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Consumer Trust in Mediating the Impact of Service Quality on Purchase Decisions



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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords:</p> <p>Service Quality; Consumer Trust; Purchase Decision; Structural Equation Modeling.</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Statement:</p> <p>The author(s) declares that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.</p> <p>Copyright © 2024 AJEB. All rights reserved.</p>	<p>Purpose: This study explores the relationship between service quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions in the context of the Jequilla florist business.</p> <p>Research Design and Methodology: This study used quantitative design with a cross-sectional approach. Data was collected through questionnaires from 120 randomly selected consumers of Jequilla florist. The variables measured include service quality, consumer trust, and purchasing decisions. Data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 26 software.</p> <p>Findings and Discussion: The results show that service quality does not directly influence purchasing decisions. However, service quality has a significant effect on consumer trust, and this consumer trust significantly affects buying decisions. This suggests that building consumer trust through service quality is a key factor influencing purchasing decisions.</p> <p>Implications: This research contributes to business practice and policy to improve service quality and build consumer trust. Florist business management is advised to focus on transparency, consistency, and responsiveness in service. Further research is recommended using a longitudinal design and considering other variables such as price and promotion to provide more comprehensive insights.</p>

Introduction

Consumer trust is key to ensuring service quality, translating into positive purchase decisions. In service industries such as florists, service quality includes the provision of fresh flowers and friendly, prompt, and responsive service (Rahmawati et al., 2021). Good service increases customer satisfaction and loyalty, which drives repeat purchase decisions. However, without consumer trust, the impact of service quality is not maximized (Yum & Yoo, 2023). This research focuses on Jequilla Florist's efforts to understand how service quality affects purchasing decisions by mediating consumer trust. Although Jequilla is committed to providing high-quality flowers and excellent service, it faces challenges in increasing consumer trust amidst intense competition. One of the practical problems encountered is the low repurchase rate despite the praised service. Theoretically, there is a gap in literature examining the mediating role of consumer trust in the context of florists. Most previous studies have focused only on service quality and purchase decisions without considering consumer trust as a mediating variable. This suggests the need for further research on how consumer trust can strengthen the relationship between service quality and purchase decisions (Setiawan et al., 2023). This phenomenon raises questions regarding other factors that influence repurchase decisions, with the

initial suspicion that consumer trust may be a key that has not been fully explored. From a theoretical perspective, there is a gap in the literature examining the mediating role of consumer trust in the context of the florist business. Most previous studies directly focus on service quality and purchase decisions without considering mediating variables. This requires more in-depth research into how consumer trust can strengthen or mediate the relationship between service quality and purchase decisions. Service quality has become a significant focus of service industry research in recent decades. This rapidly growing body of literature highlights the various aspects contributing to consumer experience and its impact on purchase decisions. A literature review shows that service quality concerns functional elements such as reliability and timeliness and emotional factors such as friendliness and empathy. High service quality has increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and purchase decisions (Choi et al., 2019). Recent studies in various service sectors show a positive relationship between service quality and purchase decisions (Ghozali et al., 2013). In the hospitality industry, for example, research shows that high responsiveness and personalized service significantly increase guest satisfaction and encourage them to return. Consistent service quality and responsiveness to customer complaints have increased customer retention rates in retail. Similar research in the food and beverage industry shows that warm interactions and attention to detail are essential in creating a satisfying dining experience and driving return decisions (Kim et al., 2008).

Previous research highlights the importance of consumer trust as a mediating variable in the relationship between service quality and purchasing decisions. In this context, consumer trust refers to the belief that a service provider will deliver on promises and act with integrity. For example, research in the banking sector found that consumer trust plays a vital role in strengthening the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. This trust is built through service consistency, information transparency, and customer interest concerns (Sutisna et al., 2023). However, while much research has been conducted on service quality and customer trust, some limitations must be recognized. Recent studies focus on more general service industries such as hospitality, retail, and banking, while the florist industry is often overlooked. The florist industry has unique characteristics that set it apart from other service sectors. Florist customers usually seek personalized and specific services for important events like weddings, birthdays, or funerals. Therefore, service quality in this context may require a different and more in-depth approach. The research methods used in previous studies are often limited to surveys and questionnaires, which, while providing valuable quantitative data, may not fully capture the nuances and complexities of the consumer experience. More in-depth qualitative approaches, such as interviews and case studies, can provide richer insight into how service quality and trust are built and maintained in the relationship between service providers and consumers. The state-of-the-art in-service quality and consumer trust research shows that while there is a deep understanding of the importance of these two variables, there is still room for further exploration, especially in the florist industry. These limitations point to the need for more industry-specific and focused research, using more diverse and in-depth methods to explore the dynamics of the relationship between service quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions (Ghozali et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2008; Zihao & Chae-Kwan, 2021).

A range of studies have explored the role of consumer trust in mediating the effect of service quality on purchasing decisions. Becker et al., 1997; Sutisna et al. (2023) both found that service quality has a significant negative impact on perceived risk, which in turn influences purchasing decisions. Caruana & Ramaseshan, 2014; Li et al. (2009) further support this, with Caruana finding a partial mediation effect of consumer trust on the relationship between service quality and retail website loyalty and Li identifying trust as a mediator between service quality and customer share. Utama et al. (2022) and Dewi & Praswati (2024) found that trust mediates the effect of service quality on purchase intention and customer satisfaction, respectively. Lie et al. (2019) also found that trust mediates the impact of service quality on consumer loyalty and purchase decisions. These studies collectively suggest that consumer trust plays a crucial role in mediating the effect of service quality on purchasing decisions. However, while these studies provide valuable insights into the mediating role of consumer trust, they have predominantly focused on industries such as retail, banking, and hospitality, leaving a gap in the context of the florist industry. In the research world, finding and understanding gaps in the existing literature is a critical step to advancing knowledge and practice.

One significant gap in the current literature is the lack of research that explicitly links service quality with purchase decisions by mediating consumer trust in the florist industry. Many studies have explored the relationship between service quality and purchase decisions in the hospitality, retail, and banking sectors. However, research highlighting the mediating role of consumer trust in the context of the florist industry is still minimal (Ghozali et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2008). The florist industry has unique characteristics; personalization and emotions are essential in the consumer experience. Therefore, an in-depth understanding of how service quality and consumer trust interact in this industry is needed (Kantsperger & Kunz, 2010). This research seeks to fill this gap, specifically focusing on the Jequilla florist business. With its well-established reputation for providing high-quality flowers and excellent service, Tequila makes an ideal case study for this research. Through a comprehensive approach, this research will explore how the service quality provided by Jequilla can influence consumer purchasing decisions through the mediation of trust. As such, this research contributes to existing literature and offers practical insights that other florist industry players can apply.

The relevance of this research is not only limited to the academic context but also has significant practical implications. In the academic context, this research seeks to expand our understanding of the dynamics between service quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions. By exploring the florist industry, this study adds a new dimension to the existing literature and fills a previously overlooked gap. Practically, the findings from this study can be used by florist industry players to develop more effective strategies for building and maintaining consumer trust. As such, businesses like Jequilla can increase customer loyalty and, ultimately, increase sales. Previous relevant research has shown that high-quality service can increase consumer trust and influence purchasing decisions. However, many of these studies were conducted in different sectors, and few have examined how this dynamic works in the florist industry. For example, research in the banking sector shows that service quality can mediate customer trust, influencing purchase decisions. Similarly, research in the retail industry shows that consumer trust plays a vital role in mediating the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. This research extends these findings by applying them in the context of the florist industry. With a focus on Jequilla, this study provides empirical evidence on how high service quality can build consumer trust and, in turn, influence purchase decisions.

Literature Review

Concept of Service Quality

Service quality is essential in the service industry because it directly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. Excellent service fulfills customer needs, creates an extraordinary experience, encourages repeat purchase decisions, and builds long-term relationships. According to recent research, service quality can be measured through five primary dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, confidence, empathy, and physical evidence (Tao & Ramayah, 2021). Reliability refers to the company's ability to deliver the promised service consistently and on time. Responsiveness indicates the willingness and ability of employees to help customers and provide services quickly and efficiently. Confidence involves the knowledge and courtesy of employees, as well as their ability to instill a sense of trust and security in customers. Empathy includes the attention and understanding given to customers, helping create a more personalized and in-depth relationship. Physical evidence relates to the observable aspects of the service, such as physical facilities, equipment, and personnel appearance, all of which contribute to customers' perceptions of service quality (Dagger et al., 2022).

Empirical research shows that each service quality dimension contributes significantly to customer satisfaction. Recent studies found that reliability and responsiveness influence customer satisfaction most (Ali & Raza, 2020). In the hospitality industry, research shows that fast and reliable service can significantly increase guest satisfaction (Rahman et al., 2019). In the banking sector, transparency and consistency of service are critical in building customer trust (Özkan et al., 2020). Thus, an in-depth understanding and practical application of these service quality dimensions is essential for companies wanting to increase customer satisfaction and build long-term loyalty. Empirical studies show that service quality significantly influences purchasing decisions in various service sectors. Recent research confirms that service quality dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, confidence, empathy, and physical evidence are essential in shaping customer perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions

(Dagger et al., 2022). For example, research by Tao & Ramayah (2021) confirmed that reliability and responsiveness are the dimensions that have the most influence on customer satisfaction. They found that when customers perceive consistent and responsive service, they tend to have higher satisfaction, increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases. In the hospitality context, a study by Rahman et al. (2019) showed that fast and highly personalized service can significantly increase guest satisfaction, positively impacting their decision to return. In retail, responsive service to customer complaints can increase customer retention (Ali & Raza, 2020). This suggests that responsiveness and the ability to deal with customer problems quickly are key to retaining customers. In the banking industry, transparency and consistency in service are critical to building customer trust (Özkan et al., 2020). This trust, in turn, strengthens customer loyalty and increases purchase decisions.

Consumer Trust

Consumer trust is a fundamental element in building successful business relationships. It consists of three main components: capability, integrity, and goodwill. Capability refers to a company's competence in providing products or services that meet customer expectations. Integrity reflects a company's consistency in keeping commitments and promises and acting by high ethical values. Goodwill shows that the company has the customer's best interest in mind in every action, demonstrating that the company cares and is committed to customer welfare. This trust is the bridge that connects a company with its customers, creating a strong foundation for long-term relationships. Without trust, business relationships would be fragile and prone to disruption, so customers feel safe and comfortable interacting with the company, which drives loyalty and repeats purchase decisions.

Recent research shows that consumer trust affects various aspects of business relationships. For example, a study found that trust is key to maintaining customer relationships. When customers believe that a company has capability, integrity, and good intentions, they are likelier to remain loyal and make repeat purchases (Ran et al., 2022). Trust also reduces risk and uncertainty perception, making customers more comfortable making transactions. Thus, companies that want to succeed long-term must build and maintain consumer trust through accurate and consistent actions (Septianto & Kemper, 2021). Recent research shows that consumer trust is essential in influencing purchasing decisions. Trust built through positive experiences and consistency in service provision determines how much customers are willing to commit to a brand or company. Studies have shown that trust is key to maintaining customer relationships, directly affecting loyalty and purchasing decisions. The dimensions of trust, namely ability, integrity, and goodwill, play an essential role in shaping such trust. Researchers reinforced the importance of these dimensions in building consumer trust, finding that consumers who believe in a company's ability, integrity, and goodwill are more likely to remain loyal and make repeat purchases. This trust reduces the perception of risk and uncertainty, making customers feel more confident in their purchasing decisions and allowing the company to grow and thrive in a competitive market.

Relationship between Service Quality and Purchasing Decisions

The SERVQUAL model is an essential tool in measuring service quality. This model includes five primary dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, confidence, empathy, and physical evidence. This model evaluates the gap between customers' expectations and perceptions of the service received. Reliability includes the company's ability to deliver promised services consistently and on time. Responsiveness measures the readiness and willingness of employees to help customers. Confidence involves the knowledge and courtesy of employees who can instill a sense of trust in customers. Empathy focuses on the personal attention given to customers, while physical evidence includes observable aspects such as facilities and personnel appearance. SERVQUAL helps companies to identify areas that need to be improved to meet or exceed customer expectations.

Purchase decision theory links service quality to customer purchasing decisions. One of the relevant theories is the theory of consumer behavior, which states that purchasing decisions are influenced by internal factors such as motivation and perception and external factors such as service quality. Good service quality can increase customer satisfaction, encouraging loyalty and repeat

purchase decisions. In this context, service quality is a key driver in customer decision-making (Özkan et al., 2020). Research by Cronin and Taylor (1992) also supports the relationship between service quality and purchasing decisions. They found that customers who perceive high-quality service are likelier to repeat purchases and recommend services to others. A deep understanding of how service quality affects purchasing decisions is essential in the service industry, where competition is fierce. By using the SERVQUAL model, companies can measure and improve their service quality, increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty and encouraging positive purchasing decisions (Ran et al., 2022).

Empirical studies consistently show a strong relationship between service quality and customer purchasing decisions. For example, a study confirmed that customers who perceive high service quality are likelier to repeat purchases and recommend services to others. In this study, service quality dimensions such as reliability and responsiveness significantly influence customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions. This research confirms that a positive experience with reliable and responsive service can increase customer loyalty. Another study supports these findings by showing that good service quality can increase customers' perceived value, encouraging repeat purchase decisions (Özkan et al., 2020). They found that customers who are satisfied with the quality of service they receive are likely to return and recommend the service to others. This research underscores the importance of service quality in building long-term customer relationships. Case studies from various service industries can be used to clarify this relationship. For example, in the hospitality industry, research shows that fast and highly personalized service can significantly increase guest satisfaction and encourage them to return. In the retail sector, responsiveness in handling customer complaints can improve customer retention. In the banking industry, transparency and consistency in service are critical to building customer trust and strengthening loyalty and purchasing decisions (Tong et al., 2023).

The Mediating Role of Consumer Trust

Mediation is a research concept describing how a mediator variable bridges the relationship between independent and dependent variables. In this context, consumer trust is a mediator that connects service quality with purchasing decisions. Consumer trust is built from consumers' experience of a product or service that meets or exceeds their expectations. When the quality of service provided by the Jequilla florist business is high, consumers tend to feel greater satisfaction, which builds trust in the industry. Consumer trust is key in the purchasing decision-making process. This happens because consumers with a high level of trust in a business will feel safer and more comfortable to make transactions, so their purchasing decisions tend to be influenced by the trust that has been formed. This trust is a bridge that flows the influence of service quality on purchasing decisions. For example, if consumers feel that Jequilla Florist always provides the best quality flowers and friendly and professional service, they will build trust in the florist. This trust, in turn, will influence their decision to continue purchasing at Tequila.

In this study, consumer trust mediates the relationship between service quality and purchasing decisions. High service quality can increase consumer trust, affecting their purchasing decisions. Consumer trust is the belief that a service provider will fulfill promises and act in the customer's best interest. When consumers trust a company, they are more likely to make repeat purchases and recommend the company to others (Wei et al., 2018). Mediation models used to test the role of consumer trust as a mediator usually follow the approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). This approach involves three main steps: first, showing that service quality (independent variable) has a significant effect on consumer trust (mediator variable); second, showing that consumer trust has a significant impact on purchase decision (dependent variable); and third, showing that the effect of service quality on purchase decision is reduced when consumer trust is included in the model. Another frequently used approach is the bootstrapping method developed by Preacher and Hayes (2004). This method allows researchers to conduct mediation tests by constructing confidence intervals for the mediation effect through random resampling. The advantage of the bootstrapping process is its ability to provide more accurate estimates without fulfilling the assumption of a normal distribution (Tu & Chih, 2013). Path analysis or structural equation modeling (SEM) can also describe mediation models. In this approach, mediator variables are analyzed in a series of paths that connect independent and

dependent variables, allowing researchers to measure and test complex relationships between variables.

Recent research has explored the mediating role of consumer trust in the relationship between service quality and purchase decisions. The study by Liu et al. (2021) shows that consumer trust can strengthen the positive impact of service quality on purchasing decisions in the hospitality industry. They found that consumers who trust hotel service providers tend to make repeat bookings and recommend the service to others. A similar study by Chen and Wang (2022) in the online retail sector confirmed that consumer trust plays a vital role in increasing customer loyalty when they are satisfied with the service quality provided. In analyzing relevant cases, we can see how consumer trust plays a role in various service sectors. For example, a case study in the airline industry shows that airlines that successfully build trust through consistent and high-quality service can increase customer satisfaction levels and encourage future ticket purchase decisions (Özkan et al., 2020). In the healthcare sector, research by Graham et al. (2019) found that high service quality in hospitals is directly related to patients' trust, which influences their decision to reuse the hospital's services in the future. Through this case study and analysis, it is clear that consumer trust is a crucial element that links service quality to purchase decisions. Understanding this mediation mechanism provides essential insights for industry players to improve their service strategies. Companies can create stronger customer relationships and encourage positive purchase decisions by improving service quality and building consumer trust. This research also highlights the importance of a holistic approach in improving service quality and consumer trust to achieve long-term success.

Research Design and Methodology

This research adopts a quantitative approach that uses statistical analysis to test hypotheses and strengthen existing theories. This method collects data through questionnaires to measure research variables, resulting in quantitative data. Data was collected by surveying Florist Jequilla's consumers, who were asked to complete a questionnaire containing statements related to this research. Data analysis utilized the Structural Equation Model (SEM), allowing for a thorough assessment of relationships and providing exploratory and confirmatory theory analysis. The research design includes steps from selecting the research problem to concluding. The research was conducted at Florist Jequilla Sentani for three months, from November 2023 to January 2024. The research population includes Florist Jequilla consumers who made purchases in the last five months of 2023, with a total population of 600. The sampling technique used the Simple Random Sampling method with a sample size of 120 people. The research variables consist of independent variables (Service Quality), related variables (Purchase Decisions), and mediating variables (Consumer Trust). The operational definition of variables is based on predetermined concepts. Data collection methods include primary and secondary data using an interval measurement scale. Instrument validity and reliability were tested using statistical programs, while data analysis was conducted with SEM using specialized software to test the proposed model. SEM analysis involved testing the assumptions of sample adequacy, normality, and outliers and evaluating the goodness of fit criteria. Sobel tests were conducted using specialized testing procedures to assess the significance of mediating variables. The analysis results are expected to provide deep insights into the relationship between service quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions, which will assist in developing more effective business strategies.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

Evaluation of the quality of the research instruments used, as well as validity and reliability tests, were carried out on the variables analyzed. The validity test is carried out to ensure that each item in the variable can measure the intended construct appropriately. This is seen from the R Count value compared to the R Table. The item is declared valid if the R Count value exceeds the R Table with a significance level (Sig) below 0.05. Meanwhile, the reliability test is carried out to ensure the instrument's consistency in measuring the construct, calculated using Cronbach's Alpha. The instrument is declared reliable if Cronbach's Alpha is above 0.70. Table 1 shows that the results of

this validity and reliability test show that each item of the Service Quality (X), Purchase Decision (Y), and Consumer Trust (Z) variables have a higher R Count value than the R Table (0.179). This shows that all items are valid with a significance level of 0.000. In addition, Cronbach's Alpha values for the Service Quality, Purchase Decision, and Consumer Trust variables are 0.763, 0.710, and 0.765, respectively. These values indicate that the three variables are reliable, meaning the instrument used consistently measures the intended construct. Overall, these results provide substantial confidence that the research instruments used in this study are valid and reliable. High validity indicates that the measured items reflect the construct to be measured, while high reliability suggests the consistency of the measuring instrument under various conditions.

Table 1. Research Instrument Test Results

Variable	Item	R Count	R Table	Sig (2-tailed)	Info	Cronbach's Alpha	Info
Service Quality (X)	Reliability	0,802	0,179	0,000	Valid	0,763	Reliable
	Responsiveness	0,713	0,179	0,000	Valid		
	Guarantee	0,743	0,179	0,000	Valid		
	Empathy	0,799	0,179	0,000	Valid		
	Attention Stage	0,711	0,179	0,000	Valid		
Purchase Decision (Y)	Attraction Stage	0,763	0,179	0,000	Valid	0,710	Reliable
	Desire/Intent Stage	0,750	0,179	0,000	Valid		
	The stage to decide to go long	0,699	0,179	0,000	Valid		
Consumer Trust (Z)	Earnestness/sincerity	0,652	0,179	0,000	Valid	0,765	Reliable
	Ability	0,655	0,179	0,000	Valid		
	Integrity	0,664	0,179	0,000	Valid		
	Willingness to depend	0,721	0,179	0,000	Valid		

Source: Data processed using AMOS 26, 2024

Before diving into the analysis presented in Table 2, it is essential to understand the underlying assumptions tested to ensure the robustness and validity of the model. Table 2 illustrates the results of the normality test and the Mahalanobis distance test, which offer a detailed examination of the dataset's distribution characteristics and potential outliers. These tests are crucial for validating the assumptions necessary for accurate and reliable statistical modeling. The table includes variables assessed for skewness, kurtosis, and critical Mahalanobis distance, providing a comprehensive overview of the data's adherence to normality assumptions. The results are derived from the data processed using AMOS 26, 2024.

Table 2. Model Assumption Test

Variables	Min	Max	Skew	c.r	Kurtosis	c.r	Observation Name	Critical Mahalanobis Distance (12:0.001)
The stage to decide to go long	5,000	10,000	0,471	2,104	0,799	1,786	39	29.462
Desire/Intent Stage	4,000	10,000	0,322	1,438	0,877	1,962	72	27.452
Attraction Stage	4,000	10,000	0,343	1,536	0,492	1,100	48	25.845
Attention Stage	4,000	10,000	0,061	0,273	0,623	1,394	-	-
Risks ready to be borne	5,000	10,000	0,239	1,070	-0,143	0,323	-	-
Integrity	5,000	10,000	0,016	0,071	0,325	0,727	88	6.540
Ability	5,000	10,000	0,240	1,074	0,249	0,556		
Earnestness/sincerity	4,000	10,000	0,197	0,880	0,256	0,572		
Empathy	5,000	10,000	0,033	0,147	0,009	0,020		
Insurance	5,000	10,000	0,199	0,890	0,418	0,935		
Responsiveness	5,000	10,000	0,176	0,787	-0,120	0,268		
Reliability	5,000	10,000	0,355	1,590	-0,022	0,049		

Table 2 shows that the results of the normality test and Mahalanobis test provide a clear view of the characteristics of the data analyzed, where the data distribution of each variable has skewness and kurtosis values that are within acceptable limits, indicating that the data is close to the normal distribution which is an essential prerequisite for advanced statistical analysis such as linear regression. The skewness values ranged from -0.197 to 0.471, while the kurtosis values were between -0.143 to 0.877, with the critical ratio (c.r) for skewness and kurtosis mostly below 2.58, indicating that the data did not deviate significantly from a normal distribution. Furthermore, the Mahalanobis test shows some observations with sizable distances, such as observation number 39, with a value of 29.462, and observation number 72, with a value of 27.452. Still, none of these observations exceed the critical Mahalanobis distance of 32.909 at 12 degrees of freedom with a significance level of 0.001, indicating that although some outliers are not extreme enough to affect the analysis significantly. Overall, the results of the normality test and Mahalanobis test provide confidence that the data used in this study meet the basic assumptions required for further statistical analysis, ensuring that the analysis conducted can be considered valid and provide accurate insight into the relationship between the variables under study, which is particularly important in the context of scientific research, where data reliability is the foundation for drawing meaningful and applicable conclusions in business practice, particularly in improving service quality and consumer trust.

A structural equation modeling (SEM) approach clarifies the relationship between Service Quality, Consumer Trust, and Purchasing Decisions. SEM is a multivariate statistical method that combines factor analysis and regression analysis, allowing us to examine complex relationships between latent and observed variables simultaneously. The figure below shows the SEM model developed and tested in this study.

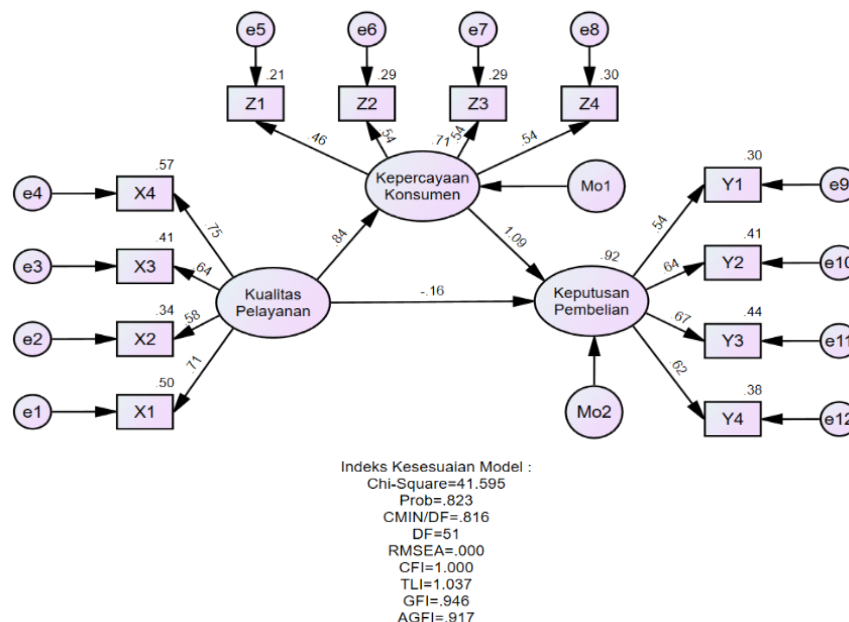


Figure 1. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Figure 1. shows the model evaluation results using various goodness-of-fit indices that indicate how much the developed model fits the empirical data collected. The Chi-Square has a value of 41.595, which, although expectedly small, still shows that the model is fit. A probability of 0.823, more significant than 0.05, also indicates that the model fits the data. The CMIN/DF index of 0.816 is below the 2.0 limit, confirming that the model is fit. Furthermore, the RMSEA value of 0.000, well below the cut-off of 0.08, indicates that the model has a very low approximation error in the population, indicating an excellent model. The CFI and TLI indices were 1.000 and 1.037, respectively, above 0.95,

indicating that the model fits well with the data. The GFI and AGFI indices were 0.946 and 0.917, respectively, both above 0.90, confirming that the model has a high level of fit. Overall, the results of this evaluation indicate that the model developed in this study fits the empirical data collected to an excellent level. Each goodness-of-fit index used in this evaluation suggests that the model is valid and reliable for explaining the relationship between Service Quality, Consumer Trust, and Purchase Decisions. This interpretation emphasizes the importance of validity and reliability in scientific research, ensuring that the results can be used to draw meaningful and valuable conclusions in developing business strategies and improving consumer satisfaction. As such, the model meets rigorous academic standards and provides practical insights that can be applied in the real business world.

Hypothesis testing uses statistical methods to test a statement or theory. The purpose of the hypothesis is to decide whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected as a parameter of the population in the study. This analysis is seen from the significance of the regression weight model, which can be seen in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Hypothesis Test Results

Variables			Estimate	S.E.	C.R	P	Direct Analysis	Effect
Consumer Trust	<---	Service Quality	0,521	0,131	3,978	0,000	Consumer Trust: 0,521	
Purchase Decision	<---	Service Quality	-0,122	0,340	-0,358	0,720	Purchase Decision: -0,122	
Purchase Decision	<---	Consumer Trust	1,319	0,670	1,968	0,049	Consumer Trust: 1,319	

Source: Data processed using AMOS 26, 2024

Based on the results of hypothesis testing in Table... show that Service Quality has a significant effect on Consumer Trust with an estimated value of 0.521, standard error (S.E.) of 0.131, critical ratio (C.R.) of 3.978, and a probability value (P) of 0.000. This indicates that Service Quality positively and significantly affects Consumer Trust. However, the effect of Service Quality on Purchasing Decisions is insignificant, with an estimated value of -0.122, S.E. of 0.340, C.R. of -0.358, and P of 0.720. This indicates that Service Quality has no significant effect on Purchasing Decisions. Conversely, Consumer Trust has a considerable impact on Purchasing Decisions with an estimated value of 1.319, S.E. of 0.670, C.R. of 1.968, and P of 0.049, which indicates that Consumer Trust has a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions.

Discussion

Service Quality on Purchasing Decisions

The study's results above show that service quality does not significantly affect purchasing decisions. This finding requires us to review the theories underlying the hypothesis and understand why these results differ from initial expectations. The theories underlying this hypothesis primarily derive from essential marketing and quality management concepts. According to service quality theory, improving service quality should increase customer satisfaction, which drives purchasing decisions. The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry states that service quality dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and physical evidence contribute significantly to customers' perception of service quality and ultimately influence their decision to buy. The hypothesis that service quality affects purchasing decisions is also supported by various previous studies, such as research by Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler, which found that service quality is a significant determinant in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty.

However, the results of this study contradict these findings. References from the literature that support or contradict these results are essential to provide context and deeper understanding. For example, Rehman et al. (2020) survey found that service quality does not always directly affect purchasing decisions but rather through customer satisfaction as a mediator. Additionally, research by Mandarić et al. (2022) shows that other factors, such as customer-perceived value and price perception, are more dominant in influencing purchasing decisions. Several factors may explain the analysis of this difference in results. First, differences in the research context may play an important role. For example, this study's market characteristics and consumer behavior may differ from previous

studies. Second, other variables not measured in this study may have a more significant influence on purchasing decisions. Price, promotion, and third-party recommendations may be more critical determinants in specific contexts. Third, service quality may have reached a certain level where further improvements no longer significantly impact purchasing decisions.

The implications of these results for business practice are essential to understand. While service quality remains vital to maintain, these results indicate that businesses should consider other factors that may have more influence on purchasing decisions. Management should conduct an in-depth analysis to identify different variables influencing customers' purchasing behavior. Focusing on competitive pricing strategies, compelling promotions, and strengthening customer relationships through loyalty programs may be more effective strategies. Based on these findings, management or business practitioners should focus on improving service quality and allocate resources to other marketing strategies that may be more impactful. A more holistic approach to understanding consumer behavior and the factors influencing purchasing decisions can help businesses achieve better results. In addition, it is essential to continue conducting ongoing research to monitor consumer preferences and behavior changes.

Service Quality on Consumer Trust

The study's results above show that service quality does not significantly affect purchasing decisions. This finding requires us to review the theories underlying the hypothesis and understand why these results differ from initial expectations. The theories underlying this hypothesis primarily derive from essential marketing and quality management concepts. According to service quality theory, improving service quality should increase customer satisfaction, which drives purchasing decisions. The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry states that service quality dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and physical evidence contribute significantly to customers' perception of service quality and ultimately influence their decision to buy. The hypothesis that service quality affects purchasing decisions is also supported by various previous studies, such as research by Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler, which found that service quality is a significant determinant in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty.

However, the results of this study contradict these findings. References from the literature that support or contradict these results are essential to provide context and a deeper understanding. For example, a study by de Fatima Carvalho et al. (2020) found that service quality does not always directly affect purchasing decisions but rather through customer satisfaction as a mediator (Subramony & Holtom, 2011). In addition, research by Sweeney, Soutar, and Johnson (2017) shows that other factors, such as customer-perceived value and price perception, are more dominant in influencing purchasing decisions (Sweeney, Soutar, & Johnson, 2017). Several factors may explain the analysis of this difference in results. First, differences in the research context may play an important role. For example, this study's market characteristics and consumer behavior may differ from previous studies. Second, other variables not measured in this study may have a more significant influence on purchasing decisions. Price, promotion, and third-party recommendations may be more critical determinants in specific contexts. Third, service quality may have reached a certain level where further improvements no longer significantly impact purchasing decisions.

The implications of these results for business practice are essential to understand. While service quality remains vital to maintain, these results indicate that businesses should consider other factors that may have more influence on purchasing decisions. Management should conduct an in-depth analysis to identify different variables influencing customers' purchasing behavior. Focusing on competitive pricing strategies, compelling promotions, and strengthening customer relationships through loyalty programs may be more effective (Al-Salamin & Al-Hassan, 2016). Based on these findings, management or business practitioners should focus on improving service quality and allocate resources to other marketing strategies that may be more impactful. A more holistic approach to understanding consumer behavior and the factors influencing purchasing decisions can help businesses achieve better results. In addition, it is essential to continue to conduct ongoing research to monitor changes in consumer preferences and behavior (de Fatima Carvalho et al., 2020).

Consumer Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The results of this study indicate that consumer confidence has a significant effect on purchasing decisions. This means that the higher consumer confidence in the florist business regarding the quality of service provided, the more purchasing decisions related to Jequilla florist products will increase. This finding requires us to examine the theories underlying the hypothesis and understand their relevance in the context of this study. The theories underlying this hypothesis are derived from fundamental marketing and customer relationship management concepts. Consumer trust theory emphasizes that trust is key to building strong relationships between customers and service providers. According to Morgan and Hunt in commitment-trust theory, trust is the foundation of all successful marketing relationships because trust creates confidence that the other party will act with integrity and reliability (Bruhn et al., 2012). When consumers trust a service provider, they are more likely to repeat purchases and recommend the service to others. Previous research also supports these findings. Mandarić et al. (2022) show that consumer trust influences purchasing decisions. When customers believe that a service provider will fulfill its promises, they feel more comfortable and confident when making transactions. In addition, research by Zhao et al. (2021) suggests that consumer trust can reduce the perception of risk associated with a purchase, thereby increasing the likelihood of a purchase decision. However, some studies suggest that trust may not always be a determining factor in purchasing decisions, especially in contexts where other factors, such as price and product quality, dominate. Further analysis suggests that this result difference may be due to different research contexts or other variables not measured in this study. For example, in some contexts, personal preferences and previous experience with a particular product or service may influence purchase decisions more than trust. Differences in demographics or market segmentation may also affect the research results. The implications of the results of this study for business practice are significant. These results indicate that increasing consumer trust can significantly increase purchase decisions. Therefore, management should focus on efforts to build and maintain consumer trust. This can include communication transparency, service quality consistency, and prompt and effective responses to customer complaints or feedback. By strengthening consumer trust, businesses can increase purchase decisions, enhance customer loyalty, and expand the customer base through word-of-mouth recommendations.

Consumer Trust can mediate the effect of Service Quality on Purchasing Decisions.

This study reveals that consumer trust has a relationship between service quality and purchasing decisions, although it does not function as a significant mediating variable. This hypothesis is based on relational marketing theory and service quality models such as SERVQUAL, which emphasize the importance of consumer trust in building long-term relationships with customers. These theories propose that good service quality can increase consumer trust, influencing purchasing decisions. However, research results show that, in specific contexts, consumer trust may not always play a decisive role as a mediator between service quality and purchase decisions. For instance, Mandarić et al. (2022) suggest that while consumers have positive attitudes toward sustainability and trust, these factors do not always translate into purchasing decisions, highlighting the complexity of the relationship. This finding differs from existing literature; ethical marketing and consumer trust significantly mediate the effect of service quality on purchase decisions. This difference in results could be due to various factors, including the study's industry context or geographical location, the measurement method used, and the demographic characteristics of the respondent sample. These variations highlight the importance of considering specific contexts when applying marketing and service quality theories.

The implications of this research for business practice are significant. While service quality remains essential, companies must consider a more holistic approach to their marketing strategies. In addition to focusing on improving service quality, businesses should also explore other factors that can influence purchase decisions, such as loyalty programs, promotions, product innovation, and effective marketing communications. For ongoing research, further exploration of the role of consumer trust in various industry and geographic contexts is needed, as well as longitudinal analysis to understand the dynamics of this relationship over time (Agnihotri et al., 2019; Zameer et al., 2015). With a deeper

understanding, companies can design more effective strategies to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Conclusion

This study has explored the relationship between service quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions in the context of the Jequilla florist business. The research findings show that service quality does not directly influence purchasing decisions. However, service quality is shown to have a significant effect on consumer trust, and this consumer trust, in turn, influences purchase decisions. In other words, although service quality does not directly influence purchasing decisions, building consumer trust through service quality is a key factor that ultimately influences purchasing decisions.

This research makes a significant contribution to academia and business practice. From a scientific perspective, this study enriches the literature on the dynamics between service quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions. The results of this study support the commitment-trust theory, which states that trust is a key component in building strong relationships between customers and service providers. This study also confirms the importance of consumer trust as a mediator in the relationship between service quality and purchase decisions. In business practice, these findings provide valuable insights for florist business management, particularly in the context of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Improving service quality alone is not enough to drive purchasing decisions; florist businesses must focus on building and maintaining consumer trust through transparency, consistency, and responsiveness. Thus, this research has high theoretical value and provides practical guidance that can be implemented in everyday business strategies.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered. First, this study uses a cross-sectional design that only captures data at one point, so it cannot identify dynamic changes in consumer behavior over time. Second, this research is limited to the Jequilla florist business context, so the results may not be generalized to other business contexts. Third, different variables such as price, promotion, and consumer personal preferences may affect purchasing decisions but were not measured in this study. For future research, it is recommended to use a longitudinal design that can observe changes in consumer behavior over time and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between service quality, consumer trust, and purchase decisions. In addition, research that considers other variables such as price, promotion, and consumers' personal preferences will provide more prosperous and relevant insights. Experimental research can also be used to test the interactions between these various factors in a more controlled context. With a more comprehensive and sustainable approach, future research can significantly contribute to our understanding of how service quality and consumer trust influence purchase decisions and provide more precise guidance for business practices in improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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