



Perceived Experience, Value, and Customer Loyalty: The Mediating Role of Satisfaction in Citilink's YIA-PKU Route

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes how perceived experience and perceived value influence customer loyalty, mediated by customer satisfaction, among Citilink airline passengers. A quantitative approach was utilized, including distributing online questionnaires to 250 respondents via Google Forms. A non-probability purposive sampling method was employed, and data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the AMOS software. The results indicate that perceived experience positively affects customer satisfaction, perceived value affects customer satisfaction, perceived experience positively affects customer loyalty, and perceived value affects customer loyalty. Furthermore, customer satisfaction mediates the positive effects of perceived experience and

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value on customer loyalty. This research can assist Citilink's management sector practitioners make policies concerning customer satisfaction. Another practical benefit is its contribution to policy-makers building customer loyalty, specifically in the airline transportation sector.

Keywords: Perceived experience; perceived value; customer satisfaction; customer loyalty; citilink.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, the dynamics of business competition in Indonesia offer a compelling area of inquiry. Marketers continually strive to ensure that consumers' products or services remain highly sought-after. To achieve this goal, marketers seek innovative strategies and cultivate positive perceptions to attract and retain customers. The rapid expansion of industries underscores the imperative for companies to consistently excel and compete effectively [1].

Private or state-owned enterprises must produce products or services at their maximum potential [2]. Companies compete vigorously to achieve maximum profitability [3]. They must work harder in marketing their products to enhance profitability [4,4a]. Therefore, companies need to understand their products and identify their target customers to formulate executable marketing strategies. Understanding customer needs and providing excellent customer experiences are crucial challenges [5].

Companies must adapt to rapidly changing and evolving industries to survive and thrive. Innovation is critical to meeting consumers' diverse and evolving preferences in the modern era. Companies must continually hone their capabilities to compete effectively and endure [6]. Global competition and rapid technological advancements underscore the importance of innovation and adaptability in the business world [7].

One of the most essential service providers today is in the transportation sector, driven by high population and economic growth rates that increase population mobility. Indonesia's geographical conditions as an archipelago demand effective and efficient transportation solutions, making air transportation services crucial. PT. Citilink Indonesia, a PT Garuda Indonesia Tbk subsidiary established in 2001, initially operated as a Strategic Business Unit focusing on the Low-Cost Carrier (LCC) segment.

The intense competition in the LCC segment has prompted Citilink Indonesia to innovate by reducing prices and expanding into new routes focused on the Eastern region of Indonesia. Another innovation includes converting previous transit routes into direct flights. In 2011, PT Garuda Indonesia Tbk spun off PT Citilink into an independent company, explicitly targeting the LCC segment. In 2012, PT Citilink Indonesia officially became its own airline as a modern LCC, and to date, it has served 70 domestic and 16 regional routes.

Citilink Indonesia's innovation of converting transit routes into direct flights is a testament to its commitment to enhancing service and competitiveness against other airlines. One direct route PT Citilink Indonesia introduced is the Pekanbaru-Yogyakarta round-trip route. Yogyakarta, renowned as a tourism destination and a city of students from various parts of Indonesia, benefits from increased interest in air travel supported by comfort, speed, and diverse promotional offers. The following is an example of the increase in the number of domestic flight passengers at Yogyakarta International Airport to Pekanbaru from 2021 to 2023 (Table 1).

Table 1. Number of Domestic flight passengers at Yogyakarta International Airport – Pekanbaru (2021-2023)

Year	Passenger Numbers
2021	30,859
2022	89,260
2023	106,803

Source: Central Statistics Agency of Special Region Yogyakarta (2024).

Table 1 depicts the increasing number of passengers as a significant opportunity in the competitive landscape of the airline service sector. To thrive in this environment, airlines leverage their unique strengths, which are crucial factors consumers consider when selecting their preferred airline. One pivotal strength lies in delivering a positive customer experience anchored in perceived value, fostering customer loyalty. In business, customer retention entails securing loyalty through cultivating values and

positive experiences that resonate deeply with customers' emotions and preferences. The paramount objective for any company is to ensure maximum customer satisfaction, influenced by various factors primarily shaped by customer experiences.

Panjaitan Yulianti [8] elucidates that satisfaction fundamentally stems from an individual's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing their perceptions of a product or service and their expectations. Whether in transportation or other sectors, service satisfaction significantly impacts a company's sustainability, particularly in customer loyalty. Service satisfaction is critical for achieving sustained success in highly competitive business environments [9].

In addition to customer satisfaction, perceived value is pivotal in influencing loyalty. As consumers seek to maximize value, customers form expectations and utilize them as the basis for their actions. They prefer companies offering the highest value propositions for their products, emphasizing the discrepancy between perceived value received and costs incurred [10]. Conversely, customers seek products/services that provide maximum satisfaction or enhance prestige and valuable experiences. In response to intensifying competition, companies in the airline service sector are advised to implement experiential marketing strategies, delivering unique, positive emotional experiences that leave a lasting impact on customers [11]. Therefore, this research aims to deepen understanding of marketing experiences and values, analyzing their profound impact on customer loyalty. Given the critical importance of customer perception assessments in the service provider sector, the study is titled "Analyzing the Influence of Perceived Experience and Perceived Value on Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable (Case Study: Citilink Airlines on the YIA-PKU Route)."

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Perceived Experience and Customer Satisfaction

Experiential marketing involves real-time, bidirectional communication between brands and customers, showcasing brand experiences directly through five indicators: sense, feel, think, act, and related marketing. Selecting appropriate marketing channels is crucial to enhance these experiences. 'Perceived experience' refers to

customers' perceptions of the dimensions of service experiences offered, which are prerequisites for customer engagement [12,13]. Engaged customers tend to be more satisfied, committed, and loyal because customer absorption and attention are crucial for engagement; marketers must effectively package positive news and brand publicity [14].

Rather and Hollebeek et al. [15,16] assert that consumers are more likely to remember desired experiences, influencing their perceptions of service quality. Service quality and innovation trigger positive customer engagement outcomes, creating desired effects on perceived brand experiences [15,17]. Service experiences are influenced by physical environments, interactions with staff, and interactions among customers, underscoring the importance of understanding each dimension's role [18]. Encouraging customers to share experiences on social media enhances brand resonance [19] and builds online communities that personify and develop brands [20]. Managing the customer experience environment is crucial for maintaining competitive advantage in the airline industry. Well-designed service experiences significantly influence customer satisfaction and purchase intentions [21].

Creating personalized experiences will provide a competitive advantage for service companies in the future. Schmitt and Prahalad & Ramaswamy [22,23] argue that marketing aims not only to solve customer problems or provide benefits but also to deliver positive and valuable experiences. Tseng et al. [24] reveal that today's customers seek experiences that exceed their expectations. Hanefors & Mossberg [25] find that memorable experiences make customers feel happy, curious, and intensely engaged with the company, leading to satisfaction [26].

In the aviation sector, affective components significantly influence customer responses, emphasizing that engagement through experiences must be noticed. Providing superior service creates memorable experiences that significantly impact customer satisfaction [14, 27]. Therefore, airlines like Citilink need to understand the various dimensions of experience and their impact on customer satisfaction [28].

2.2 Perceived Value and Customer Satisfaction

Perceived value in marketing is the difference between what consumers pay and what they

receive in return from the company [29]. It reflects the gap in consumer perceptions between the price paid and the benefits received, conceptualized as consumers' views of the value the company offers [30]. When customers use airlines for recreation or migration, experience is an integral part of what consumers desire and what airlines provide [17]. Customer loyalty consists of four indicators: price tolerance, intention to repurchase, propensity to recommend the brand, and willingness to make repeat purchases [31]. By effectively managing service experiences, the relationship between consumers and brands can be strengthened [26].

Research in the air transportation sector indicates that brand experience, value congruence, and airline credibility significantly influence brand recall, which impacts customer attachment and loyalty [15]. Engaging customers in brand experiences directly and positively impacts brand loyalty and repeat purchase intentions [32]. Positive previous experiences reduce perceived risks for customers when choosing known services [12]. Gunawan's study [33] demonstrates that perceived experience positively and significantly impacts customer loyalty to Uniqlo in South Jakarta. Research by Suganda et al. and Soliha et al. [34,35] similarly finds that perceived experience significantly influences customer loyalty.

2.3 Perceived Experience and Customer Loyalty

Perceived Experience is crucial in influencing consumers to buy or reuse products/services by fostering attachment and loyalty [36]. As described by Schmitt [37], experiential marketing engages customers through direct experiences that shape their purchasing decisions and preferences, measured through indicators like sense, feel, think, act, and relate.

Consumers make decisions based on the value received relative to costs in a competitive service market [38]. Customer satisfaction hinges on perceived value, which reflects how customers assess service quality versus what they pay, enhancing overall satisfaction. Airline brands help customers express their identities, leading to stronger brand loyalty and price tolerance [39]. This loyalty stems from customers' deep psychological connection to the brand [15]. Relational marketing strategies emphasizing service value contribute to long-term financial success by enhancing customer satisfaction [26].

Understanding customers' perceived value and emotional responses is crucial for effective management and avoiding customer dissatisfaction. Thus, companies should prioritize understanding and delivering perceived customer value to boost satisfaction and loyalty.

2.4 Perceived Value and Customer Loyalty

Loyalty in the service sector is challenging compared to products due to intangibility, lack of standardization, and extensive customer involvement in satisfaction [40]. Perceived value is a significant predictor of loyalty; higher perceived value increases the likelihood of repeat purchases [41]. Studies in the airline industry highlight that perceived value positively impacts customer retention and loyalty [28]. When customers perceive positive value from the service, they tend to remain loyal and return. Instead, [39] underscores the role of value alignment in enhancing brand loyalty and engagement among airline customers. Perceived value emerges as the strongest predictor of customer support. Loyalty behaviors, such as sustained relationships, scaling up relationships, and recommendations (Word of Mouth), result from customers' belief that one company provides higher value than others [24].

2.5 Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Customer satisfaction is the response to how well a product or service meets or exceeds its expectations. According to Oliver (cited in Barnes [42]), it involves comparing expected performance with the perceived performance of the product or service. Nainggolan & Hidayat [43] explain that customers feel satisfied if the product's performance meets or exceeds their expectations, and conversely, they feel dissatisfied if it falls short. Kotler and Armstrong [44] state that customer satisfaction occurs when the product or service's performance meets their expectations, leading to feelings of pleasure or disappointment.

On the other hand, customer loyalty is the commitment to continue buying or reusing preferred products or services in the future [45]. This commitment arises when customers perceive that the value they receive from the company is better than that from competitors [46]. It is reinforced through activation and

personalization of customer relationships, with brand trust at its core [47].

Goh and Okumus [48] suggest that increased customer satisfaction leads to greater purchase frequency, a more significant share of purchases, and positive word-of-mouth perception. Satisfied customers tend to spend more, remain loyal to products/services [49], and recommend them to others [28]. Research by Rather et al. [14] in India confirms that customer satisfaction significantly impacts loyalty and purchase intentions.

Since attracting new customers costs 6-15 times more than retaining existing ones, managers must enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty while preventing customer churn. Studies highlight that creating superior value through services, including post-purchase follow-ups, is crucial for establishing the link between customer satisfaction and loyalty [50].

When forming perceptions and attachments to brands, millennials evaluate brands based on trust and corporate social responsibility [17]. Research in the airline industry shows that satisfied customers tend to be loyal, reuse services, and add value to their lives [24]. They are also less likely to research information before travel, be more engaged in loyalty programs, be involved in company activities, reuse services, and spread positive word-of-mouth about the airline.

2.6 Perceived Experience and Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Satisfied customers are willing to repurchase/support a brand based on their prior experiences and perceptions [51]. Research conducted in the airline industry identifies that certain experiential elements such as flight comfort, aircraft cleanliness, responsiveness of airline staff, and flight punctuality will create long-term impacts on customers. These positive interaction experiences culminate in immediate customer satisfaction, which leads to long-term customer loyalty [52]. To foster customer loyalty through service innovation based on customer experiences and brand identification, achieving customer satisfaction is imperative [32].

2.7 Perceived Value and Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Perceived value, like perceived experience, involves evaluating the utility of a service, while

customer satisfaction refers to an overall positive or negative feeling about a service. While the former reflects cognitive functions, the latter encompasses more emotional considerations. Therefore, satisfaction is significantly influenced by perceived value [53]. The positive influence of perceived value on customer satisfaction and repeat purchase intention has been well-documented in service marketing literature [54], as well as the relational constructs such as trust and commitment toward customer loyalty in the airline industry.

In this context, customer loyalty results from perceived affirmative value derived from an experience, satisfaction based on physical attributes, or consistently positive emotional experiences with a product or service [55]. Thung [56] defines loyalty as a decision-making behavior where customers continuously purchase goods or services from a chosen company. According to Zati and Iqbal [57], loyalty from the customer's perspective is the intensity of their repeat consumption of a specific service provider, reflecting positive perceptions and tendencies to consume exclusively from that particular provider.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Measurement

This study employs a quantitative approach to empirically examine the relationships among the variables outlined in the research framework. According to Sugiyono [58], quantitative research is a method based on concrete data from a specific sample or population, where the data are in numerical form and measured using statistical tools to draw conclusions related to the research problem. Hence, an online questionnaire was utilized to collect responses, structured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The study includes two independent variables, perceived experience and perceived value, one dependent variable, customer loyalty, and one intervening variable, customer satisfaction. All research indicators were based on [59].

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

This study relies on primary data collected through an online questionnaire and secondary data sourced from international articles, methodological literature, and reports relevant to the research topic. Conducted in Yogyakarta, the

location was chosen for its accessibility to subjects who are travelers at Yogyakarta International Airport bound for Pekanbaru [60].

The sample comprises individuals using Citilink Airlines on the Yogyakarta International Airport to Pekanbaru route (YIA-PKU). Non-probability

sampling via purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants based on specific criteria that align with the study's objectives (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). Criteria include respondents who are Citilink airline users and have previously traveled on the YIA-PKU route.

Sample size determination followed the methodology outlined by Musannip and Siregar [61]:

Minimum sample = [(number of indicators + number of variables) x 2] x 5
 Maximum sample = [(number of indicators + number of variables) x 2] x 10
 With 4 variables and 21 question indicators in the study, the calculation resulted in:
 Minimum sample = [(21 + 4) x 2] x 5 = 250 samples
 Maximum sample = [(21 + 4) x 2] x 10 = 500 samples

Therefore, the number of respondents in this study is a minimum of 250 samples and a maximum of 500 samples. Consequently, the study obtained 250 samples for further analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis Techniques

A pilot test was conducted with 50 respondents to ensure the validity and reliability of the indicators in the research questionnaire. The analysis included both descriptive and statistical methods. Descriptive analysis was employed to elucidate the characteristics, occurrences, individuals, or specific situations based on the collected data [62]. Meanwhile, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was performed using AMOS version 25. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis aims to test relationships between latent variables and their manifest variables in the measurement model and the relationships among different latent variables in the structural model. It can also identify measurement errors [63]. This analytical technique was chosen because it enables researchers to measure structural issues and variables and simultaneously analyze and test hypothesis models [64]. The modified research model based on Paulose and Shakeel [59], as depicted in Fig. 1, summarizes the research hypotheses.

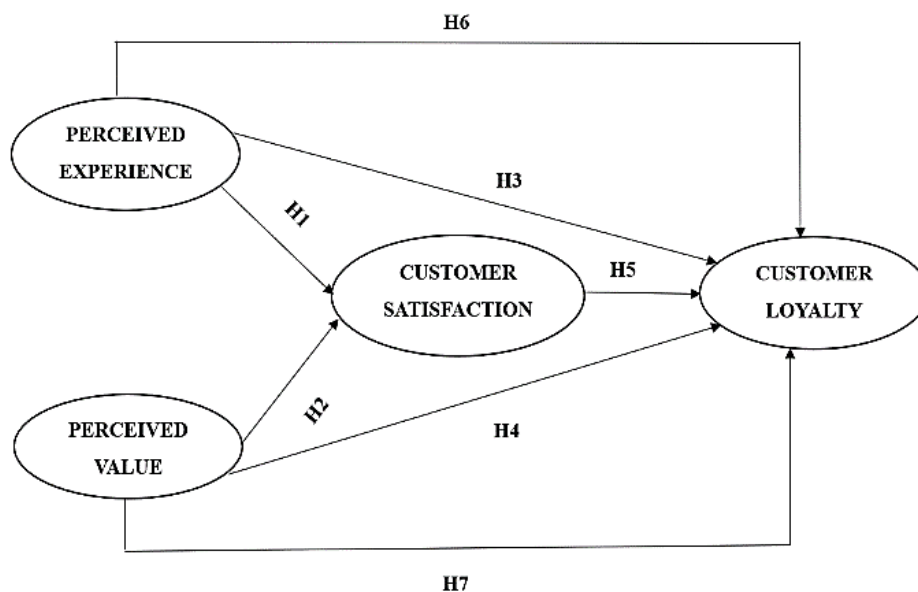


Fig. 1. Framework Model

The research framework is adopted by Paulose & Shakeel (2022)

Based on Fig. 1, this study posits four hypotheses as follows:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Perceived experience has a positive influence on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Perceived value has a positive influence on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Perceived experience has a positive influence on customer loyalty.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Perceived value has a positive influence on customer loyalty.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): customer satisfaction has a positive influence on customer loyalty.

Hypothesis 6 (H6): Perceived experience has a positive influence on customer loyalty.

Hypothesis 7 (H7): Perceived value has a positive influence on customer loyalty.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Respondent Profile

The descriptive analysis section provides an overview of the data on the respondents' characteristics obtained from the questionnaire distribution. The respondent description includes gender, age, and income levels are presented in the following table (Table 2).

Table 2 reveals that a significant majority of respondents in this study are male (54.4%). Among the respondents, 44% fall within the age group of ≤ 25 years. In terms of income, the majority earn less than 5 million per month, accounting for 51.6% of the respondents.

4.2 Validity and Reliability

Initially, validity and reliability tests were performed. The validity testing in this study utilizes the CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) tool, which is integrated into AMOS, and the reliability testing utilizes CR (Construct Reliability). An item is deemed valid if its loading value exceeds 0.5 (> 0.5), while a research variable is considered reliable if its construct reliability score is above 0.7 (> 0.7) [63]. This testing aims to measure the validity of the questionnaire and assess the extent of the questionnaire's consistency. The outcomes of the validity and reliability assessments are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 displays the outcomes of the validity assessment, represented by loading values, and the reliability evaluation, indicated by the construct reliability (CR) values. The validity test findings for the 21 questionnaire items reveal that all items meet the criterion with loading factor values exceeding 0.50, confirming their validity. Moreover, the reliability test shows that each of the 4 research variables achieves CR values above 0.7, meeting the required threshold.

Therefore, the entire research instrument is considered reliable.

4.3 SEM Analysis Results

In SEM analysis using the AMOS software, a path diagram model is constructed and converted into structural equations, as illustrated in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2 depicts the graphical representation of the research model transformed into a structural model. According to the diagram, the Perceived Experience variable comprises 6 indicator items, Perceived Value comprises 5 indicator items, Customer Satisfaction comprises 5 indicator items, and Customer Loyalty comprises 5 indicator items. The figure illustrates that the connections between variables are robust, shown by bold lines indicating strong influences.

The normality of the data distribution was assessed through the examination of z-values (critical ratio or C.R) calculated from skewness and kurtosis values. The critical value is ± 2.58 at a significance level of 0.01 [63]. Table 4 presents the results of these normality tests.

Table 4 demonstrates that the multivariate normality test fulfills the normality assumption because the value of -1.300 falls within the range of ± 2.58 . Next, the structural model identification process was carried out. One method to ascertain the presence of identification issues involves evaluating the estimation outcomes. SEM analysis is feasible only when the model identification confirms that it belongs to the over-identified category. This determination is based on examining the degrees of freedom (df) value of the constructed model, as depicted in Table 5.

Based on Table 5, the output from AMOS shows that the model's degrees of freedom (df) value is 183. This indicates that the model falls into the over-identified category due to its positive df

value. Therefore, data analysis can proceed to the next stage.

Assessing the Goodness of Fit (GoF) is a critical objective in SEM and pivotal for gauging the congruence between the proposed model and the sampled data. Detailed findings from the GoF evaluation can be explored in Table 6, which is provided later.

Table 6 suggests that the research model approaches a satisfactory fit. According to the GoF test, seven criteria meet the fit criteria: RMSEA, GFI, AGFI, CMIN/DF, TLI, CFI, and NFI. Subsequently, hypothesis testing was

performed to examine the causal relationships proposed in this study. The results of the hypothesis analysis, showing standardized regression weights indicating the coefficients of influence between variables, are presented in the subsequent table (Table 7).

Table 7 showcases the results of hypothesis testing in this study, where each hypothesis is deemed significant if the C.R. value surpasses 1.96 and the P value is below .05, as stipulated by Ghozali [63]. This criterion ensures that the relationships proposed between variables are statistically supported and can be confidently interpreted within the research context.

Table 2. Respondents' profile

Category	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	136	54,4
Female	114	45,6
Age		
≤ 25 years	110	44,0
26 - 35 years	108	43,2
36 - 45 years	28	11,2
≥ 46 years	4	1,6
Salary per Month		
Less than 5 million IDR	129	51,6
5 - 10 million IDR	113	45,2
More than 10 million IDR	8	3,2

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 3. Validity and data reliability

Variable	Item	Loadings	CR
Perceived Experience	PE1	0,825	0,923
	PE2	0,820	
	PE3	0,793	
	PE4	0,812	
	PE5	0,845	
	PE6	0,808	
Perceived Value	PV1	0,834	0,923
	PV2	0,833	
	PV3	0,825	
	PV4	0,835	
	PV5	0,871	
Customer Satisfaction	CS1	0,777	0,897
	CS2	0,870	
	CS3	0,775	
	CS4	0,805	
	CS5	0,759	
Customer Loyalty	CL1	0,799	0,928
	CL2	0,852	
	CL3	0,848	
	CL4	0,871	
	CL5	0,873	

Source: Primary data (2024)

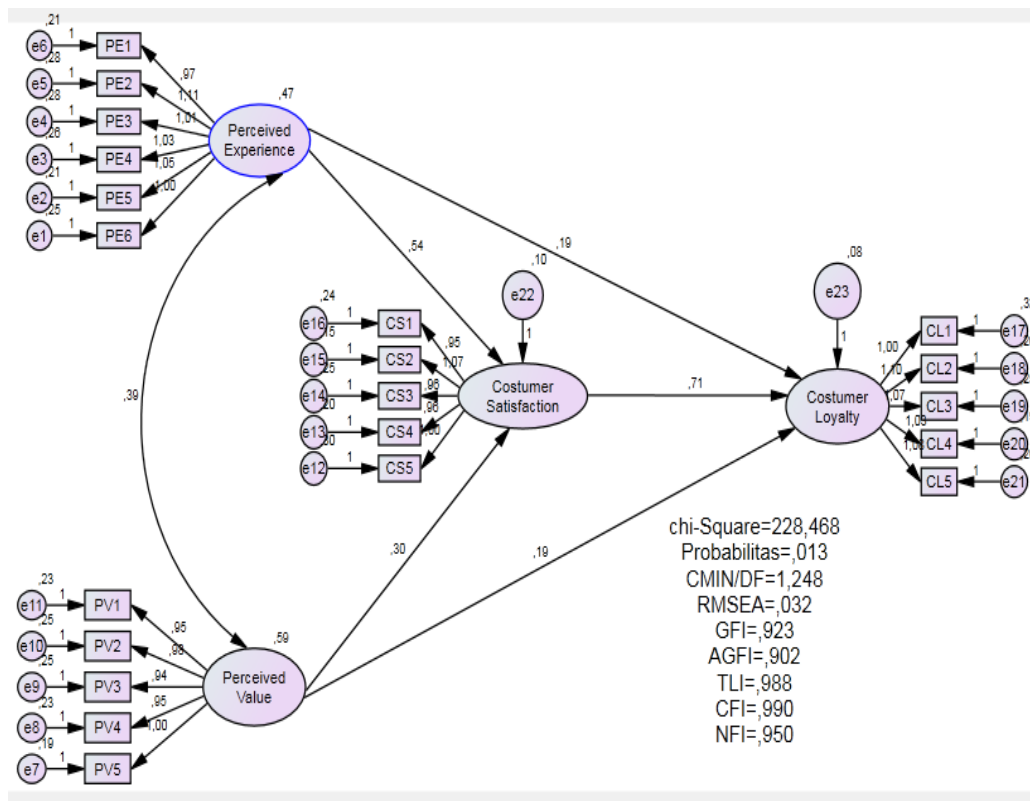


Fig. 2. Structural Equation Model

The research framework is adopted by Paulose & Shakeel (2022)

Table 4. Results of normality test for data

Item	Min	Max	Skew	C.R.	Kurtosis	C.R.
CL5	2,000	5,000	,338	2,183	-,704	-2,273
CL4	2,000	5,000	,282	1,821	-,620	-2,002
CL3	1,000	5,000	,068	,440	-,822	-2,654
CL2	1,000	5,000	,231	1,493	-,801	-2,585
CL1	1,000	5,000	,219	1,417	-,698	-2,254
CS1	2,000	5,000	,176	1,136	-,550	-1,776
CS2	2,000	5,000	,460	2,971	-,651	-2,102
CS3	2,000	5,000	,368	2,378	-,548	-1,770
CS4	2,000	5,000	,394	2,545	-,536	-1,731
CS5	2,000	5,000	,201	1,298	-,614	-1,981
PV1	1,000	5,000	,193	1,248	-,509	-1,642
PV2	2,000	5,000	,027	,177	-,808	-2,609
PV3	2,000	5,000	-,045	-,292	-,696	-2,248
PV4	2,000	5,000	,014	,090	-,709	-2,289
PV5	2,000	5,000	,180	1,160	-,873	-2,819
PE1	2,000	5,000	,325	2,096	-,553	-1,784
PE2	2,000	5,000	-,033	-,213	-,889	-2,870
PE3	2,000	5,000	-,039	-,251	-,684	-2,207
PE4	2,000	5,000	-,085	-,547	-,682	-2,201
PE5	2,000	5,000	,312	2,016	-,686	-2,213
PE6	2,000	5,000	,123	,793	-,612	-1,975
Multivariate					-5,112	-1,300

Source: Primary data (2024)

Notes: Perceived experienced (PE), Perceived value (PV), Customer satisfaction (CS), Customer loyalty (CL).

Table 5. Identification of structural model

Number of distinct sample moments:	231
Number of distinct parameters to be estimated:	48
Degrees of freedom (231 - 48):	183

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 6. Goodness of fit

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut-off value	Model Penelitian	Model
Chi-square	< 215,563 (df=246)	228,468	Not Fit
Significant probability	≥ 0.05	0,018	Not Fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0,032	Fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	0,923	Fit
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0,902	Fit
CMIN/DF	≤ 2.0	1,248	Fit
TLI	≥ 0.90	0,988	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.90	0,990	Fit
NFI	≥ 0.90	0,950	Fit

Source: Primary data (2024)

4.3.1 Influence of perceived experience on customer satisfaction

Perceived experience positively and significantly affects customer satisfaction (Estimation = 0.536; CR = 7.440; P value = .000), thus supporting H1. This indicates that a positive experience with Citilink Airlines on the YIA-PKU route leads to customer satisfaction. When customers are satisfied with the service provided, they are more likely to make repeat purchases from the company. This finding aligns with previous research by Nabila et al. [65], which demonstrated that perceived experience enhances customer satisfaction, as satisfaction is a function of performance impressions and expectations. The study suggests that Citilink can improve customer satisfaction by enhancing the memorable experiences of its customers. The significant positive impact of perceived experience on customer satisfaction is further supported by Aristiawan et al. [66]. Similarly, the research by Razi and Lajevardi [67] shows that companies must focus on perceived experience to achieve customer satisfaction. Experiential marketing, a component of perceived experience, directly and significantly enhances customer satisfaction.

4.3.2 Influence of perceived value on customer satisfaction

Perceived value has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction (Estimation = 0.297; CR = 5,098; P value = .000), thus

supporting H2. The findings of this study are consistent with the research conducted by Ekoputra [68,69], which found that perceived value significantly influences customer satisfaction. In the context of this study, factors such as quick access to tickets, assurance of refunds in the event of flight issues, affordability, and reliability regarding timeliness are critical considerations for consumers when choosing Citilink's airline services. These factors are perceived to enhance customer value. Consumers are more likely to report satisfaction during or after their travel as they evaluate the balance between the costs incurred and the quality of services received, among other perceived benefits.

4.3.3 Influence of perceived experience on customer loyalty

Perceived experience positively and significantly affects customer loyalty (Estimation = 0.193; CR = 2,309; P value = .021), thus supporting H3. Customers tend to remember desired experiences, influencing their perceptions of the quality of a company's service. Therefore, customer loyalty to Citilink Airlines can increase if the airline pays attention to customer experiences and provides positive experiences that leave a lasting impression and affect loyalty.

This result is also supported by previous research by Febrini et al. [36], which found that a positive perceived experience is a crucial determinant of consumers' intentions to

Table 7. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Conclusion
PE → CS	H1	0.536	0.072	7.440	0.000	Supported
PV → CS	H2	0.297	0.058	5.098	0.000	Supported
PE → CL	H3	0.193	0.084	2.309	0.021	Supported
PV → CL	H4	0.189	0.062	3.050	0.002	Supported
CS → CL	H5	0.711	0.112	6.349	0.000	Supported
		Direct		Indirect		
PE → CS → CL	H6	0.177		0.350		Supported
PV → CS → CL	H7	0.194		0.217		Supported

Source: Primary data (2024)

Notes: Perceived experienced (PE), Perceived value (PV), Customer satisfaction (CS), Customer loyalty (CL)

repurchase or reuse a product or service, fostering customer loyalty. Consequently, the better the perceived experience implemented in Citilink's marketing efforts, the greater the loyalty of its users. Thus, it is concluded that perceived experience is a critical factor in shaping and developing customer loyalty. Smilansky [69] emphasized that perceived experience exists to fulfill its purpose: to enhance customer loyalty by focusing on customer experiences.

The foundational concept of perceived value encompasses rational consumption values augmented by experiential values derived from using a product or service, such as eliciting joy or fantasy [70]. The atmosphere or experience while using Citilink's YIA-PKU route can create memorable sensations for consumers, leading to valuable experiences [71]. A positive experience fosters repurchase intention, a behavioral manifestation of customer loyalty [72]. Therefore, companies should pay greater attention to efforts aimed at increasing customer loyalty. This assertion is further supported by the research of Febrianti and Keni [73], who found that perceived experience significantly impacts customer loyalty.

4.3.4 Influence of perceived value on customer loyalty

Perceived value positively and significantly affects customer loyalty (Estimation = 0.189; CR = 3,050; P value = .000), thus supporting H4. These findings are corroborated by earlier research conducted by Wahyuningtyas et al. [74,75], which demonstrated that perceived value significantly impacts customer loyalty. Therefore, when the components of perceived value are effectively implemented, customers will likely experience satisfaction and exhibit increased loyalty toward Citilink's airline services. Customers tend to assess perceived value based on the price, quality, and sacrifices to obtain a

product or service. Therefore, Citilink Airlines needs to implement perceived value in customer service delivery. By prioritizing customer value, customers will feel valued because the company strives to meet their needs. Thus, a customer-value -based service approach will enhance customer loyalty.

4.3.5 Influence of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty

Customer satisfaction positively and significantly affects customer loyalty (Estimation = 0,711; CR = 6,349; P value = .000), thus supporting H5. These findings are supported by previous research indicating that customer satisfaction is crucial for achieving customer loyalty (Wahab et al., 2016). Customer satisfaction has been found to have a significant positive effect on customer loyalty [28]. Research by Hidayat et al. [76] also shows that customer satisfaction significantly influences customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is a critical factor in gaining a competitive advantage for companies, as satisfied customers are more likely to remain loyal and continue purchasing or using the company's services in the future [77]. Therefore, Citilink Airlines must focus on aspects that enhance customer satisfaction, such as improving service quality through friendly interactions (greeting, smiling, and acknowledging customers), offering promotional discounts, ensuring punctual departures and arrivals, and other measures that support customer satisfaction. These efforts are essential for enhancing customer loyalty.

4.3.6 Influence of perceived experience on customer loyalty mediated by customer satisfaction

Perceived experience positively and significantly impacts customer satisfaction through customer loyalty (0,177<0,350), thus supporting H6. It can

be interpreted as satisfied customers willing to repurchase or advocate for a brand based on their previous experiences and perceptions. These positive interaction experiences culminate in customer satisfaction, leading to customer loyalty. Therefore, Citilink Airlines must provide positive experiences to customers to influence satisfaction and foster loyalty. Satisfaction arising from positive experiences with Citilink will spread quickly through word of mouth, thereby increasing the number of passengers choosing to fly with the airline.

The study results conducted on Citilink Airlines customers on the YIA-PKU route indicate that customer satisfaction successfully mediates the relationship between perceived experience and customer loyalty. This finding demonstrates that customer satisfaction can mediate the impact of perceived experience on customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction derived from their experiences can foster loyalty towards Citilink. These findings are consistent with the research by Hendra et al. [78], which states that perceived experience influences customer loyalty through the mediating variable of customer satisfaction.

4.3.7 Influence of perceived value on customer loyalty mediated by customer satisfaction

Perceived value positively and significantly impacts customer satisfaction through customer loyalty ($0,194 < 0,217$), thus supporting H7. Based on the research conducted on consumers who have traveled the YIA-PKU route with Citilink Airlines, it was found that customer satisfaction successfully mediates the relationship between perceived value and customer loyalty. This finding indicates that customer satisfaction mediates the impact of perceived value on customer loyalty. This suggests that any changes in loyalty (increases or decreases) are influenced by perceived value. Generally, customers who perceive high value in a company tend to be loyal. Customers who perceive high value will first feel satisfied. These findings are consistent with the research by Mardikawati et al. [79], which showed that perceived value significantly affects customer loyalty through customer satisfaction as a mediating variable.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigates the impact of perceived experience and value on customer loyalty, mediated by customer satisfaction, among Citilink airline passengers traveling the YIA-PKU

route in Yogyakarta. The results affirm the acceptance of all hypotheses, indicating a robust relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty (C.R. = 6.349). It indicates that enhancing customer satisfaction facilitates increased purchase frequency, expands market share, and stimulates positive word-of-mouth recommendations. This result aligns with Prentice and Loureiro [77] that customer satisfaction is pivotal as satisfied customers tend to exhibit greater loyalty to a company's offerings.

The study highlights the significant influence of perceived customer value and experience on customer satisfaction. Customer perception of value critically affects satisfaction by meeting their needs effectively. Therefore, Citilink must prioritize enhancing perceived customer value to ensure satisfaction. Furthermore, the research confirms the mediating role of customer satisfaction in the relationship between perceived value, perceived experience, and customer loyalty. Just as perceived value assesses service quality, customer satisfaction reflects positive or negative service perceptions profoundly shaped by perceived value. Hence, Citilink Airlines emphasizes delivering superior customer value to enhance satisfaction and foster enduring customer loyalty.

6. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical implications suggest this study advances the understanding of factors influencing customer loyalty in the airline industry, specifically perceived experience, perceived value, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, contributing foundational knowledge for future theoretical developments. This research provides insights for companies to strategically manage customer loyalty by emphasizing service quality and enhancing customer satisfaction. Effective customer service policies are pivotal in fostering loyalty. Therefore, Citilink, particularly on the YIA-PKU route, should continually enhance customer value and positive experiences, innovate ticket booking features, offer compelling promotions, and improve service systems to bolster customer satisfaction and retention.

7. LIMITATION

Acknowledging limitations such as potentially limited respondent representation and the exclusive focus on perceived experience and

perceived value as independent variables with customer satisfaction as a mediator, future research should explore additional variables to understand customer loyalty drivers comprehensively. Increasing sample sizes would enhance the study's applicability and generalizability. Future research directions involve developing and comparing alternative models and strategies to optimize customer loyalty initiatives tailored to diverse customer segments and varying market conditions.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

The author uses AI ChatGPT technology to convert reference writing from APA Style to Vancouver Style references with *"Please convert these references into Vancouver Style."*

The contents of the paper are completely based on the author's research. NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of manuscripts.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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APPENDIX

The measurement items used in the questionnaire were adapted from Paulose & Shakeel (2022) (Table 8).

Table 8. Item scale of the measurement

Variables	Item	Scale
Perceived Experience	PE1	I feel comfortable traveling with Citilink Airlines.
	PE2	I feel that I receive prompt action when there is a delay.
	PE3	I feel that the flight attendants provide a positive impression to passengers.
	PE4	I feel that Citilink Airlines staff are very quick and responsive in handling customer complaints.
	PE5	I feel comfortable with the service and the interior of the Citilink aircraft.
	PE6	I feel that using Citilink Airlines provides good security for passengers' belongings.
Perceived Value	PV1	I find it easy to access Citilink Airlines flight tickets through the provided application.
	PV2	I receive a guarantee of refund when a flight is canceled.
	PV3	I believe that Citilink Airlines offers lower prices compared to competitors.
	PV4	I feel that Citilink Airlines offers value that matches the price I pay.
	PV5	I feel that the departure and arrival times are accurate as stated on the ticket.
Customer Satisfaction	CS1	I perceive the quality service provided by Citilink Airlines.
	CS2	I feel that Citilink Airlines meets my expectations.
	CS3	Overall, I am satisfied with the cleanliness of the aircraft and the service provided by Citilink Airlines.
	CS4	I feel that choosing Citilink Airlines is the right decision.
	CS5	I feel that the service provided by Citilink Airlines exceeds my expectations given the price offered.
Customer Loyalty	CL1	I am willing to use Citilink Airlines again in the future.
	CL2	I will provide positive feedback about Citilink Airlines.
	CL3	I will share the benefits of using Citilink Airlines.
	CL4	I will invite my friends or relatives to use Citilink Airlines.
	CL5	I will spread positive information about Citilink Airlines.

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