

FACTORS THAT AFFECT LONGEVITY OF BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT- *Globalization has brought changes to all aspects of economic life, socio-cultural, and human lifestyle. Globalization results in many emerging multinational corporations, varieties of food and restaurants from other countries that exist in Indonesia. The Serba Food Restaurant is the object of this study, in which it is a new comer in the restaurant business that is widely-known in the Jabodetabek area. This study intends to examine whether there is any effect of service quality on customer satisfaction, trust, interpersonal connectedness, and longevity of business relationships. A statistical test was conducted on the 103 respondents from the university students who have once eaten in the Serba Food Restaurant. This study uses the PLS-SEM method as a statistical tool.*

This study has found that service quality has a positive influence on customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction has a positive influence on trust, trust has a positive influence on customer satisfaction, customer satisfaction has a positive impact to longevity of business relationships, and trust has a positive influence on longevity of business relationships. However, service quality has no positive influence on trust, and interpersonal relationships have no positive influence on trust. This study has provided a valuable contribution to the Serba Food Restaurant in order to create its longevity of business relationships.

Keyword: service quality, customer satisfaction, trust, interpersonal connection, business longevity

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has brought changes to all aspects of life, such as economic, social cultural, and technology. As a consequence, globalization increases the number of multinational corporations, varieties of foods, and also types of restaurants that exist in Indonesia. Currently in Indonesia, especially in the Jabodetabek area, we can easily find various restaurants serving local cuisines, other Asian cuisines such as Malaysian, Singaporean, Thai, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Western cuisines.

A restaurant is a place that is commercially organized and serves foods and beverages to its guests with its best services (Marsum, 1994). In 2010, the number of medium and large size restaurant companies in Indonesia was 2,916 companies, which has increased by 7,84 percent compared to that in 2009, indicating an increase of 212 new companies (BPS, 2010).

DKI Jakarta is a province in Indonesia with the highest number of restaurants, followed by West Java. According to their business network, 50,83% of medium and large restaurants are branches, 42,85% are independent restaurants, and 6,32% are headquarters, showing that the respective companies have branches or auxiliary units elsewhere (BPS, 2010).

Many people perceive that getting into the restaurant industry is easy but also easy to be abandoned if it is not managed properly. Thus, a manager should be able to coordinate planning, controlling, and adjusting the operations of these restaurants well. Beside serving tangible products, such as foods and beverages, the industry also serves intangible products such as customer service, cleanliness, health, hospitality, and comfort. Thus, the quality of services rendered is

related closely to customer satisfaction and trust.

Oliver (1987) and Nyer (1999) stated that dissatisfied customers tend to complain and ask for compensations in order to alleviate the cognitive dissonance and failure of consumption experiences (Andaleeb & Conway, 2006). According to a study by Andaleeb and Conway (2006), dissatisfied customers in extreme cases would even spread negative words of mouth to others. Furthermore, dissatisfied customers also tend to be saboteurs, which could influence potential customers to stay away from certain services. Hence, providing a quality service is an important strategy for one's success in today's competitive environments (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Parasuraman, Zeithmal, and Berry, 1994)

We use the Serba Food Restaurant which is located in the Benton Junction, Karawaci as the object of this study. The Serba Food Restaurant offers the Asian-food concepts and serve organic tea in every meal. This restaurant also emphasizes that there is no MSG nor pork used in their meals.

There are a few studies that examine whether service quality and interpersonal connections could result in satisfaction and trust in order to create longevity of business relationships in various types of industries, such as beauty salons (Tendean, 2011) and raw food ingredients industry (Inggar, 2010). So far, no study has been conducted to investigate whether service quality and interpersonal connections could result in satisfaction and trust in the restaurant industry. Based on the current phenomenon and previous studies, this study has examined how service quality and interpersonal connections are related to satisfaction and trust, in which they might generate a longevity business relationships in the restaurant industry.

2. LITERATURES' REVIEWS AND HYPOTHESIS

Service Quality

According to Gronroos (2001) "Service is an activity or a series of intangible activities that occurs as a result of interaction between consumers and employees or any other thing that is provided by suppliers in order to solve customers' problems". The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) consists of 5 dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The tangibles dimension includes physical facility and personal appearance. The reliability dimension is the ability to fulfill the services based on what was promised. Moreover, the responsiveness dimension is the willingness to assist and provide fast services while giving clear information to customers. The assurance dimension contains knowledge, courtesy, and the ability of the company's employees to foster a sense of trust from the customers toward the company. Last, the empathy dimension is giving a sincere and personal approach in the hope of better understanding of the customer's wants.

Customer Satisfaction

According to Rabaweera and Prahbu (2003), customer satisfaction is an important factor to the company because it brings positive impacts to the company itself. Oliver (1997) stated that, customer satisfaction is defined as a response to customers' fulfillment, which is the assessment of features of the products or services themselves that gives a joyful sense on the consumption (Andaleeb & Conway, 2006). In other words, it is related to all levels of satisfaction with product or service experiences.

Furthermore, Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) stated that satisfaction is an evaluation of the products / services in terms of whether the products / services have met customer satisfaction or expectation. According to Gerson (2004), customer satisfaction is a perception of fulfilled or exceeded expectation. In this study, we will focus on Gerson's definition in order to support our research.

Trust

In business, trust is an important criterion in building and maintaining long-term relationships (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998; Singh & Sirdeshmukh, 2000). Trust leads to reciprocation of information that both parties' believed (Moorman, Deshpande, & Zaltman, 1993). If one party trusts the other party, it will lead to positive behavioral intentions towards the other party (Lau & Lee, 1999).

Ganesan (1994); Mayer, David and Schoorman (1995), as cited in Sideshmukh et al. (2002) explained that some authors conceptualize trust in terms of conative and attitude. By focusing on attitude, trust can be defined as a desire to rely on other people where one of them has self-confidence (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992 as cited in Sideshmukh et al., 2002).

According to Mayer et al. (1995), trust is the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control

that other party. Trust is the extent to which one party is willing to depend on somebody, or something, in a given situation with a feeling of relative security, even though negative consequences are possible (McKnight & Chervany, 2001).

This study will use a definition from Hoffman and Baterson (2006) explaining the consumers' opinions on the providers' ability to deliver services.

Interpersonal Relationships

People cannot establish a relationship if they only meet once. However, if people slowly try to build a relationship, there is a chance that both parties can establish a relationship (Inggar, 2010). An interpersonal connection can be defined as a grown relationship with another party that is resulted from a conversation that takes place (Beebe & Redmond, 1996). In this study, we will use the definition of interpersonal connection raised by Beebe and Redmond (1996).

Longevity of Business Relationships

Longevity of business relationships (and part of organizational mortality) can be defined as the length of an organization which exists (Mayfield et. al., 2007). Furthermore, Sabiote and Roman (2009), as cited in Inggar (2010) said that longevity of business relationship can also be defined as a relationship where the customers could have direct relationships with the producers as product/ service providers (Inggar, 2010). According to Papadoopoulo et al. (2011), the orientation of long-term relationships is the desire or ability of each party to establish and maintain long-term relationships in order to achieve the effectiveness and efficiency of each party's business (Fernandus & Ihalauw, 2006). In this article, we will focus on Sabiote and Roman's definition of longevity in business relationships.

Connection between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

One of the important factors that support satisfaction is service quality (Andaleeb & Conway, 2006). Zeithaml et al. (2009) also stated that service quality is one component to create customer satisfaction. In this study, service quality can be defined one company's ability to fulfill customer expectation (Payne, 1993). There are several studies emphasizing that there is a relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (Sureshcander et al., 2003), Spreng and Mackoy (1996), Olive (1997). In a study conducted by Ribbink et al. (2004), the connection between service quality and customer satisfaction existed in e-commerce industry. Moreover, service quality also has a positive impact to beauty salon industry (Tendean, 2011). Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) stated that customer satisfaction could be created though a high service quality. Based on the findings from these previous studies:

H1: Service quality has a positive influence on customer satisfaction.

Connection between Service Quality and Trust

In the beauty salon industry, perception and trust are two most important things to measure customer

satisfaction. Widjaja (2009), as cited in Tendeau, (2011), and service quality has a positive influence on trust (Tendeau, 2011).

Based on the findings from these previous studies:

H2: Service quality has a positive influence on trust.

Connection between Customer Satisfaction and Trust

Widjaja, (1999), as cited in Tendeau (2011) stated that customer satisfaction is important in the service sector because when customers are satisfied then they would give their trust to the providers. According to Tendeau (2011), research in the beauty salon industry revealed that both trust and customer satisfaction are positively related to each other.

Based on these findings from the previous studies:

H3: Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on trust

H4: Trust has a positive influence on customer satisfaction.

Connection between Trust and Interpersonal Relationships

According to Edvardsson, Thomasson, and Ovreutveit (1992), as cited in Tendeau (2011), the relationship between staff and customers is an important element because it defines the commitment that is originated from the customers’ trust to the business. Trust is useful and vital in relationship building, even though being the trusted party is not an easy task. Babin and Haris (2011), as cited in Tendeau (2011) stated that trust can be unconsciously formed when there is a continuing purchase transaction. Through trust and comfort from knowing each other, both customers and staff would be able to create a business relationship (Tendeau, 2011). Based on the findings from the previous studies:

H5: Interpersonal relationship has a positive influence on trust.

Connection between Customer Satisfaction and Longevity of Business Relationship

Satisfaction is the beginning of building loyalty or longevity of business relationships (Tendeau, 2011). Satisfaction is an important key in marketing strategy, such as marketing concept and business relation, which leads to loyalty that implies the longevity of business relationships. Moreover, Reicheld and Cook (1996) stated that customer satisfaction is a key to loyalty and long term relationships. According to Shin and Elliot (2001), one’s business could be categorized as a success and profitable if the companies could satisfy its customers.

Based on the findings from the previous studies:

H6: Customer satisfaction has a positive impact to longevity of business relationship.

Connection between Trust and Longevity of Business Relationship

According to Sheth and Mittal (2004), as cited in Tendeau (2011), trust is an important component in forming a relationship in the context of social and business. If there is no trust, there would not be any commitment that leads to the longevity of business relationship (Tendeau, 2011). Arnould et al. (2005), as cited in Tendeau (2011) stated that trust creates a commitment which leads to loyalty and business relationships. Tendeau (2011) found on his study that trust has a positive influence to the longevity of business relationships in the beauty salon industry.

Based on the findings from the previous studies:

H7: Trust has a positive influence on the longevity of business relationships.

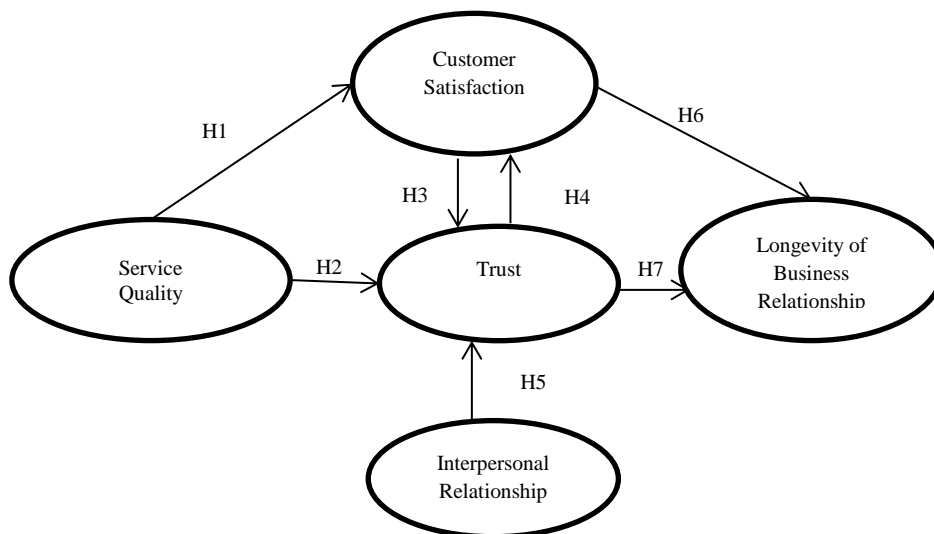


Fig 1: Hypothesis

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The survey method was conducted in this study in order to get the data. The survey was in the form of a questionnaire with a sample consisting of Business School students in Karawaci with a total of 103.

“Convenience sampling” was utilized due to its simplicity. The PLS-SEM model in SmartPLS program was used for the statistical analysis.

The items in the questionnaire on variables service quality, customer satisfaction, interpersonal

relationship, and longevity of business relationship use the 5 points in the Likert Scale, in which 1=Strongly Disagree up to 5=Strongly Agree. The items that construct the service quality use SERQUAL developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), which consists of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The items on customer satisfaction were adopted from Ishaq (2012), Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Oliver (1997) and Ryu et al. (2008). The items on trust were adopted from Svensson (2004) and Tendean (2011). The items on interpersonal relationship were adopted from Inggar (2010) and Tendean (2011). We were developed scale for items on longevity of business relationship.

A validity test was conducted by taking into considerations the convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity. A reliability test was conducted by measuring the composite reliability. In order to pass the validity test, there are several requirements which should be followed. According to Ghazali (2014), the convergent validity has to have an outer loading value of more than 0.7. Then, the minimum value of AVE

should be greater than 0.5 and the composite reliability should be greater than 0.6.

4. RESULTS

Profile

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents. This study has shown that the number of male respondents (53.40%) is slightly higher than the female respondents (46.60%). About 69.90% of the respondents have indicated that they visited the restaurant between 1-2 times in a month, while only 6.80% have indicated that they visited the restaurant more than 4 times in a month. In terms of money spent during their visit to the Serba Food Restaurant, 67.9% indicated that they spent between Rp 50,000 and Rp 100,000 while only 1.94% indicated spending of more than Rp 200,000. About 87.38% of respondents stated that they visited the restaurants with friends and only about 1.94% visited it with their parents. About 30.10% of the respondents visited the restaurants just to have a meal, while 31.07% of the respondents visited the restaurant to have a meal during their waiting-time for classes.

Table 1: Respondents Profile

Statements	Total	Percentage (%)
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	55	53.40
Female	48	46.60
<u>Monthly patronage frequency to "Serba Food" Restaurant</u>		
1-2 times	72	69.90
3-4 times	24	23.30
> 4 times	7	6.80
<u>Average customer spending in "Serba Food" Restaurant</u>		
<Rp 50 ribu	8	7.77
Rp 50 ribu until <Rp 100 ribu	70	67.9
Rp 100 ribu until <Rp 150 ribu	17	16.50
Rp 150 ribu until <200 ribu	6	5.83
≥ Rp 200 ribu	2	1.94
<u>Visitor's companion in Serba Food" Restaurant</u>		
Alone	5	4.85
With girlfriend/boyfriend	6	5.83
With friend	90	87.38
With parents	2	1.94
Others.....	0	0
<u>Purpose of visit to "Serba Food" Restoran</u>		
Eating in only	31	30.10
Eating while waiting for classes	32	31.07
Hangout	21	20.39
Eating while discussing class material	19	18.45

Validity dan Reliability

Table 2 shows that the outer loading values ranging from 0.711 to 0.910 and significant at $\alpha = 5\%$. The convergent validity test has been met since all items have outer loading values greater than 0.7. The

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct is greater than 0.5 (ranging from 0.641 to 0.910). From the results, the minimum value for the Average Variance Extracted (>0.5) and Composite Reliability (>0.60) has been met.

Table 2: Validity and Reliability Measurement

Construct & Items	Outer Loading	P Value
Customer Satisfaction (CA= 0.809, AVE=0.636)		
CS1 The Serba Food Restaurant is the right restaurant to choose.	0.788	0.000*
CS2 The Serba Food Restaurant treats me fairly.	0.832	0.000*
CS3 The Serba Food Restaurant meets my expectations.	0.771	0.000*
CS4 I always go to the Serba Food Restaurant.	0.797	0.000*
Trust (CA= 0.641, AVE=0.601)		
T1 The Serba Food Restaurant is reliable to provide a good service.	0.812	0.000*
T2 The Serba Food Restaurant is honest in running their business.	0.764	0.000*
T3 The Serba Food Restaurant is expert in its field.	0.747	0.000*
Interpersonal Relationship (CA=0.866, AVE=0.800)		
IR1 I feel happy when I interact with the Serba Food Restaurant's employees.	0.892	0.000*
IR2 I believe in the Serba Food Restaurant's employees.	0.910	0.000*
IR3 I know the Serba Food Restaurant's employees well.	0.880	0.000*
Longevity of Business Relationship (CA= 0.910, AVE= 0.586)		
LB1 I am willing if asked to engage in the marketing activities organized by the Serba Food restaurant.	0.713	0.000*
LB2 I want the Serba Food Restaurant to exist forever	0.741	0.000*
LB3 I like the concept of the Serba Food restaurant to be consistently forever	0.780	0.000*
LB4 I am willing to become members if the Serba Food Restaurant holds a member club program.	0.770	0.000*
LB5 I will give constructive feedback without being asked so that the Serba Food Restaurant can compete with others	0.788	0.000*
LB6 I want to be a regular customer of the Serba Food Restaurant all my life.	0.721	0.000*
LB7 I think the Serba Food Restaurant is the best so far.	0.804	0.000*
LB8 Though there is some negative talk about the Serba Food Restaurant, it has completely unaffected to me.	0.806	0.000*
LB9 I want to establish mutually beneficial relationships with the Serba food Restaurant.	0.761	0.000*
Service Quality (CA=0.828, AVE=0.596)		
SQ1 The Serba Food employees are ready to help their customers	0.711	0.000*
SQ2 I can trust the Serba Food employees	0.716	0.000*
SQ3 The Serba Food employees prioritize their customers	0.799	0.000*
SQ4 The Serba Food employees understand their customers needs.	0.809	0.000*
SQ5 The Serba Food Restaurant has convenient operational hours.	0.819	0.000*

Notes: CA= Cronbach Alpha; AVE= average variance extracted, *significant (two tailed test, p<00.05)

Source: Results of data processing

The discriminant validity test was conducted by comparing the correlation value between the constructs that has to be less than the root square of the AVE for each construct (Ghozali, 2014). Table 3 shows that all the requirements for the discriminant validity test have been met.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

	Customer Satisfaction	Trust	Interpersonal Relationship	Longevity of Business Relationship	Service Quality
Customer Satisfaction	0.797				
Trust	0.674	0.775			
Interpersonal Relationship	0.586	0.495	0.894		
Longevity of Business Relationship	0.634	0.665	0.750	0.766	
Service Quality	0.677	0.482	0.498	0.515	0.772

Source: Results of data processing

Hypothesis Testing

Table 4 shows the hypothesis testing of using a one-tailed test with $\alpha=0.05$. The results describe that two hypotheses are not significant because the p-value is greater than $\alpha=0.05$ (H2: Service quality has a positive

influence on trust and H3: Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on trust). The results show that the other hypothesis is significant because the p-value is less than $\alpha=0.05$.

Table 4: Structural Models Results

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized Coefficient	P value	Result
H ₁	Service Quality -> Customer Satisfaction	0.459	0.000*	significant
H ₂	Service Quality -> Trust	0.019	0.424	Not significant
H ₃	Customer Satisfaction -->Trust	0.573	0.000*	significant
H ₄	Trust -> Customer Satisfaction	0.452	0.000*	significant
H ₅	Interpersonal relationship -> Trust	0.149	0.088	Not significant
H ₆	Customer Satisfaction -> Longevity of Business Relationship	0.341	0.002*	significant
H ₇	Trust -> Longevity of Business Relationship	0.435	0.001*	significant

Note: *= significant (one-tailed test, $p<0.05$)

Source: Results of data processing

5. DISCUSSIONS

The results from the hypothesis testing show that service quality is positively correlated to customers' satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the study on the beauty salon industry and e-commerce found by Tendean (2011) and the fast food restaurants by Aryani and Rosinta (2010). Aryani and Rosinta (2010) found that the higher the service quality is, the higher customers' satisfaction will be. Based on the finding in this study, it is crucial for the Serba Food Restaurant management to keep its service quality given to its customers to keep the customers' satisfaction.

This study has also confirmed that service quality is not positively correlated with trust. This finding is consistent with what was found by Tendean (2011) in the beauty salon industry. Through the distributed questionnaire, only one assurance dimension is valid ("I can trust the Serba Food Restaurant services"), while the other four questions are not valid ("I feel safe doing transactions with the Serba Food servers, The Serba Food servers gave mannerful services, The Serba Food servers have enough knowledge in answering the customers' inquiries).

After that, the hypothesis of customer satisfaction that has a positive impact towards trust is significant. This result is in accordance with Tendean's previous research on the beauty salon industry (2011), Adelia et al.'s research on the café industry (2014), and Yieh et al.'s research on the automobile industry in Taiwan (2007). According to Mattson (2009), customer satisfaction is the main key of forming customers' trust. Thus, in order to increase trust, a company should also increase their customer satisfaction. For example, the restaurants should treat their customers fairly, or the company should be able to meet their customers' expectations and be chosen by the customers when they do purchase the products/services.

The Forth hypothesis reveals that trust has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. This hypothesis also goes along with Tendean's research. According to Widjaja (2009), trust can be created when people feel satisfied towards the products or services. Connecting the idea to this journal, it is really important for the Serba Food Restaurant to increase the customers' trust by giving them good services, maintaining the honesty of the restaurants, and the ability of the company to run the business in order to establish customer satisfaction. The fifth hypothesis proves that interpersonal relationship has no positive influence on trust. This finding is not consistent with the previous study conducted by Tendean (2011) in the beauty salon industry. In his study, Tendean (2011) found that in general if customers are already comfortable with their hairdressers/hairstylists, then the customers rarely switch to other hairdressers/hairstylists. However, this is not the case in the restaurant industry. There are several factors that cause the lack of interpersonal connectedness and trust. First, the relationship between the customers and servers is not as close as that in the case of the customers with their hairdressers/hairstylists because hairdressers/hairstylists are individuals who have their own skills, while servers are those with no specific skills. Second, servers are mostly employees, not owners of the restaurant. If the customers were to be served directly by the owners, there might be a different result. Third, the high turnover of the Serba Food Restaurant's employees may result in unfamiliarity of the customers towards the servers. Therefore, the Serba Food Restaurant should give better services and consistent quality to its customers in order to develop interpersonal connectedness. The result of the sixth hypothesis is that customer satisfaction has a positive influence on the longevity of business relationships. This hypothesis goes along with the previous research that was conducted by Inggar (2010) in the trading industry. Moreover,

Aryani and Rosita (2010) observed that customer satisfaction is an important parameter for long-term business. Satisfied customers will be reflected in the behavior of repurchase. However, dissatisfied customers will not necessarily return to purchase again. Thus, when there are many dissatisfied customers, it will decrease the turnover or sales which will finally also affect the company's profits and longevity of the business.

Furthermore, the seventh hypothesis confirms that trust has a positive influence on longevity of business relationship. According to Gabarino and Johnson (1999), trust is generally viewed as an essential ingredient for a successful relationship. Berry also supports this idea by explaining that customers who develop trust in service supplier based on their experiences will have a good reason to remain in this relationship. As for Gambetta (1988), trusting someone means "the probability that he will perform an action that is beneficial or at least not detrimental to us is high enough for us to consider engaging in some form of cooperation with him". Thus, when a restaurant wants to create longevity of business relationship with the customers, there should be a connection and conviction between the customers and the restaurants.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The results based on the hypothesis testing have produced the following conclusions:

1. Service quality has a positive influence on customer satisfaction.
2. Service quality has no positive influence on trust.
3. Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on trust
4. Trust has a positive influence on customer satisfaction.
5. Interpersonal relationship has no positive influence on trust.
6. Customer satisfaction has a positive impact to longevity of business relationship
7. Trust has a positive influence on longevity of business relationship.

7. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The first limitation of this study is the sampling method of using the non-probabilistic sampling known as the convenience sampling. The findings obtained through this method are not suitable for generalization. Therefore, the next research is advised to use another non-probabilistic sampling method, such as random sampling. The second limitation is the relatively small number of the sample of only 103. The larger the sample is the more significant the test results on the relationships between the constructs will be. For the next research, it is recommended to increase the number of the sample used.

The third limitation is the statistical tool used to analyze the model, which is Partial Least Square (PLS) – SEM that is not able to test the fitness of the model. As a result, the recommendation for the next

research is to use Covariance Based (CB) – SEM, since this statistical tool is able to test both the hypotheses and the fitness of the model.

The fourth limitation is the lack of the question in the questionnaire asking whether the respondent is currently in the Accounting or Management major. This piece of information is useful in the analysis since there is a difference between Accounting and Management students in terms of their decision-making processes. Based on prior observations, Accounting students in general are more detail-oriented compared to the Management students. If there had been any information on the respondents' major of study, a more elaborate analysis on the hypothesis testing could have been generated.

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