



# Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in the Retail Industry: A Study of Alfamart in Bekasi

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study examines the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction among Alfamart customers in Bekasi, Indonesia, where increasing retail competition makes customer retention a strategic priority.

**Research Methodology:** A quantitative descriptive approach was used. From a population of 590 customers, 85 respondents were selected through accidental sampling using the Slovin formula. Data were collected through Likert-scale questionnaires based on the five SERVQUAL dimensions and analyzed using validity, reliability, and simple linear regression tests with IBM SPSS Statistics 17.

**Results:** All questionnaire items were valid and reliable. The regression equation was  $\hat{Y} = 35.344 + 0.355X$ . Service quality had a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction ( $t = 2.293$ ;  $p = 0.024 < 0.05$ ;  $\beta = 0.244$ ), indicating that better service quality leads to higher customer satisfaction.

**Conclusions:** Service quality significantly improves customer satisfaction at Alfamart in Bekasi. Enhancements in tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy contribute to greater customer satisfaction.

**Limitations:** The study was limited to one retail chain in Bekasi with a relatively small sample size. Other factors affecting customer satisfaction, such as price, product variety, and convenience, were not included in the analysis.

**Contributions:** This study provides empirical evidence on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in Indonesia's retail sector and offers practical guidance for improving service performance.

**Keywords:** *Customer Satisfaction, Retail, Service Quality, SERVQUAL, Simple Linear Regression*

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## 1. Introduction

Indonesia's retail industry has undergone rapid transformation over the past two decades, with the proliferation of modern mini-market chains—particularly Alfamart and Indomaret—fundamentally reshaping consumer purchasing behavior in urban and suburban areas (Hariyadi, 2016; Satu & Mahmud, 2023). Bekasi, one of Greater Jakarta's most densely populated satellite cities with over 2.5 million residents, represents a highly competitive retail market where multiple Alfamart outlets frequently operate within walking distance of one another and in proximity to competing mini-markets (Andika & Hati, 2018; Husain et al., 2022; Zati & Iqbal, 2017). In an environment of comparable product offerings

and similar pricing structures, service quality has emerged as one of the primary differentiating factors influencing consumers' choices of where to make their daily purchases (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018); (Tjiptono, 2016).

Customer satisfaction, defined as the consumer's emotional and cognitive evaluation of whether a product or service has met, exceeded, or fallen short of their expectations, is both the ultimate objective of service quality investment and a primary determinant of repeat purchase behavior, positive word-of-mouth, and brand loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2015); (Rangkuti, 2016b). Consumers who are satisfied with service quality tend to return, recommend the store to peers, and resist switching to competitors, even when minor price differences exist (Uppal et al., 2018). In contrast, dissatisfied consumers are highly susceptible to competitor attraction and represent a revenue leak that is particularly damaging in retail environments, where transaction values are relatively small and relationship building occurs primarily through repeated service interactions (Akbar & Haryoko, 2020; Ariyanto et al., 2020).

The SERVQUAL framework, developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) and widely applied in retail service quality research, identifies five dimensions as the primary determinants of perceived service quality: tangibles (physical facilities, equipment, and personnel appearance), reliability (ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately), responsiveness (willingness to help customers and provide prompt service), assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence), and empathy (caring, individualized attention provided to customers). These five dimensions capture the full range of customer-facing service attributes through which retail store personnel can build or destroy customer satisfaction (Teshnizi et al., 2018; Tumsekcali et al., 2021).

Despite the extensive global literature on the service quality–customer satisfaction relationship, empirical evidence specifically examining this relationship in Indonesia's modern mini-market retail context, where service delivery norms, customer expectations, and competitive dynamics differ from those studied in Western retail markets, remains limited. This study addresses this gap by examining the service quality–customer satisfaction relationship at Alfamart stores in Bekasi, pursuing the following research objective: to determine whether service quality, operationalized through the five SERVQUAL dimensions, has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction among Alfamart customers in Bekasi.

## 2. Literature Review

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### 2.1 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the consumer's evaluative response to the perceived performance of a product or service relative to prior expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2015); (Rangkuti, 2016a; Sikder et al., 2022). When performance meets or exceeds expectations, satisfaction is experienced; when it falls short, dissatisfaction results. This expectation-disconfirmation model (Chen et al., 2023; Ngaliman et al., 2024; Yulianto, 2011) predicts that satisfaction is not an absolute evaluation of performance quality but a comparative judgment shaped by the consumer's reference standard. In this study, customer satisfaction is operationalized through four behavioral and attitudinal indicators drawn from Amegayibor and Korankye (2022) and Suwardi (2011): repeat purchase intention, word-of-mouth recommendation, positive brand image formation, and purchase decision reinforcement for the same company.

In the retail context, customer satisfaction is particularly important because the frequency of transactions creates repeated opportunities for the accumulation or erosion of satisfaction (Abbasi-Moghaddam et al., 2019; Prakash, 2019; Upadhyai et al., 2019). Each service interaction—with cashiers, floor staff, and the physical store environment—contributes to the cumulative satisfaction assessment that determines whether a consumer will return to the store (Al Kurdi et al., 2020; Hult et al., 2022). Irawan (2012) identifies customer satisfaction as the result of a multi-dimensional evaluation encompassing product

availability, price perception, service efficiency, and the physical environment—all dimensions that are directly or indirectly associated with the five SERVQUAL service quality factors (Leninkumar, 2017; Lim et al., 2020; Shankar & Datta, 2020).

## 2.2 Service Quality and the SERVQUAL Framework

Service quality refers to the difference between customer expectations for a service and their perceptions of the service received (Parasuraman et al., 1988); (Jusufbašić & Stević, 2023; Raza et al., 2020; Tjiptono, 2016). When the perceived service meets or exceeds expectations, service quality is assessed as high; when it falls short, service quality is judged as low. The SERVQUAL model operationalizes service quality across five dimensions: (1) *Tangibles*—the physical appearance of facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials; (2) *Reliability*—the ability to perform the promised service dependably, accurately, and consistently; (3) *Responsiveness*—willingness to help customers and provide prompt service; (4) *Assurance*—employee knowledge, courtesy, and capacity to convey trust and confidence; and (5) *Empathy*—caring, individualized attention to customers' specific needs and concerns (Ali & Raza, 2017; Dopeykar et al., 2018; Prentkovskis et al., 2018). Kansra and Jha (2016) and Kotler and Keller (2015) identified tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy as the five primary service quality measurement indicators most applicable to the retail context.

Empirically, the positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is one of the most consistently supported findings in marketing literature (Sumi & Kabir, 2021; Tumsekcali et al., 2021). Kusuma (2019) documents a significant positive service quality effect on customer satisfaction at a retail establishment in Bekasi ( $t\text{-count} = 7.168 > t\text{-table} = 0.05$ ,  $H_a$  accepted), directly corroborating the present study's hypothesized relationship. Yuwananto (2011) found that service quality contributes positively to customer satisfaction in a building materials retail context ( $t = 3.687$ ), accounting for 70.8% of the satisfaction variance alongside price. Sukmawati (2017) documents a significant positive service quality effect on Garden Cafe customer satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.368$ ,  $t = 5.915$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Nugraha (2016) confirmed that service quality positively affects consumer satisfaction, which in turn positively predicts repurchase decisions. Paramarta (2009) additionally confirms a significant influence between service quality and customer satisfaction. Across these studies, the consistent finding is that service quality improvements systematically and positively generate customer satisfaction.

$H_1$ : Service quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction at Alfamart in Bekasi, Indonesia.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

A quantitative descriptive research design was employed, which is appropriate for examining the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction through structured data collection and statistical hypothesis testing ((Sugiyono, 2016)). Simple linear regression was selected as the analytical method because the study examines a single independent variable (service quality) and a single dependent variable (customer satisfaction), enabling a straightforward estimation and interpretation of the directional relationship.

### 3.2 Population and Sample

The study population consisted of all consumers who purchased goods at Alfamart stores in Bekasi over a three-month observation period (January–March 2022), totaling approximately 590. Applying the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error yielded a minimum sample of 85 respondents ( $n = N / (1 + N \times e^2) = 590 / (1 + 590 \times 0.01) = 85$ ). Accidental sampling was employed, a non-probability method wherein any consumer who coincidentally encountered a researcher during an active purchase was eligible for

inclusion, ensuring that respondents were currently experiencing the Alfamart service and could provide relevant satisfaction assessments.

### 3.3 Measurement Instruments

Service quality (X) was measured using 14 items based on the five SERVQUAL dimensions: tangibles (physical store appearance, cleanliness, and staff appearance), reliability (accurate and consistent service), responsiveness (willingness and speed of staff assistance), assurance (staff knowledge and trustworthiness), and empathy (individualized attention and understanding of customer needs)—adapted from Parasuraman et al. (1988) as cited in Kotler and Keller (2015). Customer satisfaction (Y) was measured using 14 items capturing repeat purchase intention, word-of-mouth recommendation willingness, brand image assessment, and reinforcement of purchase decisions at the same store (Aboubakr & Bayoumy, 2022; Sibai et al., 2021; Suwardi, 2011)<sup>2</sup>. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

### 3.4 Validity and Reliability

Instrument validity was assessed using Pearson product-moment correlation, with the criterion  $r$ -count  $> r$ -table = 0.179 ( $n = 85$ ,  $df = 83$ ,  $\alpha = 5\%$ ). Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha (acceptance criterion:  $\alpha > 0.60$ ). Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 17.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Results

#### 4.1.1 Respondent Profile

Table 1. Respondent Demographic Profile Summary (N = 85)

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	28	33
	Female	57	67
Age	18–25 years	19	22
	26–35 years	23	27
	36–45 years	22	26
	> 45 years	21	25
Education	Elementary school	11	13
	Junior high school	23	27
	Senior high school	15	18
	Diploma-3 (D3)	18	21
	Bachelor’s degree (S1)	16	19
	Master’s / Doctoral degree	2	2
Marital Status	Unmarried	23	27
	Married	38	45
	Widowed / Widower	24	28
Occupation	Student / College student	16	19
	Private employee	10	12
	Government employee	11	13
	Businessman / Entrepreneur	18	21
	Retired	13	15
	Other	17	20

Source: Primary Data (2022)

Tables 1 present the demographic profiles of the 85 respondents. The sample was predominantly female (67%: 57 respondents) compared to male (33%: 28 respondents), reflecting the higher frequency of grocery and daily household goods purchasing among female consumers than among male consumers. The age distribution was relatively even across the adult spectrum: 18–25 years (22%), 26–35 years (27%), 36–45 years (26%), and above 45 years (25%), indicating that Alfamart attracts a broad age demographic in Bekasi. Educational attainment was diverse: junior high school (27%), Diploma-3 (21%), bachelor’s degree (19%), senior high school (18%), elementary school (13%), and master’s/doctoral degree (2%). Marital status showed a plurality of married respondents (45%), followed by widowed/widower (28%), and unmarried (27%). The participants’ occupations were distributed as follows: businesspeople (21%), other occupations (20%), students/college students (19%), government employees (13%), retirees (15%), and private employees (12%).

#### 4.1.2 Instrument Validity and Reliability

Table 2. Validity Test — Service Quality (X) ( $r$ -table = 0.179,  $n$  = 85,  $\alpha$  = 5%)

Variable	Item	r-count	r-table	Conclusion
Service Quality (X)	Item 1	0.632	0.179	Valid
	Item 2	0.729	0.179	Valid
	Item 3	0.751	0.179	Valid
	Item 4	0.590	0.179	Valid
	Item 5	0.574	0.179	Valid
	Item 6	0.655	0.179	Valid
	Item 7	0.527	0.179	Valid
	Item 8	0.732	0.179	Valid
	Item 9	0.606	0.179	Valid
	Item 10	0.569	0.179	Valid
	Item 11	0.246	0.179	Valid
	Item 12	0.268	0.179	Valid
	Item 13	0.362	0.179	Valid
	Item 14	0.257	0.179	Valid

Source: Primary Data Processed, SPSS 17 (2022)

Table 3. Validity Test — Customer Satisfaction (Y) ( $r$ -table = 0.179,  $n = 85$ ,  $\alpha = 5\%$ )

Variable	Item	r-count	r-table	Conclusion
Customer Satisfaction (Y)	Item 1	0.758	0.179	Valid
	Item 2	0.327	0.179	Valid
	Item 3	0.558	0.179	Valid
	Item 4	0.277	0.179	Valid
	Item 5	0.506	0.179	Valid
	Item 6	0.594	0.179	Valid
	Item 7	0.577	0.179	Valid
	Item 8	0.491	0.179	Valid
	Item 9	0.758	0.179	Valid
	Item 10	0.327	0.179	Valid
	Item 11	0.558	0.179	Valid
	Item 12	0.506	0.179	Valid
	Item 13	0.594	0.179	Valid
	Item 14	0.577	0.179	Valid

Source: Primary Data Processed, SPSS 17 (2022)

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Threshold	Result
Service Quality (X)	0.852	> 0.60	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction (Y)	0.860	> 0.60	Reliable

Source: Primary Data Processed, SPSS 17 (2022)

Tables 2, Table 3, and Table 4 present the validity test results for the service quality and customer satisfaction constructs, respectively. The  $r$ -table value is 0.179 ( $n = 85$ ,  $df = 83$ ,  $\alpha = 5\%$ ). All 14 service quality items recorded  $r$ -count values exceeding 0.179 (range: 0.246–0.751), confirming their validity. All 14 customer satisfaction items also exceeded the threshold (range: 0.277–0.758), confirming their validity. Table 4 presents the reliability test results: both constructs exceeded the Cronbach's alpha threshold of 0.60 (Service Quality  $\alpha = 0.852$ ; Customer Satisfaction  $\alpha = 0.860$ ), confirming good to excellent internal consistency.

#### 4.1.3 Simple Linear Regression and Hypothesis Test

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression Results (Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction)

Model	B (Unstd.)	Std. Err.	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-count	Sig.	Decision
(Constant)	35.344	9.021	–	3.918	0.000	–
Service Quality (X)	0.355	0.155	0.244	2.293	0.024	H1 Accepted

$t$ -table = 0.179 ( $df = 83$ ,  $\alpha = 5\%$ );  $t$ -count (2.293) >  $t$ -table (0.179); Sig. (0.024) < 0.05.

Source: SPSS 17 Output, 2022

Table 5 presents the simple linear regression results for the effect of service quality (X) on customer satisfaction (Y). The regression equation is as follows:  $\hat{Y} = 35.344 + 0.355X$ . The constant (35.344) indicates that when service quality is zero, the baseline customer satisfaction score is 35.344. The regression coefficient (0.355) indicates that for each one-unit increase in service quality score, customer satisfaction increases by 0.355 units, indicating a positive directional relationship. The standardized beta coefficient ( $\beta = 0.244$ ) indicates the relative contribution of service quality to customer satisfaction.

The hypothesis test confirms H1: the t-count (2.293) exceeds the t-table (0.179), and the significance value ( $p = 0.024$ ) is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , establishing that service quality has a statistically significant positive effect on customer satisfaction (H1 accepted). The coefficient of determination  $R^2 = 0.244$  indicates that service quality explains 24.4% of the variance in customer satisfaction scores, while the remaining 75.6% is attributable to other variables not included in this single-predictor model, such as price fairness, product variety, store cleanliness, location convenience, and parking accessibility.

## 4.2 Discussion

The finding that service quality positively and significantly influences customer satisfaction at Alfamart in Bekasi ( $\beta = 0.244$ ,  $t = 2.293$ ,  $p = 0.024$ ) is consistent with the literature on service quality–satisfaction. This result confirms the theoretical prediction that when customer perceptions of service quality exceed their prior expectations across the five SERVQUAL dimensions—tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—positive satisfaction is generated (Parasuraman1988; Tjiptono2016). The finding also corroborates prior Indonesian retail studies: Aria2019<empty citation> confirmed this relationship at a comparable retail establishment in Bekasi; Rina Sukmawati2017<empty citation> documented a significant service quality effect on café customer satisfaction; and Eko Yuwananto2011<empty citation> confirmed the relationship in a building materials retail context.

The relatively modest coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.244$ ) reveals that while service quality is a significant satisfaction predictor, it accounts for less than a quarter of the satisfaction variance, indicating that other factors are jointly responsible for the majority of customer satisfaction at Alfamart. In the mini-market retail context, product availability and variety, price competitiveness and promotional discounts, store location and parking convenience, and digital payment system ease are likely additional important satisfaction drivers that the current single-variable model does not capture. This finding should not be interpreted as diminishing the practical importance of service quality; rather, it indicates that service quality improvements should be pursued as part of a comprehensive customer experience management strategy that also addresses the product and pricing dimensions.

The practical implications of this result for Alfamart's management are specific and actionable. On the tangible dimension, cleanliness of store premises, appropriate staff uniforms, and well-organized product displays should be maintained consistently across store visits and time periods. On the reliability dimension, consistent accuracy in billing and change handling, reliable promotions and discount implementation, and predictable product availability are essential factors. On the responsiveness dimension, cashier queue management, the willingness of floor staff to assist customers in locating products, and rapid issue resolution are the primary improvement areas. On the assurance dimension, staff product knowledge training and professional demeanor should be regularly updated. On the empathy dimension, recognition of regular customers, individualized assistance for elderly and physically limited shoppers, and culturally appropriate communication are important service quality enhancers in the diverse Bekasi consumer market.

## 5. Conclusions

This study examined the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction among 85 Alfamart customers in Bekasi, using simple linear regression. The principal finding is that service quality has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction ( $H_1$  accepted:  $\beta = 0.244$ ,  $t = 2.293 > t_{table} = 0.179$ ,  $p = 0.024 < 0.05$ ). The regression equation  $\hat{Y} = 35.344 + 0.355X$  confirms that each unit improvement in service quality generates a 0.355-unit increase in customer satisfaction. Service quality explains 24.4% of the variance in customer satisfaction, with the remaining 75.6% attributable to other variables not included in this model. Both measurement instruments demonstrated strong validity (all 28 items valid,  $r_{count} > r_{table} = 0.179$ ) and reliability (Service Quality  $\alpha = 0.852$ ; Customer Satisfaction  $\alpha = 0.860$ ).

These findings confirm the theoretical prediction of the SERVQUAL framework—that consistent, high-quality service across the tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy dimensions generates positive customer satisfaction outcomes—and confirm the practical importance of service quality management for Indonesian mini-market retail operators' success.

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### **Author Contributions**

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MADS conceptualized the study, designed the methodology, and drafted the manuscript. SA provided supervision, validation, and critical review of the manuscript. M was responsible for data collection and data curation. MIR contributed to data analysis, prepared tables and figures, and assisted in manuscript editing. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study. This research was conducted independently, and no financial or personal relationships influenced the results or interpretation of the findings.

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