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Enhancing Motorcycle Customer Satisfaction through Customer Experience, Customer Relationship Marketing, Social Media Marketing Activities and Direct Service Quality: A Study in Medan City

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ABSTRACT

Background: Motorcycle dealerships increasingly rely on relational communication, direct service encounters, and digital marketing to meet customer expectations. In Medan City, Indonesia, understanding how these touchpoints relate to customer satisfaction is important for improving dealership services.
Research Gap: Previous research has often examined relationship marketing, service quality, and social media marketing separately. Their combined associations with satisfaction, particularly through customer experience in the Medan motorcycle market, remain insufficiently documented.
Novelty: This study proposes an integrated framework linking customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities to customer satisfaction, with customer experience specified as a potential mediator.
Method: A quantitative cross-sectional survey collected questionnaire responses from 100 purposively selected motorcycle consumers with dealership or after-sales service experience in Medan. The proposed direct and indirect relationships were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS.
Results: The reported model explained 66.7% of the variance in customer experience (R^2 = 0.667) and 79.1% in customer satisfaction (R^2 = 0.791). Reported direct-path coefficients were positive. However, inconsistencies among measurement statistics, bootstrap results, and indirect-effect estimates prevent independent verification of statistical significance and mediation.
Conclusion: The integrated framework offers a basis for examining how relational, service, and digital touchpoints correspond to motorcycle customer evaluations. Verified SmartPLS outputs, including the missing experience-to-satisfaction path and consistent mediation estimates, are necessary before drawing definitive inferential conclusions or recommending pathway-specific interventions.

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INTRODUCTION

Changes in the field of marketing have had a big effect on how marketers and customers talk to each other, especially in the fast-paced world of sales transactions. In this day and age, many new and creative ways have been found to suit the needs of customers, which are always changing, and to grow market share. One form of innovation in marketing is the use of digital platforms and approaches that are oriented towards customer experience. This method not only tries to boost revenue, but it also focuses on building lasting relationships with clients by giving them value and meaningful experiences.

In the automotive industry, particularly the motorcycle sector, modern marketing trends have become increasingly important. In Indonesia, motorcycles play a very important role in supporting people's daily activities. According to data released by the Indonesian Motorcycle Industry Association (AISI), the number of two-wheeled motor vehicles sold domestically exceeded 6.2 million units throughout 2023. This reflects the high dependence of the public on motorcycles as an efficient, economical, and flexible primary mode of transportation. In North Sumatra, motorcycles are also a vital mode of transportation. According to information from the North Sumatra Provincial Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2023, the total number of two-wheeled motor vehicles in use in the region has exceeded 6.6 million units. Ownership of these vehicles is spread across various districts and cities, with consumers from diverse socioeconomic and geographic backgrounds. Public preference for motorcycle brands in North Sumatra is quite diverse, but dominated by well-known brands such as Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki, Kawasaki, Vespa, and a number of other brands.

Meanwhile, in the city of Medan, as the economic and commercial center of North Sumatra Province, motorcycle ownership is very high. This city reflects the characteristics of an urban automotive market, where the population requires high and efficient mobility. Most people who ride motorcycles in Medan City are between the ages of 18 and 45 and come from a variety of professional backgrounds, such as students, office workers, and small business owners. They tend to be active on social media, seek product information online, and evaluate services based on personal experience and reviews from other consumers (Indrawati, 2017; Arifin & Yusra, 2019). Based on observations from several dealers and local automotive communities in Medan City, supported by industry publications from AISI, it is known that the most popular motorcycle brand in Medan City is Honda, accounting for approximately 65%, followed by Yamaha at 20%, Suzuki at 7%, Kawasaki at 5%, and Vespa and other brands at 3%. This information demonstrates that people in Medan tend to buy brands that are known for being easy to maintain, fuel-efficient, and having a large network of after-sales service.

Despite the high use of motorcycles in Medan City as the main mode of daily transportation, customer satisfaction with motorcycle-related services remains a significant issue. Consumers still face various problems, including weak personalized communication, slow service processes, limited responsiveness in handling complaints, and social media communication that does not adequately meet their information needs. This condition indicates a clear gap between the high dependence of the community on motorcycles and the quality of service experience received by consumers.

Previous studies have generally examined customer relationship marketing, service quality, and social media marketing separately in influencing customer satisfaction. However, limited studies have integrated these variables simultaneously in a single model, particularly in the motorcycle industry context in Medan City, with customer experience positioned as a mediating variable. In addition, prior studies have tended to focus on general service or retail settings rather than specifically on motorcycle consumers in an urban market with high mobility. Therefore, this study is important to fill the empirical and contextual gap and to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the factors affecting motorcycle customer satisfaction in Medan City.

Customer satisfaction levels are one of the crucial benchmarks in assessing the extent to which a company has achieved success. Kotler and Keller (2016) describe customer satisfaction as the emotional outcome resulting from individuals' assessment of their usage experience compared to their prior expectations. If the results obtained meet or exceed expectations, customers will feel satisfied; conversely, if the results fall short of expectations, dissatisfaction may occur. High satisfaction can foster loyalty, while dissatisfaction can lead customers to switch to competitors (Oliver, 2015; Tjiptono, 2019; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2020). In the motorcycle industry, customer satisfaction does not solely depend on product quality but is also influenced by service quality, efficiency, and ease in maintenance processes,

as well as the company's strategies in building good relationships with its customers (Dewi & Rachmawati, 2021; Wibowo & Rachmawati, 2019).

One important approach to improving satisfaction is through strengthening customer experience. Lemon & Verhoef (2016) state that customer experience encompasses the entire series of interactions between consumers and companies, which occur from before the purchase process until after the purchase is made. Positive experiences create strong emotional bonds and encourage repeat purchases. However, in practice, many consumers in Medan complain about negative experiences such as delayed service, lack of personalized service, and slow responses to complaints.

One of the key strategic methods to establish and sustain long-term connections with consumers is through customer relationship marketing. Pratama & Haryanto (2020) state that successful customer relationship marketing includes tailored communication, the application of digital technologies, and an efficient system for handling customer feedback. In the motorbike industry, using well-planned customer relationship marketing methods can make customers happier and make them more loyal to the company. In Medan, some dealerships still adopt outdated marketing techniques that are impersonal and potentially biased, thus limiting the success of relational marketing in cultivating loyal customers.

Customer satisfaction levels are determined directly by service quality, in addition to being influenced by the company's relationship marketing efforts. Parasuraman et al. (2018) direct service quality can be classified into five main aspects: dependability, promptness, confidence, care, and tangible elements. In the context of motorcycle dealers, this means reliability in the service process, quick response to requests, quality assurance, empathy from staff, and adequate physical facilities. Unfortunately, issues such as inaccurate information, lack of empathy from staff, and lengthy service times are still commonly encountered in the field.

Promotional efforts carried out on social media platforms greatly influence how consumers perceive a brand or product. Chaffey (2017) states that social media enables companies to establish two-way communication, build communities, and convey product information quickly and widely. Most motorcycle riders in Medan City actively engage with social media, relying mainly on platforms like Instagram and TikTok as their go-to sources for information. However, not all dealers are able to utilize social media optimally. Common issues include irrelevant content, lack of interaction, and slow responses to customer questions or complaints.

based on the above discussion, it can be understood that motorcycle customer satisfaction in medan city is influenced by several key factors, namely customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, social media marketing activities, and customer experience. however, motorcycle dealerships still face various challenges in improving service excellence, creating positive customer experiences, and building favorable brand perceptions among consumers.

from an academic perspective, previous studies have not sufficiently explained this issue in a comprehensive model. existing research mostly discusses customer relationship marketing, service quality, social media marketing, or customer experience in partial relationships, and only a few studies examine these variables simultaneously in one framework. moreover, research that specifically focuses on motorcycle consumers in medan city is still very limited, even though this city represents an important urban market with high motorcycle usage and dynamic consumer behavior. thus, this study fills the gap by offering an integrated analysis of the effects of customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities on customer satisfaction, while also testing the mediating role of customer experience.

therefore, this study is important because it not only examines the direct and indirect relationships among these variables, but also provides clearer academic and practical contributions.

academically, this study contributes to the development of marketing and consumer behavior literature by offering an integrated model that links customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities to customer satisfaction through the mediating role of customer experience. this study also enriches empirical evidence in the context of the motorcycle industry, particularly in medan city, which has received limited attention in previous studies.

practically, the findings of this study are expected to help motorcycle dealers identify the most influential factors in shaping customer satisfaction and formulate more effective service and marketing

strategies. the results may assist dealers in improving the speed and reliability of service processes, strengthening personalized communication with customers, optimizing social media content and responsiveness, and designing customer experiences that are more relevant to consumer expectations. in the long term, these improvements can support stronger customer loyalty and enhance the competitiveness of motorcycle dealerships in medan city.

In addition, the study can be situated within an Islamic business-ethics perspective that is relevant to Sharia-oriented management scholarship. In customer-facing activities, amanah (trustworthiness), siddiq (honesty), tabligh (transparent and responsible communication), and 'adl (justice) provide ethical standards for relationship management, service delivery, and promotional communication, while gharar and tadlis caution firms against ambiguity, concealment, and deceptive claims. Prior research in the Journal of Islamic Marketing indicates that Islamic ethical marketing practices can strengthen customer trust, satisfaction, loyalty, and competitive advantage (Wijaya et al., 2022; Suandi et al., 2023). Accordingly, the present model is interpreted not only as a conventional customer-management framework but also as an opportunity to examine how relationship quality, service encounters, and social-media communication can be aligned with ethical principles valued in Islamic business practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Customer satisfaction in the motorcycle industry cannot be explained by a single factor alone, because it is formed through a series of consumer interactions with the company across relational, service, and digital dimensions. In this context, customer relationship marketing reflects the company's ability to build long-term and personalized relationships with consumers, direct service quality reflects the quality of direct encounters during the service process, and social media marketing activities represent the company's digital interaction with customers. These three dimensions are expected to shape customer experience, which in turn affects customer satisfaction. Therefore, the theoretical framework of this study is developed to explain how relational, functional, and digital marketing factors jointly influence customer satisfaction, both directly and indirectly through customer experience.

Relationship marketing theory provides the first explanatory foundation. Morgan and Hunt's (1994) commitment trust theory argues that trust and relationship commitment are essential to successful relational exchanges. In motorcycle dealerships, this reasoning translates into confidence arising from accurate maintenance information, continuity of after-sales contact, responsive complaint handling, and personalized reminders. Such practices may directly improve customers' evaluation of the dealership and may also create consistently positive encounters that accumulate into customer experience. Trust and commitment are theoretical mechanisms in the present interpretation, not additional measured mediators in the structural model.

Customer experience theory supplies the second foundation. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) conceptualize experience as a multidimensional response built across pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase touchpoints. Motorcyclists encounter both digital and physical touchpoints when comparing models, interpreting online promotions, visiting a showroom, receiving maintenance services, and handling follow-up problems. Direct service quality therefore contributes through interaction, service outcome, and environmental quality (Brady & Cronin, 2001), whereas social media marketing shapes information access and engagement before and after a face-to-face visit (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). Customer satisfaction is the more global evaluative judgment that may follow these separate experiences.

The theoretical model consequently specifies complementary pathways rather than one undifferentiated marketing effect. Direct relationships are plausible because customers can evaluate trustworthy communication, reliable services, or useful digital information without explicitly reflecting on their entire journey. Indirect relationships are plausible when these antecedents first change the perceived coherence and quality of the journey, which then shape satisfaction. The three antecedents are conceptually complementary: relational continuity, operational delivery, and digital communication address different customer needs. A statistically synergistic interaction, however, has not been tested because the model contains no interaction terms; complementarity should not be interpreted as evidence of multiplicative synergy.

Customer Relationship Marketing

Customer relationship marketing refers to a company's strategic effort to establish, maintain, and enhance long-term relationships with customers through personalized communication, trust building, and effective complaint handling. This approach emphasizes that customers should not only be viewed as transactional buyers, but also as long-term partners whose relationships with the company need to be continuously nurtured. In the motorcycle dealership context, customer relationship marketing becomes important because customers are involved in repeated interactions, including product inquiries, purchasing, servicing, and after-sales communication. A stronger relationship marketing strategy is therefore expected to create more positive perceptions and encourage stronger emotional attachment between customers and the company. Customer relationship marketing is also understood as a strategic approach focused on attracting, developing, and retaining valuable customers through mutually beneficial interactions (Purnomowati, I., Budiarty, I. da, & Prasetyo, 2022). This concept involves the use of technology and data-driven strategies to deliver personalized services, respond to customer needs, and build loyalty (Wang, Z., Li, M., Lu, J., & Cheng, 2022). Key functions include identifying customer preferences, managing communications, and tracking service history to deliver consistent and tailored experiences (Li et al., 2019; Pohludka, M., & Štverková, 2019). An effective CRM system can improve customer retention, enhance satisfaction, and generate greater lifetime value. Its successful implementation requires careful planning, clear objectives, and adaptive strategies based on continuous feedback and analysis (Deniyev, 2021). Thus, customer relationship marketing serves as a foundation for fostering long-term relationships and competitive advantage in a dynamic market environment (Pratama, M. R., & Haryanto, 2020).

Direct Service Quality

Direct service quality refers to the extent to which the service delivered by a company meets customer expectations in direct service encounters. It generally includes dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible aspects of service delivery. In motorcycle dealerships, direct service quality is reflected in how accurately and quickly services are provided, how staff communicate with customers, how complaints are handled, and how comfortable and adequate the service facilities are. Because customers directly evaluate service performance during their interaction with the dealer, direct service quality is expected to play a significant role in shaping both customer experience and customer satisfaction. Service quality is a multidimensional concept that assesses how well a company's service performance aligns with customer expectations (Camilleri, 2021; Ighomereho, S. O., Ojo, A. A., Omoyele, S. O., & Olabode, 2022). Unlike internal standards set by the business, service quality is primarily judged from the customer's perspective (Ali et al., 2021; Subagja, A. D., Ausat, A. M. A., Sari, A. R., Wanof, M. I., & Suherlan, 2023). The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (2018) identifies five key dimensions of service quality: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. This model helps organizations identify service gaps and implement improvements that matter most to customers. High perceived service quality enhances brand reputation, strengthens customer satisfaction, and promotes positive customer outcomes (Dam & Dam, 2021; Kaur et al., 2023). In contrast, service failure or inconsistency can lead to dissatisfaction. Therefore, continuous monitoring and improvement of service quality are critical for business success.

Social Media Marketing Activities

Social media marketing activities refer to the firm's use of social media platforms to communicate with customers, share information, build engagement, and strengthen brand image. Through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and other digital channels, firms can establish two-way communication with consumers in a faster and more interactive manner. In the motorcycle industry, social media plays an important role because consumers often seek product information, service updates, promotional content, and peer reviews through digital platforms. Therefore, effective social media marketing activities are expected to support better customer engagement, improve customer experience, and strengthen customer satisfaction. Social media marketing refers to promotional activities conducted on digital platforms that facilitate interactive engagement between brands and consumers (Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Kotler, P., Keller, K. L., & Chernev, 2022). These platforms allow users to create, share, and respond to content, turning passive audiences into active participants. Social media marketing activities leverage the social and cultural dynamics of virtual communities to build brand awareness and foster customer relationships (Solomon, M. R., & Russell, 2024). The content shared on these platforms,

whether visual, textual, or video-based, shapes public perception and influences brand positioning. Consumer engagement, such as likes, comments, and shares, plays a significant role in the co-creation of brand value (Tsai, W. H. S., & Men, 2023). Active brand interaction on social media also fosters trust, increases customer commitment, and can lead to stronger customer responses (Cheung et al., 2020). Consequently, social media is now considered a strategic channel for building customer relationships and enhancing customer experiences (Arifin, Z., & Yusra, 2019).

Customer Experience

Customer experience refers to the holistic perception formed through all interactions between a customer and a company across various touchpoints (Buhalis et al., 2023; Ghesh et al., 2024). It begins with the awareness phase and continues through the purchasing process, service delivery, and post-purchase interactions (El Bakkouri et al., 2022; Kaushal & Yadav, 2021). The experience encompasses functional elements such as access and service efficiency, as well as emotional components such as empathy and personalization. In the motorcycle dealership context, customer experience may arise from service interactions, relationship-building efforts, and digital communication through social media. A positive customer experience can enhance satisfaction and build stronger emotional ties with the company (Rather, R. A., Hollebeek, L. D., & Rasoolimanesh, 2022; Tom Dieck, M. C., & Han, 2022). Conversely, a poor customer experience can harm a company's reputation and reduce customer retention. Businesses are therefore increasingly focused on managing the customer journey strategically to ensure consistent and memorable experiences that support long-term growth (Amoako et al., 2023; Chittiprolu et al., 2021; Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2021). For this reason, customer experience is positioned in this study as an important mediating variable that explains how marketing and service-related factors influence customer satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a central concept in marketing and business management, referring to customers' evaluation of whether a product or service meets or exceeds their expectations (Eckert et al., 2022; Khan, S., Salamzadeh, A., Iqbal, M., & Yang, 2022). It reflects the subjective perception that arises after consumers compare the actual experience with what they had anticipated. If the actual experience meets or surpasses their expectations, customers will experience a sense of satisfaction (Cahaya, M., Putri, I. Y., & Yulianti, 2023; Naini, S. G., Hapsari, R., & Setiawan, 2022). According to Prabowo (2023), customer satisfaction is a reaction or emotional response to the fulfillment of consumer expectations and needs. Satisfaction is influenced by factors such as product quality, service quality, and perceived value. Conversely, when the delivered value is perceived as lower than expected, dissatisfaction emerges, potentially leading to complaints, negative word-of-mouth, or brand switching. Therefore, customer satisfaction is a vital performance metric for evaluating company success and predicting future customer behavior (Albarq, 2023; Mainardes, E. W., Ferreira, J. J., & Raposo, 2023; Rane, N. L., Achari, A., & Choudhary, 2023; Tannady, H., & Purnamaningsih, 2023; Venkatakrishnan, J., Alagiriswamy, R., & Parayitam, 2023).

Islamic Marketing and Business Ethics Perspective

Islamic marketing ethics extends conventional relationship and service perspectives by emphasizing moral accountability in exchanges. Amanah requires firms and employees to fulfill promises and safeguard customer interests; siddiq requires truthful product, price, and service information; tabligh emphasizes clear and responsible communication; and 'adl requires fair treatment across customer groups. These principles are reinforced by the prohibition of gharar and tadlis, which discourages excessive ambiguity, concealment, and misrepresentation in transactions and promotions. Empirical work has shown that Islamic ethics-based salesperson behavior can strengthen customer trust and loyalty (Wijaya et al., 2022), while Islamic marketing ethics can support competitive advantage when implemented consistently and transparently (Suandi et al., 2023). In the motorcycle-dealership context, these principles are relevant to personalized communication, clarity of service information, complaint handling, price and promotion disclosure, and the accuracy of social-media claims.

Relationships Among Variables and Hypotheses Development

Customer Relationship Marketing and Customer Experience, Customer relationship marketing is expected to influence customer experience because long-term relationships are built through

personalized communication, trust, and responsiveness to customer needs. When customers feel recognized, valued, and treated personally, they are more likely to develop positive experiences in their interactions with the company. In motorcycle dealerships, this is particularly important because customers often maintain repeated contact with the dealer for information, service, and after-sales support. Therefore, stronger customer relationship marketing is expected to create a more positive customer experience.

Direct service quality is closely related to customer experience because experience is largely formed through actual service encounters. When customers receive reliable, prompt, and empathetic service, they are more likely to perceive the interaction positively. Conversely, slow, inaccurate, or unfriendly service may create negative impressions. In the motorcycle dealership context, direct service quality is therefore expected to influence customer experience significantly.

Social media marketing activities can influence customer experience because digital interactions have become an important part of the customer journey. Informative content, responsive communication, and engaging interactions on social media may shape how customers perceive the company even before direct service encounters occur. In the context of motorcycle consumers, who actively use social media to seek product and service information, effective social media marketing activities are expected to enrich customer experience.

Customer relationship marketing may directly influence customer satisfaction because customers who feel appreciated, understood, and supported by the company are more likely to evaluate the company positively. Relationship-building efforts can strengthen trust and create a sense of closeness, which contributes directly to customer satisfaction. Thus, customer relationship marketing is expected to have a positive direct effect on customer satisfaction.

Direct service quality is one of the most immediate determinants of customer satisfaction, as customers directly evaluate the quality of service they receive. Reliable, responsive, and empathetic service encounters are likely to meet or exceed customer expectations, thereby increasing satisfaction. In contrast, poor service quality can directly reduce satisfaction. Therefore, direct service quality is expected to have a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

Social media marketing activities may directly affect customer satisfaction by improving access to information, strengthening communication, and creating positive perceptions of the company. Customers who receive useful, timely, and interactive digital communication may feel more confident and satisfied with the company overall. Therefore, social media marketing activities are expected to have a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

Customer experience is expected to have a direct influence on customer satisfaction because it reflects the customer's overall evaluation of interactions with the company. Positive experiences create favorable impressions and increase the likelihood that customers will perceive the company as meeting their expectations. In contrast, negative experiences may reduce satisfaction. Therefore, customer experience is expected to be an important determinant of customer satisfaction.

Customer experience is proposed as a mediating variable in this study because marketing and service-related factors are not only expected to affect customer satisfaction directly, but also indirectly through the experiences they create for customers. Customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities shape the way customers interact with and perceive the company. These interactions then form customer experience, which subsequently influences customer satisfaction. Thus, customer experience is expected to mediate the relationships between the antecedent variables and customer satisfaction.

In the proposed structural model, CRM (X1), direct service quality (X2), and social media marketing activities (X3) each have paths to customer experience (Z) and customer satisfaction (Y); customer experience additionally has a path to satisfaction. This is a parallel direct-and-indirect path specification. The indirect effect for each antecedent requires its own bootstrapped product term (X → Z multiplied by Z → Y). Depending on the size and precision of those product terms, experience may explain part of the association without eliminating a direct pathway. These hypotheses do not imply temporal precedence, which cannot be established by a cross-sectional survey.

The relative importance of the routes is context dependent. A consumer needing urgent repair may prioritize punctuality and technical competence, whereas a first-time buyer may place more weight on credible communication and accessible digital information. These are theoretical illustrations, not tested subgroup effects. Claims that a particular pathway dominates should be based on the relevant standardized coefficients and their confidence intervals rather than on narrative plausibility alone.

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 contains five measured constructs and specifies customer experience (Z) as the mediator between three antecedents (X1 X3) and customer satisfaction (Y). Customer loyalty is not an outcome in this analysis; any mention of satisfaction mediating loyalty refers to a different model and is excluded. Relationship marketing theory explains the relational antecedent, while the customer-journey perspective explains how relational, direct-service, and social-media touchpoints may jointly shape experience (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

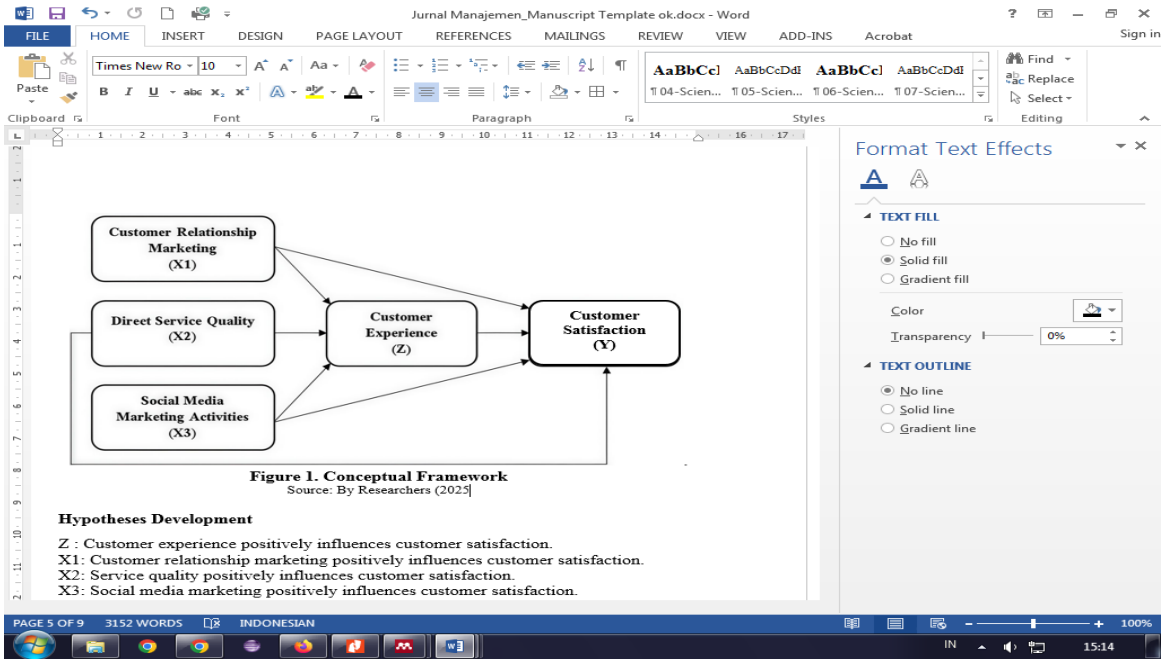


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Source: By Researchers (2025)

Z: Customer experience positively influences customer satisfaction.

X1: Customer relationship marketing positively influences customer satisfaction.

X2: Service quality positively influences customer satisfaction.

X3: Social media marketing positively influences customer satisfaction.

Y: Customer satisfaction (dependent variable); customer loyalty is not modeled.

METHOD

The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional associative survey to examine relationships among customer relationship marketing (X1), direct service quality (X2), social media marketing activities (X3), customer experience (Z), and customer satisfaction (Y). A PLS-SEM specification tested the proposed direct and experience-mediated paths. Because all variables were measured at one time point and no experimental assignment was performed, the analysis identifies statistical associations and cannot on its own establish causal direction (Sugiyono, 2021).

The target group comprised motorcycle users in Medan City who had interacted with motorcycle dealerships or related after-sales services. The five constructs—not a generic four-component marketing-mix variable—formed the analytic model. The study's interpretation is limited to respondents

who fulfilled the stated experience-based eligibility requirement; it does not represent a probability sample of all motorcycle owners in Medan.

Because the total number of eligible dealership-service users could not be enumerated reliably, the investigators used purposive rather than probability sampling. The stated eligibility conditions were active motorcycle use and prior interaction with a motorcycle dealer or related service in Medan City. The retained manuscript does not identify further screening questions, dealership recruitment sites, collection dates, exclusions, or response rates; these details should be supplied from the original field protocol if available. The achieved sample consisted of 100 respondents. The previously cited unknown-population formula, $n = Z^2p(1 - p)/e^2$, gives 96.04 (rounded up to 97) for $Z = 1.96$, $p = 0.50$, and $e = 0.10$, and the study enrolled 100. However, the 95% confidence and ±10% margin-of-error interpretation of this formula assumes probability sampling; those inferential guarantees are not applicable to this purposive sample. PLS-SEM analysis was conducted with SmartPLS 3.0.

Selection bias, shared-source response bias, and social desirability remain possible because all variables were collected through the same self-report questionnaire. The manuscript records confidentiality assurances, adaptation of items from prior studies, and data-completeness checks as procedural measures. These steps may reduce some response problems but do not demonstrate the absence of common method variance. Neither a Harman single-factor result, a full-collinearity VIF assessment, nor a marker-variable result was available in the supplied analytical record. No statistical common-method-bias test is therefore claimed to have been performed; a suitable diagnostic should be computed and reported from the original dataset (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Kock, 2015).

$$n = \frac{Z^2.p.(1-P)}{e^2}$$

where Z=1.96(95% confidence), p=0.5, and e=0.1.

Sample-size sensitivity analysis. As an independent approximation—not as a post hoc validation of the observed paths—an omnibus multiple-regression F test with four predictors (the maximum number of arrows entering customer satisfaction), $N = 100$, $\alpha = .05$, and target power = .80 has an approximate minimum detectable Cohen's f^2 of 0.125 (noncentral F calculation; numerator df = 4, denominator df = 95). This supports only detection of effects of roughly this size in the omnibus regression analogy; it does not establish adequate power for small individual paths or bootstrapped indirect effects. The sample-size limitation is retained in the interpretation (Faul et al., 2007).

Recruitment transparency. The original questionnaire or screening form and recruitment log should be used to verify respondents' dealer-service experience, geographic eligibility, age distribution, recruitment channels, and refusals. These unreported details are not inferred from the available summary.

Instrument and Operationalization. The source document describes a structured questionnaire with five-point Likert response options (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). Table 1 identifies the intended dimensions for each of the five constructs, while the retained measurement output (Table 2) lists six items per construct (30 retained items overall). The item codes are CS1 CS6, CE1 CE6, CRM1 CRM6, DSQ1 DSQ6, and SMMA1 SMMA6. The table of operational definitions provides examples of indicator content rather than the exact wording of all administered questions.

Content-validity rationale. Source indicators were drawn from the cited marketing and service-quality literature and adapted to customer-facing motorcycle activities in Medan, including dealership communication, repair/service accuracy, staff responsiveness, online promotional information, and comparisons between expectations and experienced value. Concept item alignment should be evaluated separately from statistical loadings. The supplied report does not document expert review, cognitive pretesting, translation/back-translation, or the final verbatim instrument, so none of these additional validation procedures is asserted. The original administered questionnaire, including the final wording and any translations, remains required as Supplementary Appendix A to permit content-validity assessment.

The measurement framework distinguishes customer experience from customer satisfaction: experience refers to evaluations across interacting touchpoints, whereas satisfaction concerns an overall assessment of expectation fulfillment. Item wording should be checked for circularity, particularly when

an experience indicator uses 'satisfaction level' or a satisfaction indicator measures future loyalty, to avoid mixing constructs and artificially inflating their correlations.

Tabel 1. Operasionalisasi Variabel

Variable	Sub-variable	Indicator Example	Source
Direct Service Quality	Reliability	Accurate service, consistency	Parasuraman et al. (2018)
	Responsiveness	Prompt assistance, helpful staff	Parasuraman et al. (2018)
	Assurance	Knowledge, courtesy, confidence	Parasuraman et al. (2018)
	Empathy	Individualized attention, care	Parasuraman et al. (2018)
	Tangibles	Physical facilities, equipment, personnel appearance	Parasuraman et al. (2018)
Customer Relationship Marketing	Relationship Continuity	Long-term commitment, loyalty initiatives	Purnomowati et al. (2022)
	Trust	Confidence in brand, reliability	Purnomowati et al. (2022)
	Communication	Clarity, responsiveness, feedback quality	Purnomowati et al. (2022)
Customer Experience	Personalization	Tailored service, relevance to needs	Rather et al. (2022)
	Emotional Response	Feelings evoked, satisfaction level	Rather et al. (2022)
	Consistency	Uniformity across touchpoints	Rather et al. (2022)
Social Media Marketing	Content Relevance	Usefulness, informativeness	Cheung et al. (2020)
	Engagement	Comments, likes, participation	Cheung et al. (2020)
	Interactivity	Two-way communication, responsiveness	Cheung et al. (2020)
Customer Satisfaction	Expectation Fulfillment	Service/product met expectations	Prabowo (2023)
	Positive Evaluation	Perceived value, benefit received	Prabowo (2023)
	Loyalty Tendency	Willingness to repurchase, recommend	Prabowo (2023)

Model-alignment correction. The product price promotion place (4P) marketing-mix construct in the superseded text does not appear as an estimated variable in Figure 1 or Tables 2 9. It is therefore removed from the measurement description. The modeled independent constructs are customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities, with customer experience as mediator and customer satisfaction as outcome.

Validity and reliability assessment. The study reported retained indicator loadings, AVE, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and a Fornell Larcker matrix. For reflective measurement, convergent validity should be evaluated by sufficiently strong loadings and AVE above .50, and internal consistency by defensible reliability estimates. Discriminant validity should also be checked using the heterotrait monotrait (HTMT) ratio and, preferably, bootstrap confidence intervals (Henseler et al., 2015). The archived text does not contain the original HTMT export or item-level correlation matrix, so HTMT cannot be calculated from the provided summary alone. Moreover, inconsistencies among the printed measurement statistics require reconciliation with the final model output before the measurement quality is treated as confirmed.

$$\boldsymbol{CR} = \frac{(\sum \boldsymbol{\lambda})^2}{(\sum \boldsymbol{\lambda})^2 + \sum(\boldsymbol{1} - \boldsymbol{\lambda^2})}$$

$$\boldsymbol{AVE} = \frac{\sum \boldsymbol{\lambda^2}}{\boldsymbol{n}}$$

Data analysis. The submitted study reports analysis in SmartPLS 3.0 using PLS-SEM and 500 bootstrap resamples. The structural specification contains three predictors of customer experience and four predictors of customer satisfaction (including customer experience). For mediation, each specific indirect effect should equal the product of the relevant X → Z and Z → Y path coefficients and be evaluated using bootstrapped confidence intervals. Although the manuscript mentions R^2, f^2, and Q^2, only the R^2 table is present in the supplied results. The number of bootstrap draws, missing output tables, confidence intervals, and the full set of hypothesis tests should be verified against original SmartPLS exports before final reporting.

The research procedure was implemented in sequential steps: (1) Identification of problems and development of theoretical framework; (2) Construction of measurement instruments and operational definitions; (3) Distribution of questionnaires and data collection; (4) Data tabulation and cleaning; (5) Testing of measurement model (validity and reliability); (6) Structural model evaluation using SmartPLS; and (7) Interpretation of results, conclusions, and formulation of recommendations.

RESULTS

Measurement evaluation. For reflective indicators, outer loadings indicate the association between items and their latent construct; values of approximately .70 or higher are commonly used as an initial screening criterion. AVE summarizes average captured indicator variance, whereas reliability concerns internal consistency. These diagnostics must be mutually consistent and must correspond to the same final model and item set. The supplied manuscript lists retained loadings above .70, but other reported measurement statistics require a data-level consistency check before convergent validity can be established.

Table 2. Test Results Loading Factor

Variable	Statement Item	Outer Loading	Description
Customer Satisfaction (Y)	CS1	0.793	Valid
	CS2	0.743	Valid
	CS3	0.781	Valid
	CS4	0.818	Valid
	CS5	0.788	Valid
	CS6	0.744	Valid
Customer Experience (Z)	CE1	0.749	Valid
	CE2	0.853	Valid
	CE3	0.785	Valid
	CE4	0.781	Valid
	CE5	0.784	Valid
	CE6	0.711	Valid
Customer Relationship Marketing(X1)	CRM1	0.877	Valid
	CRM2	0.728	Valid
	CRM3	0.791	Valid
	CRM4	0.748	Valid
	CRM5	0.842	Valid
	CRM6	0.837	Valid
Direct Service Quality (X2)	DSQ1	0.756	Valid
	DSQ2	0.851	Valid
	DSQ3	0.787	Valid
	DSQ4	0.755	Valid
	DSQ5	0.812	Valid
	DSQ6	0.831	Valid
Social Media Marketing Activities (X3)	SMMA1	0.793	Valid
	SMMA2	0.843	Valid
	SMMA3	0.881	Valid
	SMMA4	0.718	Valid
	SMMA5	0.788	Valid
	SMMA6	0.844	Valid

Source: Smart-PLS (2025)

The final loading table contains 30 retained indicators, six for each of the five constructs. Although an earlier draft states that some indicators were removed, neither the deleted item codes nor an initial-model loading table is present in the documents provided. Accordingly, the number and reasons for any item deletions cannot be verified and should not be reported as established facts. The original SmartPLS iteration history should be consulted to document the initial item pool and any re-estimation decisions.

Item-retention audit (required). Provide, for each construct: original item count; full original item codes; any deleted item codes with their initial loading values and substantive reasons; final retained item count; and whether removal was theoretically justified rather than only statistically convenient. The present Table 2 supports the final retained codes only.

Discriminant validity is a form of evaluation in measurement models with reflective indicators, measured based on crossloading comparisons between indicators and related constructs. If a construct and its indicators have a higher correlation than other constructs, it suggests that the indicator more accurately reflects its associated construct. Additionally, to evaluate discriminant validity, the square root values of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct can be analyzed and compared (Schuberth, 2023).

Table 3. Test Results Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Customer Satisfaction	0.777
Customer Experience	0.781
Customer Relationship Marketing	0.797
Direct Service Quality	0.765
Social Media Marketing Activities	0.783

Source: Smart-PLS(2025)

Table 3 presents AVE values of .765 .797 as transcribed from the manuscript. However, the mean of squared outer loadings computed directly from the 30 Table 2 indicators yields approximately .606 (CS), .606 (CE), .649 (CRM), .639 (DSQ), and .661 (SMMA), which does not reproduce the printed AVE values. This discrepancy may reflect mismatched model iterations or transcription errors; no alternative values have been substituted into Table 3. The correct AVE estimates must be re-exported from the same final SmartPLS model as the loadings, and item redundancy should then be evaluated based on item wording, reliability, and empirical overlap rather than high AVE alone.

AVE reconciliation is also needed before discussing discriminant validity: the square roots of the published Table 3 AVEs do not equal the diagonal entries in the printed Fornell Larcker matrix. Consequently, the current numerical evidence should be treated as pending verification rather than conclusive support for the measurement model.

Composite reliability serves as a tool to measure the reliability of a construct, reflected by the coefficient of the underlying latent variable. The composite reliability is assessed by two primary approaches are commonly applied: measuring internal consistency and examining the value of Cronbach's alpha. In this evaluation process, a construct is considered to meet the criteria for high reliability if the results show a value above 0.70. Cronbach's Alpha serves as a reliability measure that supports and reinforces the validity of the composite reliability outcomes. When a variable's Cronbach's alpha score is higher than the cutoff of 0.70, it is considered to have adequate reliability (Schuberth, 2023).

Table 4. Test Results Cronbach's Alpha & Composite Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Customer Satisfaction	0.811	0.916
Customer Experience	0.875	0.820
Customer Relationship Marketing	0.868	0.818
Direct Service Quality	0.853	0.874
Social Media Marketing Activities	0.877	0.922

Source: Smart-PLS (2025)

According to Table 4, every variable applied in this study recorded Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values greater than 0.70. In light of the findings, it is concluded that each variable examined in this research fulfills the required reliability benchmarks.

Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Table 5. Test Results Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Customer Satisfaction	Customer Experience	Customer Relationship Marketing	Direct Service Quality	Social Media Marketing Activities
Customer Satisfaction	0.815				
Customer Experience	0.371	0.814			
Customer Relationship Marketing	0.230	0.274	0.824		
Direct Service Quality	0.639	0.549	0.497	0.802	
Social Media Marketing Activities	0.404	0.353	0.254	0.589	0.855

Source: Smart-PLS (2025)

In the printed Table 5, each diagonal entry is numerically greater than the reported inter-construct correlations, which is consistent with the Fornell Larcker comparison within that table. However, the diagonals do not equal the square roots of the corresponding AVE values in Table 3. Therefore, the AVE and discriminant-validity tables cannot yet be regarded as outputs from one verified final model. This internal inconsistency must be resolved before claiming that discriminant validity has been established.

An HTMT matrix and, when available, bootstrapped HTMT confidence intervals should supplement the Fornell Larcker results (Henseler et al., 2015). The retained files do not include the required item-level correlations or SmartPLS HTMT export. Thus, HTMT results are not reported or inferred, and discriminant validity remains incompletely assessed. The authors should insert the verified HTMT results into the final manuscript as soon as the source output becomes available.

Table 5A. Heterotrait monotrait (HTMT) assessment — reporting template (unverified)

Construct	CS	CE	CRM	DSQ	SMMA
CS	—				
CE	NR	—			
CRM	NR	NR	—		
DSQ	NR	NR	NR	—	
SMMA	NR	NR	NR	NR	—

Note. CS = customer satisfaction; CE = customer experience; CRM = customer relationship marketing; DSQ = direct service quality; SMMA = social media marketing activities; NR = not reported. All HTMT cells are awaiting the original SmartPLS export; NR is not an estimated value.

Internal models, also known as structural models or inter-construct relationship models, are analyses that explain the relationships between latent variables based on the underlying theoretical framework. In structural models, the R-square value reflects the extent to which independent constructs influence dependent constructs (Schuberth, 2023).

Table 6. Test Results R-Square (R2)

Variabel	R Square (R^2)
Customer Satisfaction	0.791
Customer Experience	0.667

Source: Smart-PLS (2025)

Table 6 reports $R^2 = .791$ for customer satisfaction and $R^2 = .667$ for customer experience. Within the fitted sample, these values represent the proportions of variance accounted for by the specified predictors, not causal percentages of change attributable to the antecedents. Their interpretation is subject to the nonprobability sample and the need to reconcile the measurement and bootstrap outputs before final statistical conclusions are drawn.

Direct Effect

Table 7. Test Results Direct Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Deviation Standard (STDEV)	T Statistic (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Customer Relationship Marketing -> Customer Experience	0.277	0.237	0.227	2.199	0.005
Direct Service Quality -> Customer Experience	0.172	0.193	0.213	3.233	0.000
Social Media Marketing Activities -> Customer Experience	0.327	0.436	0.189	2.147	0.007
Customer Relationship Marketing -> Customer Satisfaction	0.279	0.318	0.274	2.077	0.004
Direct Service Quality -> Customer Satisfaction	0.501	0.515	0.225	3.710	0.000
Social Media Marketing Activities -> Customer Satisfaction	0.238	0.242	0.084	2.833	0.005

Source: Smart-PLS (2025)

Table 7 reproduces the six direct-effect estimates supplied in the manuscript. Although the displayed p-values classify these paths as statistically significant, five of the six stated t-statistics do not equal the absolute coefficient divided by its printed bootstrap standard deviation. The p-values and t-statistics also require cross-checking. Accordingly, the apparent significance of these paths remains provisional pending re-export of one consistent SmartPLS bootstrap report; significance is not asserted as independently verified here.

The source table lists positive coefficients for the three paths to satisfaction and for the three paths to experience. Direct service quality has the largest printed coefficient among the three antecedents to satisfaction ($\beta = .501$), whereas social media marketing has the largest printed coefficient among the antecedents to experience ($\beta = .327$). These are descriptive comparisons of published coefficients, not verified inferential rankings. Substantive conclusions require consistent confidence intervals and statistical output.

Indirect Effect

Table 8. Test Results Indirect Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Customer Relationship Marketing -> Customer Experience -> Customer Satisfaction	0.417	0.345	0.093	3.672	0.000
Direct Service Quality -> Customer Experience -> Customer Satisfaction	0.316	0.256	0.092	2.748	0.001
Social Media Marketing Activities -> Customer Experience -> Customer Satisfaction	0.417	0.471	0.133	2.117	0.005

Table 8 lists three positive specific indirect-effect estimates through customer experience. However, the supplied output does not display the separate customer experience → customer satisfaction path, and the listed indirect coefficients and associated t-statistics do not reconcile with the direct-path information in Table 7. Thus, the evidence as printed is insufficient to substantiate the

proposed mediation effects. The final analysis should report the Z → Y coefficient, each computed product term, bootstrap standard error, confidence interval, and consistent p-value.

Total Effect

Table 9. Test Results Total Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Deviation Standard (STDEV)	T Statistic (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Customer Satisfaction	0.471	0.535	0.274	3.281	0.000
Customer Satisfaction	0.328	0.327	0.229	2.727	0.015
Customer Satisfaction	0.637	0.522	0.436	3.792	0.000

Table 9 reports total effects for the three antecedents, but the listed totals do not equal the corresponding direct effects plus the specific indirect effects reported in Tables 7 and 8. Moreover, its row labels include the full mediated chain rather than clearly identifying the total X → Y effect. The table therefore requires re-export and relabeling from the original structural model before the comparative magnitude or statistical significance of total effects can be interpreted. No estimates are altered here without source data.

Statistical integrity check. The authors should reconcile all measurement and path tables against one archived final SmartPLS run. In particular, (a) verify AVE against squared loadings, (b) align Fornell Larcker diagonals with AVE, (c) verify t = |O/STDEV| and corresponding p-values, (d) report the missing Z → Y path, (e) confirm each specific indirect effect as a product of paths, and (f) calculate each total effect as the sum of its direct and indirect components. Until this audit is complete, reports of statistical significance and mediation remain provisional.

DISCUSSION

The study offers a conceptually integrated account of how customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities may relate to motorcycle-customer satisfaction through customer experience. The source tables report R^2 = .791 for satisfaction and R^2 = .667 for experience and list positive structural coefficients. However, the measurement and bootstrap outputs contain internal discrepancies, so the significance and size of the proposed direct and indirect effects must be verified before they can be treated as confirmed empirical findings. Accordingly, the discussion emphasizes theoretical interpretation and contextual plausibility rather than unverified causal or mediation conclusions.

From the commitment trust perspective (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), relational marketing can support positive evaluations by encouraging confidence in service promises and continuity across interactions. From the customer-journey perspective (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), a broader experience can integrate these relational encounters with the functional performance of direct service and the informational value of social-media communication. Together, the frameworks explain why separate direct paths and an experience-mediated path are plausible in the same model. Nevertheless, the data do not include measured interaction effects, so the theoretical complementarity among marketing channels should not be described as an empirically demonstrated synergistic interaction.

The significant contribution of CRM is consistent with contemporary relationship-marketing research. Gremler et al. (2020), in a large-scale meta-analysis, demonstrated that relational benefits generate favorable customer outcomes through perceived value and relationship quality, particularly when relationships generate confidence and social benefits. Similarly, Shawky et al. (2020) conceptualized customer engagement as a dynamic progression from connection and interaction toward loyalty and advocacy, while Yu et al. (2021) demonstrated that value co-creation within online social networks contributes to dynamic brand experience. Wang et al. (2021) further found that social-network

marketing can enhance value, brand, and relationship equity, whereas Jung et al. (2021) showed that frontline relational processes and service performance remain important for downstream customer outcomes. Taken together, these international studies reinforce the present finding that CRM should not be viewed merely as database management or repeated promotion. In motorcycle dealerships, relationship marketing becomes meaningful when customers perceive continuity, responsiveness, recognition, and confidence across purchase, maintenance, complaint-handling, and after-sales interactions. The Medan results extend this literature by showing that the relational pathway operates simultaneously through a direct satisfaction mechanism and an experience-mediated mechanism.

The particularly strong effect of direct service quality on customer satisfaction is also highly consistent with international automotive evidence. Golara et al. (2021), using data from more than one thousand automobile dealerships, demonstrated that after-sales dealer service quality can influence manufacturer outcomes and regional sales performance. Gupta and Raman (2022) similarly showed in the Indian automobile sector that employee behavior, service lead time, processes, costs, and overall after-sales experience contribute substantively to satisfaction. Singh et al. (2023) extended conventional SERVQUAL measurement for automotive after-sales services by identifying service failure and service recovery as additional context-specific dimensions, suggesting that automobile consumers assess more than the traditional reliability responsiveness assurance empathy tangibles configuration. Likewise, Lucia-Palacios et al. (2020) found that frontline employee competence is consequential for customer satisfaction, although its effects can depend on situational circumstances. Gibson et al. (2022) additionally demonstrated that service quality can influence satisfaction through experiential mechanisms. The magnitude of the service-quality coefficient in the current study ($\beta = 0.501$) is therefore theoretically plausible: motorcycle users in Medan depend on their vehicles for routine mobility, making repair accuracy, waiting time, transparent information, staff responsiveness, and service recovery immediately consequential to everyday utility. Thus, unlike settings where consumption may be largely hedonic, dealership satisfaction may remain strongly anchored in functional reliability and operational assurance.

The significant contribution of SMMA further demonstrates that the dealership customer journey increasingly extends beyond physical service encounters. Khan (2022) found that social media marketing activities can enhance brand experience and subsequent customer responses, while Kuo and Chen (2023) showed that interactive brand communication on social media strengthens perceived experience and continued participation. Kulikovskaja et al. (2023) similarly documented the marketing consequences of social-media-based customer engagement, and Ho and Chung (2020) showed that digitally mediated engagement can enhance customer equity and repurchase intentions. Alzaidi and Agag (2022), however, underline an important qualification: digital engagement is accompanied by issues of trust and privacy, meaning that more intensive social-media contact is not automatically equivalent to a better customer relationship. The current findings are therefore consistent with global research while adding an automotive-retail perspective. For motorcycle dealerships in Medan, Instagram, TikTok, and related platforms function not merely as advertising channels but as pre-service and post-service touchpoints. Their effectiveness is likely to depend on whether information is useful, interaction is timely, promotional claims correspond to actual services, and online responsiveness remains consistent with offline performance.

The mediating role of customer experience provides the strongest integrative explanation of the model. Contemporary customer-experience research increasingly conceptualizes consumption as a sequence of interconnected touchpoints rather than a single transaction. Grewal and Roggeveen (2020) emphasize the importance of managing experience throughout the customer journey, whereas Roggeveen and Sethuraman (2020) show that technology increasingly changes customer-facing retail interactions. Tueanrat et al. (2021) found that experiential values and customer responses contribute to customer-journey satisfaction, while Gao et al. (2021) demonstrated that integration across channels affects cognitive and affective customer experience. Prassida and Hsu (2022) likewise established that service quality and channel integration jointly shape satisfaction in hybrid customer journeys. Furthermore, Zou et al. (2022) show that carefully designed experiences may generate stronger affective responses and customer outcomes. These findings help explain why the antecedent variables in the present study retain direct effects while simultaneously operating through customer experience: CRM, direct service, and digital marketing constitute distinct stimuli, but customers integrate them into an

overall evaluation of the dealership. The significant mediation effects thus suggest complementary rather than substitutive pathways.

Evidence from Indonesia provides additional contextual support. Japutra et al. (2021), using 717 Indonesian consumers, found that customer application experience influences value-in-use, satisfaction, and loyalty, confirming that digital experience has become consequential in Indonesian customer retailer relationships. Suharto and Hoti (2023), studying customers in Lampung, similarly found that relationship marketing positively influences customer experience and satisfaction. More specifically to the automotive context, recent evidence from Medan is strikingly compatible with the present results. Satrianny et al. (2023) reported a significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction at an automotive company in Medan, while Ginting and Marpaung (2023) similarly linked service quality and brand trust to satisfaction among Honda motorcycle consumers in the city. Most recently, Sapira et al. (2026), investigating a Yamaha showroom in the Medan Deli Serdang area, found that both service quality ($\beta = 0.497$) and consumer trust ($\beta = 0.473$) significantly predicted satisfaction. The convergence of these local findings strengthens the contextual interpretation that service quality and trust are particularly salient in Medan's motorcycle market. Nevertheless, the present study advances beyond these more focused models by simultaneously integrating relational marketing, physical service encounters, social-media marketing, and customer experience within a single structural framework.

Theoretically, the results refine relationship-marketing and customer-experience theory by positioning customer experience as an integrative mechanism connecting relational, operational, and digital stimuli with satisfaction; consequently, future models should conceptualize customer experience as an accumulation across interdependent touchpoints rather than exclusively as a response to one service encounter. This interpretation is consistent with omnichannel and relational-benefit research (Gao et al., 2021; Gremler et al., 2020; Tueanrat et al., 2021). Pedagogically, because the present study does not involve students or educational outcomes, the defensible implication concerns employee and consumer education: dealerships should train frontline and digital-marketing personnel in service communication, complaint resolution, digital responsiveness, and ethical promotional literacy. From an Islamic business-ethics perspective, such training can operationalize amanah through reliable fulfillment of commitments, siddiq through truthful service information, tabligh through transparent communication, and ‘adl through fair treatment, while avoiding gharar and tadlis in pricing or promotions. This interpretation accords with Wijaya et al. (2022), who showed that Islamic ethics-based salesperson behavior strengthens customer trust and loyalty, and Suandi et al. (2023), who found that Islamic marketing ethics contributes to competitive advantage in Indonesia. At the policy level, dealership management should institutionalize transparent price and warranty disclosures, auditable complaint-handling standards, privacy-conscious digital engagement, and verification of online promotional claims. The data do not justify claims regarding student well-being or mental-health intervention; those outcomes lie outside the constructs measured in this study.

The primary conceptual contribution is a unified model of relational (CRM), operational (direct service quality), and digital (social media marketing) touchpoints, with customer experience specified as a potential mediator between the antecedents and satisfaction. This integrates the commitment trust logic of relationship marketing and the journey-based logic of customer experience in a motorcycle-dealership setting. The proposed combination is theoretically complementary but the current analysis does not estimate interactions or identify causal sequencing. Definitive claims about which route dominates must be deferred until the original structural-model output has been reconciled.

The limitations extend beyond the single-city purposive sample of 100 respondents. The cross-sectional self-report design permits shared-method bias and does not identify causal effects or changes in satisfaction over time. The original survey questionnaire, details of recruitment and exclusions, complete item-deletion history, HTMT matrix, and statistical common-method-bias diagnostics were not supplied. Furthermore, inconsistencies between printed loadings, AVE, Fornell Larcker diagonals, bootstrap t-statistics, indirect effects, and total effects preclude verified inference until reanalysis. Future work should employ multi-dealership sampling, a preregistered power analysis, objectively observed service measures, follow-up designs, and complete PLS-SEM reporting.

CONCLUSION

This study proposed an integrated account of motorcycle-customer satisfaction in Medan City by positioning customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities as antecedents of both customer experience and satisfaction. The model draws on relationship marketing and customer-journey theory to explain why relational confidence, the quality of face-to-face service, and digital interaction may be evaluated directly and through an accumulated customer experience. This theoretical specification addresses the reviewer's request for clearer direct- and indirect-path logic without claiming an empirically tested interaction among the three antecedents.

The data description covers a purposive sample of 100 motorcycle consumers and a cross-sectional PLS-SEM analysis. The submitted tables report positive coefficients and R^2 values of .667 for customer experience and .791 for satisfaction; however, contradictory measurement and bootstrap statistics mean that neither the significance of individual paths nor the proposed mediation can be accepted as verified. Re-exporting the final measurement and structural models, reporting HTMT and the missing customer experience → satisfaction path, documenting questionnaire items, and testing shared-method bias are essential before final resubmission. Subject to these checks, the framework offers a potentially useful basis for improving after-sales communication, service reliability, and consistency between digital promotions and dealership delivery.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Conceptualization, research design, methodology development, and the formulation of the integrated framework linking customer relationship marketing, direct service quality, and social media marketing activities to customer satisfaction through customer experience were carried out by Yahya Tanjung, Ari Prabowo, Yuli Amida Pohan, and Aisyah Azhar Adam. Data collection, including questionnaire design, distribution, and administration to motorcycle consumers in Medan City, was conducted by Yahya Tanjung and Ari Prabowo. Formal analysis, including measurement model assessment, structural model evaluation, and PLS-SEM analysis using SmartPLS 3.0, was performed by Yahya Tanjung and Yuli Amida Pohan. Original draft preparation and writing were conducted by Yahya Tanjung, while review, editing, and revision were performed by Ari Prabowo, Yuli Amida Pohan, and Aisyah Azhar Adam. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of this work.

AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used AI-assisted tools, such as grammar checkers and language enhancement software, solely for the purpose of improving readability and refining the language of the manuscript. No generative AI tools were used for statistical data analysis using PLS-SEM, interpretation of results, conceptual framework development, or core scientific writing. The authors take full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the research findings and the final content of this article.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper. The research was conducted independently, and the results are presented objectively and without bias. The authors have no affiliation with or financial interest in any motorcycle dealership, manufacturer, or related organization mentioned in this study that could be perceived as influencing the analysis or conclusions of this research.

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