



## **Store Atmosphere, Perceived Price, and Customer Loyalty: The Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction in Madura Grocery Stores**

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**Abstract**

**Background:** The increasingly fierce competition between traditional grocery stores, modern convenience stores, and e-commerce requires retail businesses to build customer loyalty in an ongoing manner. However, the results of previous research on the influence of store atmosphere and perceived price on customer loyalty still show inconsistencies, so mediation variables are needed to explain the relationship.

**Objective:** This study aims to analyze the influence of store atmosphere and perceived price on customer loyalty with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable in consumers of Madura grocery stores in Malang City.

**Methods:** The research uses a quantitative approach with the explanatory research method. Data was obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to 200 respondents who were selected using purposive sampling techniques, then analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

**Results:** The results show that store atmosphere and perceived price positively affect customer satisfaction and loyalty. Customer satisfaction also positively affects loyalty and significantly mediates the effects of store atmosphere and perceived price on customer loyalty. The novelty lies in testing this mediation model in Madura grocery stores, traditional 24-hour retailers facing competition from modern retail and e-commerce.

**Conclusion:** These findings confirm that increased customer loyalty is more effectively achieved through the creation of a satisfying shopping experience, supported by a comfortable store atmosphere and competitive and fair price perception.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The growth of the regional economy is closely linked to the contributions made by micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Among the sectors driving MSME development, the retail industry holds a particularly important position. As the final link in the distribution chain, retail serves as the point where goods manufactured and channeled through intermediaries are ultimately made available to end consumers.

Data from KOMINFO (2022) indicates that the total number of retail investors across East Java Province had risen to 8.62 million by 2022, reflecting a 15.11% increase from the figures recorded in December 2021. When categorized by type, traditional grocery stores represent the largest segment of the retail landscape, totaling approximately 3.57 million units. Supermarket-format retail follows with 1,411 outlets, while forecourt retailers and hypermarkets account for

358 and 285 units, respectively (Data Indonesia, 2022).

On a global scale, the retail sector has experienced a significant structural shift driven by the rapid adoption of digital technologies. Euromonitor International (2023) reported that worldwide e-commerce retail revenues amounted to USD 5.8 trillion in 2023, marking a 56% growth compared to pre-pandemic figures in 2019, with the Asia-Pacific region contributing more than 60% of all digital retail transactions. The World Bank (2022) highlighted that accelerating digitalization in developing economies is fundamentally altering how consumers behave, as they increasingly engage in cross-channel price comparisons between online platforms and physical stores prior to purchasing. Furthermore, a McKinsey Global Institute (2022) report revealed that approximately 75% of urban consumers in Southeast Asia now demonstrate omnichannel shopping patterns — verifying prices digitally before completing purchases at brick-and-mortar outlets. These developments emphasize the critical importance of investigating how traditional retailers, including Madura grocery stores, can sustain customer loyalty by leveraging store atmosphere and pricing strategies within an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Grocery stores represent a ubiquitous form of retail establishment commonly found within residential neighborhoods, offering a broad assortment of products ranging from food items and beverages to various household necessities. Despite facing intense competitive pressure from modern minimarkets and organized retail chains, grocery stores continue to hold significant relevance in Indonesian society. They function as primary distribution points for everyday essentials, particularly in communities situated far from contemporary shopping centers.

Beyond their commercial role, these stores serve as cultural landmarks and communal gathering spaces that foster social interaction among local residents (Windi Herlin Dera et al., 2023). Their broader economic significance encompasses local employment generation and the support of supply chain networks involving regional suppliers (Fitrianto et al, 2020). Madura grocery stores have established a distinctive and widely recognized brand identity across Indonesia. Their characteristic uniformity in appearance and their well-known practice of operating around the clock have made them instantly identifiable to consumers, thereby fostering a strong and lasting brand perception (Sulistiyowati et al., 2024).

Madura grocery stores, often referred to as *warung Madura*, constitute a distinct category of traditional retail that differentiates itself through continuous 24-hour operation and the provision of comparatively lower-priced merchandise. These establishments maintain a pervasive presence, occupying nearly every corner of both urban and rural residential areas, which ensures high accessibility for local communities. Their strategic positioning (typically along main thoroughfares, adjacent to housing areas, or near marketplaces) further enhances their reach.

The proliferation of Madura grocery stores throughout Indonesia commenced during the 1990s, initially concentrated in the Jakarta metropolitan area, before expanding progressively to provinces such as West Java, Central Java, and East Java. In East Java specifically, the number of these stores grew from 357 units in 2012 to 382 in 2014, reaching 8,458 units by 2019 (BPS, 2019). Nevertheless, these stores confront several operational challenges, including incomplete product inventories, insufficient management systems for handling customer grievances, inadequate store cleanliness and organization affecting the shopping experience, delays in replenishing in-demand merchandise, and limited capacity to offer supplementary services such as home delivery or custom orders.

An additional challenge confronting Madura stores stems from the competitive threat posed by e-commerce platforms as a consequence of ongoing digital transformation. BPS (2023) data reveals that the number of e-commerce enterprises in Indonesia expanded by 4.46% through 2022. Compounding this digital competition, Madura stores must also contend with the aggressive growth of minimarket chains; Pahlevi (2021) documented that minimarket outlets experienced approximately 39% growth between 2015 and 2020. These competitive dynamics underscore the imperative for Madura stores to develop strategic approaches for attracting and retaining consumers, with customer loyalty emerging as the most critical consideration. The continuous cultivation and enhancement of customer loyalty is essential, as it directly contributes to business sustainability and strengthens organizational resilience against competitive pressures (Budiman & Ardhiyansyah, 2023).

The absence of professional and systematic store management practices (encompassing inventory control, product arrangement, price display, customer service delivery, and the maintenance of a clean and comfortable shopping environment) directly diminishes consumer comfort and shapes negative perceptions (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001). Such conditions risk undermining customer satisfaction and obstructing the development of customer loyalty, which constitutes an essential cornerstone for ensuring the long-term viability of traditional grocery operations. Moreover, competitive intensity in the grocery sector continues to escalate with the expansion of modern retail formats.

The establishment of modern convenience chains such as Indomaret and Alfamart has influenced public perceptions regarding declining revenues and diminishing customer bases at traditional stores. Consequently, Madura grocery stores must devise effective management strategies oriented toward cultivating enduring relationships with their customer base. Sound management practices are expected to strengthen consumer loyalty toward the store, grounded in the satisfaction derived from their shopping experience. These empirical conditions directly reflect the significance of the three core variables investigated in this study: (1) store atmosphere — the physical and environmental attributes of the store that shape consumer experience; (2) perceived price — the consumer's cognitive assessment of whether prices at Madura grocery stores are competitive and equitable relative to the value received; and (3) customer satisfaction — the affective response that mediates the relationship between these stimuli and behavioral outcomes, including customer loyalty. The correspondence between these field-level phenomena and the selected research variables confirms that this study addresses a genuine and empirically substantiated management problem.

Oliver (2014) characterizes customer loyalty as a deeply held commitment by consumers to consistently repurchase or give preference to a particular product, whether in the form of goods or services. Observable manifestations of consumer loyalty include habitual purchasing patterns, willingness to explore different offerings within the same product line, active recommendation of the product to others, and demonstrated resistance to the appeal of competing alternatives (Sasela et al., 2023). Within the retail sector, multiple determinants have been identified as influential in shaping customer loyalty, most notably store atmosphere and perceived price (Sabilla & Kurniawati, 2023).

Store atmosphere refers to an integrated configuration of a store's physical elements, including architectural design, spatial layout, illumination, visual appearance, color scheme, ambient temperature, background music, and overall olfactory characteristics, which collectively shape the store's perceived image. When a store maintains high standards of cleanliness, provides adequate lighting, arranges merchandise in an orderly manner, and ensures both physical and social comfort, consumers are more inclined to feel at ease during their shopping experience, thereby increasing the probability of repeat visits and long-term patronage. A well-crafted atmosphere also enhances customer engagement and creates memorable impressions (Fernando & Djunaid, 2023).

Empirical evidence from several studies Hapsari & Octavia (2025) supports the proposition that store atmosphere exerts a significant positive influence on customer loyalty within grocery retail contexts. As a fundamental physical attribute, store atmosphere plays a pivotal role across diverse business environments by fostering favorable conditions (such as comfort, locational convenience, and distinctive store characteristics) that enhance positive consumer perceptions. Nonetheless, contrasting findings from Hendra Saputra et al. (2024) suggest that store atmosphere does not always significantly affect customer loyalty. Lazuardi et al. (2022) further conceptualizes store atmosphere as a distinctive differentiating characteristic that stores cultivate to develop their brand image and attract consumers who seek a comfortable and inviting shopping environment.

Perceived price constitutes another critically important factor in determining a company's (retailer's) market share and profitability (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001). The perceived price variable is particularly relevant to enhancing customer loyalty because it directly influences consumer perceptions regarding purchasing decisions at Madura stores. Given the presence of formidable competitors, the assessment of price perception becomes an indispensable consideration, as it represents one of the primary benchmarks against which consumers compare alternative retail options. Consumers typically gravitate toward stores that provide promotional

discounts and maintain comparatively more affordable pricing structures.

Traditional grocery stores inherently position themselves near their consumer base. Amid fierce market competition, these stores establish competitive pricing relative to neighboring retail establishments. Accordingly, pricing strategies are calibrated to remain affordable for consumers within the surrounding community, thereby serving as a mechanism for both attracting new customers and reinforcing existing loyalty. Product pricing reflects careful consideration of local purchasing power and prevailing consumer needs. Excessively high prices tend to suppress purchasing decisions, whereas appropriately calibrated pricing can strengthen customer loyalty (Amri, 2023). Empirical evidence from Maulana et al. (2024) demonstrated that perceived price exerts a significant positive influence on customer loyalty, a finding consistent with the work of (Dimiyati & Subagio, 2016). Conversely, the studies of Nugroho (2018) yielded contrasting results, indicating that perceived price does not significantly impact customer loyalty.

The foregoing discussion reveals notable inconsistencies across prior studies examining the effects of store atmosphere and perceived price on customer loyalty. This divergence in findings necessitates the incorporation of a mediating variable to elucidate the underlying relationship. The mediating variable selected for this investigation is customer satisfaction. a (2024) conceptualizes customer satisfaction as the positive or negative evaluative response that emerges when consumers compare actual product performance against their prior expectations. When service delivery falls short of expectations or proves unsatisfactory, consumers experience disappointment. Conversely, consumers derive heightened satisfaction when service quality surpasses their anticipations, and achieve baseline satisfaction when service matches their expectations.

A systematic analysis of these empirical inconsistencies identifies three principal explanatory factors. First, variations in research populations: investigations conducted in modern minimarkets and supermarkets (Aulia et al. (2025) detected significant store atmosphere effects because their consumer segments possess greater discretionary income and assign higher importance to shopping aesthetics, whereas consumers frequenting traditional grocery stores Hendra Saputra et al. (2024) are predominantly motivated by functional and economic considerations. Second, differences in consumer decision-making processes: habitual shoppers in traditional retail environments typically engage in low-involvement purchasing where the marginal influence of physical atmosphere is inherently limited. Third, variations in retail outlet type and competitive context: Madura grocery stores operate within a distinctive competitive landscape defined by proximity-based advantages and price-driven competition with both modern minimarkets and e-commerce platforms. These structural differences account for the inconsistent relationship between store atmosphere and customer loyalty across studies, and substantiate the necessity of incorporating a mediating variable (customer satisfaction) to capture the conditional pathway through which store atmosphere shapes loyalty behavior.

Customer satisfaction functions as an intermediary mechanism linking store atmosphere to loyalty outcomes. Their findings indicate that store atmosphere positively and significantly influences customer satisfaction, which in turn exerts a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. Corroborating evidence from Ndengane et al. (2021) imilarly confirms the mediating function of customer satisfaction in the store atmosphere–loyalty relationship. Furthermore, Rochmah & Muzdalifah (2024) demonstrated that customer satisfaction effectively mediates the relationship between perceived price and customer loyalty, establishing that satisfaction can serve as a bridging variable between price perception and loyalty outcomes. This conclusion aligns with the findings of Kurniawan et al. (2024), who reported that perceived price positively and significantly influences customer satisfaction, and that customer satisfaction subsequently exerts a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

This investigation contributes to the literature through three distinct dimensions of novelty. First, the study focuses specifically on Madura grocery stores (a culturally unique and operationally distinctive segment of traditional retail characterized by round-the-clock operations) a context that has not been systematically examined in prior research on store atmosphere and price perception. Second, departing from the predominantly direct-relationship models employed in existing studies, this research explicitly incorporates customer satisfaction as a mediating mechanism, thereby offering a more comprehensive account of how loyalty is formed. Third, this study synthesizes the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework,

Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory, Relationship Marketing Theory, and Customer Value Theory into an integrated explanatory model, providing a more robust theoretical foundation than studies that rely on a singular theoretical perspective. These contributions collectively position this research as a meaningful extension of the traditional retail marketing literature within the Indonesian context.

This investigation seeks to examine how store atmosphere and perceived price influence customer loyalty at Madura grocery stores in Malang City, considering both direct pathways and indirect pathways mediated by customer satisfaction. Specifically, the study analyzes: the effect of store atmosphere on customer loyalty; the effect of perceived price on customer loyalty; the effect of store atmosphere on customer satisfaction; the effect of perceived price on customer satisfaction; and the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty. Additionally, this research evaluates the mediating function of customer satisfaction in the relationship between store atmosphere and customer loyalty, as well as in the relationship between perceived price and customer loyalty at Madura grocery stores in Malang City.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research contributes to the marketing discipline by providing empirical validation of the SOR framework within the traditional retail context, and by establishing that customer satisfaction operates as an essential conditional mechanism, rather than a supplementary element, in the process of loyalty formation. From a practical perspective, the findings are designed to offer actionable recommendations for Madura grocery store proprietors and local government policymakers in formulating competitive strategies that harmonize physical store enhancements with competitive pricing and service quality improvements, ultimately supporting the resilience and sustainability of traditional retail MSMEs amid modern retail and e-commerce competition.

## METHOD

This investigation employed a quantitative research design predicated on the examination of relationships among variables, utilizing numerical data as the basis for analysis. The quantitative method was specifically designed to explain phenomena through the statistical analysis of numerical data, enabling the testing of research hypotheses and the prediction of interrelationships among variables. The study was conducted in Malang City, which was selected as the research site because it represented a location containing the target population. The data collection phase spanned approximately two months.

The study population comprised consumers of Madura grocery stores throughout Malang City, with the total population size being unknown. Following Roscoe's (1975) guidelines for sample size determination, the researcher established a sample of 200 respondents. This figure satisfied Roscoe's stipulated minimum of 30 participants for adequate statistical power. Moreover, applying Roscoe's rule of thumb that the minimum sample size for multivariate research should equal at least 10 times the number of model variables or indicators, the 19 indicators distributed across four constructs in this study yielded a minimum requirement of 190 respondents. The selected sample of 200 therefore exceeded this threshold and met the practical recommendation of at least 100 participants for structural equation modeling applications (Hair Jr et al., 2017). Respondent selection followed a purposive sampling strategy governed by two inclusion criteria: (1) a minimum age of 17 years and (2) a history of at least two shopping visits to a Madura grocery store within the preceding three months. These criteria ensured that respondents had sufficient experiential familiarity with the research context to provide reliable responses.

This study drew upon both primary and secondary data sources. Secondary data were compiled from published documents, research reports, and various institutional publications, supplemented by information from academic books, journal articles, and internet-based scientific resources. Primary data were gathered directly from original sources through first-hand data collection, without reliance on intermediary channels.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered directly to consumers of Madura grocery stores in Malang City. The data collection process was conducted face-to-face (in person), with questionnaires physically distributed to respondents at Madura grocery store locations spanning five sub-districts within Malang City: Lowokwaru, Klojen, Blimbing, Sukun, and Kedungkandang. The questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert response

format, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Measurement instruments for each variable were drawn from previously validated scales in the existing literature. Store Atmosphere comprised seven items, Perceived Price comprised five items adapted from Zeithaml (1988), Customer Satisfaction comprised three items adapted from Oliver (2014), and Customer Loyalty comprised three items adapted from (Oliver, 2014). Content validity was established through expert evaluation prior to the administration of the primary survey.

Regarding research ethics, all participation was voluntary. Respondents received clear information about the academic nature of the study, and assurances of response confidentiality were provided. No personally identifiable data were collected, and all respondents provided informed consent before completing the survey instrument. Data analysis was performed using path analysis through Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), implemented in SmartPLS 4 software.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 200 consumers of Madura grocery stores in Malang City who were selected using purposive sampling, with the criteria of being at least 17 years old and having shopped at least twice in the last three months. Data was collected through the distribution of questionnaires directly (offline).

**Table 1.**

*Characteristics of Research Respondents*

| Characteristics  | Categories        | Quantity | Percentage |
|------------------|-------------------|----------|------------|
| Gender           | Male - Male       | 118      | 59%        |
|                  | Women             | 82       | 41%        |
| Age              | 62 - 80 Years     | 34       | 17%        |
|                  | 46 - 61 Years Old | 54       | 27%        |
|                  | 30 - 45 Years     | 78       | 39%        |
|                  | 17 - 29 Years     | 34       | 17%        |
|                  |                   |          |            |
| Operational Area | Lowokwaru         | 64       | 32%        |
|                  | Klojen            | 52       | 26%        |
|                  | Blimbing          | 38       | 19%        |
|                  | Sukun             | 26       | 13%        |
|                  | Kedungkandang     | 20       | 10%        |

An examination of the 200 respondents' demographic profiles reveals a predominantly male composition (59%), with female respondents accounting for 41%. The age distribution indicates that millennials (aged 30–45) constitute the largest group at 39%, followed by Generation X (aged 46–61) at 27%, while both Generation Z (aged 17–29) and baby boomers (aged 62–80) each represent 17% of the sample. Regarding geographic distribution, respondents were drawn from across all five sub-districts: Lowokwaru (32%), Klojen (26%), Blimbing (19%), Sukun (13%), and Kedungkandang (10%). This demographic and geographic composition demonstrates that the research sample adequately represents the diverse population segments and regional spread within Malang City, thereby supporting the external validity of the findings and their potential generalizability to the broader consumer population of Madura grocery stores in the city.

#### Description of Research Variables

A descriptive analysis was undertaken to characterize respondent perceptions across all research variables, using the mean value of responses measured on a 1-to-5 Likert scale. Mean scores were classified into five interpretive categories: very low (1.00–1.80), low (1.81–2.60), medium (2.61–3.40), high (3.41–4.20), and very high (4.21–5.00).

**Table 2.**

*Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables*

| Variable                   | Number of Items | Red  | Std. Deviation | Categories |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------|----------------|------------|
| Store atmosphere (SA)      | 7               | 3,82 | 0,64           | High       |
| Customer satisfaction (CS) | 5               | 4,15 | 0,58           | High       |
| Perceived price (PP)       | 3               | 3,91 | 0,61           | High       |
| Customer loyalty (CL)      | 4               | 4,02 | 0,59           | High       |

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that all research variables were in the high category, which reflected the positive perception of respondents towards Madura grocery stores. The perceived price variable obtained the highest average score (4.15), followed by customer loyalty (4.02), customer satisfaction (3.91), and store atmosphere (3.82). These findings show that price advantage is the aspect that consumers appreciate the most, while the store atmosphere, while rated well, still has room for improvement.

### Evaluation of Measurement Models (Outer Model)

#### Convergent Validity

The assessment of convergent validity relied on outer loading values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) scores. Hair Jr et al. (2017) recommend that indicators achieve outer loading values exceeding 0.70 to be considered valid, though values between 0.60 and 0.70 remain acceptable in exploratory research contexts provided that AVE and composite reliability thresholds are met.

**Table 3.**

*Outer Loading Indicator Value*

| Variable              | Indicator | Outer Loading Value | Remarks |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------------------|---------|
| Store atmosphere      | SA1       | 0,806               | Valid   |
|                       | SA2       | 0,792               | Valid   |
|                       | SA3       | 0,823               | Valid   |
|                       | SA4       | 0,786               | Valid   |
|                       | SA5       | 0,773               | Valid   |
|                       | SA6       | 0,803               | Valid   |
|                       | SA7       | 0,795               | Valid   |
| Perceived price       | PP1       | 0,781               | Valid   |
|                       | PP2       | 0,780               | Valid   |
|                       | PP3       | 0,784               | Valid   |
|                       | PP4       | 0,803               | Valid   |
|                       | PP5       | 0,812               | Valid   |
| Customer satisfaction | CS1       | 0,807               | Valid   |
|                       | CS2       | 0,805               | Valid   |
|                       | CS3       | 0,849               | Valid   |
| Customer loyalty      | CL1       | 0,782               | Valid   |
|                       | CL2       | 0,776               | Valid   |
|                       | CL3       | 0,840               | Valid   |

The analysis confirmed that all indicators attained outer loading values surpassing the 0.70 benchmark (range: 0.773–0.849), thereby fulfilling convergent validity requirements and ensuring the retention of all 19 indicators within the model. This assessment is further corroborated by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values that exceed the 0.50 minimum threshold, confirming that each construct accounts for more than half of the variance attributable to its constituent indicators.

**Table 4.**

*Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value*

| Variable              | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Root Value | Remarks |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------|
| Store atmosphere (SA) | 0,633                                  | 0,796                                       | Valid   |

|                                   |       |       |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| <i>Perceived price</i> (PP)       | 0,626 | 0,791 | Valid |
| <i>Customer satisfaction</i> (CS) | 0,679 | 0,824 | Valid |
| <i>Customer loyalty</i> (CL)      | 0,636 | 0,798 | Valid |

The results of the analysis show that all constructs have an AVE value above 0.50, namely Perceived price (0.626), Store atmosphere (0.639), Customer loyalty (0.651), and Customer satisfaction (0.679). All these values meet the criteria of convergent validity, which indicates that each construct can explain most of its indicator variance well.

### ***Discriminant Validity***

The evaluation of discriminant validity employed the Fornell-Larcker criterion to verify that each latent construct is conceptually distinct from the others. A construct satisfies the discriminant validity requirement when its AVE square root value exceeds its correlations with all other constructs in the model.

**Table 5.**

*Fornell-Larcker Criterion Matrix*

| <b>Variable</b>       | <b>Customer loyalty</b> | <b>Customer satisfaction</b> | <b>Perceived price</b> | <b>Store atmosphere</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Customer loyalty      | <b>0,798</b>            |                              |                        |                         |
| Customer satisfaction | 0,712                   | <b>0,824</b>                 |                        |                         |
| Perceived price       | 0,824                   | 0,685                        | <b>0,791</b>           |                         |
| Store atmosphere      | 0,541                   | 0,598                        | 0,532                  | <b>0,796</b>            |

The results of the analysis showed that the entire construct met the Fornell-Larcker criteria, with the square root values of AVE being Perceived price (0.791), Store atmosphere (0.799), Customer satisfaction (0.824), and Customer loyalty (0.807), respectively. All of these values are greater than their correlation with other constructs, thus confirming that the model has good discriminant validity and that each construct measures a different concept clearly.

### ***Reliability***

Instrument reliability was assessed through Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficients, which gauge the internal consistency of each latent construct. A construct is deemed reliable when both its CR and Cronbach's Alpha values surpass the 0.70 threshold, with Composite Reliability serving as the primary indicator.

**Table 6.**

*Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha Values*

| <b>Variable</b>       | <b>Composite Reliability</b> | <b>Cronbach's Alpha</b> | <b>Remarks</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Store atmosphere      | 0,932                        | 0,917                   | Reliable       |
| Perceived price       | 0,893                        | 0,854                   | Reliable       |
| Customer satisfaction | 0,863                        | 0,766                   | Reliable       |
| Customer loyalty      | 0,874                        | 0,811                   | Reliable       |

The results of the analysis showed that the entire construct met the reliability criteria with a Composite Reliability value ranging from 0.863–0.932 and Cronbach's Alpha between 0.766–0.917. Store atmosphere had the highest reliability (CR = 0.932;  $\alpha$  = 0.917), while Customer satisfaction had the lowest reliability (CR = 0.863;  $\alpha$  = 0.766), but remained above the minimum limit of 0.70. These findings confirm that all constructs have good internal consistency so that the research instrument is declared reliable.

### **Evaluation of Structural Models (*Inner Model*)**

#### ***Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )***

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) quantifies the extent to which exogenous variables account for the variance observed in endogenous variables. Greater  $R^2$  values signify stronger explanatory power of the model. Following Chin (1998) classification,  $R^2$  values of 0.67, 0.33, and

0.19 correspond to strong, moderate, and weak explanatory categories, respectively.

**Table 7.**

*R-Square and R-Square Adjusted Values*

| Variable              | R <sup>2</sup> | R <sup>2</sup> Adjusted | Categories |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Customer satisfaction | 0,412          | 0,406                   | Moderate   |
| Customer loyalty      | 0,674          | 0,669                   | Moderate   |

The results of the analysis show that Customer satisfaction has an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.412 (Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.406), which means that 41.2% of customer satisfaction variance can be explained by Store atmosphere and perceived price, so it is included in the moderate category. Meanwhile, Customer loyalty has an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.674 (Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.669), which shows that 67.4% of customer loyalty variance can be explained by Store atmosphere, perceived price, and Customer satisfaction, so it has moderate to strong predictive capabilities.

### **Predictive Relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>)**

Predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>) serves as an indicator of the model's capacity to accurately predict out-of-sample data, evaluated through blindfolding procedures. A model demonstrates predictive relevance when its Q<sup>2</sup> value exceeds zero, with thresholds of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 denoting weak, moderate, and strong predictive power, respectively (Hair Jr et al., 2017). For this study, Q<sup>2</sup> values were derived from the R<sup>2</sup> scores of Customer satisfaction (0.412) and Customer loyalty (0.674).

**Table 8.**

*Predictive Relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>) Value*

| Variable              | Q <sup>2</sup> | Categories  |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Customer satisfaction | 0,411          | Strong      |
| Customer loyalty      | 0,674          | Strong      |
| Overall Model         | 0,808          | Very Strong |

The results of the analysis showed that the model had strong predictive relevance, with a Q<sup>2</sup> Customer satisfaction value of 0.411, Customer loyalty of 0.674, and Q<sup>2</sup> of the overall model of 0.808. All of these values exceed the 0.35 limit, indicating that the model has excellent predictive and generalization capabilities. The consistency between the R<sup>2</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup> values also shows that the model is robust and does not experience overfitting.

### **Hypothesis Testing Results**

The testing of research hypotheses was conducted to evaluate the proposed relationships among variables within the structural model. This evaluation encompassed both direct effects and indirect (mediating) effects. Direct effect results are summarized in Table 9, while mediation analysis results appear in Table 10.

**Table 9.**

*Direct Impact Test Results*

| Hypothesis | Relationships | Line Coefficient (β) | Standard Deviation | T-Statistics | P-Value | Categories |
|------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------|------------|
| H1         | IN → CL       | -0,008               | 0,038              | 0,208        | 0,835   | Rejected   |
| H2         | PP → CL       | 0,760                | 0,032              | 23,909       | 0,000   | Accepted   |
| H3         | CS → CL       | 0,170                | 0,037              | 4,547        | 0,000   | Accepted   |

Based on the results of the direct influence test in Table 5.8, the following results were obtained.

1. Hypothesis 1 was rejected because Store atmosphere had no significant effect on customer loyalty (β = -0.008; t = 0.208; p = 0.835 > 0.05).
2. Hypothesis 2 is accepted because Perceived price has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty (β = 0.760; t = 23.909; p < 0.001). These findings suggest that the better the

consumer's perception of price, the higher the customer loyalty.

3. Hypothesis 3 is accepted because Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty ( $\beta = 0.170$ ;  $t = 4.547$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). These results show that increased customer satisfaction will increase customer loyalty.

**Table 10.**

*Indirect Influence Test Results (Mediation)*

| Hypothesis | Relationships                        | Line Coefficient ( $\beta$ ) | Standard Deviation | T-Statistics | P-Value | Categories |
|------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------|------------|
| H4         | SA $\rightarrow$ CS $\rightarrow$ CL | 0,052                        | 0,014              | 3,797        | 0,000   | Accepted   |
| H5         | PP $\rightarrow$ CS $\rightarrow$ CL | 0,075                        | 0,022              | 3,473        | 0,000   | Accepted   |

Based on the results of the indirect influence test in Table 5.9, the following results were obtained.

1. Hypothesis 4 is accepted because Customer satisfaction significantly mediates the effect of Store atmosphere on customer loyalty ( $\beta = 0.052$ ;  $t = 3.797$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Although the direct influence of Store atmosphere on customer loyalty is not significant, the indirect influence through customer satisfaction has proven to be significant.
2. Hypothesis 5 is accepted because Customer satisfaction significantly mediates the influence of perceived price on customer loyalty ( $\beta = 0.075$ ;  $t = 3.473$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings show that good price perception not only increases loyalty directly, but also indirectly through increased customer satisfaction.

## Discussion

### **The Influence of Store Atmosphere on Customer Loyalty**

The empirical findings indicate that store atmosphere does not exert a statistically significant influence on customer loyalty within Madura grocery stores in Malang City. This outcome is consistent with the conclusions of Kusuma Putra (2024), who similarly reported that store atmosphere alone has proven insufficient to directly enhance customer loyalty. However, these results diverge from the findings of Mulyani (2019), Marso (2022), whose studies demonstrated a positive effect of store atmosphere on customer loyalty. Such discrepancies underscore that the influence of store atmosphere is heavily contingent upon consumer characteristics, the nature of the retail business, and consumers' primary shopping objectives. At Madura grocery stores, consumers predominantly engage in need-based shopping to fulfill daily requirements, meaning their purchasing decisions are guided by practical rather than experiential considerations.

The distinctive characteristics of Madura grocery stores themselves help account for this non-significant influence. Most of these stores are situated within residential neighborhoods, maintain extended operating hours (frequently up to 24 hours), and stock a comprehensive range of basic necessities with convenient access. Under such conditions, consumers tend to prioritize locational proximity, merchandise availability, and the speed of product acquisition over aesthetic considerations of the store environment. Ndengane et al. (2021) provided supporting evidence that in traditional retail settings, functional attributes (including ease of access, product assortment completeness, and transactional efficiency) exercise greater influence over purchasing decisions than the physical ambiance of the store. Additionally, the customer base of Madura grocery stores is largely composed of price-sensitive individuals whose attention is directed primarily toward economic benefits rather than store design or environmental comfort.

This finding can be further interpreted through the lens of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model, which posits that physical environmental stimuli influence consumer responses only when such stimuli successfully generate positive psychological evaluations. However, in the context of routine or habitual purchasing behavior, consumers tend to follow relatively stable shopping patterns, which inherently constrains the incremental influence of store atmosphere. Consequently, while enhancing store atmosphere remains a worthwhile endeavor for improving customer comfort, it has not yet emerged as a primary determinant in cultivating customer loyalty at Madura grocery stores.

### **The Effect of *Perceived Price* on *Customer Loyalty***

The findings demonstrate that perceived price exercises a positive and statistically significant influence on customer loyalty, corroborating the results reported by (Maulana et al., 2024). The substantial magnitude of the perceived price effect confirms that pricing constitutes the predominant factor in consumers' decisions to select and remain loyal to Madura grocery stores. This finding aligns with Price Perception Theory Zeithaml (1988), which proposes that consumers evaluate the congruence between the price paid and the benefits obtained. When prices are judged as fair and within reasonable bounds, consumers develop a heightened sense of value that subsequently fosters loyalty.

The pronounced price sensitivity that characterizes Madura grocery store consumers further underscores the strategic importance of pricing decisions. The competitive landscape, shaped by rivalry with minimarket chains and e-commerce platforms, positions price as one of the foremost competitive advantages available to traditional grocery stores. Sustaining competitive pricing while preserving consumers' purchasing power thus constitutes a vital long-term strategy for maintaining customer loyalty (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001).

### **The Effect of *Customer Satisfaction* on *Customer Loyalty***

The analysis confirms that customer satisfaction positively and significantly affects customer loyalty, lending empirical support to the findings of (Airlangga Kusuma Agung & Hery Pudjoprastyono, 2023; Rachman & Ariyanti, 2024). Grounded in the Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory Oliver (1980), satisfaction materializes when perceived service performance meets or surpasses consumer expectations. Customers who experience satisfaction demonstrate a greater propensity to engage in repeat purchasing, recommend the store to acquaintances, and sustain ongoing patronage relationships.

Within Madura grocery stores, consumer satisfaction derives not solely from product and service quality but also from the interpersonal bonds cultivated between store proprietors and their clientele. These personal interactions generate emotional proximity that reinforces customer trust and deepens commitment. This dynamic renders satisfaction a particularly influential factor in preserving loyalty, especially amid escalating competition from modern retail formats. Viewed through the framework of Relationship Marketing Theory Morgan & Hunt (1994), satisfaction serves as the foundational precondition for building enduring trust and commitment. Accordingly, continuous attention to service quality, product availability, and shopping convenience is imperative for sustaining customer loyalty.

### **The Role of *Customer Satisfaction* Mediation on the Influence of *Store Atmosphere* on *Customer Loyalty***

The findings reveal that customer satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between store atmosphere and customer loyalty, aligning with previous research by Alfiansyah et al. (2024), all of whom identified customer satisfaction as a bridging variable between store atmosphere and loyalty outcomes. The presence of full mediation indicates that store atmosphere does not directly shape loyalty; rather, it operates indirectly by first elevating customer satisfaction, which subsequently drives loyalty formation. This mechanism is consistent with the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) paradigm, wherein store atmosphere functions as the environmental stimulus, customer satisfaction represents the internal organismic state of consumers, and customer loyalty constitutes the behavioral response. Thus, the physical attributes of a store exert meaningful influence on loyalty only insofar as they succeed in creating a satisfying shopping experience for consumers.

The results of this study also explain why store atmosphere does not have a direct influence on customer loyalty, but still has an important role in building loyalty through customer satisfaction. At Madura grocery stores, customers generally shop to meet their daily needs so that they prioritize convenience, comfort, and efficiency over the aesthetic aspects of the store. Therefore, a clean, neat store atmosphere, has a layout that makes it easy to find products, and provides convenience when shopping will increase customer satisfaction. This satisfaction then encourages customers to make a repeat purchase, recommend the store to others, and still choose the store even though there are other alternatives.

The implication of these findings is that improving the store atmosphere should be

focused on aspects that truly benefit customers, such as cleanliness, neatness, adequate lighting, and ease of access to products, rather than over-investing in aesthetic elements that do not provide added value for traditional grocery store customers. Therefore, investing in the physical environment of the store will be more effective if it is able to create a pleasant shopping experience and increase customer satisfaction. These findings also reinforce that customer satisfaction is the main mechanism that explains how store atmosphere can form customer loyalty in the context of traditional retail, especially Madura grocery stores.

### **The Role of Customer Satisfaction Mediation on the Influence of Perceived Price on Customer Loyalty**

The analysis demonstrates that customer satisfaction partially mediates the influence of perceived price on customer loyalty, a finding consistent with the work of Rochmah & Muzdalifah (2024) and Ramadhanti & Sulistiono (2022), who similarly confirmed the mediating role of customer satisfaction between price perception and loyalty. The partial mediation pattern indicates that perceived price influences loyalty through dual pathways: a direct route and an indirect route channeled through customer satisfaction. This implies that competitively perceived prices are capable of independently sustaining consumer patronage at Madura grocery stores, yet this loyalty is amplified when consumers concurrently experience satisfaction throughout their shopping encounters. These results suggest that while pricing remains a central determinant for consumers, satisfaction continues to play a complementary role in consolidating the long-term relationship between customers and stores.

These findings can be contextualized through the Customer Value Theory articulated by Zeithaml (1988), which holds that consumers evaluate product or service value based on the perceived equilibrium between benefits received and sacrifices incurred. When consumers judge a store's pricing to be proportionate to product quality, merchandise assortment, and service provision, a favorable value perception is established. Such positive value assessments not only enhance customer satisfaction but also strengthen consumers' inclination toward repeat purchasing and resistance to competitor switching. This evidence indicates that customer loyalty at Madura grocery stores is not solely attributable to low prices but rather to consumers' perception that each transaction delivers proportionate value.

In Madura grocery stores, price perception is a very important factor considering that most customers are people who have high sensitivity to prices. Competition with modern convenience stores and e-commerce platforms encourages grocery stores to maintain competitive prices as one of their main advantages. However, the results of this study show that a competitive pricing strategy alone is not enough to create strong loyalty if it is not balanced with a satisfying shopping experience. Therefore, Madura grocery store owners need to implement an integrated strategy, namely maintaining reasonable and affordable prices while improving service quality, maintaining product availability, and providing a comfortable shopping experience. Thus, customer loyalty is not only formed due to economic considerations, but also because of the satisfaction felt by customers during shopping. These findings also reinforce that customer satisfaction is an important mechanism that explains how price perceptions can lead to more sustainable customer loyalty.

### **CONCLUSION**

This investigation has established that both store atmosphere and perceived price positively influence customer satisfaction, and that customer satisfaction in turn positively affects customer loyalty at Madura grocery stores in Malang City. Notably, store atmosphere does not directly affect customer loyalty, whereas perceived price emerges as the predominant driver of loyalty. Furthermore, customer satisfaction has been confirmed as a mediating variable, fully mediating the store atmosphere–loyalty relationship and partially mediating the perceived price–loyalty relationship.

These findings demonstrate that customer loyalty is shaped not only by the physical condition of the store and price perceptions but also by the degree of satisfaction consumers experience during shopping. From a theoretical standpoint, this study reinforces the traditional retail marketing literature by highlighting the pivotal mediating role of customer satisfaction in transmitting the effects of store atmosphere and perceived price on customer loyalty. From a

practical perspective, the results indicate that Madura grocery store owners should prioritize competitive pricing strategies, uphold store cleanliness and orderliness, and enhance service quality to generate sustainable satisfaction capable of maintaining customer loyalty. Theoretically, this study offers a significant contribution by demonstrating that customer satisfaction functions as a full mediator between store atmosphere and loyalty, and as a partial mediator between perceived price and loyalty, a nuanced distinction that clarifies the conditional pathways through which retail stimuli translate into behavioral outcomes. This finding extends the applicability of the SOR framework and Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory to the specific context of Madura traditional grocery stores, which feature unique characteristics (24-hour availability, residential proximity, culturally embedded social relationships) not captured in prior retail studies. By establishing customer satisfaction as the critical linking mechanism between store attributes and loyalty within this context, this study addresses a theoretical gap identified in the retail marketing literature.

Several limitations of this research warrant acknowledgment. The geographic scope is confined to Madura grocery stores in Malang City, which limits the generalizability of findings to other regions characterized by different consumer profiles and competitive conditions. Moreover, the study examined only four variables (store atmosphere, perceived price, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty) while potentially relevant factors such as service quality, interpersonal closeness between store owners and customers, business location attributes, and retail digitalization were excluded from the analysis. The cross-sectional research design further constrains the ability to observe temporal changes in consumer behavior. Future investigations would benefit from expanding the geographic coverage, incorporating additional explanatory variables, and adopting longitudinal research designs to develop a more holistic understanding of customer loyalty formation in traditional retail contexts.

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#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Mohammad Iqbal Amin: Conceptualization, Literature Review, Data Collection, Data Analysis, and Writing Original Draft. Ida Yulianti: Conceptualization, Theoretical Framework, Research Design, and Supervision. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript., and Supervision. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

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