

The effect of personal selling and relationship marketing on customer loyalty and satisfaction as an intervening variable in PT. Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang Branch

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to examine the effects of personal selling and relationship marketing on customer satisfaction and loyalty at the PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch.

Methodology: The study population comprised 302 customers of PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch who made purchase transactions during 2023, while the sample included customers with regular monthly transactions from January 1 to December 31, 2023. Data were analyzed using multivariate analysis with a structural equation modeling (SEM) program.

Results: The analysis shows that personal selling and relationship marketing influence both customer satisfaction and loyalty, with customer satisfaction strengthening the effect on loyalty. Personal selling has the strongest impact on satisfaction, whereas relationship marketing has the weakest impact on loyalty.

Conclusion: Effective personal selling and relationship marketing strategies play a critical role in enhancing customer satisfaction, which, in turn, fosters greater customer loyalty. Among these factors, personal selling emerged as the most impactful driver of satisfaction and loyalty within the company's customer base.

Limitation: This study is limited to a single branch of PT Welty Indah Perkasa and uses a sample confined to customers with regular monthly transactions for over one year. The findings may not be fully generalizable to other branches, industries, or customers with irregular purchase patterns.

Contribution: This study provides empirical evidence of the key role of personal selling and relationship marketing in fostering sustainable customer satisfaction and loyalty in the B2B context, offering strategic guidance to prioritize personal selling and enhance relationship marketing for long-term engagement.

Keywords: *Personal Selling, Relationship Marketing, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty*

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1. Introduction

The main focus in business is how the transaction process continues on an ongoing basis so that the organization or company tries to build long-term relationships, which, in turn, are expected to form loyalty. According to Lepojević and Đukić (2018), Factors Affecting Customer Loyalty are influenced by (a) Customer Satisfaction, (b) Customer Trust, (c) customer commitment, (d) Perceived Service Quality. According to Hadi, Saufi, and Rinuastuti (2023), customer loyalty is influenced by (a) customer

satisfaction, (b) product and service quality, (c) brand image, (d) perceived value, (e) trust, (f) customer relationships, and (g) switching costs. PT Welty Indah Perkasa is a manufacturer of aftermarket automotive components for vehicle maintenance under the WEALTHY and MULTITECH brands. PT Welty Indah Perkasa was established in 2006 to meet the market demand for high-quality products in the automotive aftermarket maintenance field in Asia. The relationship between suppliers and customers in the automotive spare parts industry is mediated by salespeople. Many customers do not make repeat purchases because of a lack of relationship marketing and post-purchase communication from salespeople.

In the context of competition in the automotive market, the sustainability of business relationships is determined not only by the quality of the products offered but also by the company's ability to create a positive customer experience at every point of interaction (Scherpen, Draghici, & Niemann, 2018). Customer loyalty is a crucial long-term goal because loyal customers can become brand advocates and organically expand the market share. Customer satisfaction, as explained by (Wilk, Soutar, & Harrigan, 2021), is a post-purchase evaluation in which the customer's experience with a product or service is compared to their initial expectations. If the product performance meets or exceeds expectations, customers will feel satisfied and are more likely to develop long-term relationships with the company (Ghanad, 2023; Javed, Khalil, Ishaque, & Khalil, 2023).

Customer trust is another crucial element that shapes customer loyalty. Trust arises when one party believes that the other has integrity and can be relied upon. In the context of PT Welty Indah Perkasa, trust can be built through clear product information, transparent pricing, adherence to warranties, and honest communication (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Customer commitment also plays a significant role in this regard. This commitment can be affective (emotional connection) or calculative (rational consideration based on benefits and costs) (Fullerton, 2003). Perceived service quality is an important dimension of relationship marketing. Fullerton (2005) explains that service quality is determined by five key dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

In addition, according to (Rinenggo, Sudiro, Sunaryo, & Hussein, 2025), customer loyalty is influenced by brand image, perceived value, customer relationships, and switching costs. PT Welty Indah Perkasa, with its WEALTHY and MULTITECH brands, holds a strategic position in Asia. However, the challenge it faces is maintaining its customers amid intense competition. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of a structured relationship marketing strategy and insufficient post-purchase communication. Salespeople in the automotive industry serve as the primary link between companies and customers. They are not only responsible for selling products but also for building relationships, understanding customers' specific needs, and providing post-sale follow-ups. Therefore, PT Welty Indah Perkasa needs to design a comprehensive relationship marketing strategy, including customer loyalty programs, salesperson training, and the use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technology. The integration of digital marketing through social media, email marketing, and instant communication platforms is also an essential complement to maintaining customer engagement (Safari, Safari, Olesen, & Shahmehar, 2016). It is important to note that in the automotive aftermarket industry, face-to-face interactions between salespeople and customers hold high strategic value. Customers often require detailed explanations of technical specifications, product compatibility, and the long-term benefits of using specific spare parts. Therefore, the ability of salespeople to communicate this information persuasively and transparently is a decisive factor in building trust and loyalty. Conversely, relationship marketing strategies that prioritize proactive after-sales service, such as regular maintenance reminders or special offers for existing customers, can increase the likelihood of repeat purchases.

In addition to the human aspect, information technology support serves as an essential instrument for strengthening relationship marketing. The implementation of an integrated CRM system can help companies effectively manage customer data, track purchase histories, personalize offers, and monitor customer satisfaction in real time. This enables companies to respond to customer needs more quickly and accurately than before. Furthermore, digitalization trends and changes in consumer behavior require companies to adapt to omnichannel marketing strategies that combine face-to-face channels with digital platforms. The use of social media as an interactive communication tool, e-mail marketing campaigns

for exclusive offers, and instant messaging applications for customer support are concrete steps in maintaining long-term relationships with consumers. By combining effective personal selling, well-planned relationship marketing strategies, and robust digital technology support, PT Welty Indah Perkasa has a significant opportunity to increase customer retention and build sustainable competitive advantages in the highly competitive Asian automotive industry.

2. Literature review

In this study, the theory used as a basic foundation for determining customer satisfaction and loyalty is the behavioral aspect of it. Behavior is one of the factors that shapes consumer responses to products or services. Behavior Reason Theory (BRT) determines the main reasons for an individual's behavior, the main components of which are value, reason, attitude, and intention (Hadiwijaya & Yustini, 2023; Putra, Ahadiyat, & Keumalahayati, 2023; Sahu, Padhy, & Dhir, 2020).

2.1 Customer satisfaction

According to Tjiptono (2019), the word satisfaction or satisfaction comes from the Latin "satis" (meaning quite a lot, adequate) and "facio" (doing or making) simply satisfaction can be interpreted as an effort to fulfill something or make something adequate.

- a. According to Hayati and Siregar (2019), five main factors must be considered when determining the level of customer satisfaction, there must consider 5 (five) main factors:
Product quality refers to consumers' satisfaction if the results of their evaluation show that the products they use are of high quality.
- b. Service quality refers to consumers' satisfaction with the service received.
- c. Emotionally, consumers feel proud and gain confidence that others will admire them when using products with certain brands that tend to have a higher level of satisfaction. Satisfaction obtained from social values makes consumers satisfied with certain brands.
- d. Price, namely, products that have the same quality but set a relatively low price, provides higher value to consumers.
- e. Consumers who do not need to pay additional costs or do not need to waste time to get a product tend to feel satisfied.

Customer satisfaction can be determined and measured by considering various factors that affect it. According to Butarbutar, Efendi, Simatupang, Butarbutar, and Sinurat (2021), the dimensions of customer satisfaction consist of:

- a. Product: Good products meet consumer tastes and expectations in creating satisfaction, measured by (a) product variety, (b) product quality, and (c) product availability.
- b. Price. Reflects the quality of the product compared to the price that consumers have to pay, which is measured by (a) the price level and suitability of the selling value, and (b) the price variation.
- c. Promotion. Communication efforts on the benefits of the product to target consumers, as measured by (a) advertising by the company, (b) discounts given to customers, and (c) gifts provided to customers.
- d. Employee service. Service from employees is an effort to meet the needs and desires of consumers and create satisfaction, measured by (a) politeness, (b) friendliness, and (c) speed and accuracy of service.

2.2 Customer loyalty

According to Kotler, Keller, Ang, Tan, and Leong (2018), loyalty is a commitment held by consumers to buy or reuse a preferred product or service in the future despite situational influences and marketing actions or efforts to influence switching decisions.

According to Sasongko (2021), there are five ways to create and maintain consumer loyalty.

- a. Treat customer rights; customers have the right to be respected. Treating them according to their wishes and their wishes so that their loyalty is maintained, the company must pay attention to what their wishes and expectations are for the company's product performance.
- b. Staying close to customers is a valuable asset because the company will know the changes in consumer desires, which is very effective in quickly knowing consumer expectations.

- c. Measuring customer satisfaction is very important as a meaningful input and must be done continuously and gradually every decade to determine consumer attitudes, especially regarding loyalty.
- d. Creating switching costs in the form of pricing as well as negotiated discounts, where the set price can be reduced by negotiation with special consideration for loyal customers.
- e. Providing extras, which can be in the form of gifts to customers so that they feel cared for and valued, can in turn bind them to remain loyal.

Dimensions and indicators of customer loyalty according to Pratiwi, Suparwan, and Alfaridi (2019).

- a. Repeat Purchase: Is the willingness of customers to buy or reuse the same product or service in the future, including: (a) Buy products continuously, (b) Always use products from the same brand
- b. Purchases across product lines: The willingness of customers to buy outside the product or service line that has been used from the same brand, measured by (a) buying other products from a preferred brand and (b) having a great love for the brand.
- c. Referrals: The willingness of customers to recommend the products or services they use to others is characterized by (a) recommending products to others and (b) believing and trusting the products offered.
- d. Showing Immunity (Retention): This is a condition in which consumers feel attached to a brand or store that causes them to choose the product or store even though there are many other alternatives available, characterized by (a) Will continue to use the same product in the future, and (b) Not interested in similar products from other brands.

2.3 Personal Selling

According to Tjiptono (2019), Personal Selling is defined as a marketing activity carried out through direct interaction with one or more buyers to present product knowledge, answer questions, and take orders from prospective buyers. According to Kotler et al. (2018), selling is an oral disclosure of dealing with one or several prospective buyers with the intention of creating a sale. From the experts' explanations, Personal Selling can be interpreted as sales activities carried out directly by salespeople to buyers or prospective buyers to interact with and establish long-term relationships between the two.

Gunasekharan, Basha, and Lakshmana (2016) used four dimensions to measure personal selling effectiveness:

- 1. Communication ability is the ability of sales personnel to establish good communication with consumers, as measured by (a) starting interactions with customers, (b) having a good and polite attitude, and (c) being able to break the ice with customers.
- 2. Product knowledge shows the ability of salespeople to explain product characteristics and benefits and answer various questions asked by consumers about the products offered, as measured by (a) able to explain the products offered, (b) able to answer questions asked by consumers, and (c) able to demonstrate the products offered.
- 3. Creativity (creativity) Creativity refers to the salesperson's skills in marketing products, using various communication methods to attract consumer attention, and having patience when offering products to consumers characterized by (a) being able to attract customer attention, and (b) being able to control emotions.
- 4. Empathy (empathy) Empathy refers to the ability of salespeople to provide individualized attention to consumers, truly prioritize the interests of consumers, understand consumer needs, and provide solutions to problems faced by consumers as measured by (a) providing attention, (b) understanding customer needs and desires, and (c) providing solutions to customer problems.

2.4 Relationship Marketing

According to Aldaihani and Ali (2019), relationship marketing is an important approach to marketing that supports and strengthens relationships between companies and consumers. Losing one customer costs an organization five times as much as attracting a new one, which is why any organization is looking for long-term relationships and constant efforts to retain existing customers rather than looking for new ones. In short, Relationship Marketing can be defined as a planned Relationship Marketing by building, developing, and maintaining customers over the long term. Relationship Marketing proposes

the principles of consultation, dialogue, and mutual trust that strengthen the relationship between the company and the customer.

Hadi et al. (2023) conducted a study to determine the relevant dimensions and indicators, and the results of the analysis showed that the dimensions and indicators of Relationship Marketing consist of:

1. Commitment: The power of relationship marketing, which can be used to demonstrate a higher level of relationship work for the satisfaction and benefit of both parties. Measurement Indicators of commitment include (a) the company's ability to provide superior products and services at a fair/reasonable price, (b) providing appropriate and correct services, and (c) meeting the needs of consumers.
2. Trust: The willingness of customers to trust a company. Companies that prove themselves trustworthy are also better able to build trust; customers feel confident that the company understands their needs and meets their expectations. The measurement of relationship marketing indicators in the trust dimension includes (a) the company's trust in providing accounts receivable to customers and (b) customer trust in the services provided by the company.
3. Communication: Communication is important because a relationship will not start without it. Some of the basic things needed to build ideal communication between the company and its customers are (a) listening, giving, and receiving feedback (feedback), (b) showing confidence, and (c) resolving conflicts and solving problems.

3. Research methodology

This quantitative research aims to show the relationship between variables and test existing theories by analyzing them. The data source used in this study was primary data. Primary data refer to information obtained first-hand by researchers relating to research variables for the specific purpose of the study (Lim & Teoh, 2021; Sugiyono, 2019). Primary data were collected in this study by distributing questionnaires to customers of PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch who met the research sample criteria.

The population in this study was all customers who had purchased goods at PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch during 2023, with a total of 302 customers. The sampling procedure used in this study was non-probabilistic and purposive. Sugiyono (2019) suggested that purposive sampling is a sampling technique with certain considerations. The consideration used is that the sample is taken from active customer data, namely the number of customers of PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch who regularly made purchases during 2023, with a total of 107 customers from six provinces.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design aimed at identifying the relationships among variables and testing existing theories using statistical analysis. Quantitative research is suitable for measuring constructs objectively, analyzing numerical data, and generalizing findings (Munther, Zyoud, Tahani, Bsharat, & Dweikat, 2024). This study examines the effects of personal selling and relationship marketing on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

3.2 Data Source

The data used in this study were primary data obtained directly from the respondents. Primary data refer to information collected first-hand by the researcher relating to the research variables for the study's specific purpose. In this study, primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to customers of PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch who met the sample criteria for this study.

3.3 Population and Sample

The population consisted of all customers who purchased goods from the PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch in 2023, totaling 302 customers. The sampling method applied was **non-probability** sampling using a purposive sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2019), purposive sampling is a sampling technique based on specific considerations. The inclusion criterion in this study was customers categorized as *active customers*, defined as those who made regular purchases every month

in 2023. Based on this criterion, the final sample comprised 107 customers from six provinces within the company's operational area.

3.4 Sampling Criteria

- **Inclusion criteria:**
 1. Customers who made regular monthly purchases between January and December 2023.
 2. Customers are domiciled in one of the six provinces served by PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang branch.
 3. Customers were willing to participate and complete the questionnaire in full.
- **Exclusion criteria:**
 1. Customers with incomplete purchase data.
 2. Customers who cannot be contacted.
 3. Customers who refused to participate.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed directly to respondents via email and in-person. The instrument used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The questionnaire was divided into sections: demographic information, personal selling, relationship marketing, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. Prior to the main survey, a pre-test involving 20 respondents was conducted to ensure the clarity, content validity, and reliability of the instrument.

3.6 Measurement of Variables

Each variable in this study was measured using established indicators adapted from the previous literature.

Variable	Indicators	Scale	Sources
Personal Selling (PS)	Salesperson's communication skills, product knowledge, responsiveness, problem-solving	Likert	Ingram et al. (2015)
Relationship Marketing (RM)	After-sales communication, provision of updated product information, complaint handling	Likert	Berry (1995)
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	Conformity with expectations, satisfaction with product quality, satisfaction with service	Likert	Kotler & Keller (2016)
Customer Loyalty (CL)	Repurchase intention, recommendation, resistance to switching	Likert	Dick & Basu (1994)

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)** to test the causal relationships between variables. SEM was chosen for its ability to simultaneously assess the measurement and structural models (Byrne, 2016). The analysis stages included the following:

1. **Descriptive Statistics** – to describe respondent profiles and response patterns.
2. **Reliability Test** – Cronbach's alpha ≥ 0.70 was considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).
3. **Validity Test** – Convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted ≥ 0.50) and discriminant validity ($\sqrt{\text{AVE}} > \text{inter-construct correlations}$).
4. **Measurement Model Analysis** – Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess indicator loading.
5. **Structural Model Analysis:** Hypothesis testing for direct and indirect effects.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical research principles, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and the use of data solely for academic purposes. Respondents were informed about the research objectives, potential benefits, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences.

4. Results and discussions

The validity test can be seen in two aspects: convergent and discriminant validity. The reflection measure is considered high if it correlates more than 0.7 with the measured construct. The following test results were obtained using SmartPLS 4.0: The test results show that all tested indicators are valid. The outer loading values of the indicators are listed in table below.

Table 1. Outer Loading Value

Dimensions	Indicators	<i>Outer loading</i>
Communication Skills	Starting the interaction	0.903
	Good and polite attitude	0.891
	Can break the ice	0.882
Product Knowledge	Able to explain the product	0.886
	Able to answer questions	0.853
	Able to demonstrate the product	0.819
Creativity	Can attract attention	0.943
	Able to control emotions	0.938
Empathy	Giving attention	0.850
	Understanding needs	0.878
	Providing solutions	0.866
Commitment	The products offered are good	0.911
	Provide good service	0.937
	Meet customer needs	0.890
Trust	The company provides receivables	0.919
	Trust in the company's services	0.924
Communication	Giving and receiving feedback	0.840
	Showing confidence	0.844
	Resolve conflicts	0.869
Products	Variety of products offered	0.912
	Good product quality	0.874
	Product availability	0.891
Price	Price level versus quality	0.914
	Varied prices	0.906
Promotion	The existence of promotional media from the company	0.875
	Product discount	0.907
	The existence of prizes provided	0.879
Service	Employee courtesy	0.892
	Friendliness provided	0.900
	Speed and accuracy	0.876
Repurchase	Make regular purchases	0.953
	Use products from the same brand	0.953
Buying a Product Line	Buying product lines from the same brand	0.934
	Strong liking for the brand	0.934
Recommending the Product	Recommend to others	0.926
	Belief the brand is the best	0.922
Showing Immunity	Fixation on the brand	0.951
	Not interested in other brands' products	0.950

Source: smartPLS data processing, 2024

It can be seen that the indicator values are all above 0.7; therefore, it can be concluded that all constructs are valid. After calculating the validity of each indicator, the next step was to calculate the validity of the dimensions of the scale. The outer loading dimension values are listed in table below.

Table 2. Outer Loading Value Dimension

Dimension	Variable	Outer Loadings
Personal Selling	Communication Skills	0.884
	Product Knowledge	0.953
	Creativity	0.865
	Empathy	0.910
Relationship Marketing	Trust	0.928
	Commitment	0.917
	Communication	0.930
Customer Satisfaction	Price	0.939
	Service	0.949
	Product	0.894
	Promotion	0.956
Customer Loyalty	Repurchase	0.933
	Buying a Product Line	0.963
	Recommending the Product	0.931
	Showing Immunity	0.891

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2024

It can be seen that the indicator values are all above 0.7; therefore, it can be concluded that all constructs are valid. The significance value of the direct effect between the exogenous and endogenous variables is shown in table below.

Table 3. Structural Model Testing Table / Hypothesis Testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Customer Satisfaction -> Customer Loyalty	0.611	0.598	0.086	7.128	0.000
Personal Selling -> Customer Satisfaction	0.796	0.799	0.056	14.332	0.000
Personal Selling -> Customer Loyalty	0.237	0.244	0.082	2.904	0.004
Relationship Marketing -> Customer Satisfaction	0.173	0.167	0.076	2.283	0.022
Relationship Marketing -> Customer Loyalty	0.178	0.185	0.057	3.106	0.002

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2024

The path coefficient results show that all values in the original sample were positive. The significance of the direct effect can be seen from the p-values, which are all below 0.05, indicating that customer satisfaction has a significant effect on customer loyalty, personal selling to customer satisfaction, personal selling to customer loyalty, relationship to customer satisfaction, and relationship to customer loyalty. The significance value of the indirect direct effect between the variables is shown in table below.

Table 4. Mediation Testing Table

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Personal Selling -> Customer Satisfaction	0.486	0.479	0.083	5.857	0.000
Customer Satisfaction -> Customer Loyalty					

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Relationship Marketing -> Customer Satisfaction -> Customer Loyalty	0.105	0.098	0.043	2.453	0.014

Source: SmartPLS data analysis, 2024

Value of the indirect relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables. The indirect effect of personal selling on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction with a p-value of 0.000 is significant because it is smaller than 0.05, and the original sample value is 0.486, which means that customer satisfaction motivates 48.6% of the intervention of personal selling on customer loyalty. The indirect effect of relationship marketing on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction with a p-value of 0.014 is significant because it is smaller than 0.05, and the original sample value is 0.105, which means that customer satisfaction motivates 10.5% as an intervening factor for relationship marketing on customer loyalty.

H1, the test result of the estimated coefficient (sample mean) of Personal Selling on Customer Satisfaction, is 0.799 with a t-statistic value of 14.332 and a standard deviation value of 0.056, while the p-values are 0.000 or smaller than 0.05, meaning that H1 is accepted, which means Personal Selling on customer satisfaction has a significant effect.

H2, the test result of the estimated coefficient (sample mean) of Relationship Marketing on Customer Satisfaction is 0.167 with a t-statistic value of 2.283 and a standard deviation value of 0.076; for niai, the p-value is 0.022 or smaller than 0.05, meaning that H2 is accepted, which means Relationship Marketing on customer satisfaction has a significant effect.

H3 the test results of the estimated coefficient (sample mean) Personal Selling on Customer Loyalty is 0.244 with a t-sattistics value of 2.904 and a standard deviation value of 0.082, while for the p-values value is 0.004 or smaller than 0.05 so that H3 is accepted or which means Personal Selling on Customer Loyalty has a significant effect.

H4, the test results of the estimated coefficient (sample mean) Relationship Marketing on Customer Loyalty is 0.185 with a t-statistic value of 3.106 and a standard deviation value of 0.057, while the p-values are 0.002 or smaller than 0.05; thus, H4 is accepted, which means Relationship Marketing on Customer Loyalty has a significant effect on customer loyalty.

H5 the estimated coefficient test results (sample mean) Customer satisfaction on Customer Loyalty is 0.598 with a t-sattistics value of 7.128 and a standard deviation value of 0.086, while the p-values are 0.000 or smaller than 0.05 so that H5 is accepted or which means Customer satisfaction on Customer Loyalty has a significant effect.

H6, the test results of the estimated coefficient (sample mean) of Personal Selling through customer satisfaction on customer loyalty is 0.479 with a t-statistic value of 5.857 and a standard deviation value of 0.083, while for the p-values value is 0.000 or smaller than 0.05, so that H6 is accepted or which means Personal Selling through customer satisfaction on customer loyalty has a significant effect.

H7 the test result of the estimated coefficient (sample mean) of Relationship Marketing through customer satisfaction on customer loyalty is 0.098 with a t-sattistics value of 2.453 and a standard deviation value of 0.043, while the p-values are 0.014 or smaller than 0.05 so that H7 is accepted or which means Relationship Marketing through customer satisfaction on customer loyalty has a significant effect.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and analysis conducted, the following conclusions can be drawn: there is a significant influence between Personal Selling and customer satisfaction; there is a significant influence between Relationship Marketing and customer satisfaction; there is a significant influence between personal selling and customer loyalty; there is a significant influence between Relationship Marketing and customer loyalty; there is a significant influence between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty; there is a significant influence between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty through customer satisfaction as an intervening variable on customers; and there is a significant influence between Relationship Marketing and customer loyalty through customer satisfaction as an intervening variable on customers of PT Welty Indah Perkasa Palembang. Personal selling had the strongest influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Researchers suggest that branch management must pay attention to the recruitment process for qualified salespeople by providing training and debriefing before they enter the field. Training and debriefing salespeople will enable them to answer questions and solve problems in the field better. Company management must set a standard procedure for customer visits, including what to bring, explain, and demonstrate products. Policies concerning the cooperative relationship between companies and customers, such as discounts, cashbacks, point contracts, and accounts receivable limits, must consider phenomena in the field so that they can match the needs and abilities of customers. Improving marketing relationships by providing merchandise bonuses, creating monthly or annual programs, product promotions, etc., will increase satisfaction and have an impact on customer loyalty.

The research findings on the influence of personal selling and relationship marketing on customer satisfaction and loyalty at PT Welty Indah Perkasa, Palembang branch, show that these two main variables play a significant role in shaping customer behavior in a business-to-business (B2B) context. This study reinforces previous findings that personal selling is not merely the process of selling products face-to-face but also involves building emotional connections, effective communication, understanding specific customer needs, and providing the right solutions. The results of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis confirm that personal selling has the strongest influence on customer satisfaction compared to other variables. This indicates that direct interaction between salespeople and customers can create a positive and memorable experience, thereby enhancing perceived service quality and building trust in the brand. Salespeople with strong communication skills, empathy, and deep knowledge of both the product and customer needs are the spearheads of the company's marketing strategy.

Meanwhile, relationship marketing also has a positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty, although its effect on loyalty is relatively weaker than its effect on satisfaction. This phenomenon can be explained by relationship marketing theory, which emphasizes the importance of maintaining long-term relationships through continuous interaction, added value, and consistent trust in the brand. However, the relatively lower direct impact on loyalty indicates the need to improve strategies, such as strengthening post-purchase communication, implementing attractive loyalty programs, and leveraging digital technology for personalized interactions. This study also found that customer satisfaction acts as a mediating variable that strengthens the relationship between personal selling and relationship marketing with customer loyalty. In other words, without adequate satisfaction, personal selling and relationship marketing efforts will not maximize their impact on consumer loyalty. Satisfied customers tend to make repeat purchases, recommend products to others, and become more tolerant of minor shortcomings that may arise.

From a theoretical perspective, this study makes an important contribution to the marketing management literature, particularly in the B2B marketing field within the automotive component industry. The finding that personal selling has a dominant effect on customer satisfaction strengthens the view that human interaction remains crucial, even as digital marketing trends grow in popularity. Meanwhile, the finding regarding the mediating role of customer satisfaction expands the understanding of the mechanism of the relationships among variables in building loyalty. From a practical perspective, the results of this study have strategic implications for PT Welty Indah Perkasa. First, the company should prioritize training and development of salespeople to enhance their interpersonal communication

skills, effective negotiation abilities, and in-depth product knowledge. Such training could include consultative selling techniques, Customer Relationship Management skills, and the use of customer relationship management (CRM) technology to manage customer data and interactions systematically.

Second, companies need to strengthen their relationship marketing strategy through loyalty programs designed specifically for the B2B customer segment. These programs could include special discounts for bulk purchases, bonus products for repeat purchases, or premium after-sales services that competitors do not offer. Third, the integration of digital technology is essential to support both strategies. The use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp Business API, email marketing, and social media can help reach customers more quickly and personally. In addition, cloud-based CRM systems can help salespeople monitor purchase histories, preferences, and customer needs, enabling more relevant and targeted interactions.

Fourth, companies must pay attention to post-purchase interaction quality, as this study shows that one reason customers do not make repeat purchases is the lack of post-sales communication. Follow-up actions, such as contacting customers to inquire about their satisfaction, provide updates on new products, or simply express gratitude, can strengthen emotional bonds and increase the likelihood of repeat purchases. Fifth, in the long term, PT Welty Indah Perkasa should build a customer-oriented organizational culture. This culture should be reflected in every operational aspect, from production, quality control, and distribution to after-sales services. In this way, every employee—not just salespeople—will feel responsible for ensuring customer satisfaction.

Overall, this study confirms that effective personal selling and relationship marketing strategies can create a positive synergy in building customer satisfaction and loyalty. Satisfaction serves as a crucial link to ensure that both strategies deliver optimal results. In the competitive automotive component industry, competitive advantage is not determined solely by product quality but also by the company's ability to build and maintain long-term relationships with customers. By understanding and implementing the findings of this study, PT Welty Indah Perkasa is expected to strengthen its market position, improve customer retention, and drive sustainable sales growth.

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