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Promotion, Service Quality, and Store Location as Drivers of Customer Loyalty: The Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

Previous studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding the effects of promotion, service quality, and location on customer loyalty, suggesting that these relationships may vary across different retail contexts and customer characteristics. This inconsistency highlights the need for further investigation, particularly within Indonesia's highly competitive modern minimarket sector. This study examines the effects of promotion, service quality, and location on customer loyalty among Alfamart consumers in Semarang City, with customer satisfaction acting as an intervening variable. The intensifying competition within the retail industry necessitates effective strategies for sustaining long-term customer relationships. A quantitative explanatory approach was employed, surveying 150 respondents selected via purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using SPSS and path analysis. The findings reveal that service quality and location significantly enhance customer satisfaction, whereas promotion has no significant effect on satisfaction levels. Directly, promotion, service quality, and location all positively influence customer loyalty. However, customer satisfaction neither significantly affects customer loyalty nor serves as an effective intervening variable in the model. Theoretically, this insignificant mediation result challenges the conventional assumption that customer satisfaction automatically converts favorable retail experiences into brand loyalty. These results suggest that customer loyalty among Alfamart consumers in Semarang is primarily driven by operational efficiency and convenience rather than satisfaction alone. Consequently, retail managers should prioritize enhancing service quality and optimizing store location to foster customer retention and long-term loyalty.

Keywords: promotion, service quality, location, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty

Introduction

Semarang City is one of the regions in Indonesia experiencing rapid population growth and economic development. These dynamics have encouraged the emergence of numerous modern minimarket outlets, particularly Alfamart, whose number continues to increase and expand across various strategic locations throughout the city. This condition has intensified competition, not only with external competitors such as Indomaret but also among Alfamart outlets themselves. In such circumstances, maintaining customer loyalty has become a significant challenge for store owners and managers. Consumers have a wide range of shopping alternatives, requiring companies to provide added value that encourages customers to continuously choose a particular Alfamart outlet as their preferred shopping destination.

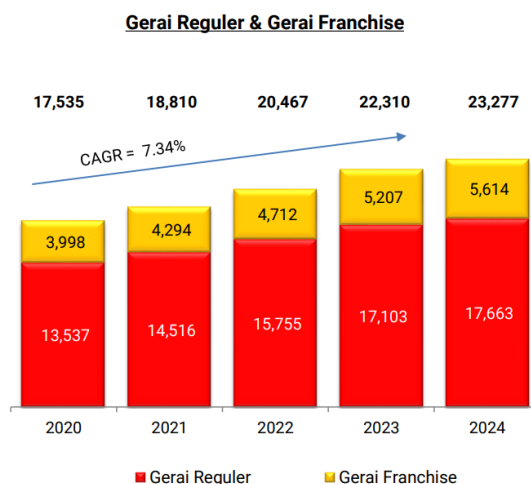


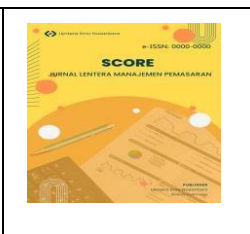
Figure 1. Growth in the Number of Alfamart Stores in Indonesia, 2020–2024
Source: PT Sumber Alfaria Trijaya Tbk. Public Expose (2024).

Based on Figure 1, the number of Alfamart outlets in Indonesia has shown substantial growth over the last five years. In 2020, Alfamart operated 17,535 outlets, consisting of 13,537 regular outlets and 3,998 franchise outlets. This number increased steadily to 23,277 outlets in 2024, comprising 17,663 regular outlets and 5,614 franchise outlets. Overall, Alfamart's outlet expansion achieved a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.34%, indicating that the company's expansion has been consistent year over year. (PT SUMBER ALFARIA TRIJAYA TBK, 2025).

The increasing number of outlets has directly contributed to a more competitive retail environment, including in Semarang City, where the number of modern minimarkets has also grown significantly in recent years. The growing concentration of outlets, particularly those located in close proximity to one another, has created competition not only between Alfamart and rival retailers such as Indomaret but also among Alfamart branches themselves. Consequently, retaining customer loyalty has become a critical factor for the sustainability of each outlet, especially in densely populated and economically active areas such as Semarang City.

From the Stimulus Organism Response (S-O-R) theoretical perspective (Mehrebian & Rusel, 1974) external environmental stimuli do not directly trigger consumer behavior; rather, they are processed through internal psychological evaluations. Within the modern retail context, promotion, service quality, and store location operate as external marketing cues (Stimulus) that shape consumers' cognitive and affective evaluations. These internal psychological states manifest as customer satisfaction (Organism), which subsequently drives long-term behavioral commitment in the form of customer loyalty (Response).

Theoretically, promotion influences satisfaction and loyalty through the mechanism of perceived value. When retail outlets offer tailored price incentives or promotional deals, consumers perceive economic benefits that outweigh their monetary sacrifices. This favorable trade-off induces psychological satisfaction, which in turn motivates repeat purchase behaviors as an expression of loyalty. However, the efficacy of promotional stimuli heavily depends on

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consumer expectations; routine or standardized promotions often fail to generate lasting affective engagement, thereby weakening their impact on loyalty.

In contrast, service quality drives customer outcomes through operational expectation fulfillment and friction reduction. Efficient checkout processes, helpful store personnel, and reliable service encounters minimize shopping effort. Consistently meeting or exceeding service standards directly fosters positive affective evaluations (satisfaction) and builds consumer trust. This cognitive trust serves as the theoretical foundation through which service quality secures customer loyalty, even in highly competitive retail environments.

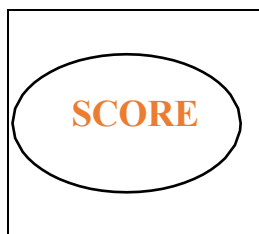
Furthermore, store location operates under the principles of convenience theory and transaction cost reduction. Physical accessibility, favorable traffic flow, and proximity to daily routines significantly reduce the non-monetary costs—specifically time and effort—associated with shopping trips. This spatial accessibility delivers functional satisfaction. In modern minimarket sectors characterized by high product homogeneity, spatial convenience frequently acts as a primary structural driver that directly reinforces routine shopping habits (loyalty), sometimes bypassing deep emotional attachment.

Customer satisfaction subsequently influences customer loyalty. Loyalty is reflected in customers' commitment to continue purchasing from a particular retailer, their willingness to recommend it to others, and their resistance to competitors' offers. In the highly competitive minimarket industry of Semarang City, maintaining customer loyalty has become a strategic necessity for Alfamart to sustain its market position and competitive advantage.

Previous empirical studies have generated mixed results concerning the associations between promotion, service quality, location, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. These variations in findings highlight unresolved issues within the existing literature and indicate the need for further examination. With respect to promotion, Muazidah et al., (2022) and (Suryani Putri et al., 2023) Reported that promotional activities contribute positively to customer satisfaction. Conversely, Banowati & Raharja (2023) as well as Khairum et al., (2023) found no significant relationship between promotion and customer satisfaction. Similar inconsistencies are evident in studies examining customer loyalty. Solehudin (2023) and (Arifin & Budiarti, 2021) demonstrated that promotion positively influences customer loyalty, whereas Ratnaningtyas et al., (2024), Astianita & Lusia (2022), and (Ummi & Widodo, 2023) concluded that promotional efforts do not significantly affect customers' loyalty intentions.

Regarding service quality, Muazidah et al., (2022), Suryani Putri et al., (2023) , Banowati & Raharja (2023), Elman & Bakhtiar (2024), and Pottu & Rifki Bakhtiar (2024) indicated that better service quality tends to enhance customer satisfaction. However, studies conducted by Maulana Azka et al., (2024) and Anugrah et al., (2024) reported that service quality does not significantly affect customer satisfaction. On the other hand, concerning its impact on customer loyalty, Solehudin (2023), Ratnaningtyas et al., (2024), and Pottu & Rifki Bakhtiar, (2024) found a positive effect of service quality on customer loyalty. In contrast, Ruslim & Aurelia (2025) identified a negative effect, while Akmal et al. (2023) concluded that service quality does not have a significant effect on customer loyalty.

Regarding location, Suryani Putri et al. (2023), Septian et al. (2022), Ing & Dahlan (2023) concluded that strategic business locations can improve customer satisfaction. In contrast, Syahputra et al. (2024), Tanjung et al. (2024), and Kholifah et al. (2023) found insufficient evidence to support a significant relationship between location and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, concerning its effect on customer loyalty, Anggriani et al. (2024) as

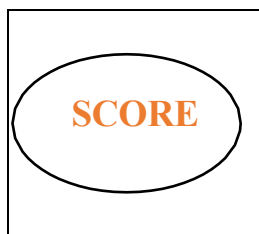
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well as Ing & Dahlan (2023) reported that location plays an important role in fostering customer loyalty. However, Ratnaningtyas et al. (2024) and Suwarni et al. (2022) found that location does not significantly influence customer loyalty.

Despite extensive research on the relationships among promotion, service quality, location, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty, previous studies have reported inconsistent findings. For instance, Arifin & Budiarti (2021), in their study of Sakinah Supermarket in Surabaya, found that promotion had a significant positive effect on customer loyalty, whereas service quality influenced loyalty only indirectly through customer satisfaction. In contrast, Ratnaningtyas et al. (2024), who investigated customers of Alfamart in Yogyakarta, reported that neither promotion nor location significantly affected customer loyalty, while service quality was identified as the only significant predictor. Meanwhile, Putri (Suryani Putri et al., 2023) found that both service quality and location significantly influenced customer satisfaction in the context of Indomaret Drive Thru in West Jakarta, where convenience and speed of service were key characteristics of the retail format. These inconsistent findings indicate that the effectiveness of marketing variables depends on contextual factors, including retail format, customer characteristics, competitive intensity, promotional strategies, and service delivery systems. Supermarkets, conventional minimarkets, and drive-thru retail outlets provide different shopping experiences and attract different customer segments, resulting in variations in customers' perceptions and behavioral responses. Therefore, the relationships among promotion, service quality, location, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty cannot be generalized across different retail contexts, highlighting the need for further investigation within highly competitive modern minimarket environments.

According to the Stimulus Organism Response (S-O-R) theory proposed by (Mehrebian & Rusel, 1974), external environmental stimuli influence individuals' internal psychological states, which subsequently determine their behavioral responses. In marketing, this theoretical framework has been widely adopted to explain how marketing stimuli shape consumers' internal evaluations before influencing their behavioral outcomes. Recent studies have also applied the S-O-R framework to demonstrate that marketing activities affect customer behavior through psychological mechanisms rather than solely through direct relationships (Ing & Dahlan, 2025). In the present study, promotion, service quality, and location are conceptualized as external stimuli (Stimulus), customer satisfaction represents the internal evaluation process (Organism), and customer loyalty reflects the behavioral response (Response). Although the S-O-R theory has been extensively applied in consumer behavior research, empirical evidence explaining the simultaneous direct and indirect effects of promotion, service quality, and location on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction remains limited, particularly within Indonesia's highly competitive modern minimarket sector. Therefore, this study adopts the S-O-R theory as the theoretical foundation for explaining the mechanism through which marketing stimuli influence customer loyalty.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the direct effects of promotion, service quality, and location on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, as well as the mediating role of customer satisfaction in the relationships between these marketing variables and customer loyalty at Alfamart in Semarang. Grounded in the Stimulus Organism Response (S-O-R) theory, this study proposes an integrated conceptual model explaining how marketing stimuli influence customers' internal evaluations, which subsequently shape customer loyalty. Unlike previous studies that primarily examined direct relationships or

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focused on different retail settings, this study simultaneously investigates both direct and indirect effects through customer satisfaction within the context of a highly competitive modern minimarket. Consequently, this study contributes to the marketing literature by extending the application of the S-O-R theory in the retail sector and by providing empirical evidence regarding the mediating role of customer satisfaction in explaining customer loyalty. The proposed conceptual framework consists of three exogenous variables (promotion, service quality, and location), one mediating variable (customer satisfaction), and one endogenous variable (customer loyalty). Accordingly, ten hypotheses are formulated: H1, promotion positively influences customer satisfaction; H2, service quality positively influences customer satisfaction; H3, location positively influences customer satisfaction; H4, promotion positively influences customer loyalty; H5, service quality positively influences customer loyalty; H6, location positively influences customer loyalty; H7, customer satisfaction positively influences customer loyalty; H8, customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between promotion and customer loyalty; H9, customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty; and H10, customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between location and customer loyalty.

Method

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional, explanatory research design using a structured questionnaire-based survey to examine the effects of promotion, service quality, and location on customer loyalty among Alfamart customers in Semarang City, with customer satisfaction serving as an intervening variable. A cross-sectional approach was adopted because data were collected from respondents at a single point in time, enabling the proposed relationships among the research variables to be empirically examined. Data were collected between February and April 2026 through a structured questionnaire administered to customers who met the predetermined sampling criteria. The quantitative approach provides measurable evidence and enables robust statistical analysis of the proposed conceptual model..

Population and Sample

This study targeted Alfamart customers in Semarang City as the research population and employed a non-probability purposive sampling technique. To ensure that respondents had sufficient shopping experience to evaluate the research variables, only customers who had made at least five purchases at Alfamart during the previous month were eligible to participate. Respondent eligibility was verified through a screening question placed at the beginning of the questionnaire, asking participants whether they had purchased products at Alfamart at least five times within the previous month.

To achieve robust model stability and sufficient statistical power for analyzing the proposed research model, which includes three independent variables (X), one dependent variable (Y), and one intervening variable (Z), the sample size was determined based on the multivariate analysis guideline proposed by Hair et al. (2019), recommending a minimum of 5–10 observations per measurement indicator. With 23 measurement indicators, the minimum required sample size was 115 respondents (23×5). From then 186 online questionnaires distributed by sharing direct digital survey links to target respondents, 150 valid responses

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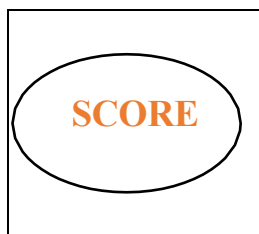
remained after data screening. This sample size exceeds the minimum requirement suggested by (Hair et al., 2019).

Data Analysis Techniques

Data collected in this study were analyzed sequentially using SPSS to evaluate measurement properties, verify structural assumptions, and test the hypothesized direct and indirect relationships. First, validity testing was performed using Pearson's product-moment correlation to assess indicator accuracy. Next, regression diagnostic tests specifically normality, heteroscedasticity, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) were conducted in SPSS to satisfy the classical assumptions of linear modeling. Multiple linear regression analysis and t -tests were then executed within SPSS to determine the direct effects and statistical significance of promotion, service quality, and location on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Finally, to assess the indirect mediating role of customer satisfaction, the Sobel test (Sobel, 1982) was employed. The application of the Sobel test is justified as it formally evaluates whether the indirect effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable through a mediating variable is statistically significant by analyzing the product of the regression coefficients ($a \times b$) relative to their combined standard error (s_{ab}). The resulting z -values and two-tailed p -values for the mediation pathways were computed using an interactive web-based Sobel test calculator, utilizing the unstandardized regression coefficients and standard errors generated from the SPSS regression outputs.

Table. 1 Operational Definition of Variables

Variable	Source	Definition	Indicator Variable
Promotion (X1)	Kotler & Keller (2016)	Promotion refers to marketing communication activities undertaken by a company to inform, persuade, and remind customers about its products or services in order to influence purchasing decisions	- Advertising - SalesPromotion - Events and Experiences - Public Relations and Publicity - Online and Social Media Marketing
Service Quality (X2)	(Zeithaml et al., 1998)	Service quality refers to customers' evaluation of how well a service meets or exceeds their expectations during the service delivery process.	- Tangible - Reliability - Responsiveness - Assurance - Empathy
Location (X3)	Suryani Putri et al. (2023)	Location refers to the strategic placement of a retail outlet that provides accessibility, visibility, and convenience for customers.	- Accessibility - TrafficFlow - Environmental Proximity - Visibility - Convenience

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Customer Satisfaction (Z)	Kotler & Keller (2016)	Customer satisfaction is the customer's evaluation of whether the product or service performance meets or exceeds prior expectations.	- Expectations Match - Repurchase Intention - Willingness to Recommend - Overall Satisfaction
Customer Loyalty (Y)	Kotler & Keller (2016)	Customer loyalty refers to customers' commitment to continue purchasing from the same company and recommending it to others despite competitors' offers.	- Commitment to Repurchase - Willingness to Recommend - Resistance to Switching - Emotional Attachment

Result and Discussion

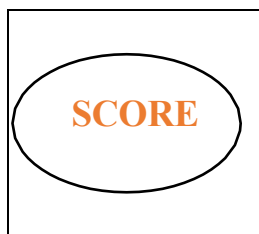
Respondent Demographic and Shopping Profile Analysis

To evaluate the representativeness of the collected data, the demographic and shopping characteristics of the 150 valid retained respondents were analyzed. In terms of gender distribution, male respondents comprised the majority at 56.2% (84 respondents), while female respondents accounted for 43.8% (66 respondents). Based on age criteria, the sample was heavily dominated by young adults aged 21–25 years, representing 57.3% (86 respondents), followed by respondents aged 26–30 years at 24.9% (37 respondents), those aged under 20 years at 10.3% (15 respondents), and respondents aged over 30 years accounting for 7.6% (12 respondents).

Regarding occupational background, university students formed the primary group, representing 51.9% (78 respondents) of the total sample. Entrepreneurs constituted 17.3% (26 respondents), private employees made up 13.0% (20 respondents), laborers and freelancers each accounted for 7.0% (10 respondents each), and housemothers alongside other occupational categories comprised the remaining 3.8% (6 respondents). In terms of monthly shopping frequency at Alfamart over the past month, all retained respondents met the established screening benchmark of at least five visits. Specifically, 53.2% of respondents (80 individuals) shopped between 5 and 10 times, 30.0% (45 individuals) made 11 to 15 visits, and 16.8% (25 individuals) visited Alfamart more than 15 times within the month.

Discussion of Sample Composition and Imbalance

The descriptive profile indicates a structural concentration toward male respondents (56.2%), young adults aged 21–25 years (57.3%), and university students (51.9%). While this distribution reveals an imbalance compared to the overall population structure of Semarang City, it is contextually aligned with Semarang's identity as a major educational and commercial hub in Central Java. The high density of university campuses and surrounding student residential areas naturally positioning university students and young adults as the predominant daily customer segment for modern convenience stores like Alfamart.

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Young, highly mobile consumers typically demonstrate high transaction frequencies driven by proximity, operational convenience, and immediate consumption needs. Furthermore, the screening process ensured that all participants possessed extensive shopping exposure, with nearly half of the sample shopping at Alfamart more than ten times a month. Consequently, although the overrepresentation of younger, student-heavy demographics may limit the direct generalizability of the findings to older or non-student residential populations across Semarang, it guarantees that the empirical evaluation of promotional activities, service delivery, and store location is grounded in the responses of Alfamart's core and most active consumer base.

Validity Test Result

Table. 2 Validity Test

No.	Indicator	Calculated r	Critical r	Result
Promotion				
1	X1.1	0,596	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
2	X1.2	0,621	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
3	X1.3	0,678	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
4	X1.4	0,569	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
5	X1.5	0,640	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
Service Quality				
1	X2.1	0,606	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
2	X2.2	0,619	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
3	X2.3	0,638	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
4	X2.4	0,625	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
5	X2.5	0,639	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
Location				
1	X3.1	0,607	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
2	X3.2	0,645	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
3	X3.3	0,560	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
4	X3.4	0,552	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
5	X3.5	0,649	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
Customer Satisfaction				
1	Z1	0,628	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
2	Z2	0,651	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
3	Z3	0,658	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
4	Z4	0,640	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
Customer Loyalty				
1	Y1	0,645	0,1603	Passed Validation Test

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2	Y2	0,650	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
3	Y3	0,670	0,1603	Passed Validation Test
4	Y4	0,695	0,1603	Passed Validation Test

The indicator for each variable show valid results. The calculated correlation coefficient (r-value) for each indicator exceeded the critical value of the correlation coefficient (r-table = 0.160, N = 150, $\alpha = 5\%$, df = 148), confirming that all measurement items met the validity requirements.

Normality Test

Table. 3 Normality Test

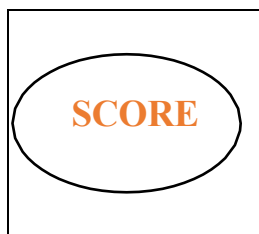
		Unstandardized Residual
N		150
Normal Parameters	Mean	0
	Std.Deviation	0,54291363
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0,047
	Positive	0,046
	Negative	-0,047
Test Statistic		0,047
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0,200
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig.	0,577
	99% Confidence Interval	
	Lower Bound	0,564
Upper Bound		0,59

According to the normality test results in Table 2, the Asymp. Sig. value reached 0.200, which is greater than 0.05. Hence, the data are deemed to conform to the normality assumption and are appropriate for further statistical analysis.

Coefficient of Determinan (R^2)

Table. 4 Result of the Coefficient of Determinan (R^2) test

Model	R	(R^2)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,731	0,535	0,525	0,54846

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As presented in Table 3, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.535. This result indicates that Promotion, Service Quality, and Location collectively account for 53.5% of the variation in Customer Loyalty, while the remaining 46.5% is attributable to other variables not included in the proposed research model.

Heteroscedasticity Test

Table. 5 Heterocedasticity Test

Model				T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0,118	0,141		0,837	0,404
Promotion	0,058	0,045	0,146	1,308	0,193
Service Quality	0,018	0,048	0,042	0,367	0,714
Location	0,014	0,044	0,035	0,326	0,745

a. Dependent Variable: abs_rest

Based on the Glejser test results, the significance values for Promotion (X1), Service Quality (X2), and Location (X3) were 0.193, 0.714, and 0.745, respectively. As all significance values were greater than 0.05, the regression model satisfies the homoscedasticity assumption, indicating the absence of heteroscedasticity.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The study employed multiple linear regression analysis within the SPSS version 27 software to process the data. The results, including the regression coefficients and significance values of Promotion, Service Quality, and Location on Customer Satisfaction, are presented in Table 5.

Table. 6 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis.

Model				t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0,436	0,245		1,776	0,078
Promotion	0,060	0,078	0,059	0,772	0,441
Service Quality	0,413	0,083	0,393	4,973	0,000
Location	0,408	0,076	0,387	5,334	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Based on the statistical test results, the resulting regression equation is as follows:

$$Z = 0,436 + 0,060 (\text{promotion}) + 0,413 (\text{Service Quality}) + 0,408 (\text{Location})$$

A detailed explanation of the effect of each variable is presented as follows:

a. Promosi

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The estimated coefficient for Promotion was 0.060, indicating a positive relationship with Customer Satisfaction. However, the t-value of 0.772 did not exceed the critical value of 1.65508, and the significance level of 0.441 was greater than the threshold of 0.05. These results suggest that although Promotion is positively associated with Customer Satisfaction, its effect is not statistically significant.

b. Service Quality

Service Quality produced a coefficient value of 0.413, demonstrating a positive contribution to Customer Satisfaction. The t-value of 4.973 exceeded the critical value of 1.65508, while the significance value of 0.000 was below 0.05. Therefore, Service Quality was found to have a positive and statistically significant influence on Customer Satisfaction

c. Location

The coefficient for Location was 0.408, indicating a positive relationship with Customer Satisfaction. Statistical testing showed a t-value of 5.334, which was higher than the critical value of 1.65508. In addition, the significance value of 0.000 was below the accepted level of 0.05. Accordingly, Location has a positive and statistically significant effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Hypothesis Testing Using the t-Test

The study utilized path analysis through SPSS version 27 to explore how Promotion, Service Quality, and Location contribute to Customer Loyalty (Y). Customer Satisfaction (Z) was included in the model as a mediator to explain the indirect relationships among the variables. Detailed results are provided in Table 6.v

Table. 7 Hypothesis Testing Using the t-Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0,374	0,252		1,484	0,140
Promotion	0,228	0,079	0,225	2,881	0,005
Service Quality	0,320	0,091	0,304	3,508	0,001
Location	0,252	0,085	0,238	2,961	0,004
Customer Satisfaction	0,098	0,084	0,097	1,161	0,248

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

The relationship between the variables, as estimated through regression analysis, is described by the following equation:

$$Y = 0,374 + 0,228 (\text{promotion}) + 0,320 (\text{Service Quality}) + 0,252 (\text{Location}) + 0,098 (\text{Customer Satisfaction})$$

A detailed description of the effect of each variable is presented as follows:

a. Promotion

Promotion demonstrated a positive and statistically significant influence on Customer Loyalty, with a regression coefficient of 0.228. This result suggests that Customer Loyalty

increases by 0.228 units for every one-unit rise in Promotion. The significance of this effect was confirmed by a t-value of 2.881, which exceeded the critical value of 1.65508, and by a p-value of 0.005, which was below the 0.05 significance level.

b. Service Quality

Based on the statistical analysis, Service Quality demonstrated a meaningful contribution to Customer Loyalty. The positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.320$) suggests that improvements in service-related performance are associated with higher levels of customer loyalty. The statistical evidence supports this relationship, as the observed t-statistic (3.508) exceeded the required critical value (1.65508). In addition, the probability value of 0.001 remained substantially below the 0.05 significance criterion. These findings indicate that customers are more likely to remain loyal when they consistently experience reliable and satisfactory service from the retailer.

c. Location

The results indicate that Location positively affects Customer Loyalty, as reflected by a regression coefficient of 0.252. This coefficient suggests that improvements in location-related factors are associated with a 0.252-unit increase in Customer Loyalty. The statistical analysis supports this finding, with the calculated t-value ($t = 2.961$) exceeding the critical value of 1.65508. Moreover, the significance value ($p = 0.004$) was below the accepted significance threshold of 0.05. These findings confirm that Location has a positive and statistically significant effect on Customer Loyalty.

d. Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction demonstrated a positive relationship with Customer Loyalty, as indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.096. This result implies that an increase of one unit in Customer Satisfaction is associated with a 0.096-unit increase in Customer Loyalty. However, statistical testing did not provide sufficient evidence to support the significance of this relationship. The calculated t-value ($t = 1.161$) was lower than the critical value of 1.65508, while the significance value ($p = 0.248$) exceeded the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, although Customer Satisfaction shows a positive association with Customer Loyalty, the effect was not statistically significant.

Sobel Test

Sobel Test for the Promotion Variable

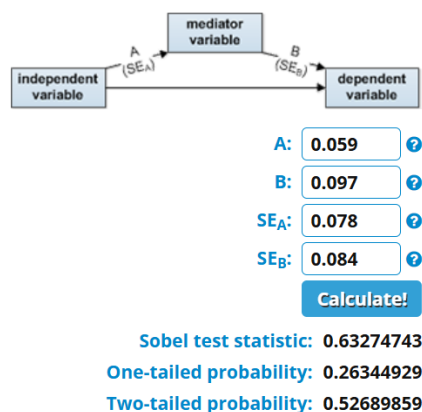


Figure 3. Sobel Test for the Promotion Variable

The mediation analysis yielded a Sobel test statistic of 0.632 with a corresponding p-value of 0.526. The results did not satisfy the required significance criteria, as the test statistic remained below 1.96 and the p-value was greater than 0.05. Accordingly, Customer Satisfaction did not serve as a significant mediating mechanism in the relationship between Promotion and Customer Loyalty, as the indirect effect failed to reach statistical significance.

Sobel Test for the Service Quality Variable

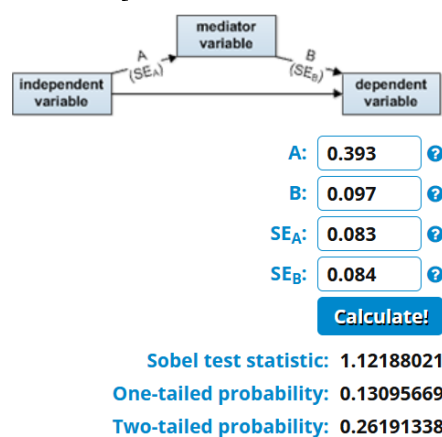


Figure 4. Sobel Test for the Service Quality Variable

Mediation analysis using the Sobel test produced a test statistic of 1.121 and a p-value of 0.261. Because the observed statistic fell below the critical value of 1.96 and failed to achieve the required significance level, Customer Satisfaction could not be confirmed as a mediator between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty. Consequently, the hypothesized indirect association between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction could not be validated by the empirical data.

Sobel Test for the Location Variable

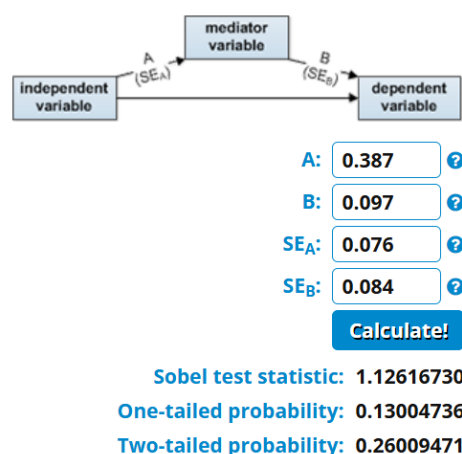
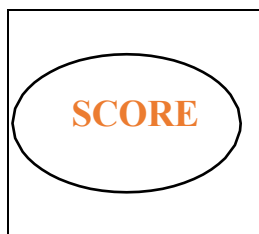


Figure 5. Sobel Test for the Location Variable

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Results of the mediation analysis revealed a Sobel test statistic of 1.126 and a p-value of 0.260. Since the test statistic did not meet the required critical value and the p-value was above the accepted significance level, Customer Satisfaction could not be established as a significant mediator between Location and Customer Loyalty. Therefore, the proposed indirect relationship between Location and Customer Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction was not supported by the empirical evidence.

Discussion

The Effect of Promotion on Customer Satisfaction

The statistical analysis revealed that Promotion did not significantly affect Customer Satisfaction. Although the regression coefficient was positive ($\beta = 0.060$), the calculated t-value ($t = 0.772$) was lower than the critical value of 1.65508, and the significance level ($p = 0.441$) exceeded the accepted threshold of 0.05. These results indicate that promotional activities implemented by Alfamart in Semarang were unable to generate a meaningful improvement in customers' satisfaction levels.

This finding suggests that consumers may perceive promotional programs such as discounts, reward schemes, or temporary campaigns as routine marketing practices rather than factors that substantially enhance their shopping experience. Consequently, while promotion may attract customer attention, it does not necessarily strengthen their overall evaluation of the retailer. The present result is consistent with the findings of (Banowati & Raharja, 2023), who similarly reported an insignificant relationship between promotion and customer satisfaction.

The Effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction

Service Quality was found to have a significant positive effect on Customer Satisfaction. The regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.413$ indicates a positive relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, the calculated t-value ($t = 4.973$) exceeded the critical value of 1.65508, while the significance level was below 0.05 ($p < 0.001$).

These findings demonstrate that customers place considerable importance on service-related attributes when evaluating their shopping experiences. Friendly employees, efficient transaction processes, and responsive customer assistance contribute to favorable customer perceptions and higher satisfaction levels. This result supports previous research conducted by Muazidah et al. (2022), which emphasized the critical role of service quality in shaping customer satisfaction.

The Effect of Location on Customer Satisfaction

The findings indicate that Location significantly influences Customer Satisfaction. The positive regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.408$) suggests that improvements in location-related attributes are associated with higher satisfaction levels. Statistical evidence further confirms this relationship, as the calculated t-value ($t = 5.334$) was substantially higher than the critical value of 1.65508 and the significance level remained below 0.05 ($p < 0.001$).

A strategic location provides consumers with easier access, shorter travel time, and greater convenience when shopping. In the context of Semarang City, where residential and commercial areas continue to expand, accessibility has become an important determinant of customer evaluations. These findings are consistent with those reported by Suryani Putri et al. (2023), who identified location as a significant contributor to customer satisfaction.

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The Effect of Promotion on Customer Loyalty

Promotion was found to have a significant positive effect on Customer Loyalty ($\beta = 0.228$; $t = 2.881$; $p = 0.005$). These findings indicate that promotional programs implemented by Alfamart are capable of encouraging repeat purchases and strengthening customers' intention to continue shopping at the store. This result differs from (Ratnaningtyas et al. (2024), who reported that promotion did not significantly affect customer loyalty. The difference may be attributed to variations in customer characteristics and promotional strategies applied across research settings. In the context of Alfamart in Semarang, promotional activities appear to provide sufficient value to maintain customer loyalty.

The Effect of Service Quality on Customer Loyalty

The analysis showed that Service Quality has a positive and statistically significant effect on Customer Loyalty. This relationship is reflected by the regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.320$), the calculated t-value ($t = 3.508$), which exceeded the critical value of 1.65508, and the significance level ($p = 0.001$), which was lower than 0.05.

These findings indicate that customers who consistently receive satisfactory service are more likely to maintain long-term relationships with the retailer. Positive service experiences contribute to trust, comfort, and confidence, which ultimately encourage customers to revisit the store and continue purchasing from the same retailer. This result aligns with the findings of Solehudin (2023), who also identified service quality as a key determinant of customer loyalty brand.

The Effect of Location on Customer Loyalty

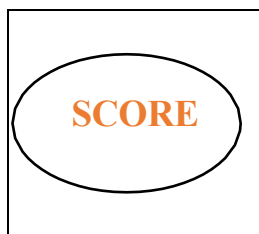
The findings indicate that Location significantly influences Customer Loyalty. The positive regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.252$) suggests that improvements in location-related factors are associated with higher levels of customer loyalty. Statistical evidence further confirms this relationship, as the calculated t-value ($t = 2.961$) exceeded the critical value of 1.65508 and the significance level remained below 0.05 ($p = 0.004$).

A strategic location provides customers with greater convenience and easier access when shopping. Retail stores that are situated close to residential areas, workplaces, or public facilities tend to be visited more frequently because they reduce customers' time and effort. These findings are consistent with those reported by Anggriani et al. (2024), who found that location has a positive effect on customer loyalty

The Mediating Effect of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship Between Promotion and Customer Loyalty

Mediation analysis provided insufficient evidence to support the intervening role of Customer Satisfaction in the association between Promotion and Customer Loyalty. The obtained Sobel statistic ($Z = 0.632$) failed to reach the required critical threshold of 1.96, and the corresponding probability value ($p = 0.526$) exceeded the accepted significance criterion. Therefore, the indirect effect was not statistically supported.

These findings suggest that promotional activities may attract customers and create short-term satisfaction, but such satisfaction is not sufficiently strong to generate long-term loyalty. Customers may respond positively to discounts, rewards, or promotional campaigns;

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however, these benefits are often temporary and can easily be replaced by competing offers. Therefore, customer loyalty appears to be influenced more directly by promotion rather than indirectly through customer satisfaction.

The Mediating Effect of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship Between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty

The Sobel test results indicate that Customer Satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty. This conclusion is supported by the Sobel statistic ($Z = 1.121$), which was lower than the critical value of 1.96, and the significance level ($p = 0.261$), which exceeded the threshold of 0.05.

Although service quality contributes positively to customer satisfaction, the resulting satisfaction does not appear to be strong enough to encourage customer loyalty. In the retail industry, customers often regard good service as a standard expectation rather than a unique advantage. As a result, customers may remain satisfied with the service they receive while still considering alternative retailers that offer similar services and additional benefits.

The Mediating Effect of Customer Satisfaction on the Relationship Between Location and Customer Loyalty

The findings indicate that Customer Satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between Location and Customer Loyalty. The Sobel test produced a statistic of $Z = 1.126$, which was below the critical value of 1.96, while the significance value ($p = 0.260$) remained above the accepted significance level of 0.05.

A strategic location undoubtedly provides convenience and accessibility, which contribute positively to customer satisfaction. However, convenience alone may not be sufficient to create long-term loyalty. Customers may choose a particular retail store because it is easy to access, but they may also switch to competitors that offer comparable accessibility along with more attractive promotions or services. Therefore, the indirect effect of location on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction was not supported in this study.

H10: The Effect of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty

The findings indicate that Customer Satisfaction does not significantly influence Customer Loyalty. Although the relationship was positive ($\beta = 0.096$), the calculated t-value ($t = 1.161$) was lower than the critical value of 1.65508 and the significance level exceeded 0.05 ($p = 0.248$).

These results suggest that customer satisfaction alone is insufficient to encourage long-term loyalty among Alfamart customers in Semarang. Customers may feel satisfied with the services and shopping experience provided by the retailer; however, they may still consider alternative stores that offer greater convenience, more attractive promotions, or better value. Consequently, customer loyalty appears to be influenced by factors beyond customer satisfaction in the context of modern retail competition.

Conclusion

This study empirically examined the structural relationships among Promotion, Service Quality, Location, Customer Satisfaction, and Customer Loyalty among Alfamart customers

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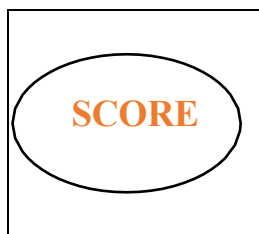
in Semarang City. The findings demonstrate that Service Quality and Location significantly drive Customer Satisfaction, whereas Promotion does not. Conversely, Promotion, Service Quality, and Location each exert a direct, positive, and significant impact on Customer Loyalty. Notably, Customer Satisfaction does not significantly influence Customer Loyalty, nor does it serve as an intervening mediator in the structural model, as evidenced by the non-significant indirect pathways for Promotion ($p = 0.526$), Service Quality ($p = 0.261$), and Location ($p = 0.260$). These results indicate that retail loyalty in Semarang is directly driven by core operational efficiency and transactional benefits rather than mediated psychological satisfaction. From a practical perspective, minimarket management should prioritize enhancing front-line service excellence and strategic store accessibility while restructuring promotional schemes to focus on tangible value rather than routine price discounts.

Despite its contributions, this study is subject to several limitations that contextualize its findings. Methodologically, the reliance on a non-probability purposive sampling framework and a cross-sectional design limited to Semarang City restricts the broad generalizability of the findings to broader retail markets. Furthermore, the statistical mediation analysis relied strictly on the conventional Sobel test, which may exhibit lower statistical power compared to non-parametric resampling methods.

To address these limitations, future research should adopt probability or multi-stage sampling techniques and expand the geographic scope to incorporate multi-city retail comparisons across urban and suburban markets. Methodologically, future studies are encouraged to employ longitudinal designs to capture temporal shifts in customer behavior and utilize bootstrap mediation techniques (e.g., via PROCESS Macro or PLS-SEM) for enhanced statistical precision. Finally, scholars should incorporate additional relevant constructs—such as perceived value, trust, price fairness, store image, product availability, and switching costs—to build a more comprehensive structural framework for retail customer loyalty.

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