

**MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ON  
SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN  
GROCERY STORE IN SHOPPING MALLS IN SAUDI  
ARABIA**

**NAIF MUTLAQ AL OTAIBI**

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AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN GROCERY STORE IN SHOPPING MALLS IN  
SAUDI ARABIA**

**By**

**NAIF MUTLAQ AL OTAIBI**

**Thesis Submitted to  
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business  
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## ABSTRACT

With a robust economic growth and a young population, Saudi Arabia is presently witnessing a high consumer's demand in the food and grocery sector. This has led to a transformation of its retailing industries from the aspect of small and unorganised markets to palatial grocery stalls in the shopping malls. As the number of choices for these markets increases with the entry of new players, retailers need to understand the customers' perceptions of the quality of services and products offered. This is crucial towards the survival and competitiveness in the market. The determinants of service quality vary in different industries, countries and individuals. The demographics and lifestyles of customers have been identified as the determinants of service quality. However, the studies done on these two factors are limited in Saudi Arabia. Thus this research attempts to examine the effect of perceived service quality on customer loyalty through mediation of customer satisfaction in the Saudi Arabia grocery store industry. Quantitative research method was employed. This research was conducted at selected major shopping malls in three cities in Saudi namely Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam. This is because the total number of people living in these three cities represented 60% of the total population of Saudi. Eight hundred questionnaires were distributed but only 408 questionnaires were found to be useable, yielding a response rate of 51%. The findings revealed that there is a direct relation between perceived service quality and customer loyalty. The findings also showed that a relationship has existed between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction and that the customer satisfaction partly mediated the relationship between the perceived service quality and the store loyalty. The study concludes with some recommendations that can be used to guide the retailers in Saudi Arabia in managing their stores' service quality and loyalty.

**Keywords:** perceived service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, grocery retailing, Saudi Arabia

## ABSTRAK

Dengan pertumbuhan ekonomi yang kukuh dan penduduk yang muda, negara Arab Saudi telah menyaksikan permintaan pengguna yang tinggi dalam sektor makanan dan peruncitan. Hal ini telah menyebabkan berlakunya transformasi industri peruncitan daripada pasaran kecil dan tidak tersusun kepada pembangunan gerai-gerai runcit mewah di pusat membeli-belah. Apabila berlakunya pertambahan bilangan pilihan akibat kemasukan peserta baharu, peruncit perlu memahami persepsi pelanggan terhadap kualiti perkhidmatan dan produk yang ditawarkan kerana ia adalah penting bagi kelangsungan dan daya saing dalam pasaran. Penentu kualiti perkhidmatan berbeza-beza mengikut industri, negara dan ciri-ciri individu. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian yang mengkaji tentang demografi dan gaya hidup pembeli dalam persekitaran peruncitan adalah terutamanya di rantau ini. Oleh itu, tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pengaruh tanggapan kualiti perkhidmatan terhadap kesetiaan kedai melalui kesan pengantara kepuasan pelanggan dalam industri peruncitan di Arab Saudi. Kajian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif. Kajian ini menggunakan borang soal selidik yang telah diedarkan kepada pelanggan runcit di pusat membeli-belah utama yang terletak di tiga bandar yang mewakili lebih daripada 60% daripada penduduk Arab Saudi iaitu Riyadh, Jeddah dan Dammam. Sebanyak 800 borang soal selidik telah diedarkan tetapi hanya 408 borang soal selidik yang boleh digunakan dan menghasilkan kadar respons sebanyak 51%. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan wujudnya pengaruh langsung antara tanggapan kualiti servis dan kesetiaan pelanggan. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan antara tanggapan kualiti servis dan kepuasan pelanggan, serta kepuasan pelanggan yang sebahagiannya pengantara hubungan antara tanggapan kualiti servis dan kesetiaan terhadap peruncit. Akhir sekali, kajian ini turut mengemukakan beberapa cadangan yang berguna kepada peruncit di Arab Saudi dan juga kepada para pengkaji akan datang.

**Kata kunci:** tanggapan kualiti perkhidmatan, kepuasan pelanggan, kesetiaan pelanggan, peruncitan runcit, Arab Saudi

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ACSI	American Customer Satisfaction Index
AIO	Activities, Interests and Opinions
AMA	American Marketing Association
CAB	Cognition Affect Behaviour
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
CDV	Customer Desired Value
CL	Customer Loyalty
CMA	Capital Market Authority
CPV	Customer Perceived Value
CS	Customer Satisfaction
ESCI	Emotional and Social Competency Inventory
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRDI	Global Retail Development Index
HSQM	Hilbert Space Quantum Mechanics
Hyp	Hypermarket
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
PSQ	Perceived Service Quality
RSQ	Retail Service Quality
SERVPERF	Service Performance
SCSB	Swedish Customer Satisfaction Barometer
SL	Store Loyalty
VALS	Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles
WOM	Word of Mouth
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ACG	Academic Colleges Group
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In Saudi Arabia, the retail sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. In 2009, the Middle East retail industry has more than US\$ 425 billion worth economy (RNCOS Report, 2008). Most of the major retailers in Saudi Arabia have experienced a sound growth since 2008, and their development includes the growth made by shopping malls, superstores, clothes, and fashion retailers, footwear retailers, health, beauty retailers, home appliance retailers (RNCOS Report, 2008). In addition, retailing in general has benefited from Saudi Arabia's WTO membership and legislation which were introduced since 2000 in order to facilitate direct foreign investments. In 2000, Saudi government liberalised its investment law by allowing 100% ownership of projects by foreigners and thus easing the rules for recruiting foreign employees. The law authorizes foreigners' for ownership of property and reduces the corporate taxes.

The positive economic out look for Saudi Arabia is expected to support strong growth in retail sales in which rises disposable income levels. Ongoing urbanization will encourage customers, to shift from lower-priced independent players and souks (market), to shopping malls and chains offering wide range of products and a comfortable shopping environment. Considering the grocery retailers, shopping malls and chained fore court retailers are expected to achieve better growth since they have expanded into new areas within the country and have gained CAGR of 10 % to 15% outlet volume (Datamonitor,

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