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The Role of Satisfaction Customer Mediate Influence Perception Quality To Loyalty Customer

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Abstract iPhone is one of the premium smartphones that Apple relies on to compete with various premium smartphone products from other brands. The iPhone has a competitive advantage in the form of a unique and exclusive physical design and an operating system that is different from other brands in order to maintain its existence in the market. This study aims to explain the role of customer satisfaction in mediating the influence of quality perception on customer loyalty in iPhone smartphone users in Denpasar City. This study used a sample of 100 respondents taken using the non-probability sampling method with purposive sampling techniques. The data in this study was collected using a questionnaire method which was distributed in the form of a google form link to respondents. The data that has been collected is then analyzed and tested using classical assumption tests, path analysis tests, and testing the role of mediating variables. The results of this study show that quality perception has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, quality perception has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction is able to partially mediate the influence of quality perception on customer loyalty. The results of this study can provide suggestions for Apple companies to improve the perception of quality and customer satisfaction in iPhone users to increase customer loyalty.

Keywords: Quality Perception, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty;

Abstract iPhone is one of them Premium smartphones that the Apple company relies on to compete with various premium smartphone products from other brands. The iPhone has a competitive advantage in the form of a unique and exclusive physical design and an operating system that is different from other brands in order to maintain its existence in the market. This research aims to explain the role of customer satisfaction in mediating the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty among iPhone smartphone users in Denpasar City. This research used a sample of 100 respondents taken using a non-probability sampling method with a purposive sampling technique. The data in this research was collected using a questionnaire method which was distributed in the form of a Google Form link to respondents. The data that has been collected is then analyzed and tested using the classic assumption test, path analysis test, and testing the role of mediating variables. The results of this research show that perceived quality has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty, perceived quality has a positive and significant influence on customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction is able to partially mediate the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty. The results of this research can provide suggestions for the Apple company to improve the perception of quality and customer satisfaction among iPhone users increase loyalty as his customers.

Keywords : Perception Quality , Satisfaction Customers , Loyalty Customer ;

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of telecommunications technology, especially smartphones, is growing rapidly. Every year, there are at least dozens of the latest types of smartphones from various brands with increasingly sophisticated technology. Today's telecommunications tools are not only used for communication activities, but the presence of smartphones can also be used to search and disseminate information quickly, socialize, and carry out transaction activities (Septyadi, et al., 2022). The development of smartphones requires companies to compete competitively in order to build, maintain and maintain customer commitment and

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loyalty (Krismajayanti and Darma, 20 21). Apple.inc is a giant telecommunications company operating in the multinational technology sector headquartered in Cupertino, California. In June 2007, the Apple company began to innovate and released a *smartphone product* called the iPhone. Apple makes the iPhone the most superior and reliable *flagship product to compete with various smartphone brands* on the market.

In the midst of intense competition in the telecommunications industry, the iPhone has a competitive advantage in that the iPhone has a distinctive and exclusive physical design and is different from other *smartphones* in its class. The iPhone is also designed using a different operating system from other brands, where only the iPhone brand uses the iOS operating system on their *smartphones* . To date, Apple *smartphone products* continue to experience development and the percentage of users is increasing throughout the world (Handayani and Sutanto, 2023). Based on data from *the International Data Corporation (2023)*, *smartphones* from the Apple brand are included in the Top 5 *smartphone brands* in the world and are in second place with a *market share* of 17.7% in the third quarter of 2023 and total shipments worldwide of 53.6 million units. . This value is greater when compared to the total *market share* and shipments in the third quarter of 2022, with a total percentage increase of 2.5%. This indicates that even though it is in second place, the Apple brand is still experiencing increasing demand for its iPhone products throughout the world. However, according to data from IDC Indonesia, the iPhone brand is not included in the top 5 positions in the *smartphone market* in Indonesia.

Based on data from *the International Data Corporation (2023)*, it can be seen that the *smartphone market* in Indonesia in 2022 to 2023 will be dominated by Oppo, Samsung, Transsion, Xiaomi and Vivo. This shows that there is a business phenomenon where even though the iPhone is one of the best-selling brands in the world, the iPhone is unable to dominate the *smartphone market* in Indonesia. According to research conducted by Ramadhan et al., (2023) Apple makes the iPhone a premium *smartphone* with good quality and facilities for its users, but has not been able to maximize it properly. On the other hand, other *smartphone brands* such as Samsung are also competing to continue to innovate by launching premium class flagship products aimed at competing with the iPhone in the high-end market (Mulyati and Jaya, 2020). This is certainly a threat for the company to maintain the existence of the iPhone in Indonesia , so it is important for Apple to maintain the quality of iPhone products as premium *smartphones* .

Consumers who have good quality perceptions will tend to have loyalty to a brand (Sari et al., 2022). Perceived quality is a customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority

of a product or service in relation to the customer's own expectations (Rivai and Wahyudi, 2017). Bali (20kha22), states that companies must be able to maintain the quality of the products they have in order to prevent customers or consumers from switching to using products from other brands. *Smartphones* with the iPhone brand have the best features that other cellphone brands don't have and can only be experienced by iPhone users, making consumers loyal and difficult to switch to other *smartphone brands* (Pelupessy et al., 2022). This statement indicates that *smartphone users* with the iPhone brand are quite loyal to the iPhone brand. Lonan, et al (2023) in their research stated that perceived product quality is an important factor in determining customer loyalty. The results of previous research conducted by Alhaddad (2015) also suggest that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on loyalty. Other research was also conducted by Aquinia, et al (2021), Faizal and Nurjanah (2019) which stated that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. However, different results were found in research conducted by Sinta (2023) and research by Lesmana, et al (2020) which stated that perceived quality did not significantly influence customer loyalty.

Based on the results of this empirical study, it was found that there were differences in research results regarding the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty, so that in this research the mediating variable customer satisfaction was involved. The use of satisfaction mediating variables is based on research by Howat and Assaker (2013) who found that customer satisfaction was able to mediate the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty . The same research was also conducted by Assaker, et al. (2020) who found that perceived quality has an indirect effect on loyalty which is mediated by customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is a post-purchase evaluation between perceptions of the performance of selected product or service alternatives that meet or exceed expectations (Angraini and Budiarti, 2020). Apple products are the favorites in the *smartphone market* because the products they offer have attractive services and *software* to use. The uniqueness of the iPhone shapes people's tendency to choose the Apple *brand as their daily driver* when carrying out activities such as socializing, working, etc. and shows that people have a high level of loyalty to the Apple *brand* (Reynaldi and Wuisan, 2023). This indicates the form of satisfaction that customers feel when using a *smartphone* with the iPhone brand. So, this form of iPhone user satisfaction can also give rise to user loyalty towards the brand. The results of research conducted by Udayana and Ridho (2023) state that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. Likewise, research conducted by Kresna (2019) stated that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

Perceived quality is a consumer assessment that is given an indication of the characteristics and superiority of a product or service based on its quality (Rahmawati and Arikandi 2022). Good quality perceptions will also increase customer loyalty in using a brand continuously (Teddy and Lisa, 2022). This statement is supported by the results of previous research conducted by Raharja and Aksari (2019), which stated that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty, meaning that the higher the perceived quality, the more brand loyalty will increase. Likewise, research conducted by Dipura (2016), Ilviendri and Sari (2021), and Ontarina (2022), which states that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. Based on the results of previous discussions and research, the following hypothesis can be concluded.

H₁: Perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

Satisfaction is a state that consumers feel after experiencing a performance (or result) that meets their various expectations (Holis and Iskandar, 2023). A form of customer satisfaction with a product can be achieved through good product quality (Febriana and Prabowo, 2022). Therefore, the perception of the quality of a product is an important thing for companies to pay attention to. Previous research conducted by Maulida and Indah (2020), Yunaji and Dwiridotjahjono (2023), and Marlina and Yuniati (2020) found that perceived quality has a significant influence on consumer satisfaction, which means that the greater the quality perception felt by consumers, the greater the influence consumer satisfaction. Based on the discussion and results of previous research, the following hypothesis can be established.

H₂: Perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction

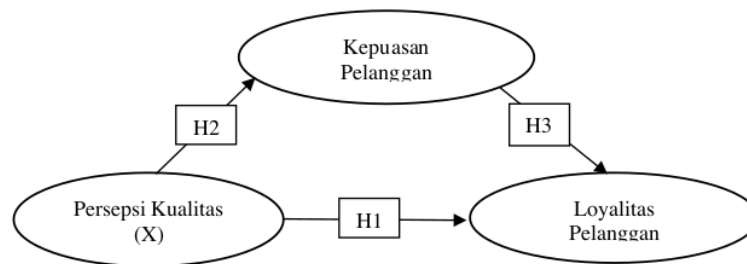
Consumer satisfaction is a factor for consumers to make repeated purchases, because if consumers are satisfied with a product or service then consumers will not object or hesitate to do so (Afiah and Prabowo, 2023). So, maintaining customer satisfaction will further increase customer loyalty. This statement is supported by the research results of Ramadhani and Nurhadi (2022) which state that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. Likewise, research by Tannady et al. (2023), Khan et al. (2022), and Naini et al. (2022) which revealed that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. Based on the results of previous discussions and research, the following hypothesis can be determined.

H₃: Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

The research results of Salim and Dharmayanti (2014) concluded that perceived quality has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Meanwhile, customer satisfaction has a

significant effect on loyalty and perceived quality has an indirect effect on customer loyalty. The results of this research indicate that the customer satisfaction variable is able to mediate the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty. Indraswari and Susanti (2023) also stated that perceived quality has a significant influence on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction, which means that perceived quality can generate loyalty through customer satisfaction. So, based on this discussion, the following hypothesis can be determined.

H₄: Customer satisfaction mediates the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty.



Source: Research Data, 2024

Figure 1.1 Research Model

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This type of research is quantitative research which aims to analyze the role of customer satisfaction in mediating the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty among iPhone smartphone users in Denpasar City. The population in this study are iPhone users who have used and purchased a cellphone with the iPhone brand more than once. The sampling method used in this research is a non-probability sampling method with a purposive sampling technique with the number of samples used in this research being 100 respondents. The data in this study was collected using a questionnaire distributed via a Google Form link to respondents, and then the respondents' answers were measured using a Likert scale. The feasibility test in this research was tested using a validity test and a reliability test. Data analysis techniques in this research include descriptive data analysis, inferential data analysis which includes path analysis, classical assumption testing, and testing the role of mediating variables.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be seen that the characteristics of the respondents in this study include gender, age, highest level of education, occupation, and monthly income or pocket money which is explained in Table 1.

Table 3.1
Respondent Characteristics

No.	Variable	Classification	Amount (person)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Man	43	43
		Woman	57	57
Amount			100	100
2	Age	18 – 28 years old	92	92
		29 – 39 years	7	7
		40 – 50 years	1	1
		> 50 years old	-	-
Amount			100	100
3	Last education	High School/Equivalent	77	77
		Bachelor	15	15
		Diploma	8	8
		Postgraduate	-	-
Amount			100	100
4	Work	Student	57	57
		Private employees	21	21
		Self-employed	5	5
		PNS/ABRI/POLRI	3	3
		Other	14	14
Amount			100	100
5	Income or pocket money per month	< Rp.2,000,000	47	47
		Rp.2,000,000 – Rp.5,000,000	38	38
		> Rp. 5,000,000	15	15
Amount			100	100

Source: Research Data, 2024

Characteristics of respondents based on gender: Females dominated the study with 57 people with a percentage of 57 percent of the total respondents. Meanwhile, there were 43 male respondents. The characteristics of respondents based on age were dominated by the 18 – 28 year age group with a total of 92 people. The characteristics of respondents based on the latest education show that the majority of respondents are high school graduates/equivalent with a total of 77 people, and the characteristics of respondents based on occupation are dominated by students with a total of 57 people. The characteristics of respondents based on total income show that the majority of respondents have a monthly income or pocket money of less than R0,2,000,000 per month.

The results of the validity test show that all research instruments used to measure the variables of perceived quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty have a total *Pearson correlation value* for each research instrument greater than 0.30 , so it can be said that each

statement in the research instrument is valid. and suitable for use as a research instrument. The results of the reliability test show that these three research instruments have a Cornbach's alpha value of more than 0.60 so they can be said to be reliable and can be used to conduct research.

The customer satisfaction variable in this research is an *independent variable* symbolized by These findings show that some respondents agree that the iPhone has a high security system so that respondents feel safe when using the iPhone as their *daily driver* . Meanwhile, the statement "Performance on iPhone *smartphones* is superior compared to other brands of *smartphones* " received the lowest average score but was included in the good category. This means that several respondents in this study felt that there are still *smartphones* from other brands that have superior performance than *smartphones* from the iPhone brand.

The customer satisfaction variable in this study is a mediating variable which is symbolized by M. The distribution of respondents' answers to the variable regarding customer satisfaction with iPhone users which has the highest average value is found in the statement "The iPhone's performance is in line with my expectations" with an average value of 4. 19. This value shows that the majority of respondents in this study were satisfied because the performance of their iPhone was in line with what was expected. Meanwhile, the lowest average score of 3.37 was found in the statement "I have no complaints when using the iPhone" which is included in the quite satisfied category. The results of this research show that respondents still have several complaints when using iPhone *smartphones* .

The customer satisfaction variable in this study is a *dependent variable* which is symbolized by Y. The distribution of respondents' answers to customer loyalty with the highest average value of 4.09 is found in the statement "I am willing to recommend iPhone products to other people" which is included in the high category. This means that the majority of respondents feel loyal to the iPhone brand so that respondents agree to recommend iPhone products to other people. Meanwhile, the lowest average score of 3.89 was found in the statement "I am not interested in using a competing *smartphone brand* " but it is still included in the high criteria. This shows that some iPhone users who were respondents in this study are still interested in using other *smartphone brands* that are competitors to the iPhone.

The results of the normality test in this study show that the Asym. Sig. (2 tailed) in sub-structural 1 and sub-structural 2 is 0.200. These results indicate that the value of *Asym. Sig. (2 tailed)* is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the regression equation model has a normal distribution. The results of the multicollinearity test in this study show that the *tolerance value* of the quality perception and customer satisfaction variables shows a value greater than 0.10 (*tolerance* > 0.10). Meanwhile, the VIF value for each independent variable also shows

a value smaller than 10 (VIF < 10). The results of this research indicate that the variables of perceived quality and customer satisfaction are free from multicollinearity problems. The results of the heteroscedasticity test in sub-structural 1 have a significance value for the quality perception variable of 0.340. This value is greater than 0.05, which means that there is no influence between the independent variables on the absolute residual, so that the model created does not contain symptoms of heteroscedasticity. The heteroscedasticity test in sub-structural 2 shows that the significance value of the quality perception variable is 0.180, while the significance value of the customer satisfaction variable is 0.841. The significance value of each variable is greater than 0.05, which means there is no influence between the independent variables on the absolute residual. So that the model created does not contain symptoms of heteroscedasticity.

Table 3.2
Results of Structural Equation Analysis 1

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4,750	1,160		4,093	0,000
	Perception of Quality	0.553	0.057	0.700	9,707	0,000

R1²: 0.490
F statistic: 94.229
Sig. F : 0.000

Source: Research Data, 2024

The value of β_2 in structural equation 1 is 0.700, indicating that the quality perception variable has a positive effect on the customer satisfaction variable, so that if the quality perception variable increases, the customer satisfaction variable will increase by 0.700. The total determination value (R square) is 0.490, indicating the magnitude of the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. So, it can be interpreted that 49 percent of the variation in customer satisfaction is influenced by variations in quality perceptions, while the remaining 51 percent is influenced by other factors not included in this research.

Table 3.3
Results of Structural Equation Analysis 2

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,399	0.748		1,785	0,077
	Perception of Quality	0.238	0.050	0.395	4,776	0,00
	Customer satisfaction	0.370	0.063	0.485	5,862	0,00

R2²: 0.661
F Statistics: 94.511
Sig. F : 0.000

β_1 value of 0.395 means that the quality perception variable has a positive effect on customer loyalty, so that if quality perception increases then customer loyalty will also increase by 0.395. Furthermore, a value of 0.485 means that the customer satisfaction variable has a positive effect on the customer loyalty variable, so that if customer satisfaction increases then customer loyalty will also increase by 0.485. The magnitude of the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable is shown by the total determination value (*R square*) of 0.661. An *R square* value of 0.661 means that 66.1 percent of variations in customer loyalty are influenced by variations in perceptions of quality and customer satisfaction, while the remaining 33.9 percent is explained by other factors outside this research.

Table 3.4
Direct, Indirect and Total Influence of Perceived Quality (X), Customer Satisfaction (M), and Customer Loyalty (Y) variables.

Influence of Variables	Direct Influence	Indirect Influence Through M	Total Influence	Signification	Results
X → M	0.700		0.700	0,000	Significant
M → Y	0.485		0.485	0,000	Significant
X → Y	0.395	0.339	0.734	0,000	Significant

Source: Research Data, 2024

Table 3.4 shows mark The path coefficient for the direct influence of perceived quality on customer satisfaction is 0.700 with a significance value smaller than 0.05 (0.000, 0.05), this finding means that directly, perceived quality has a positive and significant influence on customer satisfaction for iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City. The path coefficient value of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty is 0.485 with a significance value of less than 0.05 (0.000, 0.05) indicating that the customer satisfaction variable directly has a positive effect on customer loyalty. The path coefficient value of the direct influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty is 0.395 with a significance value of less than 0.05 (0.000, 0.05), meaning that perceived quality directly has a positive influence on customer loyalty. The path coefficient value of the indirect influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction is 0.339, showing the results that perceived quality has an indirect influence on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction.

The results of the research that has been carried out provide findings that directly the quality perception variable (X) has a positive and significant effect on the customer loyalty variable (Y) and the quality perception variable (X) also has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction (M), then directly the variable customer satisfaction (M) has a positive

and significant effect on customer loyalty (Y). Based on existing theory, it can be concluded that the relationship between the *independent variable*, *dependent variable* and mediating variable in this research is partial mediation, or in other words the customer satisfaction variable plays a partial role in mediating the influence of perceived quality on customer satisfaction.

The results of hypothesis testing in this research show that perceived quality directly has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The results of this research mean that as the perceived quality of iPhone products increases, customer loyalty for iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City will increase, and vice versa. Based on this, the first hypothesis, namely that perceived quality has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty among iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City, can be accepted. The results of this research are in line with the results of previous research conducted by Raharja and Aksari (2019), Ilviendri and Sari (2021), and Ontariana (2022), which stated that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

The results of hypothesis testing in this research show that perceived quality directly has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. This means that as the perceived quality of iPhone products increases, the customer satisfaction of iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City will increase, and so on. Based on this, the second hypothesis, namely that perceived quality has a positive and significant influence on customer satisfaction for iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City, can be accepted. The findings obtained in this research are also in accordance with previous research conducted by Maulida and Indah (2020), Yunaji and Dwiridotjahjono (2023), and Marlina and Yuniati (2020), which stated that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

The results of hypothesis testing in this research show that perceived quality directly has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. This means that as the quality perception of iPhone users towards iPhone products increases, the customer satisfaction of iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City will increase, and vice versa. Based on this, the third hypothesis, namely that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty among iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City, can be accepted. The results of this research are also in line with Giantari (2022), Tannady et al. (2023), Khan et al. (2022), and research by Naini et al. (2022), who found that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

The results of hypothesis testing in this research show that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, mediated by customer satisfaction. This

means that customer satisfaction is able to mediate the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty, in other words, perceived quality has an indirect effect on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis can be accepted. The results of this research are in line with the results of previous research conducted by Indraswari and Susanti (2023), as well as research by Assaker et al. (2020) who found that perceived quality has a significant influence on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction.

The theoretical implications in this research explain the development of marketing management science, especially regarding expectation confirmation theory, as well as how the variables of perceived quality and customer satisfaction can influence customer loyalty. The practical implications of this research show that perceived quality and customer satisfaction are proven to be able to increase customer loyalty among iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City. The company is expected to be able to maintain a good quality perception for iPhone products and increase customer satisfaction in order to maintain the loyalty of iPhone *smartphone users* in Denpasar City. The scope of this research only includes 100 respondents who are iPhone users and have purchased an iPhone *smartphone* more than once and live in Denpasar City, so the results of this research cannot be generalized to iPhone users in other areas. The results of this research show that there are still other variables that can influence customer loyalty outside the research model which are not explained in this research

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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The results of this research provide the conclusion that perceived quality directly has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty among iPhone users in Denpasar City. Perceived quality directly has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction for iPhone users in Denpasar City. 4
Customer satisfaction directly has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

Customer satisfaction can partially mediate the influence of perceived quality on customer loyalty. Based on the research results and suggestions that have been explained, the Apple company is advised that the company can carry out research and development to ensure that the iPhone products that will be launched have the best quality and the latest innovations in order to be able to compete with various other premium smartphone brands. The Apple company is also expected to be able to quickly respond to existing complaints and increase customer satisfaction by focusing on improving product quality and customer service, providing technical support through various channels that can be easily accessed by customers,

and providing a customer feedback collection *platform for* understand customer problems and needs.

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