service provider tend to provide positive recommendations of the company to members of their reference group, while customers who are not loyal and therefore switch to other providers tend to spread negative WoM promotions towards the company (Abdullah et al., 2022). Empirical results from studies (Chinomona, 2016; Rodrigues et al., 2023; Yee & Fang, 2024) show that customer loyalty has a positive impact on WoM.

H₈: Customer Loyalty has a positive effect on Word of Mouth..

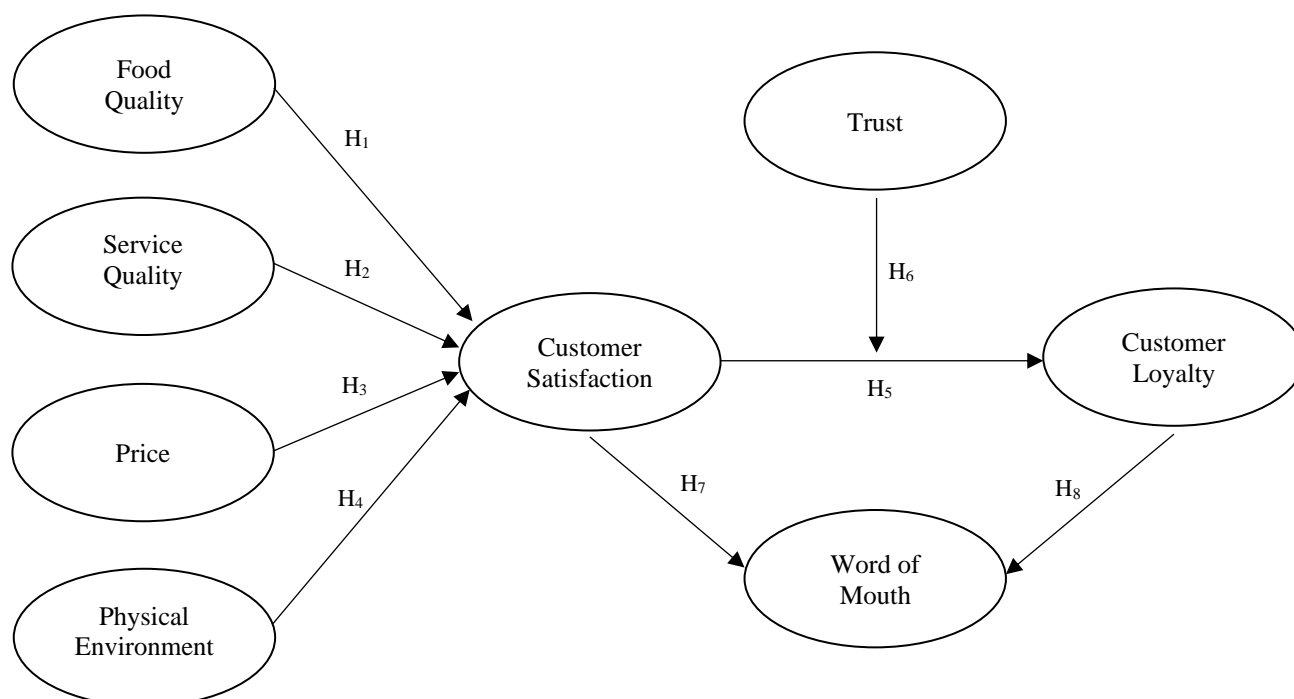


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this study aims to test a theory or hypothesis to strengthen or reject a theory or hypothesis of previous research results. This study examines the causal relationship between variables which is a direct influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Purwanza et al., 2022). The variables in this study include food quality, service quality, price, physical environment, customer satisfaction, trust, customer loyalty and word of mouth. The data used for analysis purposes in this study are data consisting of primary data obtained from distributing questionnaires using the help of Google Forms distributed via WhatsApp.

In this research, data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires, with the scale used being a Likert scale containing 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) levels of answers. The use of a score of 1-4 is used to avoid ambiguous middle scores and the number of people who answered the middle score when respondents did not determine their attitude. Measurements related to the food quality variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Uddin (2019), the service quality variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Uddin (2019), the price variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Uddin (2019), the physical environment variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Dwaikat et al. (2019), the customer satisfaction variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Chikazhe et al. (2021), the trust variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Jalilvand & Samiei (2012), the customer loyalty variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Chikazhe et al. (2021), the word of mouth variable as many as 5 statements were adopted from Kang & Hustvedt, (2014).

Population is defined as a collection of all research objects consisting of individuals who are the source of data in a study and have certain characteristics (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This study was conducted on fast food restaurant customers, while the determination of the number of samples in the study used the Hair et al. (2022) method formula where the formula used is

the minimum sample size of 5 x the number of statements of which there are 40 statements in this questionnaire, so that the sample size obtained is 200 respondents. The sampling method in this study will use the purposive sampling method which is a data collection technique by determining samples that have been considered. Thus, the sample used as respondents in this study amounted to 200 Gen Z respondents who had consumed food (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) at least 2 times in one month with an age range of 18-27 years and domiciled in the Bekasi area.

This study conducted a pre-test distributed to 30 respondents to identify and eliminate potential misunderstandings in the measuring instruments used in measuring the research variables (Sugiyono, 2015). Then, a validity and reliability test was conducted using confirmatory factor analysis to test and measure the hypothesized model. The validity test was conducted using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) anti-image matrix correlation measurements with the provision that the acceptable factor analysis value is if $KMO \geq 0.5$ and $MSA \geq 0.5$ (Ghozali, 2018).

This research analysis method uses (SEM-PLS). Therefore, a measuring instrument is used to measure its validity and reliability. Validity test through convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity by applying the guidelines for loading factor values > 0.7 , and average variance extracted (AVE) > 0.5 (Hair et al., 2022). Next, to test reliability through Cronbach alpha > 0.7 and composite reliability > 0.7 . Furthermore, an inner model test is carried out to test the relationship between the variable arrangement indicators. The measurements applied are R-square, Path Coefficient. The R-square test guideline is 0.75 indicating a strong model, 0.50 moderate and 0.25 weak. The guidelines for the path coefficient value range from -1 to 1, with values closer to 1 or -1 indicating a stronger positive or negative relationship (Hair et al., 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity testing at the pretest stage refers to the Kaiser Msyer Olkin (KMO) value and Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) anti image matrix correlation with the provision of ≥ 0.50 (Hair et al., 2021). Based on the test results, the KMO value (0.740 - 0.889) and MSA value (0.658 - 0.991) were obtained from each indicator totaling 40 statements so that all indicators meet the validity requirements and can be used in the next analysis stage. Then, the reliability test refers to Cronbach's Alpha with the provision of ≥ 0.6 (Hair et al., 2021). Based on the reliability test, the results obtained were that all statement indicators obtained values (0.938 - 0.954) exceeding the predetermined value limit, indicating that all indicators in this study are reliable and can be used for further analysis.

Based on the results of the distribution of questionnaires that have been conducted to 200 respondents, the results obtained that the respondents consisted of male gender as many as 85 people or 43.7% and female as many as 115 people or 57.3%. For the respondents' favorite fast food restaurants, it was dominated by McDonald's as many as 79 people or 39.4%, Richeese Factory as many as 66 people or 32.9%, and KFC as many as 55 people or 27.7%. Furthermore, the type of work was dominated by private/state employees as many as 124 people or 62%, students as many as 44 people or 21.6%, and self-employed as many as 32 people or 16.4%. Then the number of respondents' consumption in 1 month was 3-4 times as many as 128 people or 64.3%, more than 5 times as many as 48 people or 23.5%, and 2 times as many as 2 people or 12.2%. As for the cost of consumption expenditure of respondents of Rp 1,000,000 -

2,000,000 as many as 81 people or 40.4%, Rp 2,000,001 - 3,000,000 as many as 60 people or 30%, < Rp 1,000,000 as many as 31 people or 15.5%, and expenditure above Rp 3,000,000 as many as 28 people or 14.1%.

Outer Model Testing

Table 1. Outer Model Results

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Outer Loading</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>	<i>AVE</i>
Food Quality	FQ1	0.755	0.798	0.861	0.553
	FQ2	0.737			
	FQ3	0.732			
	FQ4	0.781			
	FQ5	0.713			
Service Quality	SQ1	0.771	0.805	0.864	0.559
	SQ2	0.784			
	SQ3	0.715			
	SQ4	0.727			
	SQ5	0.729			
Price	PR1	0.721	0.832	0.882	0.599
	PR2	0.768			
	PR3	0.788			
	PR4	0.818			
	PR5	0.770			
Physical Environment	PE1	0.714	0.791	0.857	0.545
	PE2	0.769			
	PE3	0.719			
	PE4	0.748			
	PE5	0.741			
Customer Satisfaction	CS1	0.743	0.802	0.863	0.559
	CS2	0.732			
	CS3	0.733			
	CS4	0.775			
	CS5	0.754			
Trust	TR1	0.754	0.813	0.869	0.571
	TR2	0.767			
	TR3	0.745			
	TR4	0.744			
	TR5	0.767			
Customer Loyalty	CL1	0.717	0.839	0.886	0.609
	CL2	0.741			
	CL3	0.749			
	CL4	0.806			
	CL5	0.784			
Word of Mouth	WoM1	0.723	0.800	0.862	0.555
	WoM2	0.745			
	WoM3	0.717			
	WoM4	0.779			
	WoM5	0.760			

Source: Researcher-processed data findings, 2025

The convergent validity value can be seen by looking at the loading factor value in the external loading table and can also be seen from the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value.

Hair et al. (2021) the fixed value that must be met to measure convergent validity is > 0.7 , then for factor loading and AVE with a value > 0.5 . In this study, the results of the loading factor values obtained from 40 indicators were (0.713 - 0.841) and the AVE value (0.545 - 0.609) so that they have passed the provisions and it can be concluded that the 40 indicators can be accepted which can be seen in table 8 appendix 5. In addition, the internal consistency reliability test used to measure the ability of indicators to measure their latent constructs based on the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values to be accepted $> 0.6 - 0.7$ (Hair et al., 2021). The results of data processing obtained that all latent variables (constructs) have a Composite Reliability value (0.857 - 0.886) > 0.6 and a Cronbach's Alpha value (0.791 - 0.839) > 0.7 . Thus, both the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values have passed the requirements.

The strength of discriminant validity illustrates that one latent variable is different from other latent variables (Hair et al., 2021). There are methods to explain the discriminant validity test, namely the Fornell Larckel and Cross Loading criteria.

The Fornell-Larckel Criterion describes that a latent construct should better explain the variance of its own indicators than the variance of other latent constructs (Hair et al., 2021). The measurements in this study all variables meet the criteria, so it can be said that the Fornell-Larckel Criterion has a good discriminant validity value.

The Cross Loading value shows the correlation between the indicator and its construct and other constructs. The correlation value of the indicator with the latent variable should show higher results than the correlation value with other latent variables (Hair et al., 2021). Based on the statistical results, the cross loading values of measuring Service Quality, Food Quality, Price, Physical Environment, Customer Satisfaction, Trust, Customer Loyalty and Word of Mouth have higher values and are highly correlated with the main variables measured compared to other variables, this indicates that these variables have good discriminant validity.

Multicollinearity test is needed to determine whether there are independent variables that have similarities between independent variables in one regression model. If there is a correlation, it is stated that the regression model has a multicollinearity problem. The multicollinearity test is carried out by looking at the tolerance value and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value. In the external VIF value table, a VIF value < 5 indicates that there is no collinearity problem in the indicator (Hair et al., 2021). Statistics show that there is no multicollinearity problem in any indicator, because the VIF value (1,000 - 2,177) < 5 for all indicators.

The next stage is to determine the R-square value, if the R-square is at a value of 0.75, 0.50, 0.25, it can be concluded that the outer model is strong, moderate and weak. The coefficient of determination value explains to what extent the exogenous variables are able to explain the endogenous variables (Hair et al., 2021). According to the results of data processing in table 5, the coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) value for the customer satisfaction variable is 0.988. This means that the variables Food Quality, Service Quality, Price and Physical Environment can explain the Customer Satisfaction variable by 98.8%, while the remaining 1.2% is explained by other variables not examined in this study. Then, the customer loyalty variable has a coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) value of 0.631. In other words, the variables Food Quality, Service Quality, Price, Physical Environment and Customer Satisfaction can explain the Customer Loyalty variable by 63.1%, while the remaining 36.9% is explained by other variables not examined in this study. Furthermore, the Word of Mouth variable has a

coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) of 0.712. In other words, the Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty variables can explain the Word of Mouth variable by 71.2%, while the remaining 28.8% is explained by other variables not examined in this study.

Inner Model Testing (Hypothesis Testing)

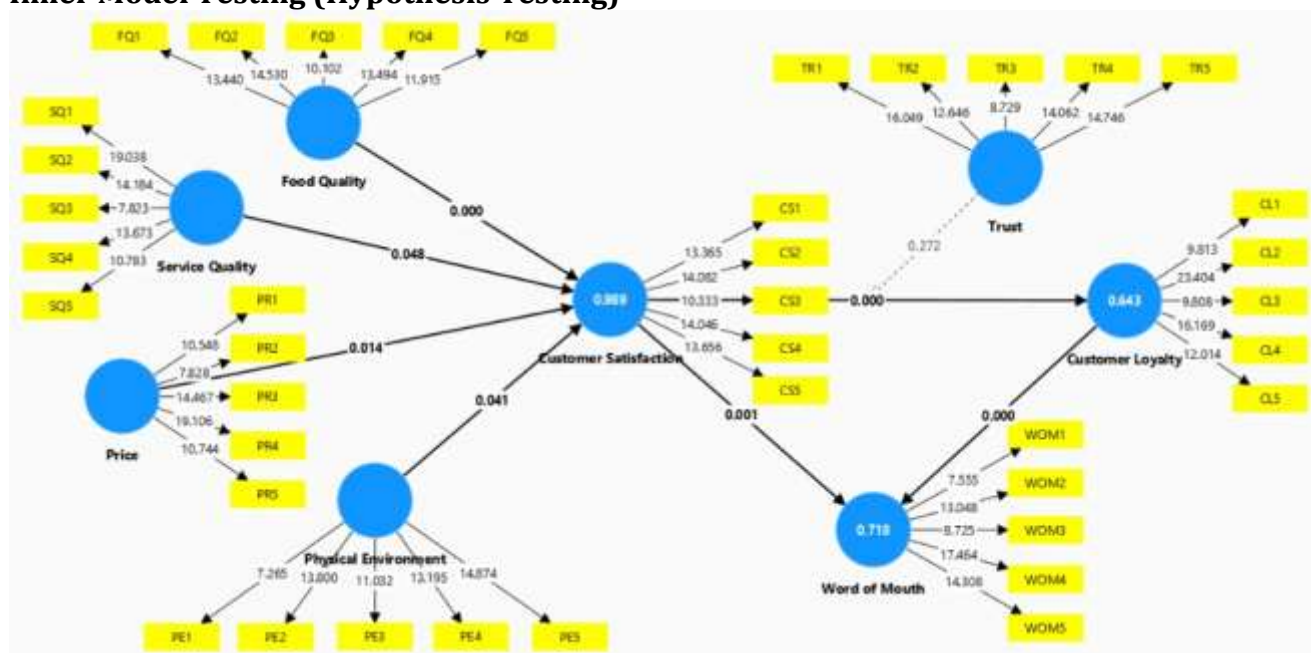


Figure 2. Hypothesis Test Results

Testing the internal model of a study (hypothesis testing) by looking at the results of the significance of the path coefficient. Hair et al. (2021) if the T-statistic is greater than the T-table (1,650) at the 5% level with a p-value <0.05, it can be said to have a significant effect if the direction of the relationship is determined by looking at the original sample value.

Based on the results of calculations using the bootstrapping method, the results are obtained in the table below:

Table 2. Hypothesis Test Results

	Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Information
FQ → CS	H ₁	0.968	46.388	0.000	The data support the hypothesis
SQ → CS	H ₂	0.033	1.668	0.048	The data support the hypothesis
PR → CS	H ₃	0.035	2.209	0.014	The data support the hypothesis
PE → CS	H ₄	-0.030	1.742	0.041	The data support the hypothesis
CS → CL	H ₅	0.563	6.454	0.000	The data support the hypothesis
CS → WOM	H ₇	0.267	3.159	0.001	The data support the hypothesis
CL → WOM	H ₈	0.624	7.626	0.000	The data support the hypothesis

Source: Researcher-processed data findings, 2025

Inner model testing (hypothesis testing) by looking at the results of the path coefficient significance. If the T statistic value is greater than the T table (1.650) at the 5% level, with a p-

value <0.050 , it can be said that there is a significant influence. Hypothesis testing one of the influence of Food Quality (FQ) on Customer Satisfaction (CS) obtained T Statistic $46.388 > 1.960$ with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.050$, it can be said that there is a significant and positive influence between Food Quality and Customer Satisfaction, thus H_1 can be accepted. Hypothesis testing two of the influence of Service Quality (SQ) on Customer Satisfaction (CS) obtained T Statistic $1.668 > 1.650$ with a p-value of $0.048 < 0.050$, it can be said that there is a significant and positive influence between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction. Thus H_2 is accepted. Hypothesis testing of three influences of Price (PR) on Customer Satisfaction (CS) obtained T Statistic $2.209 > 1.650$ with p-value $0.014 < 0.050$, it can be said that there is a significant and positive influence between Price and Customer Satisfaction. Thus H_3 is accepted.

Hypothesis testing of four influences of Physical Environment (PE) on Customer Satisfaction (CS) obtained T Statistic $1.742 > 1.650$ with p-value $0.041 < 0.050$, it can be said that there is a significant and positive influence between Physical Environment on Customer Satisfaction. Thus H_4 is accepted. Hypothesis testing of five influences of Customer Satisfaction (CS) on Customer Loyalty (CL) obtained T Statistic $6.454 > 1.650$ with p-value $0.000 < 0.050$, it can be said that there is a significant and positive influence between Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty. Thus H_5 is accepted.

Hypothesis testing of the seven influences of Customer Satisfaction (CS) on Word of Mouth (WoM) obtained T Statistic $3.159 > 1.650$ with p-value $0.001 < 0.050$, it can be said that there is a significant and positive influence between Customer Satisfaction and Word of Mouth. Thus H_7 is accepted. Finally, hypothesis testing of the eight influences of Customer Loyalty (CL) on Word of Mouth (WoM) obtained T Statistic $7.626 > 1.650$ with p-value $0.000 < 0.050$, it can be said that there is a significant and positive influence between Customer Loyalty and Word of Mouth. Thus H_8 is accepted.

Analysis of Moderation Effects

Table 3. Moderation Test Results

	<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>T Statistics (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>P Values</i>	<i>Information</i>
TR x CS x CL	H_6	-0.036	0.608	0.272	Data does not support the hypothesis

Source: Researcher-processed data findings, 2025

Hypothesis testing of six moderating effects of Trust (TR) on the relationship between Customer Satisfaction (CS) and Customer Loyalty (CL) obtained T Statistics $0.608 < 1.650$ with a p-value of $0.272 > 0.050$. It can be concluded that the moderating effect of Trust between the relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty is to weaken the relationship, in other words, Trust in this study does not play a role in moderating the relationship between the CP and CL variables. Thus, H_6 cannot be accepted.

The first finding in this study proves that food quality can increase Gen Z customer satisfaction at fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) in Bekasi, this is because fast food restaurants that provide fresh food tend to make consumers happy when consuming. In addition, fast food restaurants also serve nutritious and delicious food so that consumers really enjoy the food, if the quality of the food provided by the fast food restaurant is according to consumer desires, then in the minds of consumers they will feel a sense of

satisfaction that can make consumers come back to enjoy fast food. The menu presented by fast food restaurants is also varied, consumers can choose food options according to their wishes, so that their desires for the menu at fast food restaurants can be fulfilled. Food quality is still a critical factor in the overall evaluation of consumer satisfaction that influences consumer decisions in choosing fast food. Thus, this study is in line with previous studies which state that food quality has an impact on customer satisfaction (Zhong & Moon, 2020; Chun & Ochir, 2020).

Further findings prove that service quality can increase customer satisfaction of Gen Z consumers at fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) in Bekasi. This can be seen from several aspects of consumer responses that fast food restaurant employees have good product knowledge that makes consumers happy when visiting and interacting with these employees. In addition, fast food restaurant employees provide friendly service, such as when consumers have difficulty searching for a menu, fast food restaurant employees are always willing to listen to customer complaints and provide the best solutions, making consumers feel the experience of the service provided. This fast food restaurant has modern service equipment, so that consumers are more satisfied when they make menu purchases. This fast food restaurant prioritizes consumer orders to be on time to provide convenience, so that consumers feel satisfied with all the services provided by the fast food restaurant employees. These findings are in line with previous research conducted by (Saneva & Chortoseva, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2018) that service quality can have an impact on customer satisfaction.

The next finding proves that price can increase customer satisfaction of Gen Z consumers at fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) in Bekasi. Fast food restaurants always provide discount prices for their consumers on certain days that can attract consumers to come and make purchases. When consumers make payments at fast food restaurants, the restaurant provides an effective way to make payments so that it is easy for consumers to do. Then the price given by this fast food restaurant can compete with other fast food restaurants as a benchmark for consumers in making purchases. If the price available at a fast food restaurant is acceptable to customers, consumers will feel satisfied with the fast food restaurant, they can visit again for a longer period of time. The findings of this study are in line with previous studies which state that price can have an impact on customer satisfaction (Yi et al., 2018; Ali & Lee, 2019).

The results of this study also prove that the physical environment can increase customer satisfaction of Gen Z consumers at fast food restaurants in Bekasi. The music facilities provided by fast food restaurants can please their consumers as an important role in shaping consumer satisfaction. Then the employees at this fast food restaurant appear very neat, making consumers feel comfortable when interacting with employees, thus triggering consumers to be satisfied and make repeat purchases at fast food restaurants in the future. The availability of food equipment at this fast food restaurant is complete and this restaurant also prioritizes cleanliness so that consumers can feel an environment that is truly in accordance with their wishes. The interior design and decoration presented by fast food restaurants are very good and attract consumers' attention. Apart from the fast food environment, another result that can be a standard of customer satisfaction is the alignment between consumer needs and what is offered by the restaurant. Consumer satisfaction is formed through a long and continuous process between what has been done throughout the journey of the relationship between the environment and consumers. Thus, the results of this study have similarities with the research conducted by (Uddin, 2019; Singh et al., 2021) which states that the physical environment can

have an impact on customer satisfaction.

Other results in this study can also prove that customer satisfaction can have an impact on customer loyalty. Judging from the response of Gen Z consumers to fast food restaurants in Bekasi which are successful among fast food restaurants, when consumers make a menu purchase, the fast food restaurant cashier always provides an accurate payment receipt according to the menu price so that consumers feel comfortable when making transactions so that it becomes the main factor in creating a form of loyal attitude in consumers towards fast food restaurants. Consumers feel happy to be in this fast food restaurant for a long time because of the clean environment and attractive interior. In addition, this fast food restaurant can offer an experience that is comparable to the money paid. Because they feel they get value that is truly comparable to what is spent, resulting in a loyal attitude towards fast food restaurants. Consumers will lead to loyalty, because the role of customer satisfaction here is a reference in creating customer loyalty. Thus, these results are in line with previous studies which state that customer satisfaction has an impact on customer loyalty (Chikazhe et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2022).

This study also proves that trust does not moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer customer loyalty. This is because Gen Z at fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) in Bekasi is more influenced by price or loyalty programs than trust. If customers find cheaper prices or more attractive promotions from competitors, they may still switch even though they have trust in the previous brand. Then, fast food restaurant food that has been registered with BPOM does not guarantee that consumers fully trust it, especially when they hear negative reviews from other consumers about the fast food restaurant. Consumers are also not sure that this fast food restaurant food is safe and durable. When consumers are worried about fast food restaurant food ingredients that are made from safe ingredients for consumption, they will hesitate to consume it so that they will not be loyal to fast food restaurants. In addition, consumers are not sure about fast food restaurants as the best local food in their class due to the large amount of information obtained that fast food restaurant employees are lacking in handling customer complaints. When the satisfaction received does not match what consumers expect, then feelings of disappointment will arise after comparing the expected perception with another fast food, so that customers will not be loyal and customers tend to reduce their intention to come back. Expenditure costs and consumption amounts are factors that determine consumer trust, those who receive negative news about fast food restaurants will reduce their expenditures and tend to switch to other fast food restaurants. The results of this study are not in line with references stating that trust can moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Joshi & Garg, 2021).

This study also successfully proved that customer satisfaction can have an impact on word of mouth of Gen Z consumers at fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) in Bekasi. The higher the satisfaction felt by consumers towards the menu presented by fast food restaurants, the higher the impact on word of mouth information. The information provided about fast food restaurants really meets the expectations of every consumer, making consumers want to buy the menu at this fast food restaurant. When consumers feel happy being at this fast food restaurant, they will share their positive experiences with others without being asked by the restaurant. This is because the satisfaction that Gen Z consumers have received from fast food restaurants will spontaneously provide information to those closest to them to

visit, so that they also get the same experience in choosing the right fast food restaurant. These findings are similar to previous studies which state that customer satisfaction has an impact on word of mouth (Song et al., 2021; Khoo, 2022).

The latest results of this study prove that customer loyalty can have an impact on the word of mouth of Gen Z consumers at fast food restaurants in Bekasi. Loyal consumers will recommend this fast food restaurant to others as a form of their loyalty to fast food restaurants. They make fast food restaurants the best alternative to spend time with colleagues or family. When there are many fast food restaurants spread throughout the community, this fast food restaurant is their main choice because they are sure that based on the experience they get, it is in accordance with their desires and the desire to buy food and drinks at this fast food restaurant again increases. Consumers will also consume various types of food choices available on the fast food menu because the menu presented is quite interesting for consumers to enjoy so that consumers will visit this fast food restaurant at another time. Consumers will not accept input from other people when they are given recommendations for other fast food places or restaurants for them to visit, because consumers are already sure and embedded in their minds about one restaurant of their choice. The results of this study are in line with previous studies which state that customer loyalty has an impact on word of mouth (Choi & Choi, 2014; Hyun et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION, AND LIMITATIONS

This study explains how factors consisting of food quality, service quality, price and physical environment affect customer satisfaction, then customer satisfaction affects loyalty and word of mouth, and trust moderation on the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that in order to improve food quality towards customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory), fast food restaurants can present delicious menus and pay attention to each menu provided to make a positive impression on their consumers. Furthermore, in order to improve service quality towards customer satisfaction, fast food restaurants must listen to all forms of consumer complaints and provide appropriate solutions. Next, in order to increase prices towards customer satisfaction, fast food restaurants must provide prices that are acceptable to consumers, because prices can be a benchmark for consumers in making repeat purchases in the future. As for improving the physical environment towards customer satisfaction, fast food restaurants must provide clean environmental facilities so that consumers are comfortable when they are in fast food restaurants. Then to be able to increase customer satisfaction towards customer loyalty in fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory), fast food restaurants must be able to pay attention to several factors of food quality, service quality, price and physical environment optimally and measurably. Finally, when there is a problem related to purchasing, fast food restaurant employees must be able to prioritize the customer in handling customer complaints in a professional manner, so that customers get a good experience and trust when they are in fast food restaurants, which results in consumers being able to provide positive information to family and others without being asked by fast food restaurants.

There are several limitations that can be improved and developed in this study. First, in this study, the respondents studied were Gen Z at fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) which were limited to respondents in the Bekasi area. As a result, these

findings cannot represent all Gen Z at fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) in Indonesia. Therefore, for further research, researchers will provide information to increase the number of respondents in order to obtain more comprehensive results. Second, the variables included in this study should continue to be developed so that other variables related to this study can be used in different contexts. Therefore, researchers provide input for further research by including other variables. Third, there is autocorrelation in the HTMT value which indicates that respondents are not focused on filling out the questionnaire. Therefore, for further research, the questionnaire section can be distributed in such a way that it does not interfere with filling out the questionnaire.

This study has several managerial implications for improving customer satisfaction. The implications that can be drawn from the conclusions above are that this study can provide suggestions and input for fast food restaurants (KFC, McDonald's and Richeese Factory) in formulating more effective marketing strategies. It is important to prioritize food quality as an effort to improve restaurant quality, especially related to the menu offered. High quality will provide greater customer satisfaction, which of course will be more in demand by generation Z. This satisfaction will encourage a high level of trust, so that customers tend to recommend this fast food restaurant to others. This will have a positive implication on the reputation of the fast food restaurant. In addition, the consumer experience when visiting a restaurant that meets their expectations will contribute to the creation of added value for the menu. Thus, consumers will have more desire to visit again, and make it a sustainable restaurant of choice in the long term. Then in increasing word of mouth, fast food restaurant employees are given direction to greet customers in a friendly manner, provide menu recommendations, and ensure that each order is served with the best standards, so that the experience obtained by customers can provide positive information to others about the fast food restaurant.

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