

# BOARD ROLE ON THE QUALITY OF THE SERVICE, CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION AND CUSTOMERS' LOYALTY IN RESTAURANT FIRMS: STORY FROM INDONESIA

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## Abstract

The objective of this research is to test and conducting an analysis in sequence, on the effect of exchange of superior-subordinate relationship on: the quality of the service, customers' satisfaction and customers' loyalty: Case study on a restaurant in Surakarta Indonesia. The samples used in this research are 430 staffs and 430 customers taken with convenient method. The technique used to test the hypothesis is SEM analysis (*Structural Equation Model*). The validity test result shows that there are several items on this research which extracted and finally used as the base for item analysis that meets the criteria, while the reliability test result shows that all the variable meets the requirements, and the research model required can be found. The analysis result of this research shows that: First, the exchange of superior-subordinate relationship shows positive effect on the service quality, but shows no effect on the customers' satisfaction. Second, the service quality gives positive effect on customers' satisfaction, but shows no effect on customers' loyalty. Third, customers' satisfaction gives positive effects on customers' loyalty. The existing research implications and limitations need to be studied in future researches

**Keywords:** Superior-Subordinate Relationship, Service Quality, Customers' Satisfaction, Customers' Loyalty

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## 1 Introduction

Customer loyalty in using items and services is crucial in assuring the sustainability, success, and development of any business activity in the future. Robbin, Judge, and Hasham (2012) stated that every leader in an organization has a high hope of every staffs under their command conducts on high efficiency and on the other hand, the staffs have high hope that their aspirations and needs are accommodated well in their leader's hand in every decision taken. The message communicated in a supportive way by a leader, according to Michael (2004) has the potential to build up harmony in the exchange of superior-subordinate relationship (*LMX = Leader Member Exchange*). This will also cast a positive effect on the performance of the staffs.

Customer loyalty on restaurant business unit has to be build and needs effort to do so. The numbers and types of competitors in restaurant business keep growing and will never cease. In term of the quantity, the space for restaurants and food vendors is easier to follow any time because the market is relatively strong and the resources needed are easy to get, especially micro-business and other mid to low class business.

The leader of an organization, including restaurant business have to empower their staffs by leading them to improve the quality of the reciprocal relation with the leader/ owner. In smaller and medium business scale, the staffs hold an important role as they are the bridge to determine the quality of the customer service. The role of the employees, become a very strategic one in realizing service quality that surpass those of the other competitors. This would create a positive image on the service of the company as part of building the loyalty of the customers.

LMX is a theory that focuses on the interaction between the leader and the members. Yulk (2010) mentions that LMX, explains how the leader member relationship is a relationship that affects each other and negotiates the role of the employee in an organization. LMX does not only see the attitude and behavior of the leader and member, but also focuses on the quality of the built up relationship. Dunegan, Uhl-Bien, & Duchon (2002) concluded that the quality of the relationship between superior-subordinate affects the working performance. In a wider view, an organization

could be observed from its service quality given to the customers, the customers' satisfaction level, and customers' loyalty. This research is conducted at several restaurants in Surakarta Indonesia, taken from 51 areas in Surakarta, both in big, small, and medium sized restaurant. Opening up a restaurant is relative.

There are five districts in Surakarta Indonesia, and they are Banjarsari district, Serengan, Jebres, PasarKliwon, and Laweyan. All has 51 with numbers of restaurant with various sizes from small, medium, to large. As a city, Surakarta is quite packed with people. Based on the data retrieved from Division of Citizenship and Survey of Surakarta (2013), the people of Surakarta are counted as 563. 569 people in total. Moreover, Surakarta is well-known as a city of learning with at least 30 academic institutions and colleges. This is also a culture city and is a great business target in the division of tourism. Opening up a food business would create a big chance for a success. We often see that this kind of business isn't very well being taken care of. Often the owners felt confused already, because similar business is already opened here and there. Some of them aren't prospering that much and customers are scarce in the store.

While actually, no matter how many stalls of restaurants are opened, there are always chances that you can slip in. As long as the businessman had a clear and unique concept in mind when deciding to open up his business. Restaurant owners have to make an extra effort in providing better service quality and realizing customers' satisfaction, as well as being able to be remembered by the customers so they will come back and even taking other people with them. With that, the sale would increase. The success of restaurant business need an in-depth and continuous learning, especially in understanding the service quality which provides satisfaction and increasing the customers' loyalty to our restaurant.

One of the things that you could do is by building an exchange network of superior-subordinate relationship exchange, especially those working on the floor which interacts directly with the customers, to be exchanged with the manager of the restaurant.

Between the leader/owner/manager, it is important to build a pattern of relationship exchange with the staffs as a team which will try to excel in giving work performance for the restaurant and to realize the customers' satisfaction by giving the best service to fulfill the need for meals, drinks, snacks, etc.

In certain threshold, LMX occurred between the existence of transformational leadership gave positive effect towards the delivery of great service quality as stated by Berry (1995) and Poodsakof, Ahearne, and MacKenzie (1997) who said that a leadership based and oriented on the service quality would clearly implied on the effort of increasing the service quality. In TQM (Total Quality Management) concept, as said by Ugboro and Obeng (2000), this dissertation explains a harmonious relation between each level of managements in the process of empowering the resources as well as work satisfaction towards an understanding and fulfillment of customers' satisfaction.

When the quality of relationship exchange between the superior and the subordinate is good, it will become a lubricant for the staffs, especially those who interact directly with the customers. They would conduct an ideal behavior for the sake of performing good in their work, to give proof of excellent performance expected including in giving service function for the customers. Between the leader and direct supervisor, there should be a continuous causal effect interaction based on mutualism principal. Supervisor always try to improve their subordinates with a contextual leading style. On the other hand, the subordinates need to be the organization's resource with strategic value which helps the leader to give a better leading. Process improvement give an clear advantage in service quality for the customers and will surely give an impact on the customers' satisfaction. The turn will determine the customers' satisfaction and the service quality has the potential to affect the customers' loyalty, as well as the service quality would affect the customers' loyalty. For example, just like what had been mentioned by Zahir Osman & Ilham Sentosa (2013) Asghar Afshar Jahanshahi, Mohammad Ali Hajizadeh Gashti, Seyed Abbas Mirdamadi, Khaled Nawaser, Seyed Mohammad Sadeq Khaksar (2011): Lo Liang Kheng, Osman Mahamad, Ramayah, Rahim Mosahab. (2010); and Amraz Hafeez & Bakhtiar Muhammad (2012).

The position of this research, this time, is to see how far the quality of leader/owner's relationship pattern has been understood and applied as part of business strategy in achieving success on restaurants based on the obsession of giving excellent service quality which would fulfill the demand, and to build loyalty to each customers, so they would come to one single restaurant to fulfill their demand for meals. With this foundation, this is the research theme conducted.

Polly (2002) in the dissertation paper explains that the effort on building a commitment and staffs' motivation will fix the quality of relationship exchange between the superior and subordinates and has the potential to

increase the service quality for the customers. The commitment in this research includes commitment towards the supervisor and organization, which will affect the improvement of service quality for the customers. The service quality is actually the embodiment of performance in one particular context. For example, in understanding and realizing the aspirations from the customers, to meet up the customers' demand excellently.

The same thing also stated by Paraskevas (2001) who studies hotel business. He emphasizes on the importance of the intensity of the internal service of the organization as an important factor in giving excellent service quality which also shown by the harmony of relationship exchange between the supervisor and the subordinate, which continuously being fixed and upgraded.

The problem formulation in this research could be formulated as follow: First, whether the exchange of the relationship between superior and subordinate shows positive effect on the service quality and customer royalty. Second, whether the service quality give positive effect on the customers' satisfaction and customers' loyalty. Third, whether the customers' satisfaction gives positive effect on the customers' loyalty.

Therefore, the objectives of this research are to test and discuss: First, the effect of relationship exchange between superior and subordinate, on service quality and customers' satisfaction. Second, the effect of service quality on customers' satisfaction and customers' loyalty. Third, the effect of customers' satisfaction on customers' loyalty.

### **1.1 Literature review and hypothesis formulation**

Relationship Exchange of Superior-Subordinate, Service Quality and Customers' satisfaction The choosing of leadership style and method have to shows excellent LMX quality. Research conducted by Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang & Chen (2005) took sample of 162 pair of superior-subordinate relationships in China. The result shows that LMX managed to fully mediates leadership and work performance of the staffs which were measured based on the level of service quality, customers' satisfaction, and customers' loyalty.

The leadership duality used in the organization, be it in direct or indirect, will affect the performance quality both in context of individual and group performance. Any leadership model has a great role in realizing the transformation of energy, material, and information for the sake of improving the success and achieving the set goals of the organization. When the service quality is considered as a part of performance aspects, then Jabnoun and Rasasi (2005) considered leadership (transformational) has connection with service quality received by the customers.

The same thing also stated by Masi and Cooke (2000). Their research shows that there is a relation between leadership and the service quality. Similar thing also stated by Jandagi, Matin, and Farjami (2008) in their research. It shows that there is a positive effect between leadership and performance. Other than that, Khan & Shafiq (2012) as well as Walumba, Mayer, Wang, Wang & Workman (2011) explains the significant effect of approaches and ethics in leadership, towards the effective of organization's performance. Based on the explanation above, there are several hypothesizes that could be formulated

*Hypothesis 1:* The exchange of superior-subordinate relationship has positive effect towards service quality

*Hypothesis 2:* The exchange of superior-subordinate relationship has positive effect towards customers' satisfaction

### **1.2 Service quality, customers' satisfaction and customers' loyalty**

The service quality, according to Parasuraman et al, (1985) is a measuring unit on how excellent the service given by certain organization or service provider, in meeting the standards expected by the customers. While customers' satisfaction, according to Fornel (1992) is the whole evaluation process (by the customers) during and after purchase. And the last is the explanation for customers' loyalty according to Zethaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996). Related to all of the customers' responds to the product, the other service aspects involves and affects a customers, growing a need to assure the existence of continuous demand in the future.

Generally it can be concluded that service is every action or activity that could be offered from one party to another one, which generally does not have concrete form and does not cause any form of ownership. Production could be related or unrelated to certain concrete physical product. Therefore, generally service is all

kind of economic activity which result is not a product in physical or construction form, which usually is consumed at the same time as when it is produced and giving additional point (such as comfort, entertainment, recreation, or health) or a solution for certain customers' problem. From various descriptions above, it can be seen that in service, there is always the aspect of interaction between the consumers, even though the involved parties does not always realize.

If the quality of the causal effect of the relationship exchange of superior and subordinate is good, this would smoothen the performance of the staffs, especially those who interacts directly with the customers. They would conduct a better action for the sake of fulfilling their duty, to proof that their performance is higher than expected including in term of giving service function for the customers. There should be a mutual direct relationship between superior and the subordinates. A superior always tries to develop the subordinates based on contextual leadership, while the subordinates need to become the resource of the organization with strategic value which would help the superior to become a better leader. The improvement of excellent service delivery process for the customers clearly will affect the customers' satisfaction. The customers' serving order will determine the customers' loyalty. The service quality also have the potential of affecting the customers' loyalty, as said by Zahir&Sentosa (2013) Jahanshahi, Gashti, Mirdmadi, Nawser, and Khaksar (2011):LoLiang Kheng, Mahamad, Ramayah, Mosahab. (2010); and Hafeez&Muhammad (2012). Based on the explanation above, there are several hypothesizes that could be formulated

*Hypothesis 3:* Service quality gives positive effects on customers' satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 4:* Service quality gives positive effects on customers' loyalty

*Hypothesis 5:* Customers' satisfaction gives positive effects on the customers' loyalty.

## **2 Research method**

The population of this research is the staffs and customers of restaurants, both small, medium, and large, in 51 areas in Surakarta Indonesia. The number of samples in this research is taken in convenient and can be processed. It consists of 430 staffs of restaurants and 430 customers of restaurants treated as respondents, who are spread all across 52 areas in Surakarta. Data gathering is done with questioner using likert scale 1-5 which has been prepared before.

The definition of operational for the four variables consist of: relation of superior-subordinate (JHAB), service quality, customers' satisfaction, and customers' loyalty Measurement of variable, for JHAB is determined based on the version of Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), while for service quality is measured based on the version from Praturaman, et. al. (1985). For customers' satisfaction variable, using Westbrook, and Oliver (1981). On the other hand, the customers' loyalty uses the criteria set by Bowen and Chen. 2001”

## **3 Discussion**

Descriptively, the respondents, both the staffs and the customers, could be observed and explained as follow: Most of the staffs' ages range from 20-29 years old (57.4%); 30-39 years old (18.4%) while the customers are mostly at the age range of 20-29 years old (31.2%) younger than 20 years old (34.9%). Most of the staffs have almost the same ration of male and female

50.5% male and 49.5% female, while the customers are mostly male (54.2%) with the female percentage of 45.8% of the total customers. From the aspect of the staffs' academic degrees are mostly of High school (66.2%); Junior high school (19.5%), while the customers' academic degrees are college (56.1%); High school (35.3%). The work period of most of the staffs are mostly around 2 - 5 years (40.5%); less than 2 years (34.9%) and the frequency of the customers' coming twice each week (85.3%)

### **3.1 Validity Test and Reliability**

Table 1 shows the result of validity test which is done on the six main variables in this research. The result of CFA for these question items of LMX statement which consist of 7 items shows that there are 4 question items remaining with good validity. For the question items on service quality with 5 items, there are 3 question items with good validity. For the item on customers' satisfaction statement which consists of 7 items, shows that all items are in good validity. Question Items statement of customers' loyalty which consists of 4 items, shows that all items are in good validity. Table 1 also shows that all variables have composite reliability > 0.7 which shows that all variables have good reliability.

**Table 1.** Validity and Reliability Results

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Composite Reliability
	Items	Loadings	Composite Reliability
LMX	LMX1	0.699	0.756
	LMX2	0.648	
	LMX3	0.739	
	LMX7	0.552	
Service Quality	SQ3	0.538	0.746
	SQ4	0.721	
	SQ5	0.835	
Customers' Satisfaction	CS1	0.533	0.810
	CS2	0.586	
	CS3	0.602	
	CS4	0.684	
	CS5	0.615	
	CS6	0.639	
	CS7	0.643	
Customers' Loyalty	CL1	0.643	0.795
	CL2	0.711	
	CL3	0.711	
	CL4	0.738	

The test result for the multi-variate outliers which was conducted using the distance criteria of Mahalanobis on the rate of  $p < 0.001$ . This distance is explained using  $\chi^2$  on free degree with the same value as the variable used in the research. In this research, there are 18 indicator variables. Therefore, all cases have Mahalanobis Distance bigger than  $\chi^2 (18; 0.001) = 42.312$  is multivariate outliers.

Besides, it can be seen that there are 13 cases which is categorized as outliers, therefore the cases are out from analysis. After being out from the analysis, it turns out that several of the cases including the outliers, so the total cases being left out of the analysis are 21 cases. The last result shows that there are no outlier, therefore the amount of data used for analysis changes from 452 to 430 data.

The evaluation of normality is identified both in univariate and multivariate. In univariate for values in C.R Skeness, there are 9 question items showing value  $> 2$ . While for the value in C. R. kurtosis, all question items show value  $< 7$ . Therefore, the univariate is not distributed normally. The value on the right down corner could also tell that the data in this research do not distributed normally in multivariate with C. R. kurtosis value 15.577. Analysis on abnormal data could causes a bias in interpretation because the chi-square value of the analysis result tends to increase causing the probability level value to decrease. However, according to Hair et al., (1998) the size of the sample which is rather big, tends to decrease the effect which negate (distortion of analysis result) from the non-normality of the data which will be analyzed. Besides, Maximum Likelihood Estimates (MLE) technique which is used in this research does not receive too much effect (robust) on the abnormal data (Ghozali 2008) and therefore, the next analysis could be conducted.

From Table 2 there are several spread of averages and premier side of the variable in order from the highest : LMX; customers' satisfaction; service quality and customers' loyalty for the mean. For Primer side of the highest for each customers' loyalty; LMX; service quality; and customers' satisfaction. Besides, the corelay coefficient between the variable is in moderate level.

**Table 2.** Correlation Result Between Variables

	Mean	S. D	LMX	SQ	CS	CL
LMX (LMX)	3,690	.587	1			
Service Quality (SQ)	3,615	.559	.105*	1		
Customers' Satisfaction (CS)	3,633	.484	.049	.574**	1	
Customers' Loyalty (CL)	3,018	.639	-.038	.341**	.392*	* 1

Notes: \*\* correlation significant on 0,01; \* correlation significant on 0,05

Based on the result of model modification retrieved from the increase on goodness of fit model. Chi-Square value, CMIN/DF, GFI, AGFI, TLI, CFI shows a good alignment value. Based on that result, it can be concluded that overall, the model is acceptable. More detail on the test result of model's acceptability could be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Result of modified goodness-of-Fit model

Goodness-of-fit Indices	Cut-off Value	Result	Model Evaluation
Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ )	Expected small	132,007	Fit
Degrees of freedom	positive	110	Fit
Probability level ( $p$ )	$\geq 0,05$	0,075	Fit
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2,0$	1,200	Fit
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,966	Fit
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,948	Fit
TLI	$\geq 0,95$	0,989	Fit
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,992	Fit
RMSEA	$\leq 0,08$	0,022	Fit

Based on the Table 3, the result of modified model shows an increase of the goodness of fit model. The *Chi-Square*, CMIN/DF, GFI, AGFI, TLI, CFI value show a good acceptability. Based on that test result, it can be concluded that overall the model is acceptable.

**Table 4.** Line Coefficient Analysis Result

H1	Service Quality	<---	LMX	.148	.067	2,194	.028
H2	Customers' Satisfaction	<---	LMX	-.043	.053	-.802	.423
H3	Customers' Satisfaction	<---	Service Quality	.648	.087	7,412	.000
H4	Customers' Loyalty	<---	Service Quality	.013	.108	.119	.905
H5	Customers' Loyalty	<---	Customers' Satisfaction	.815	.147	5,550	.000

Source; Primary Data processed (2014)

Table 4 shows that from the 5 lines analyzed, there are 2 lines with insignificant result because the significant value ( $p$ ) is higher than 5%. This analysis also shows the value of the direct effect, indirect effect, and total effect of one variable towards the other. The result of this analysis could be seen on Table 5.

**Table 5.** Direct Effect, Indirect Effect, and Total

Independent	Variable Dependent	Effect ( $\beta$ )		
		Direct	Indirect	Total
LMX	Service Quality	0.130	-	0.130
LMX	Customers' Satisfaction	-0.041	0.091	0.050
Service Quality		0.704	-	0.704
LMX	Customers' Loyalty	-	0.033	0.033
Service Quality		0.011	0.445	0.456
Customers' Satisfaction		0.631	-	0.631

Based on the data from Table 5, it is known that the line with biggest direct impact is the effect of the service quality towards the customers' satisfaction, which is 0.704. While the line with the biggest indirect effect is the effect of service quality towards customers' loyalty, which is 0.445.

### 3.2 Hypothesis test

The result of Hypothesis 1 and 2 -Relationship exchange of superior and subordinate gives positive effect towards the service quality but does not give effect towards customers' satisfaction. For the hypothesis 1 where the CR=2.194 with  $p$  0.028 that means the quality of the relationship exchange of the superior with subordinate effects the characteristics and behavior of the staffs at the restaurant, which is what the customers' needed. If this continues, there will be a constant increase in service quality which will also increase the customers' satisfaction as a medium to build up customers' loyalty. This founding is in accordance with the research conducted by Masi& Cooke (2000); Jandagi, Martin, and Farjami (2008) and Walumba et al., (2011). Staff needs to make effort in order to become a good resource and assets for a leader and for a restaurant. Hypothesis 1 is accepted while Hypothesis 2 is not accepted shows that the exchange of relationship between superior and subordinate does not affect the customers' satisfaction as the shown result where the value CR 0.082 with P 0.423. This is not in line with the research conducted by Khan, et. al. (2012) and Walumbaet. al. (2011) This result shows that relationship exchange does not give direct effect, but the effect can be seen indirectly.

Result of Hypothesis 3 and 4: The service quality gives positive effect towards customers' satisfaction, but do not affects the customers' loyaltyHypothesis 3 result ; CR=7.412 with CR=7.412 with  $p < 0.001$ , while hypothesis

4CR= 0,119 with  $p < 0,905$ . This means the service quality of the staffs from the restaurants at Surakarta could increase the customers; satisfaction, though indirectly. Therefore hypothesis 3 is proven to be accepted while hypothesis 4 is not. Hypothesis 3 is in accordance with the founding of the research conducted by Zahir& I Sentosa (2013) and Asgharet. al., (2011): while hypothesis 4 is not in accordance with the founding of the research conducted by Lo Liang Khenget. al., (2010), and Hafeez& Muhammad (2012). Hypothesis 5 is accepted, that the customers' satisfaction gives positive effects towards the customers' totally CR 5.55. and  $p < 0.001$ . The result of this research is in accordance with the result of the research done by Asgharet. al., (2011): Lo Liang Kheng et al., (2010), and . (2010); and Hafeez& Muhammad (2012).

The hypothesis 2 and 4 are not acceptable. The possible reasons for the failure can be that the two hypothesis do not incite direct effect from the relationship exchange. However, it does not mean that it does not incite any effect at all. It is possible that there lay indirect effects from certain variable. In this research model, the possibility of indirect exists. Through variable service quality, LMX affects the customers' satisfaction for hypothesis 2, and through variable customers satisfaction, service quality affect the customers' loyalty for hypothesis 4. Besides, there is the mean of those four variables which ranges around 3-4 that means there are still things to be improved that the result can change the direction and degree of the effect from the research variable.

#### 4 Conclusion

Based on the analysis result and discussion above, this research concludes: First, relationship exchange between superior and subordinate shows positive effect towards service quality, but not towards customers' satisfaction. Second, service quality shows positive effects towards customers' satisfaction, but not on customers' loyalty. Third, customers' satisfaction shows positive effect on customers' loyalty.

Therefore, three from five hypothesis submitted are proven to be acceptable.

Implication that restaurants in Surakarta Indonesia in every thought, statement, and behaviors as well as performance need to keep focused on the effort of maintaining as well as improving the customers' loyalty. This needs to be done to realize customers satisfaction through real excellent service quality based on strong passion in making relationship exchange between the leader/owner with their subordinates and the customers as well as other parties. Limitation on this research in various fields requires for further study for future projects.

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