

ENHANCING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION FOR WINTERHALTER DISHWASHERS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of product quality, after-sales service quality, and price perception on brand trust, mediated by customer satisfaction. Data was collected from 285 Winterhalter dishwasher customers using a purposive sampling method and a Likert scale questionnaire from December 2023 to February 2024. Employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via SmartPLS, the analysis reveals that product quality, after-sales service quality, and price perception significantly impact customer satisfaction and brand trust, both directly and indirectly through customer satisfaction. High product quality enhances customer satisfaction and brand trust, while reliable after-sales service contributes positively to both. Competitive price perceptions that align with product value also boost satisfaction and trust. Managerially, businesses should prioritize continuous product innovation, robust after-sales services, and strategic price management to improve perceived value. These strategies are essential for achieving higher customer satisfaction and building strong brand trust, ultimately supporting sustainable growth and increased market share

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki pengaruh kualitas produk, kualitas layanan purna jual, dan persepsi harga terhadap kepercayaan merek, yang dimediasi oleh kepuasan pelanggan. Data dikumpulkan dari 285 pelanggan mesin pencuci piring Winterhalter dengan menggunakan metode purposive sampling dan kuesioner skala Likert dari Desember 2023 hingga Februari 2024. Dengan menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) melalui SmartPLS, analisis menunjukkan bahwa kualitas produk, kualitas layanan purna jual, dan persepsi harga secara signifikan berdampak pada kepuasan pelanggan dan kepercayaan merek, baik secara langsung maupun tidak langsung melalui kepuasan pelanggan. Kualitas produk yang tinggi meningkatkan kepuasan pelanggan dan kepercayaan merek, sementara layanan purna jual yang dapat diandalkan memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap keduanya. Persepsi harga yang kompetitif yang selaras dengan nilai produk juga meningkatkan kepuasan dan kepercayaan. Secara manajerial, bisnis harus memprioritaskan inovasi produk yang berkelanjutan, layanan purna jual yang kuat, dan manajemen harga yang strategis untuk meningkatkan nilai yang dirasakan. Strategi-strategi ini sangat penting untuk mencapai kepuasan pelanggan yang lebih tinggi dan membangun kepercayaan merek yang kuat, yang pada akhirnya mendukung pertumbuhan yang berkelanjutan dan peningkatan pangsa pasar.

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INTRODUCTION

The kitchen equipment market in Indonesia is currently experiencing rapid development, particularly in sectors such as hotels, restaurants, catering, cafes, and hospitals. High-quality kitchen equipment is essential for hotels to maintain good facilities, especially within the Food and Beverage (F&B) department. This department is responsible for the cleaning, storage, maintenance, and distribution of kitchen equipment, with specific roles like kitchen stewards overseeing these tasks (Noviastuti & Astuti, 2021).

The importance of cleanliness and sanitary hygiene, especially for equipment in direct contact with food, drives consumers to seek efficient and reliable kitchen equipment, such as dishwashers. Sanitary hygiene involves controlling contamination risk factors from food ingredients, people, places, and equipment to ensure food safety (Permenkes RI, 2011). Nitami et al., (2022), highlight the significance of sanitary hygiene in preventing food contamination and associated health risks.

The burgeoning market has intensified competition among dishwasher manufacturers to produce high-quality products with innovative features. Winterhalter, a prominent brand, offers quality products, competitive pricing, and excellent after-sales service. The company continually innovates to ensure certified cleanliness and hygiene (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Maintaining product quality is crucial for Winterhalter to enhance customer satisfaction and retain consumer trust. Without quality products, the company risks losing consumer confidence and sales (Pratiwi & Fadhli, 2021). Quality after-sales service is equally important, as it fosters long-term consumer relationships. (Rigopoulou et al., (2008), note the significance of after-sales service across industries, while Tavakoli et al., (2016), emphasize its role in customer satisfaction and retention.

Pricing also plays a critical role in consumer perception and satisfaction. According to Solomon (2009), consumer perception involves selecting, organizing, and interpreting product benefits, with price perception reflecting the value consumers place on a product (Bose & Banerjee, 2019). Amidst fierce competition, Winterhalter continues to enhance product features and specifications, ensuring ease of use and customer satisfaction, which positively impacts brand trust. Brand trust, defined as consumers' belief in a brand's consistency, competence, and credibility, is essential for maintaining and increasing market share (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Naggari & Bendary, 2017). Trust influences loyalty in high-involvement and high-service product markets (Chiou & Droge, 2006).

While previous studies have explored the relationships between product quality, after-sales service quality, price perception, customer satisfaction, and brand trust, there is a notable gap in research focusing specifically on dishwashers within the context of the Winterhalter brand. This study aims to address this gap by providing comprehensive insights into Winterhalter's marketing management. The objective is to offer practical guidance for improving product quality, after-sales service, and price perception to enhance customer satisfaction and build robust brand trust. The findings are expected to benefit not only Winterhalter but also other companies in the kitchen appliances and home electronics industry, particularly in the dishwasher segment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Product Quality

Product quality refers to the capacity of a product to deliver performance that meets or exceeds consumer expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Consumers consider not only the tangible aspects of the goods but also the perceived quality (Pratiwi & Fadhli, 2021). In today's highly competitive market, maintaining superior product quality is crucial for companies seeking to sustain their competitive advantage.

Kotler & Keller (2012), outline several indicators of product quality, including shape, features, customization, craftsmanship, conformity to specifications, durability, reliability, ease of repair, style, and design. These indicators collectively influence a product's ability to meet consumer needs and expectations. Budi (2017) and Indrasari (2019), emphasize key aspects such as performance, features, reliability, fit, durability, ease of service, aesthetics, and the overall impression of quality. These attributes significantly impact consumer satisfaction, as higher product quality directly correlates with increased customer satisfaction (Pratiwi & Fadhli, 2021).

Previous research supports the positive relationship between product quality and customer satisfaction. Studies by Hoe & Mansori (2018), Jahanshahi et al.,(2011), and Lone & Bhat (2023), demonstrate that superior product quality enhances consumer perceptions of product value, leading to greater customer

satisfaction and brand trust. Consumers who are satisfied with product quality are more likely to develop trust in the brand, influencing their purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. Building on the literature review and addressing the identified research gap, this study proposes the following hypotheses :

H1: Product quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

H2: Product quality has a positive effect on brand trust.

H3: Product quality has a positive effect on brand trust through customer satisfaction.

After-Sales Service Quality

Service quality is defined as a global perception or attitude towards overall service excellence, representing an overall evaluation of the service (Haming, 2019). After-sales service is a critical component of this quality, encompassing services provided to customers after the product has been delivered (Rigopoulou et al., 2008). Gaiardelli et al., (2007), describe after-sales service as essential support offered to consumers throughout the product's lifecycle, ensuring optimal usage and satisfaction.

The scope of after-sales service includes the seller's responsibility for technical support and product quality. This support can take various forms, such as follow-up consultations, warranty services, and repairs or replacement of defective parts (Kurata & Nam, 2013). High-quality after-sales service offers multiple benefits, including increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and business opportunities for companies (Saccani et al., 2006). Effective after-sales service processes must be transparent, enabling easy customer contact, prompt response to complaints, problem identification, and adherence to service standards (Rebelo et al., 2021).

The dimensions of after-sales service quality include responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangible elements. These dimensions cover various aspects necessary for delivering satisfactory after-sales service and creating a positive customer experience. Responsiveness and reliability ensure that services are provided promptly and consistently. Assurance and empathy build trust and understanding between service providers and customers, while tangible elements, such as the physical aspects of service delivery, contribute to the overall service perception (Saricam, 2022).

Previous studies have demonstrated the significant impact of after-sales service quality on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Fazlzadeh et al., (2011), and Rigopoulou et al., (2008), found that dimensions of after-sales service quality positively influence customer satisfaction, which in turn affects brand trust. This relationship highlights the importance of after-sales service in maintaining long-term customer relationships and enhancing brand reputation. Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: After-sales service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction

H5: After-sales service quality has a positive effect on brand trust

H6: After-sales service quality has a positive effect on brand trust through customer satisfaction.

Price Perception

Price is defined as the amount of money charged for a product or service and the value that consumers exchange to benefit from owning or using a product or service (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). Price is a critical element of the marketing mix that generates income and revenue for companies, unlike other elements such as product, distribution, and promotion, which incur costs (Tjiptono, 2015). Hasan (2013), elaborates that price represents all forms of monetary costs sacrificed by consumers to obtain, own, and utilize a combination of goods and services from a product. Sarkar & Khare (2017), add that the impact of price on consumers can be positive or negative, depending on consumer behavior.

Price perception shapes consumer behavior and can result in satisfied or dissatisfied customers (Güzel & Baş, 2020). It encompasses the consumer's evaluation of the monetary sacrifice required to obtain a product, reflecting the value of money spent in relation to the benefits received (Feng et al., 2024). According to Kotler et al., (2018), indicators of price perception include the affordability of prices relative to the product, compatibility of price with quality, price competitiveness, and compatibility of price with benefits.

Previous research has shown that price perception significantly affects customer satisfaction. Srilestari & Santoso (2022), found that positive price perception enhances customer satisfaction, which in turn

influences brand trust. Consumers who perceive the price of a product to be fair and justified by the quality and benefits are more likely to be satisfied and develop trust in the brand. Based on the literature review and the identified research gap, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H7: Price perception has a positive effect on customer satisfaction
- H8: Price perception has a positive effect on brand trust
- H9: Price perception has a positive effect on brand trust through satisfaction
Customer

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is defined as the fulfillment of a need or desire, resulting in a sense of adequacy and contentment (Tjiptono & Gregorius, 2016). It reflects the happiness or pleasure derived from comparing a product's performance with customer expectations (Taufiq-Hail et al., 2023). Alfianto & Nurhasanah (2023) describe customer satisfaction as an emotional response when the actual situation meets or exceeds the desired situation after purchasing a product or service. Wirtz & Lovelock (2022), explain that customer satisfaction varies based on how well a service meets or exceeds expectations. Kotler & Armstrong (2012), similarly define it as the extent to which a product's perceived performance matches the buyer's expectations, with alignment or surpassing of expectations resulting in satisfaction, and misalignment resulting in dissatisfaction.

Tjiptono & Gregorius (2016), elaborate that customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction arises from the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and actual product performance. Irawan (2003), identifies indicators of customer satisfaction, including product quality, service quality, emotional factors, product prices, and the cost and ease of obtaining products or services. Satisfaction and trust in brands are crucial for customer loyalty and retention. Delgado-Ballester et al., (2003), state that brand trust is a feeling of security consumers have due to their interactions with a brand, based on the perception of the brand's reliability and responsibility. Previous research, such as Rosdayanti & Tuti (2023), establishes a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand trust, highlighting the importance of ensuring customer satisfaction to build and maintain brand trust. Based on these explanations, the following hypothesis is proposed.

- H10: Customer satisfaction has a positive effect on brand trust

Brand Trust

Trust is defined as the belief that another party will maintain the expected commitment Mansouri et al., (Mansouri et al., 2022). In the context of brands, trust is built when customers' perceptions of a company's honesty and the accuracy of its advertised goods align with the actual product. Lassoued & Hobbs (2015), describe brand trust as the sense of security consumers feel when connecting with a brand, believing it to be reliable and capable of meeting their needs. Tjiptono (2015), defines brand trust as consumers' willingness to rely on a brand in risky situations, expecting positive outcomes. A brand symbolizes trust, quality, and assurance, even without direct human interaction (Bart et al., 2005).

Several factors influence brand trust, including self-concept, need, and value (Firmansyah, 2018). Indicators of brand trust, according to Lassoued & Hobbs (2015), include credibility, brand competence, brand benevolence, and brand reputation. Firmansyah (2018), adds brand safety and brand honesty as additional indicators. This study analyzes brand trust in relation to product quality, after-sales service quality, price perception, and customer satisfaction, supported by previous research (Benhardy et al., 2020; Cynthia & Tuti, 2023; Puspita et al., 2017). The conceptual framework for this study is based on these relationships.:

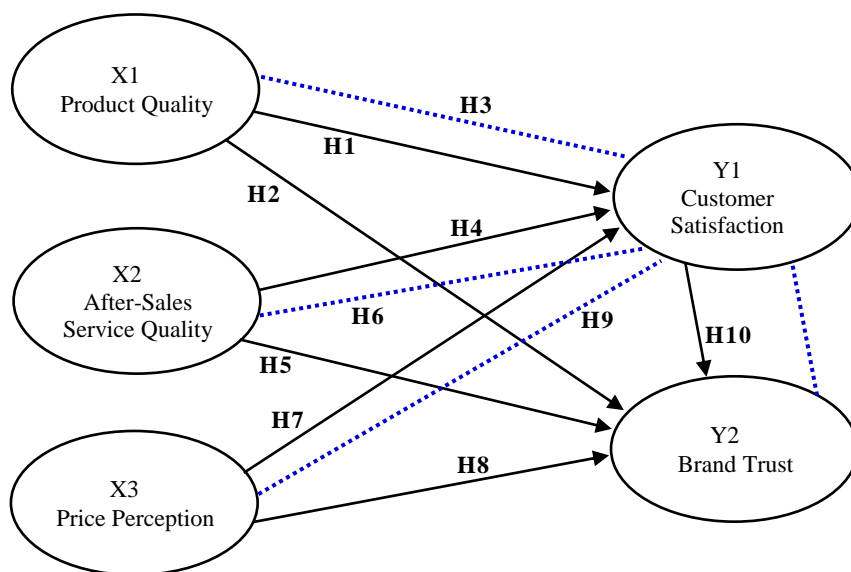


Figure 1 : Conceptual framework

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a survey method, gathering data from 285 Winterhalter customers who have made at least one purchase through purposive sampling. Conducted over three months (December 2023 to February 2024), respondents completed a structured questionnaire measuring their experiences with Winterhalter products and services on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via SmartPLS to test the direct and indirect effects of product quality, after-sales service quality, and price perception on customer satisfaction and brand trust. This methodology provides comprehensive insights into the factors influencing customer satisfaction and brand trust.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Description Respondents

Table 1 provides insights into the demographic and categorical composition of Winterhalter's customer base. The majority of respondents are female (54.5%) and aged 26-35 (54%), indicating a young demographic. Most are from the Hotel/Restaurant sector (87.7%) and reside in Java (80%), highlighting a concentration in the hospitality industry and Java region. Customers prioritize product quality (60.7%) and price (29.8%), with a lesser emphasis on after-sales service (7%) and innovation (2.5%). Information about Winterhalter spreads mainly through personal networks (49.2%) and social media (30.1%), suggesting effective word-of-mouth and digital marketing. To maintain and grow customer trust and satisfaction, Winterhalter should focus on enhancing product quality, leveraging social media, and optimizing pricing strategies.

Table 1: Description of Respondent

Demographic	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	130	45.5
Female	155	54.5
Age		
17 – 25 Years	18	6.3
26 – 35 Years	154	54.0
36 – 45 Years	73	25.6
46 – 55 Years	33	11.6

Demographic	Frequency	Percent (%)
> 56 Years	7	2.5
Category		
Hotel/Restaurant	250	87.7
Catering	12	4.2
Hospital	15	5.2
Club Bars/Karaoke/Golf/Club House	8	2.9
Domicile		
Java	228	80.0
Sumatera	21	7.3
Bali	14	4.9
Kalimantan	7	2.5
Sulawesi	9	3.1
NTB & NTT	4	1.4
Papua & Maluku	2	0.8
What to like about Winterhalter		
Product Quality	173	60.7
After-Sales Service	20	7.0
Price	85	29.8
Innovation	7	2.5
Know about Winterhalter		
Friends/Relatives	140	49.2
Media Social	86	30.1
Exhibition	27	9.3
Flyer/Pamphlet	14	4.9
Website Winterhalter	18	6.5
Total	285	100

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Figure 2 illustrates the structural framework showing the relationships between Product Quality, After-Sales Service Quality, Price Perception, Customer Satisfaction, and Brand Trust. The standardized path coefficients reveal that After-Sales Service Quality has the strongest direct impact on Customer Satisfaction (0.375), followed by Product Quality (0.143) and Price Perception (0.132). Customer Satisfaction also has a significant direct effect on Brand Trust (0.327), highlighting its mediating role. Constructs are measured by indicators with strong loading factors, such as durability (0.763) and features and function (0.817) for Product Quality, and responsiveness (0.830) and problem-solving (0.753) for After-Sales Service Quality. The model demonstrates that enhancing After-Sales Service Quality, maintaining high Product Quality, and ensuring competitive Price Perception are essential for boosting Customer Satisfaction, which in turn significantly enhances Brand Trust. This underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach to customer service and quality management in building strong brand relationships, with the robust loading factors confirming the accuracy of these measurements.

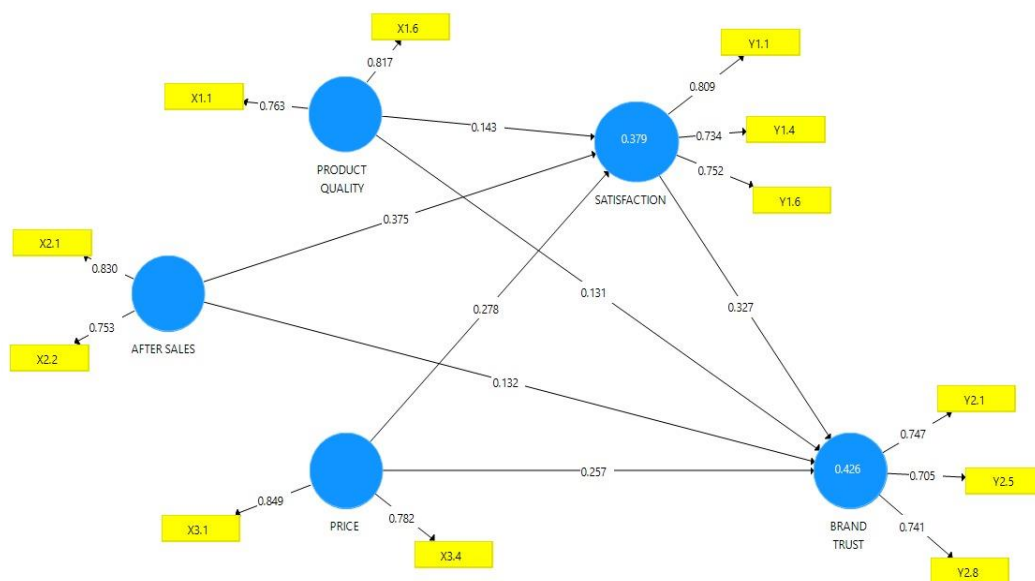


Figure 2 : Structural Framework

Table 2 evaluates the measurement model by detailing loading factors, reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for indicators across five variables: Product Quality (X1), After-Sales Service Quality (X2), Price Perception (X3), Customer Satisfaction (Y1), and Brand Trust (Y2). For Product Quality (X1), durability (X1.1, 0.763), and features and function (X1.6, 0.817) are significant, with reliability of 0.769 and AVE of 0.625. After-Sales Service Quality (X2) includes responsiveness (X2.1, 0.830) and problem-solving (X2.2, 0.753), with reliability of 0.771 and AVE of 0.627. Price Perception (X3) is measured by price competitiveness (X3.1, 0.849) and perceived value (X3.4, 0.782), achieving reliability of 0.800 and AVE of 0.666. Customer Satisfaction (Y1) includes overall satisfaction (Y1.1, 0.809), timeliness of service (Y1.4, 0.734), and innovation product (Y1.6, 0.752), with a reliability of 0.809 and AVE of 0.586. Brand Trust (Y2) is assessed through perceived reliability (Y2.1, 0.747), customer testimonial (Y2.5, 0.705), and warranty and guarantees (Y2.8, 0.741), with reliability of 0.775 and AVE of 0.534. Overall, the data confirms strong internal consistency and convergent validity for all variables, with loading factors above the acceptable threshold, reliability values between 0.769 and 0.809, and AVE values between 0.534 and 0.666, indicating a robust and reliable measurement model.

Table 2: Evaluation of Measurement Model

Variable	Indicator	Item Loading Factor	Reliability	AVE
Product Quality (X1)	1. Durability	X1.1 0.763	0.769	0.625
	2. Material Quality			
	3. Features and Function	X1.6 0.817		
	4. Aesthetic Appeal			
<i>(Kotler & Keller, 2012)</i>				
After-Sales Service Quality (X2)	1. Responsiveness	X2.1 0.830	0.771	0.627
	2. Availability of Spare Part			
	3. Problem Solving	X2.2 0.753		
	4. Customer Support			
<i>(Saricam, 2022)</i>				
Price Perception (X3)	1. Price Competitiveness	X3.1 0.849	0.800	0.666
	2. Perceived Value of Money	X3.4 0.782		
	3. Price Transparency			

Variable	Indicator	Item Loading	Factor	Reliability	AVE
<i>(Kotler et al., 2018)</i>					
Customer Satisfaction (Y1)	1. Overall Satisfaction	Y1.1	0.809	0.809	0.586
	2. Problem Resolution				
	3. Timeliness of Service	Y1.4	0.734		
	4. Innovation Product	Y1.6	0.752		
<i>(Irawan, 2003)</i>					
Brand Trust (Y2)	1. Perceived Reliability	Y2.1	0.747	0.775	0.534
	2. Consistency in Quality				
	3. Positive Reputation				
	4. Customer Testimonial	Y2.5	0.705		
	5. Warranty and Guarantees	Y2.8	0.741		
	6. Recommendation Intention				
<i>(Lassoued & Hobbs, 2015)</i>					

Source : Processed Data, 2024

Table 3 confirms the discriminant validity of the constructs using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeds its correlations with other constructs. This indicates that Product Quality (0.781), After-Sales Service Quality (0.792), Price Perception (0.816), Customer Satisfaction (0.766), and Brand Trust (0.731) each have good discriminant validity. For instance, the AVE square root for Product Quality (0.781) is higher than its correlations with After-Sales Service Quality (0.386), Price Perception (0.409), Customer Satisfaction (0.401), and Brand Trust (0.419). This pattern is consistent across all constructs, verifying their distinctiveness and supporting the robustness and reliability of the measurement model. Discriminant validity is considered valid when each variable shows a higher factor loading on its latent construct compared to others, and when the square root of the AVE is greater than any correlation between the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, the data in Table 3 validates the discriminant validity of the model.

Table 3 : Discriminant Validity-Fornell Lacker

Variable	Product Quality	After-Sales Service Quality	Price Perception	Customer Satisfaction	Brand Trust
Product Quality	0,781				
After-Sales Service Quality	0,386	0,792			
Price Perception	0,409	0,319	0,816		
Customer Satisfaction	0,401	0,519	0,456	0,766	
Brand Trust	0,419	0,434	0,502	0,565	0,731

Source : Processed Data, 2024

Table 4 presents the Collinearity Statistics (VIF) for the variables influencing Customer Satisfaction and Brand Trust. All VIF values are below the common threshold of 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues. Specifically, for Customer Satisfaction, Product Quality has a VIF of 1.316, After-Sales Service Quality 1.220, and Price Perception 1.246. For Brand Trust, Product Quality has a VIF of 1.349, After-Sales Service Quality 1.447, Price Perception 1.371, and Customer Satisfaction 1.610. These values suggest that each predictor variable is relatively independent and provides a reliable contribution to the model. Thus, the model is robust, with no significant collinearity concerns affecting the regression analysis.

Table 4 : Collinearity Statistic (VIF)

Variable	Customer Satisfaction	Brand Trust
Product Quality	1,316	1,349
After-Sales Service Quality	1,220	1,447
Price Perception	1,246	1,371
Customer Satisfaction		1,610
Brand Trust		

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Table 5 shows the R Square and R Square Adjusted values for Customer Satisfaction and Brand Trust. Customer Satisfaction has an R Square of 0.379 and an adjusted R Square of 0.372, indicating that 37.2% of the variability in Customer Satisfaction can be explained by the model's predictors. Brand Trust has an R Square of 0.426 and an adjusted R Square of 0.418, suggesting that 41.8% of the variability in Brand Trust is accounted for by the model. These values demonstrate a moderate level of explanatory power, indicating that the model reasonably explains the variations in Customer Satisfaction and Brand Trust.

Table 5 : R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Customer Satisfaction	0,379	0,372
Brand Trust	0,426	0,418

Source : Processed Data, 2024

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values for both the Saturated Model and the Estimated Model are 0.090, indicating a good fit as values below 0.10 suggest. This confirms the robustness of the model in accurately capturing the relationships between variables. Introduced by Henseler et al., (2014), to prevent model misspecification, SRMR is a fit metric for PLS-SEM with a cutoff value set between 0.08 and 0.09 (Cho et al., 2020). In this study, the SRMR value meets the threshold of 0.09, making it acceptable.

Table 6 presents the results of the F-test analyzing the impact of various factors on customer satisfaction and brand trust. Product Quality, After-Sales Service Quality, and Price Perception all positively influence both customer satisfaction and brand trust, with After-Sales Service Quality having the highest impact on customer satisfaction (0.186) and Price Perception having the highest impact on brand trust (0.084). Additionally, customer satisfaction significantly influences brand trust (0.116). These findings highlight that enhancing product quality, after-sales service, and price perception are crucial for boosting both customer satisfaction and brand trust, ultimately leading to stronger brand loyalty and customer retention.

Table 6. F Test

Variable	Customer Satisfaction	Brand Trust
Product Quality	0.025	0.022
After-Sales Service Quality	0.186	0.021
Price Perception	0.100	0.084
Customer Satisfaction		0.116
Brand Trust		

Source : Processed Data, 2024

Table 7 shows significant path coefficients and accepted hypotheses for the relationships between variables. Product Quality positively impacts Customer Satisfaction (0.143, T = 2.429, P = 0.015) and Brand Trust (0.131, T = 2.556, P = 0.011), with Customer Satisfaction mediating the effect on Brand Trust (0.047, T = 2.345, P = 0.019). After-Sales Service Quality strongly influences Customer Satisfaction (0.375, T = 6.681, P = 0.000) and affects Brand Trust directly (0.132, T = 2.097, P = 0.036) and indirectly through Customer Satisfaction (0.123, T = 4.178, P = 0.000). Price Perception significantly affects Customer Satisfaction (0.278, T = 4.900, P = 0.000) and Brand Trust (0.257, T = 4.788, P = 0.000), with an indirect effect through Customer Satisfaction (0.091, T = 3.703, P = 0.000). Customer Satisfaction itself strongly influences Brand Trust (0.327, T = 6.010, P = 0.000). The T values above 1.96 and P values below 0.05 confirm the model's robustness and the significant impact of the variables on Customer Satisfaction and Brand Trust

Table 7 : Path Coefficients

Variable	Sample Original (O)	Mean Sample (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Statistik T (O/STDEV)	P Value	Results
Product Quality -> Customer Satisfaction	0,143	0,144	0,059	2,429	0,015	Accepted
Product Quality -> Brand Trust	0,131	0,135	0,051	2,556	0,011	Accepted

Product Quality -> Customer Satisfaction -> Brand Trust	0,047	0,047	0,020	2,345	0,019	Accepted
After-Sales Service Quality -> Customer Satisfaction	0,375	0,376	0,056	6,681	0,000	Accepted
After-Sales Service Quality -> Brand Trust	0,132	0,128	0,063	2,097	0,036	Accepted
After-Sales Service Quality -> Customer Satisfaction -> Brand Trust	0,123	0,125	0,029	4,178	0,000	Accepted
Price Perception -> Customer Satisfaction	0,278	0,275	0,057	4,900	0,000	Accepted
Price Perception -> Brand Trust	0,257	0,258	0,054	4,788	0,000	Accepted
Price Perception -> Customer Satisfaction -> Brand Trust	0,091	0,091	0,025	3,703	0,000	Accepted
Customer Satisfaction -> Brand Trust	0,327	0,332	0,054	6,010	0,000	Accepted

Source: Processed Data, 2024

DISCUSSION

The results of hypothesis testing show that product quality, after-sales service quality, and price perception all have a significant influence on customer satisfaction and brand trust. These findings are consistent with previous research showing the importance of these factors in building strong relationships between customers and brands.

First, product quality has a significant influence on customer satisfaction and brand trust. This is in line with Kotler & Keller (2012), which states that product quality is the product's ability to meet or exceed consumer expectations. Research by Pratiwi & Fadhli (2021), also shows that good product quality increases customer satisfaction, which in turn increases brand trust. In business practice, companies need to continuously improve the quality of their products to maintain and increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. High-quality products not only meet customer expectations but also create positive perceptions that strengthen brand trust.

Second, after-sales service quality shows a significant influence on customer satisfaction and brand trust. This supports the findings of Rigopoulou et al., (2008), that good after-sales service can strengthen customer relationships with companies. Tavakoli et al., (2016), also emphasized the importance of after-sales service in influencing customer satisfaction. Practical implementation in business is to ensure that customers receive adequate support after purchase, including maintenance and availability of spare parts. Good after-sales service can increase customer trust in products and brands because customers feel supported and valued.

Third, price perception is also proven to have a significant influence on customer satisfaction and brand trust. Solomon (2009), states that price perception is how consumers perceive the value they get from the products they buy. Bose & Banerjee (2019), added that positive price perceptions can increase customer satisfaction and brand trust. In business practice, companies need to set competitive prices and by the value perceived by customers. Prices that are considered fair and comparable to product quality can increase customer satisfaction and strengthen brand trust.

Fourth, customer satisfaction acts as a significant mediating variable between product quality, after-sales service quality, price perception, and brand trust. This shows that customer satisfaction is key in building brand trust. Research by Hoe & Mansori (2018), as well as Jahanshahi et al.,(2011), support these findings by stating that high customer satisfaction can increase brand loyalty and trust. In business practice, companies should focus on strategies that increase overall customer satisfaction. High customer satisfaction not only makes customers buy again but also creates long-term relationships that are profitable for the company.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study highlight the substantial impact of superior product quality, prompt after-sales service, and competitive pricing on customer satisfaction and brand trust, particularly in the hospitality sector in Java. The extensive use of Winterhalter Dishwashers in hotels and restaurants underscores the importance of these factors in influencing consumer choices. Notably, consumers prioritize

product quality and recommendations from peers, demonstrating the critical role that perceived value and word-of-mouth play in brand trust and customer satisfaction.

To maintain and enhance customer satisfaction and brand trust, companies must prioritize continuous improvement in product quality through innovation and rigorous quality control measures. Strengthening after-sales service is also essential, as it reinforces customer loyalty and satisfaction by ensuring that customers feel supported and valued post-purchase. Moreover, managing price perceptions by aligning prices with the perceived value of products can further enhance customer satisfaction and foster long-term brand loyalty. These strategies are integral to sustaining business growth and increasing market share in competitive industries.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

To address the research gaps identified in this study, future research should focus on the combined impact of product quality, after-sales service, and price perception on long-term brand loyalty, which has been underexplored in existing literature. While this study highlights their importance individually, particularly within the hospitality sector in Java, there is a need to generalize these findings across different regions and industries.

Building on this, future studies should incorporate broader variables such as brand image, customer experience, and perceived value—factors emphasized by previous researchers like Keller (2001), Aaker (1996), and Verhoef et al.,(2009), to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior. Additionally, as suggested by Hofstede (1984), cultural differences and technological advancements should be examined to see how they influence customer satisfaction and brand trust across various contexts. By conducting research across diverse settings and using a longitudinal approach, future studies can offer deeper insights into how these relationships evolve over time, helping businesses develop more effective strategies for enhancing customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

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