

Research Article

Analysis of the Effect of Product Quality and Service Quality on Customer Loyalty Mediated by Customer Satisfaction at Kafe Kudu, Jalan Sei Petani, Medan City

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of product quality and service quality on customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction serving as a mediating variable at Kafe Kudu, located on Jalan Sei Petani, Medan City. A quantitative approach was employed using the Partial Least Square–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. The study involved a sample of 90 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The results indicate that product quality does not have a significant effect on customer satisfaction but has a significant impact on customer loyalty. Conversely, service quality significantly affects both customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Furthermore, customer satisfaction significantly influences customer loyalty. The mediation test results show that customer satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between product quality and customer loyalty but does significantly mediate the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. These findings suggest that, within the context of Kafe Kudu, enhancing service quality is a more effective strategy for fostering customer satisfaction and loyalty than focusing solely on product quality. Therefore, it is recommended that management prioritize improving service quality as a long-term strategic initiative.

Keywords: Café; Customer Loyalty; Customer Satisfaction; Product Quality; Service Quality.

1. Introduction

The culinary industry, particularly cafés, has experienced rapid growth in line with the changing lifestyles of urban communities. Cafés today not only serve as dining venues but also function as social and lifestyle spaces that offer customers distinctive experiences (Febriatu Sholikhah & Hadita, 2023). In an increasingly competitive environment, maintaining customer loyalty has become a major challenge for business operators, including Kafe Kudu, located on Jalan Sei Petani, Medan City.

Customer loyalty is influenced by various factors, among which product quality and service quality play crucial roles (Kristy Manihuruk, 2023). High product quality reflects the degree to which customer expectations align with the actual experience, encompassing elements such as taste, presentation, and menu consistency (Dianta Purba et al., 2025). Meanwhile, service quality involves interpersonal aspects, promptness, and the overall comfort experienced by customers during their visit to the café.

However, loyalty is not always formed directly; it can be mediated by customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction reflects the overall evaluation of the consumer experience, which, when positive, increases the likelihood of repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Wasistho & Toto Rahardjo, 2023).

Previous studies have produced mixed results regarding the relationships among these variables. Therefore, it is important to empirically re-examine whether product quality and service quality directly influence customer loyalty and to what extent customer satisfaction acts as a mediating variable in the context of Kafe Kudu.

This study aims to analyze the effect of product quality and service quality on customer loyalty mediated by customer satisfaction, using a quantitative approach and the Partial Least Square–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. The results of this research are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to efforts aimed at enhancing customer loyalty in the café sector.

Received: September 21, 2025
Revised: October 11, 2025
Accepted: November 15, 2025
Online Available: November 17, 2025
Curr. Ver.: November 17, 2025



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Research Hypotheses

Based on the theoretical framework illustrated in Figure 1, the research hypotheses are formulated as follows:

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

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

H3: Product quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

H4: Service quality has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

H5: Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

H6: Product quality indirectly affects customer loyalty through customer satisfaction as a mediating variable.

H7: Service quality indirectly affects customer loyalty through customer satisfaction as a mediating variable.

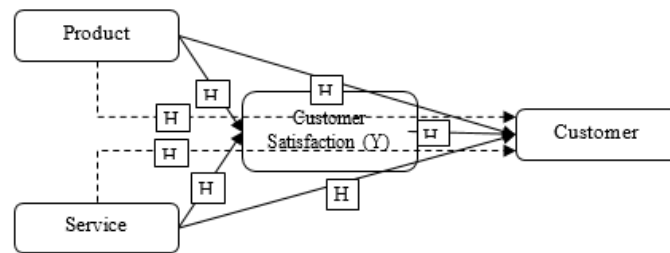


Figure 1. Framework

Source: Processed data (2025).

2. Literature Review

Product Quality

Product quality is a key aspect in meeting consumer needs and satisfaction. According to Kotler and Keller (2012), quality reflects a product's ability to perform its intended functions, including durability, reliability, ease of use, and conformity with consumer expectations. Tjiptono (2020) adds that product quality encompasses all elements that provide value in fulfilling consumer needs and desires—not only from a functional perspective but also in terms of perceived benefits. Thus, product quality represents the set of characteristics designed by a company to meet consumer expectations, enhance satisfaction, and strengthen competitiveness.

Food (Product) Quality Indicators

According to Tjiptono and Chandra (2020) in Service, Quality, and Satisfaction, food quality is influenced by several key factors that determine customer satisfaction with the dishes served. These factors include color, appearance, portion or standard portion size, shape, temperature, texture, and aroma. Collectively, these seven aspects contribute to consumers' overall perception of food quality, encompassing visual, taste, and sensory experience dimensions.

Service Quality

According to Kotler and Keller (2016a), service quality should be customer-oriented and measured from the customer's perspective rather than that of the service provider. The image of service quality is determined by how customers perceive and evaluate the services delivered. Quality service encompasses both direct and indirect interactions between customers and providers, with the primary goal of effectively solving customer problems. In industries where physical products are difficult to differentiate, value-added services—such as order convenience, delivery, training, and after-sales service—become key differentiating factors that enhance customer satisfaction.

Service Quality Indicators

According to Tjiptono (2019), service quality can be measured through five main dimensions that are generally used to assess customer experience. These dimensions are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. These five reflect essential aspects of the service process, from the provider's ability to keep promises, speed and willingness to respond to customer needs, to the personal attitude and physical facilities that support optimal service delivery.

Customer Satisfaction

According to Kristianto (2011), customer satisfaction arises from a comparison between expectations of a product and the actual experience after use. If the outcome meets or exceeds expectations, customers feel satisfied; if not, dissatisfaction occurs. Satisfaction also represents an emotional response to the perceived benefits relative to the costs or sacrifices incurred. The greater the perceived relative benefit, the higher the level of satisfaction. Kotler

and Keller (2016b) emphasize that customer satisfaction has a substantial influence on loyalty and future purchasing decisions, and that customer expectations are generally shaped by personal experience, recommendations, and advertising information.

Customer Satisfaction Indicators

According to Kotler and Keller (2016c), there are five main indicators influencing customer satisfaction levels: product quality, service quality, emotional factors, price, and additional costs. Customers tend to feel satisfied when the received product exhibits good quality and when service delivery meets their expectations. Additionally, emotional factors—such as feelings of pride or social status derived from using a product—also affect satisfaction. Competitive pricing and minimal additional costs or time spent obtaining the product further enhance overall satisfaction.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty refers to a customer's commitment to a brand, store, or service provider, formed through consistently positive experiences and minimal complaints. Loyalty stems from sustained satisfaction with a company's performance in delivering services and addressing customer issues. According to Tjiptono (2016), loyalty is also reflected in consistent repeat purchases and the willingness of customers to recommend the product or service to others.

Customer Loyalty Indicators

According to Alma (2018), customer loyalty is reflected in purchasing behavior based on awareness and deliberate decision-making. A loyal customer not only makes regular repeat purchases but is also inclined to recommend the product or service to others. Furthermore, loyal customers demonstrate resistance to competitors' offers, meaning they continue choosing the same product or service even when alternative options are available in the market. These three indicators collectively describe loyalty formed through continuous satisfaction and trust in the brand.

3. Method

This study employs a quantitative approach to examine the relationships among variables in the research model, consisting of Product Quality (X_1), Service Quality (X_2), Customer Satisfaction (Y), and Customer Loyalty (Z). This approach was selected to obtain a systematic and measurable understanding of both direct and indirect effects among these variables.

The population of this study includes customers who have visited and made at least one purchase within the past month at Kafe Kudu, located on Jalan Sei Petani, Medan City. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which involves selecting respondents who are considered relevant to the research objectives (Imansari & Kholifah, 2023). A total of 90 respondents were included in the sample, all meeting the criteria as active customers (Slohihin & Ratnomo, 2021).

The research instrument is a questionnaire utilizing a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). The questionnaire consists of several indicators derived from established theories relevant to each variable (Hafni Sahir, 2021).

Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Square–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique with SmartPLS 4.0 software. This method was chosen because it effectively analyzes relationships among latent variables with relatively small sample sizes and simultaneously tests both structural and measurement models.

Validity and reliability tests were conducted beforehand to ensure that the research instrument was appropriate for use. Subsequently, path analysis was employed to determine the direct and indirect relationships among variables. Significance testing was based on t -statistics > 1.96 and p -values < 0.05 , as recommended by Hair et al. (2021).

Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

Validity

a. Convergent Validity (Outer Loading)

Convergent validity testing was conducted using the outer loading values for each indicator (Audria Deva Ananda & Achmad, 2025). The results show that all indicators of Product Quality (X_1), Service Quality (X_2), Customer Satisfaction (Y), and Customer Loyalty (Z) have outer loading values above 0.7. This indicates that all indicators are valid and consistently represent their respective constructs. This finding aligns with the criterion proposed by Hamid and Anwar (2019), which states that an outer loading value ≥ 0.7 signifies good indicator validity.

b. Convergent Validity (Average Variance Extracted – AVE)

All constructs in the model meet the convergent validity criterion, as shown by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above the minimum threshold of 0.50. This indicates that the proportion of variance explained by the indicators is greater than that caused by

measurement error. Hence, all constructs in this study are declared valid in terms of convergent validity (Arifin et al., 2023).

c. Discriminant Validity

Fornell–Larcker Criterion

The Fornell–Larcker test results show that the square root of the AVE for each construct is higher than its correlations with other constructs. For instance, Product Quality (0.790) is higher than its correlations with Customer Satisfaction (0.644), Service Quality (0.732), and Customer Loyalty (0.506). Similar results apply to the other constructs. This satisfies the criterion proposed by Haryono (2016), which states that discriminant validity is achieved when the square root of AVE exceeds inter-construct correlations. Therefore, all constructs in this model exhibit strong discriminant validity and are clearly distinct from one another.

Cross-Loading Analysis

The cross-loading test results indicate that each indicator loads more strongly on its associated construct than on other constructs (Salim et al., 2022). For example, indicator X1.1 loads at 0.824 on Product Quality, higher than its loadings on any other construct. This satisfies Haryono's (2016) criterion that discriminant validity is achieved when indicators represent their intended constructs better than others. Thus, all indicators are confirmed to be valid and accurately measure their respective constructs.

Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

The HTMT discriminant validity test shows that all inter-construct correlation ratios are below the 0.90 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015). The highest HTMT value is 0.873 between Satisfaction and Loyalty, while others range from 0.564 to 0.832. These values fall within acceptable limits, indicating that all constructs are distinct and non-overlapping (Lukman et al., 2024). Therefore, discriminant validity is satisfactorily achieved.

Reliability

All constructs in the research model were found to be reliable, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding the 0.70 threshold. This suggests that the indicators for each latent variable—product quality, service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty—demonstrate strong internal consistency. Hence, the measurement instruments meet reliability criteria and are suitable for further analysis (Haryono, 2016).

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Evaluation of the inner model aims to assess relationships among latent constructs, both direct and indirect. This analysis also includes testing the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2) to ensure the model's empirical strength and accuracy.

Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)

The results of the direct relationship tests, illustrated in Figure 2 and Table 1, indicate that most paths in the model have significant effects. First, the relationship between product quality and customer satisfaction ($X_1 \rightarrow Y$) is positive, with a coefficient of 0.169, but statistically insignificant (T-statistic = 1.677; P-value = 0.094 > 0.05). Second, the path from product quality to customer loyalty ($X_1 \rightarrow Z$) is negative (coefficient = -0.185) but statistically significant (T-statistic = 2.304; P-value = 0.021), suggesting a significant effect despite the negative direction.

Next, the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction ($X_2 \rightarrow Y$) is positive and highly significant, with a coefficient of 0.648, T-statistic of 6.438, and P-value of 0.000, indicating that service quality is the primary determinant of customer satisfaction. Similarly, the path from service quality to customer loyalty ($X_2 \rightarrow Z$) is positive and significant (coefficient = 0.435; T-statistic = 3.567; P-value = 0.000). Finally, the path from customer satisfaction to customer loyalty ($Y \rightarrow Z$) is also positive and significant, with a coefficient of 0.579, T-statistic of 5.391, and P-value of 0.000.

Thus, of the six direct relationships tested, five are significant and positive, except for the path from product quality to customer satisfaction (insignificant) and the path from product quality to customer loyalty (significant but negative).

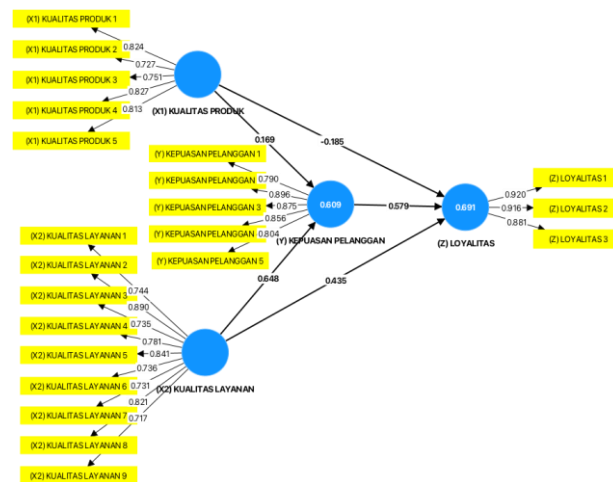


Figure 2.Result path coefficient (Direct effect).

Source: Processed data from smart PLS (2025).

Based on opinion (Hair et al., 2021) The relationship between variables is declared significant if the t-statistic value is > 1.96 and the p-value is < 0.05 at a significance level of 5%. Referring to these criteria, it can be concluded that only the influence of Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction is insignificant in this model. Meanwhile, Service Quality is proven to have a significant influence on the other two variables, and Customer Satisfaction also plays an important role in shaping Customer Loyalty.

Table 1.Result datapath coefficient/ Direct relationship.

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	Hair et al. (2021) T statistics ($ O/STDEV $) $> 1.96 =$ Significant	Hair et al. (2021) P values $< 0.05 =$ Significant	Information
(X1) Product Quality -> (Y) Customer Satisfaction	0.169	0.179	0.101	1,677	0.094	Positive and Insignificant
(X1) Product Quality -> (Z) Loyalty	-0.185	-0.195	0.080	2,304	0.021	Negative and Significant
(X2) Service Quality -> (Y) Customer Satisfaction	0.648	0.644	0.101	6,438	0,000	Positive and Significant
(X2) Service Quality -> (Z) Loyalty	0.435	0.444	0.122	3,567	0,000	Positive and Significant
(Y) Customer Satisfaction -> (Z) Loyalty	0.579	0.582	0.107	5,391	0,000	Positive and Significant

Indirect Effect (Specific Indirect Effect)

Based on Table 2, the indirect effect of product quality (X1) on customer loyalty (Z) through customer satisfaction (Y) has a positive coefficient direction of 0.098, but not statistically significant, with a T-statistic of 1.514 and a P-value of 0.130. This indicates that although the direction of the relationship is positive, customer satisfaction is not able to be a significant mediator in bridging the influence of product quality on customer loyalty.

On the other hand, the indirect effect of service quality (X2) on customer loyalty (Z) through customer satisfaction (Y) shows a positive coefficient direction of 0.375, and proven

statistically significant, with a T-statistic of 4.517 and a P-value of 0.000. These results indicate that customer satisfaction is an effective mediator in strengthening the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. Thus, only the path $X2 \rightarrow Y \rightarrow Z$ meets the significance criteria as stated by Hair et al. (2021), namely a T-statistic > 1.96 and a P-value < 0.05 , while the path $X1 \rightarrow Y \rightarrow Z$ does not meet these requirements.

Based on the criteria(Hair et al., 2021) The indirect effect is considered significant if the t-statistic > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05 . Therefore, it can be concluded that in this model, only the mediation path from Service Quality to Loyalty through Satisfaction is proven to be statistically significant.

Table 2. Result dataspecific indirect effect/ Indirect relationship.

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	Hair et al. (2021) T statistics ($ O/STDEV $) 1.96 = Significant	Hair et al. (2021) P values < 0.05 = Significant	Information
(X1) Product Quality -> (Y) Customer Satisfaction -> (Z) Loyalty	0.098	0.105	0.065	1,514	0.130	Positive and Insignificant
(X2) Service Quality -> (Y) Customer Satisfaction -> (Z) Loyalty	0.375	0.372	0.083	4,517	0,000	Positive and Significant

Quality Model Evaluation

R-square (R²)

The results of Table 3 show that the Satisfaction variable has an R² value of 0.609 and Loyalty of 0.691. This means that 60.9% of the variation in Satisfaction is explained by Product Quality and Service Quality, while 69.1% of the variation in Loyalty is explained by the three variables in the model.

Refers to(Hamid & Anwar, 2019)And(Aditiya Kesuma, 2022)An R² value between 0.50–0.75 is considered moderate. Therefore, this model has good predictive ability, especially in explaining Loyalty as the main variable.

Table 3. MarkR-square.

	R-square
(Y) Customer Satisfaction	0.609
(Z) Loyalty	0.691

f-square (f²)

The results of Table 4 show that Product Quality (X1) has a small effect on Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.034$) and Loyalty ($f^2 = 0.050$). Conversely, Service Quality (X2) has a large effect on Satisfaction ($f^2 = 0.497$) and a moderate effect on Loyalty ($f^2 = 0.190$). Meanwhile, Customer Satisfaction (Y) has a large effect on Loyalty ($f^2 = 0.425$).

Refers to(Savitri et al., 2021)And(Arifin et al., 2023)An f^2 value > 0.35 is categorized as large, 0.02–0.15 as medium, and < 0.02 as small. Therefore, Service Quality and Satisfaction are the dominant contributors in influencing Customer Loyalty in this model.

Table 4. f-square.

	(X1) Product Quality	(X2) Service Quality	(Y) Customer Satisfaction	(Z) Loyalty
(X1) Product Quality			0.034	0.050
(X2) Service Quality			0.497	0.190
(Y) Customer Satisfaction				0.425
(Z) Loyalty				

Q-square (Q²)

Based on Table 5, the Q² values of 0.580 for Satisfaction and 0.539 for Loyalty indicate that the model has good predictive ability. These values indicate that the endogenous variables can be adequately predicted by the independent constructs.

Refers to (Haryono, 2016)Q² is said to be relevant if > 0 . Therefore, the model in this study is proven to have a fairly strong predictive quality and is suitable for use in testing the relationship between variables.

Table 5. Q-square value.

	Q ² predict
(Y) Customer Satisfaction	0.580
(Z) Loyalty	0.539

4. Results and Discussion

This study aims to analyze the influence of product quality and service quality on customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable. Based on the data analysis using SmartPLS 4.0 on 90 respondents, the results are presented as follows:

Effect of Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction

The results show that product quality does not have a significant effect on customer satisfaction. This finding is indicated by a T-statistic value of 1.677 and a P-value of 0.094, which exceeds the significance threshold of 0.05. Thus, the first hypothesis (H1) is rejected. This suggests that customers' perceptions of product quality are not sufficient to directly generate satisfaction.

Effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction

Service quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. The T-statistic value of 6.438 and P-value of 0.000 indicate that the second hypothesis (H2) is accepted. Excellent, responsive, and friendly service has a strong impact on customer satisfaction during their visit to Kafe Kudu.

Effect of Product Quality on Customer Loyalty

Product quality has a negative but significant effect on customer loyalty, with a T-statistic of 2.304 and a P-value of 0.021. Therefore, the third hypothesis (H3) is accepted. However, the negative direction of the effect indicates that perceptions of product quality actually reduce loyalty. This may suggest that customer expectations were not fully met or that other factors, such as service and atmosphere, play a more dominant role in shaping loyalty.

Effect of Service Quality on Customer Loyalty

Service quality also has a significant effect on customer loyalty, as indicated by a T-statistic of 3.567 and a P-value of 0.000. Accordingly, the fourth hypothesis (H4) is accepted. Customers who experience high-quality service are more likely to return and recommend the café to others.

Effect of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty

Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on loyalty, as evidenced by a T-statistic of 5.391 and a P-value of 0.000. Hence, the fifth hypothesis (H5) is accepted. High levels of satisfaction create a positive emotional bond between customers and the café, which ultimately strengthens loyalty.

Mediation Test of Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between product quality and customer loyalty (T-statistic = 1.514; P-value = 0.130), so the sixth hypothesis (H6) is rejected. However, customer satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty (T-statistic = 4.517; P-value = 0.000), thus the seventh hypothesis (H7) is accepted.

This indicates that in the context of Kafe Kudu, good service quality not only enhances satisfaction but also strengthens customer loyalty through positive experiences and emotional engagement.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of data from 90 respondents who are customers of Kafe Kudu on Jalan Sei Petani, Medan City, several key conclusions can be drawn. First, product quality does not significantly affect customer satisfaction, indicating that positive perceptions of the product alone are insufficient to directly generate satisfaction. Conversely, service quality has a significant impact on customer satisfaction, highlighting that service aspects play a dominant role in creating a positive customer experience. Second, product quality has a negative but significant effect on customer loyalty, suggesting a possible mismatch between customer expectations and the perceived product quality. On the other hand, service quality exerts a significant positive influence on customer loyalty, implying that the better the service provided, the higher the likelihood of customers remaining loyal. Furthermore, customer satisfaction significantly affects customer loyalty, meaning that satisfied customers tend to revisit and recommend Kafe Kudu to others. Finally, customer satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between product quality and loyalty, but it does significantly mediate the effect of service quality on loyalty. This finding confirms that excellent service is the key factor in building customer loyalty at Kafe Kudu.

6. Recommendations

The management of Kafe Kudu is advised to prioritize improving service quality aspects such as staff friendliness, service speed, and attentiveness to customer needs, as these factors have been shown to significantly influence both satisfaction and loyalty. Although product quality did not demonstrate a direct contribution to satisfaction, it remains essential to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the products offered, particularly regarding taste, presentation, and menu innovation, to better align with customer expectations. In addition, long-term strategies should focus on integrating superior service with an overall customer experience, including the café's comfort, ambiance, and emotional connection with customers. For future research, it is recommended to include additional variables such as emotional value, price perception, or brand image to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing customer loyalty in the culinary industry.

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