

HOW LOYAL ARE THE CUSTOMER TO RECYCLED PRODUCT

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ABSTRACT

Recycled products form a crucial component of the Reuse, Reduce and Recycle framework within the broader concept of circular economy. Nevertheless, consumer loyalty towards these products remains uncertain. This research aims to examine the determinants of customer loyalty for recycled goods, with customer satisfaction serving as a mediating factor. The study utilises a quantitative approach, gathering data through an online questionnaire distributed via purposive sampling. To assess the hypotheses, SEM Smart PLS analysis is applied to responses from 302 recycled product consumers. The findings reveal that brand image and environmental concern positively influence customer loyalty. Conversely, brand prestige and product quality demonstrate a negative relationship with loyalty, with the latter showing significant impact. Customer satisfaction mediates the connection between perceived price fairness, product quality, environmental concern, and customer loyalty. This research contributes to marketing and sustainability literature by demonstrating that customers can develop satisfaction and loyalty towards non-food recycled products. For future investigations into recycled product loyalty, a qualitative methodology is recommended.

Keywords: recycled product, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, brand prestige

INTRODUCTION

Recycled products should gain the customer satisfaction first before it can lead to loyalty through repetitive purchase. How to gain Customer Loyalty in Recycled Product still receive few attentions from researchers, and there are more than one factors will have the possibility on affecting customer loyalty. In the case of non-recycled products, perceived fair price refers to customer perceptions of price when the quality of service exceeds the reference points such as competitor's price, expected price, service performance (Kwak et al., 2015 as cited in Liao et al., 2020) because it involves comparing the price with a relevant standard, norm, or reference to determine whether it is fair (Xia et al., 2004 as cited in Liao et al., 2020). Consumers perceive the fairness of price they paid based on the comparison of the benefits of the products they purchased. Perceived price fairness was tested in the online games and the results revealed that perceived price fairness was positively related to online gamer loyalty (Liao et al., 2020). Price fairness was also tested in the coffee shop industry in Thailand, where the results showed customer loyalty may be influenced by the presence of price fairness (San et al., 2022). On the other case, specifically in telecommunications business, perceived price fairness positively influences customer satisfaction based on the study conducted in the United Arab Emirates (Alzoubi et al., 2020). Perceived Price Fairness were studied in various industries and enhanced customer satisfaction.

Marketing sees brand management as one of the factors that affecting for any products to be marketed (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018). A well-established brand will have a better opportunity to market its products successfully compared to unknown or newly established brand. A well-established brand will also bring prestigious feeling to its customer whenever the customer wears or uses the product. For example: Bae (2021) studied about Nike launched Nike Space Hippy in March 2020 where it made exclusively with factory scraps and recycled materials, and Dell computer introduced its first product in 2014 that made from recycled plastic. Another example is Adidas collaborates with Parley for the Oceans to produce sneakers, socks, swimwear, football kits, et cetera that are made from recycled ocean plastic waste (Adidas x Parley, n.d.) where in 2017, Adidas successfully sold one million parley shoes that made from ocean plastic (Kharpal, 2018). Gilaninia et al. (2012) studied brand prestige in dairy products to determine whether it has positive relationship between prestige of the dairy products' brand with customers' intention to buy through loyalty in Kermanshah province, Iran. The study found that there is a positive significant relationship between brand prestige and loyalty. They suggested that brand prestige is perhaps positioned as a symbolic sign to increase the social image of the customers. A well-known brand will leave a strong brand image in their customers' mind. Previous studies of brand image suggested that perception of a brand has a positive and significant influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty when tested in retail supermarket chain in the United Kingdom (Neupane, 2015); brand image has positive influence on customer satisfaction in the internet banking (Rahi et al., 2020); brand value and brand characteristic, which are dimensions of brand image have positive relationship with customer satisfaction in catering businesses (Lin, 2011), however, it is yet to be tested in recycled products.

One of the leading factor that may be possible in increasing customer satisfaction is product quality, research show if customer satisfaction is created, then eventually it will lead to increasing customer loyalty. Product quality has been

studied widely in the marketing literature and found to be an important factor in increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty (Hoe & Mansori, 2018; Ishaq et al., 2014; Wantara & Tambrin, 2019). In the recycled product context, consumers may perceive products made of recycled materials as low quality (Essoussi & Linton, 2010, as cited in Bae, 2021) and recycled materials are associated with negative image such as dirtiness or contaminated (Meng & Leary, 2021). Previous study showed that the perceived quality of recycled product was positively related to intention to purchase recycled products (Sun et al., 2018) where intention to purchase is one of the constructs of customer loyalty. Recycled product has drawn attention of many researchers in recent years because of environmental concern (Adıgüzel & Donato, 2021; Bigliardi et al., 2020; Calvo-Porral & Lévy-Mangin, 2020; Magnier et al., 2019). More and more educational materials regarding on how to preserve the environment are available so the next generation will continue to have a healthy living environment. To avoid continuing harming the environment, the recycled product has become one of the solutions to reduce environmental burden. Eco-friendly product has gained popularity in recent years along with the increment of awareness among younger population. In the era of increasing concern over the environment where government around the globe has issued more strict regulations to protect the environment, many corporations are required to follow regardless of the business type. Thus, this concern over the environment may benefited the businesses that produce recycled or environmental-friendly products. Although concern over the environment is increasing, but recycled products may have negative image (Meng & Leary, 2021) in the mind of many consumers because they may not be well informed on the manufacturing process, therefore, dirtiness or contamination are common concerns over recycled products. However, previous study showed that environmental concern increased customer loyalty for restaurant with sustainability practices (Kim & Hall, 2020) that may lead to actual visit repeatedly and finally lead to customer loyalty.

Customer satisfaction is one of the factors that leading to customer loyalty because a satisfied customer may return to purchase the products or services. When a customer has a pleasant experience towards the products they purchased, they become satisfied either with the product itself or services provided by the store during the purchase. Customer satisfaction for conventional products and services has been studied widely, such as in the catering businesses in Taiwan (Lin, 2011); hotel industry in Malaysia (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018); internet banking in Pakistan (Rahi et al., 2020); and telecommunication industry in the United Arab Emirates (Alzoubi et al., 2020). The mediating role of customer satisfaction has been studied in multiple industries such as organic food restaurant in Turkey (Konuk, 2019), coffeehouse brands in the USA (Choi et al., 2017), internet banking in Pakistan (Rahi et al., 2020), automotive industry in India (Jahanshahi et al., 2011). Based on extant literature, there are lacking studies in investigating the role of customer satisfaction in recycled products. Customer loyalty has been studied widely in the marketing field because loyalty to products has become one of the factors that creating profit for the business through repetitive purchase. Loyalty also becomes a critical factor for sustainability of the business because without a loyal customer that keeps purchasing the products, a business may not be sustainable in a long run. In the conventional product and services, customer loyalty is studied in the coffee shop industry in Thailand (San et al., 2022); online gaming industry (Liao et al., 2020); telecommunication industry in the United Arab Emirates (Alzoubi et al., 2020), and many more with objective to find out the determinant factors of customer loyalty, whether it is perceived price fairness, brand prestige, brand image, product quality, or environmental concern. However, loyalty towards recycled products has received limited attention especially in Indonesia where recycled products are not well known/informed yet. Based on the recycled product phenomenon above, this study investigates Perceived Price Fairness, Brand Prestige, Brand Image, Product Quality, and Environmental Concern on how they influence the customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. The following are the Hypothesis:

- H1: Perceived price fairness has a positive relationship and significantly affects customer loyalty.
- H2: Brand prestige has a positive relationship and significantly affects customer loyalty
- H3: Brand image has a positive relationship and significantly affects customer loyalty
- H4: Product quality has a positive relationship and significantly affects customer loyalty
- H5: Environmental concern has a positive relationship and significantly affects customer loyalty.
- H6: Perceived Price Fairness and Customer Loyalty mediated by Customer Satisfaction
- H7: Brand Prestige and Customer Loyalty mediated by Customer Satisfaction
- H8: Brand Image and Customer Loyalty mediated by Customer Satisfaction
- H9: Product Quality and Customer Loyalty mediated by Customer Satisfaction
- H10: Environmental concern and Customer Loyalty mediated by Customer Satisfaction

METHOD

This study is using quantitative methods to test the relationship between variables. The 302 respondents are gathered using online questionnaires. Total indicators are 36, and all constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale with the categories (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree (Hair et al. 2017).

In PLS-SEM, the outer model consists of internal reliability, internal consistency, convergent and discriminant validity tests. The inner model is tested using R^2 , Q^2 and F^2 to analyze relationship between latent variables. An acceptable R^2 estimate is 0.25, 0.50, or 0.75, which represents weak, moderate, or significant predictive accuracy (Hair et al., 2014). The Q^2 must be bigger than 0 to confirm that the model has a good predictive relevance. Evaluation of the size of the F^2 value follows the following rules (Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2014) where the threshold of 0.02, 0.15, or 0.35 is categorized as weak, moderate, strong effect size. Hypothesis testing was conducted using path analysis, one-tailed, and the t-value must be greater than 1.96 with 95% confidence level for the hypothesis to be accepted. The mediating relation will be tested using bootstrapping procedure to determine the complementary, competitive, indirect-only mediation, or non-mediation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the profile of the respondent. The female respondents are higher than males, and the Gen X and Millennials are dominants of the generation. The Education is mostly Bachelor, and the domicile are dominant in Jakarta and greater Jakarta area. We can conclude the profile is sufficient and provides good distribution.

Table 1. Profile of respondent

Description	N	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	100	33.1
Female	202	66.9
Generation		
Gen Z	26	8.6
Millenials	94	31.1
Gen X	173	57.3
Baby Boomer	9	3.0
Education		
High School or equivalent	45	14.9
Bachelor	185	61.3
Postgraduate	61	20.2
Doctorate	11	3.6
Domicile		
Jakarta	109	36.1
Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi	122	40.4
West, Central, and East Java	49	16.2
Others	22	7.3

Table 2. Reliability and validity test result

Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	Reliability Coefficient RhoA	AVE
Perceived Price Fairness (PPF)	PPF1	0.733	0.929	0.905	0.929	0.725
	PPF2	0.886				
	PPF3	0.908				
	PPF4	0.879				
	PPF5	0.840				
Brand Prestige (BP)	BP1	0.868	0.954	0.940	0.951	0.804
	BP2	0.910				
	BP3	0.906				
	BP4	0.908				
	BP5	0.891				
Brand Image (BI)	BI1	0.847	0.936	0.916	0.923	0.746
	BI2	0.883				
	BI3	0.852				
	BI4	0.876				

	BI5	0.861				
Product Quality (PQ)	PQ3		0.876	0.789	0.824	0.704
	PQ4	0.724				
	PQ5	0.897				
	PQ6	0.885				
Environmental Concern (EC)	EC1	0.826	0.929	0.898	0.908	0.767
	EC3	0.861				
	EC4	0.901				
	EC5	0.911				
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	CS1	0.842	0.917	0.887	0.890	0.690
	CS2	0.838				
	CS3	0.844				
	CS4	0.790				
	CS5	0.837				
Customer Loyalty (CL)	CL1	0.813	0.913	0.880	0.882	0.676
	CL2	0.838				
	CL3	0.832				
	CL4	0.813				
	CL5	0.814				

The Table 2 presents the reliability and validity, which are fulfilled the requirements to be analysed further.

Table 3. Inner test result with f^2

Variable	F^2	Effect Size
Perceived Price Fairness → Customer Loyalty	0.012	No effect
Brand Prestige → Customer Loyalty	0.003	No effect
Brand Image → Customer Loyalty	0.023	Small
Product Quality → Customer Loyalty	0.016	No effect
Environmental Concern → Customer Loyalty	0.035	Small
Perceived Price Fairness → Customer Satisfaction	0.071	Small
Brand Prestige → Customer Satisfaction	0.001	No effect
Brand Image → Customer Satisfaction	0.000	No effect
Product Quality → Customer Satisfaction	0.135	Small
Environmental Concern → Customer Satisfaction	0.432	Large
Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty	0.364	Large

Table 4. Hypothesis result

Hypotheses	Path	Path Coefficient	t-Statistics	p-Value	Impact	Conclusion
H1	PPF → CL	0.086	1.605	0.055	Not Sig	Rejected
H2	BP → CL	-0.052	0.857	0.196	Not Sig	Rejected
H3	BI → CL	0.162	2.518	0.006	Sig	Accepted
H4	PQ → CL	-0.106	2.021	0.022	Sig	Rejected
H5	EC → CL	0.159	11.596	0.000	Sig	Accepted
H6	PPF → CS → CL	0.121	3.666	0.000	Sig	Accepted
H7	BP → CS → CL	0.023	0.635	0.263	Not Sig	Rejected
H8	BI → CS → CL	-0.004	0.082	0.467	Not Sig	Rejected
H9	PQ → CS → CL	0.177	5.065	0.000	Sig	Accepted
H10	EC → CS → CL	0.282	7.944	0.000	Sig	Accepted

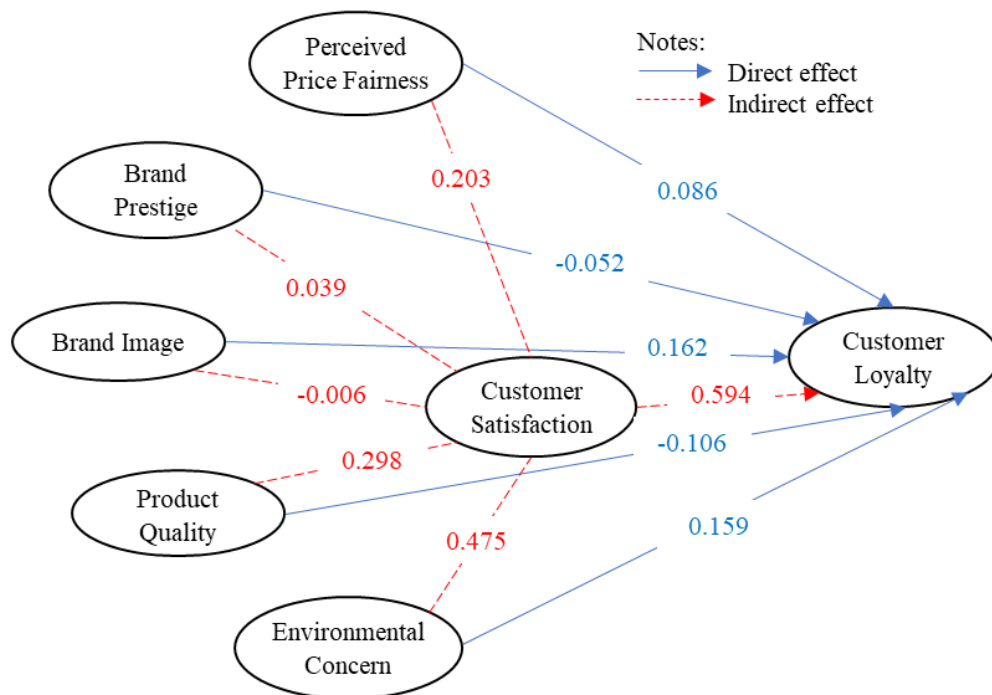


Figure 1. Research model (tested)

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to find out the factors that determine customer loyalty in the recycled product and the impact of mediating role of customer satisfaction. The paper concludes that customers are more receptive to brand image portraying familiarity, easy to remember, and having good reputation while concern about the environment is a strong indicator of loyalty towards recycled product. Customers of recycled product feel that by using recycled product, they have contributed to the environment by reducing the waste dumped into the landfill. Perceived price fairness has positive but insignificant impact in influencing recycled product loyalty. Customers of recycled product feel that perceived price fairness is not strong enough to gain their loyalty. Brand prestige and product quality is found to be having opposite relationship with customer loyalty and the impact is not significant for brand prestige but significant for product quality. Customers of recycled products do not concern about their social position because concern over the environment is more important. As for product quality, it is related to the customers' perception of contamination and dirtiness because recycled products are made of recycled materials which are considered contaminated and dirty.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to acknowledge our fellow researchers Hamina Ali, MM., and Evi Evianti Kriswandi, MM., for the contribution of data collection.

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