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Enhancing Purchase Intention through Service Quality: The Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction and Competitive Advantage in Batam City Supermarkets

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, and purchase intention among customers of five supermarkets in Batam City: Top 100, DC Supermarket, Hypermart, JC Supermarket, and SNL Food. A quantitative method was employed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) based on data collected from 306 respondents. The result indicates that service quality has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, and purchase intention. Furthermore, competitive advantage significantly mediates the relationship between service quality and purchase intention, while customer satisfaction does not show a direct or mediating effect. These findings highlight the strategic importance of service quality in fostering sustainable competitive advantage, which has a stronger influence on consumers' purchasing decisions than short-term satisfaction. Theoretically, this study contributes to the retail marketing literature. Practically, it provides valuable insights for retail managers to develop service strategies focused on long-term value creation and differentiation.

Keywords: Competitive advantage, customer satisfaction, purchase intention, service quality, retail supermarket (batam city).

INTRODUCTION

Global economic conditions have influenced consumption patterns in emerging economies, including Indonesia. Inflationary pressures and rising living costs have prompted consumers to become more discerning in their purchasing decisions, prioritizing perceived value, convenience, and the overall service experience, particularly in the retail sector. According to Indonesia's Ministry of Finance, domestic economic pressures have impacted household purchasing power and consumption behavior, necessitating that businesses continually adapt their competitive strategies (Fiscal Policy Agency, 2025). In this context, service quality has become an increasingly important factor shaping consumer decision-making and retail competition.

Despite economic pressures, Indonesia's consumption-driven sectors have demonstrated resilience. Indonesia's Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) reached 51.9 in January 2025, indicating sustained economic activity and relatively stable domestic demand (Fiscal Policy Agency, 2025). These conditions encourage consumers to reassess their shopping priorities, increasing sensitivity not only to price but also to service quality, store convenience, and overall shopping experience. Consequently, supermarkets are required to compete more intensively through superior service quality as a strategic means of influencing customer satisfaction and purchase intention (Goić et al., 2021; Purnamasari & Fadli, 2024).

At the regional level, Batam City represents a dynamic economic environment characterized by industrial activity, urban growth, and an increasingly competitive retail landscape. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and the Batam Development Agency (BP Batam) indicate that Batam's economic growth reached 6.69% in 2024, slightly declining from 7.04% in the previous year. The manufacturing sector remains the primary driver of the regional economy, contributing over 56% to the Regional Domestic Product (RDP). In addition, total investment in the third quarter of 2024 amounted to IDR 6.9 trillion, reflecting sustained investor confidence in Batam's business climate (BPS Batam City, 2024).

The wholesale and retail trade sector, including modern retail formats such as supermarkets and minimarkets, also plays a significant role in Batam's economy, contributing 6.33% to the RDP (Kepri.Antaranews.com, 2024). Amid increasing competition within the local retail market, supermarkets in Batam such as Top 100, DC Mall (Diamond Supermarket), and SNL Food have continued to expand their operations. Top 100 has opened its 10th store and is developing its 11th location, while SNL Food has expanded its market reach through collaboration with more than 1,000 local SMEs. DC Mall remains a major shopping destination for the lower-middle-income segment (Batam Pos, 2024; Ulasan.co, 2024). These developments indicate that competition among supermarkets in Batam increasingly emphasizes service performance and customer experience rather than price alone.

Therefore, this section is streamlined to maintain a clear focus on the study's core research problem, namely examining how service quality influences customer satisfaction and competitive advantage, and how these factors subsequently shape purchase intention in the supermarket industry of Batam City.

Although Batam demonstrates strong economic performance, academic research that simultaneously examines service quality, customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, and purchase intention within regional supermarket contexts remains limited. Previous studies have largely focused on metropolitan areas such as Jakarta and Surabaya or examined these variables independently. Studies by (Al Mamun et al., 2023; Sibarani et al., 2020) primarily assessed direct relationships without incorporating mediating mechanisms, leaving a gap in understanding integrative consumer behavior models at the regional level.

Service quality is widely recognized as a critical determinant of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and behavioral intention. Satisfied customers are more likely to engage in repeat purchases and provide positive recommendations, thereby strengthening a retailer's competitive position (Goić et al., 2021; Purnamasari & Fadli, 2024).Moreover, competitive advantage derived from superior service quality serves as a strategic differentiator in increasingly saturated retail markets (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). Empirical evidence also indicates that customer satisfaction and brand loyalty have a significant positive influence on purchase intention (Lady et al., 2025).

Accordingly, this study aims to address the identified research gap by investigating the effects of service quality on customer satisfaction and competitive advantage, and examining how both variables mediate the relationship between service quality and purchase intention in Batam City supermarkets. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to marketing

literature and provide practical insights for retail managers operating in regional economic environments.

Customer satisfaction has been widely recognized as a fundamental construct in building trust, loyalty, and long-term relationships between customers and businesses. Lyman et al. (2023) emphasize that satisfaction serves as a foundation for trust, while Sugiat et al. (2023) assert that satisfied customers are more likely to develop loyalty and maintain enduring relationships with firms. Empirical studies consistently demonstrate a strong relationship between service quality and purchase intention, indicating that superior service enhances customers' willingness to engage in future purchasing behavior (Akter et al., 2024; Fernando et al., 2023).

Customer satisfaction reflects an emotional response resulting from consumers' evaluations of their experiences with products or services. When perceived performance meets or exceeds expectations, satisfaction levels increase, as explained by Disconfirmation Theory (Schiebler et al., 2025). Satisfied customers tend to exhibit repeat purchase behavior and positive word-of-mouth, thereby contributing to increased retail sales and stronger customer loyalty (Hussain et al., 2025; Slack & Singh, 2020). This relationship is particularly evident among lower- and middle-income consumers, for whom satisfaction plays a critical role in purchase decision-making (Afinia & Tjahjaningsih, 2024; Aurelia & Nawawi, 2021; Dlamini et al., 2024).

Furthermore, prior studies confirm that customer satisfaction functions as a significant mediating variable between service quality and repurchase intention. Research by Reza Al Faisal et al. (2022); Made Yoga Saputra & Gede Bayu Rahanatha (2024); Soeharso (2024) demonstrates that improvements in service quality indirectly influence repurchase intention through enhanced satisfaction. Similar findings were reported by Hameed et al. (2024), Prassida et al. (2024) and Salsabila (2023), who emphasize that satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and behavioral intentions, including loyalty and repurchase behavior.

Purchase intention refers to consumers' willingness and tendency to purchase a product or service after evaluating various influencing factors and serves as a key predictor of actual purchasing behavior and market performance (Lu et al., 2021). Empirical evidence indicates that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on purchase and repurchase intentions (Jordan et al., 2025; Afinia & Tjahjaningsih, 2024). However, Hameed et al., (2024) argue that the direct effect of service quality on purchase intention may be relatively weak without deeper satisfaction, trust, and relational factors.

In addition to customer satisfaction, competitive advantage plays a crucial role in shaping purchase intention. Competitive advantage refers to a firm's ability to create superior value and maintain a favorable market position amid intense competition (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). Firms that develop sustainable competitive advantages through innovation, differentiation, and strong customer relationships are better positioned to attract customers and enhance profitability (Gong et al., 2023; Purwanto et al., 2023). Service quality serves as an essential source of competitive advantage by strengthening trust, perceived value, and brand preference, which in turn influence consumers' purchase decisions (Zhang & Ahmad, 2021; Angela & Kesumahati, 2023; Sheykhan et al., 2024)

Empirical studies in the retail sector confirm that service quality significantly and directly enhances competitive advantage. Kusumadewi and Karyono (2019), Dwi Nurdiyanto and Dwi Jayanti (2022) and Faria et al. (2022) provide evidence that superior service performance contributes to differentiation and strengthens firms' competitive positions. This advantage is further reinforced through reliable, responsive, and empathetic service, which is difficult for competitors to replicate (Carter et al., 2023; Mahrinasari et al., 2024)

Moreover, competitive advantage has been shown to positively influence purchase intention and business performance. Studies by Novrianto (2024), Susanti et al. (2023) and Utama et al. (2024) highlight that firms with strong competitive advantages are more capable of fostering customer trust and satisfaction, ultimately encouraging repeat purchases. In uncertain and highly competitive environments, differentiation strategies become particularly important for SMEs and retail businesses in strengthening customer relationships and purchase intentions (Nuryakin & Maryati, 2022; Gorondutse et al., 2021).

Although some studies did not explicitly test competitive advantage as a mediating variable, their findings support the conceptual linkage in which service quality shapes competitive advantage through differentiation and perceived value, which subsequently affects customer satisfaction and purchase intention (Lestari et al., 2024; Soeharso, 2024). Additionally, Djiu et al. (2024) confirm that competitive advantage has a significant positive impact on business performance, particularly within micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

METHODS

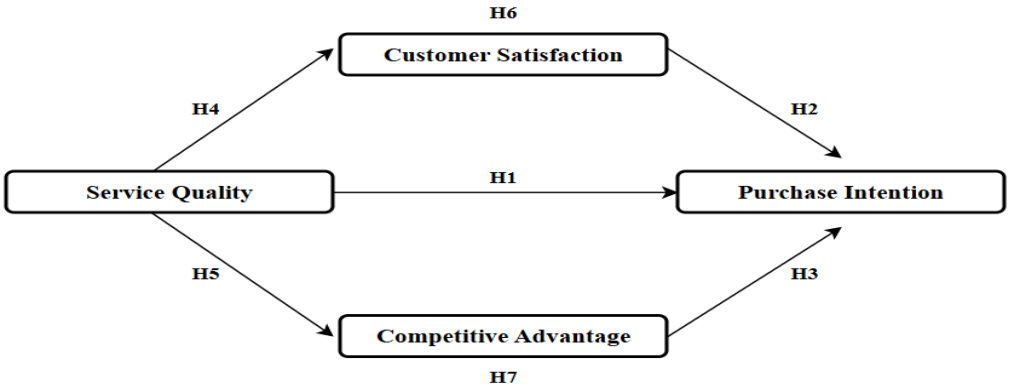


Figure 1. Research framework

This study adopted quantitative research methods utilizing the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique, which is particularly appropriate for examining complex models involving latent constructs and small to medium sample sizes. PLS-SEM offers significant benefits in exploratory studies, as it does not assume multivariate normality and enables concurrent assessment of both the measurement and structural models (Hair et al., 2021). Data were gathered from 306 participants using purposive sampling during the period from December 2024 to June 2025, Respondents qualified for inclusion if they had made at least one purchase intention within the past three months at any of the five target supermarkets: Top 199, DC Supermarket, Hypermart, JC Supermarket, and SNL Food.

Individuals who had never shopped at these locations or provided incomplete responses were excluded based on the established exclusion criteria. According to the guidelines proposed by Hair et al. (2010), the recommended minimum sample size for PLS-SEM is approximately ten respondents for each indicator included in the model. This approach is intended to ensure the stability of parameter estimates and the reliability of the results, particularly in complex structural models with 17 indicators in this study. at least 170 participants were required, The Finals sample of 306 exceeded this benchmark, ensuring adequate statiscal.

The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). Measurement items for service quality were adapted from Kim et al. (2024), while customer satisfaction and purchase intention items were drawn from González-Viralta et al. (2023) and Do et al. (2025), respectively, to ensure construct validity based on

prior empirical research. Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS version 4.1.9, with evaluation of the measurement model including outer loadings, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study applied the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, following the two-stage procedure recommended by Hair et al. (2019) to assess both the measurement model and the structural model fit. In the first stage, the reliability and validity of the measurement model were evaluated using several criteria, including outer loadings, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity. In the second stage, the structural model was examined to test the proposed hypotheses, adhering to the procedures outlined by Hair et al. (2017, 2019).

Table 1. Demographic Profile

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	181	59.2%
	Female	125	40.8%
Age Range	17-26 Years old	129	42.2%
	27-36 Years old	79	25.8%
	37-46 Years old	64	20.9%
	47-56 Years old	29	9.5%
	>56 Years old	5	1.6%
Education	Junior High School	18	5.9%
	Senior High School	144	47.1%
	Associate Degree (D3/D4)	63	20.6%
	Higher Education (S1/S2/S3)	81	26.5%
Occupation	Student	102	33.3%
	Housewife	40	13.1%
	Privat Sector Employe	69	22.5%
	Goverment Employe	44	14.4%
	Entrepreneur	51	16.7%
Income Range	<Rp5.000.000	129	42.2%
	Rp5.000.000 – Rp 10.000.000	132	43.1%
	>Rp 10.000.000	45	14.7%
Supermarket in Batam City	SNL Food	62	20.3%
	Top 100	74	24.3%
	Hypermart	41	13.4%
	Dc Supermarket	78	25.2%
	JC Supermarket	51	16.3%

Source: Data processed (2025)

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 306 respondents who participated in the survey. The majority of respondents were male (59.2%) and fell within the 17–26 years age group (42.2%). In terms of education, most respondents had completed senior high school (47.1%), followed by those with higher education (bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees) at 26.5%.

Regarding occupation, the largest segment comprised students (33.3%), followed by private-sector employees (22.5%), and entrepreneurs (16.7%). In terms of monthly income, most respondents reported earnings in the range of IDR 5,000,000 – IDR 10,000,000 (43.1%), followed by those earning less than IDR 5,000,000 (42.2%). With respect to supermarket

visitation, the majority of respondents reported shopping at DC Supermarket (25.5%), followed by Top 100 (24.3%), and SNL Food (20.3%).

Table 2. Measurement Tendency and Fit

Latent and observed variables	Item Code	Outer Loading	AVE	SD
Service Quality (Kim et al., 2024)				
Employees are able to resolve problems for every customer.	QS 1	0,850	0.667	0.012
Employees provide service with a high level of accuracy.	QS 2	0,823		0.016
Employees are very helpful and trustworthy.	QS 3	0,896		0.014
Employees perform their duties effectively.	QS 4	0,760		0.031
Employees demonstrate a high willingness to serve customers.	QS 5	0,746		0.046
Customer Satisfaction (González-Viralta et al., 2023 ; Do et al., 2025)				
Visiting this supermarket meets my needs.	CS 1	0.813	0.663	0.020
I am satisfied with my decision to visit this supermarket.	CS 2	0.809		0.019
Overall, I am satisfied with the products and services provided by this supermarket.	CS 3	0.885		0.017
Shopping at this supermarket is a pleasant experience.	CS 4	0.827		0.024
I will return and recommend this supermarket to my friends because I am very satisfied with the products and services offered.	CS 5	0.729		0.050
Competitive Advantage (Purwanto et al., 2023)				
This supermarket offers competitive cost advantages compared to others.	CA 1	0.901	0.918	0.012
This supermarket innovates to create creative promotional strategies.	CA 2	0.878		0.017
This company possesses innovations with a high level of competitiveness.	CA 3	0.886		0.013
Purchase Intention (Sae-tae & Wang, 2024)				
I am willing to purchase products because of the excellent service.	PI 1	0.814	0.634	0.027
I will consider shopping at this supermarket in the near future.	PI 2	0.632		0.065
If given the option, I would choose this supermarket.	PI 3	0.880		0.009
I would recommend others to consider shopping at this supermarket.	PI 4	0.837		0.014

Source: Data processed (2025)

Convergent validity at the item level indicates that all indicators in the model had outer loading values above the minimum threshold of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2017), except for one indicator (PI2), which was retained because the construct's overall AVE exceeded the cut-off value of 0.5. All constructs in the model demonstrated adequate Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, ranging between 0.6 and 0.9, indicating good internal consistency. Furthermore, discriminant validity was established based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion. No multicollinearity issues were detected, as all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values exceeded 0.5, indicating acceptable levels of collinearity among the predictors (Hair et al., 2017; Ghozali & Latan, 2015).

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Conclusion
Competitive Advantage	0.866	0.918	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	0.872	0.907	Reliable
Purchase Intention	0.805	0.872	Reliable
Service Quality	0.874	0.909	Reliable

Source: Data processed (2025)

The reliability evaluation showed that all constructs had Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.7, with Composite Reliability (CR) values also exceeding the 0.7 threshold. These findings confirm that each variable exhibited strong internal consistency and reliability. The CR scores ranged from 0.872 to 0.918, satisfying the reliability standards recommended by Hair et al. (2017) and Ghozali & Latan (2015).

Table 4. Fornell-Lacker Criterion

Variable	Competitive Advantage	Customer Satisfaction	Purchase Intention	Service Quality
Competitive Advantage	0.888			
Customer Satisfaction	0.876	0.814		
Purchase Intention	0.892	0.861	0.796	
Service Quality	0.898	0.880	0.895	0.817

Source: Data processed (2025)

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which indicated that the square root of the AVE for each construct was greater than the correlations between that construct and all other constructs. Thus, it can be concluded that all constructs in the model satisfy the discriminant validity requirement (Hair et al., 2017). This finding confirms that each variable distinctly measures a different construct and there is no significant overlap between them.

Table 5. Structural Path Coefficients Significance Test Results

Hypothesis	T-Statistics	P-Value	Conclusion
Competitive Advantage → Purchase Intentionn	4.740	0.000	Accepted
Customer Satisfaction → Purchase Intentionn	1.944	0.052	Rejected
Service Quality → Competitive Advantage	66.963	0.000	Accepted
Service Quality → Customer Satisfaction	31.901	0.000	Accepted
Service Quality → Purchase Intentionn	4.375	0.000	Accepted
Service Quality → Competitive Advantage → Purchase Intentionn	4.764	0.000	Accepted
Service Quality → Customer Satisfaction → Purchase Intentionn	1.883	0.060	Rejected

Source: Data processed (2025)

The structural path analysis presented in Table 5 reveals that Competitive Advantage has a significant influence on Purchase Intention (t-statistic = 4.844; p-value = 0.000), thus supporting the hypothesis. Likewise, Service Quality significantly affects Competitive Advantage (t = 66.223; p = 0.000), Customer Satisfaction (t = 30.832; p = 0.000), and Purchase Intention (t = 47.136; p = 0.000). All of these relationships are statistically significant at the 5% level.

Moreover, the mediating role of Competitive Advantage in the relationship between Service Quality and Purchase Intention is confirmed to be significant (t = 4.876; p = 0.000), underscoring its importance as an intervening variable. In contrast, the direct effect of Customer Satisfaction on Purchase Intention (t = 1.940; p = 0.053), and its mediating role (t = 1.875; p = 0.061) are not statistically significant, as the p-values exceed the threshold of 0.05, resulting in hypothesis rejection. These findings align with the criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2014), where a t-statistic greater than 1.96 and a p-value below 0.05 indicate a statistically significant path in PLS-SEM modeling.

Discussion

The structural model analysis using the PLS-SEM approach reveals that five out of seven hypothesized paths are statistically significant ($t > 1.96$; $p < 0.05$), indicating strong empirical

support for the proposed theoretical framework linking service quality, customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, and purchase intention in the context of supermarkets in Batam. The findings of this study provide empirical support for the proposed theoretical framework that service quality, customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, and purchase intention within the supermarket context in Batam City. The significant influence of service quality on all three outcome variables is consistent with previous studies (Kim et al., 2024; Supriyanto et al., 2025).

In the retail sector, service attributes such as reliability, empathy, and responsiveness significantly shape customer perceptions and shopping experiences (Nguyen et al., 2022; Ernanto & Hermawan, 2022). Service quality functions not only as a catalyst for satisfaction but also as a strategic resource that fosters unique differentiation, ultimately leading to sustainable competitive advantage (Farida & Setiawan, 2022; Kusumadewi & Karyono, 2019). The direct impact of service quality on purchase intention is further supported by Fernando et al., (2023), who argue that customers' service perceptions are strong predictors of repurchase behavior. Thus, supermarkets in Batam that prioritize service excellence can simultaneously boost customer satisfaction and enhance market competitiveness. Integratingly, the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention was found to be statistically insignificant. This contradicts many theoretical models and empirical findings that regard satisfaction as a key driver of purchase decisions (Dlamini et al., 2024; Akter et al., 2024; Hussain et al., 2025).

This disparity may be attributed to the complexity of consumer behavior in localized markets like Batam, where external elements such as pricing strategies, store accessibility, and location may exert stronger influence (Lu et al., 2021; Do et al., 2025). These results suggest that satisfaction alone may not sufficiently predict purchase intention in highly competitive and price-sensitive environments. Competitive advantage demonstrated a significant effect on purchase intention, reinforcing the idea that value-added service and differentiation strategies are crucial for attracting consumer interest (Sheykhan et al., 2024; Zhang & Ahmad, 2021).

In this study, competitive advantage established through creative promotional efforts, innovation, and cost efficiency established through creative promotional efforts, innovation, and cost efficiency influenced consumer preferences toward specific supermarkets. These results underscore the importance of strategic market positioning and distinct service offerings in maintaining long-term competitiveness. (Purwanto et al., 2023; Gong et al., 2023). Mediating analysis produced mixed outcomes. The mediating effect of customer satisfaction was not statistically significant, whereas competitive advantage significantly mediated the relation between service quality and purchase intention. This finding aligns with (Hameed et al., 2024; Gazi et al., 2024), who suggest that service quality is more effective when it is channeled into building strategic advantage rather than short-term emotional satisfaction.

The limited mediating role of satisfaction may stem from its affective nature. As noted by Adeiza et al., (2022), a pleasant shopping experience alone may not drive repeat purchases unless supported by practical elements such as competitive pricing or product availability. In contrast, competitive advantage directly shapes consumers' value perceptions and brand preferences (Sun, 2020; Yasri et al., 2019). Theoretically, this study highlights the necessity of a holistic understanding of service quality; its role in consumer behavior models. It should be managed not only to foster satisfaction but also as a long-term strategic resource to sustain differentiation. Retail strategies should emphasize positioning (Farida & Setiawan, 2022; Liu et al., 2022). From a practical perspective, supermarket managers in Btam are advised to invest in service elements that not only delight customers but also create sustainable and unique value perceptions. This can be achieved through employee training, service technology investment, and brand differentiation campaigns.

CONCLUSION

The results of the PLS-SEM analysis demonstrate that service quality has a significant direct effect on all three constructs. However, only competitive advantage significantly mediated the relationship between service quality and purchase intention, while customer satisfaction did not serve as an effective mediator. These findings indicate that in the local retail context, improving service quality should not focus solely on increasing satisfaction but must be directed toward building a sustainable competitive advantage. Competitive advantage emerged as the primary determinant of purchase intention, surpassing the predictive power of customer satisfaction. The study contributes theoretically to the consumer behavior and retail marketing literature while offering practical insights for strengthening market position through service innovation, added value, and strategic differentiation.

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations, including the geographical scope limited to five supermarkets in Batam, the use of a cross-sectional design, and a narrow focus on mediating variables. Future research should consider expanding to other cities in Indonesia, employing longitudinal methods, and exploring additional constructs such as brand trust, brand engagement, and perceived value. Practically, retail business actors in Batam and similar regions are encouraged to use these findings in designing service strategies that go beyond customer satisfaction to create sustainable competitive differentiation and enhance consumer loyalty.

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