

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Exploring the Impact of Perceived Justice and Complaint Handling Satisfaction on Trust and Commitment in Indonesia's E-commerce Fashion Sector

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Abstract:

Background: Indonesia's rapid growth in the e-commerce fashion sector presents opportunities and challenges, particularly in addressing consumer dissatisfaction during post-purchase experiences. Key challenges include product misrepresentation, delivery delays, or unmet expectations, which can lead to negative behaviors such as complaints, reduced loyalty, and distrust toward sellers.

Purpose: This study investigates the impact of perceived justice dimensions—interactional, procedural, and distributive—on satisfaction with complaint handling and its subsequent effects on customer trust, customer commitment, and customer loyalty.

Methods: This study employed a cross-sectional survey with a purposive sampling technique, collecting data from 174 respondents in the Jabodetabek region. Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was used for analysis.

Findings: This research reveals that distributive and procedural justice significantly influence complaint handling, while interactional justice has a smaller yet notable impact. Complaint handling, in turn, significantly enhances both customer commitment and customer trust, with customer commitment emerging as a stronger driver of customer loyalty. Notably, customer trust's direct effect on customer loyalty is insignificant, suggesting that emotional engagement through commitment plays a more pivotal role in fostering loyalty.

Conclusion: These findings underscore the importance of fair complaint resolutions, efficient processes, and empathetic communication in maintaining customer relationships.

Research implication: The findings provide actionable insights for e-commerce businesses to improve customer satisfaction with complaint handling, particularly emphasizing the critical roles of distributive justice and procedural justice in fostering satisfaction.

Keywords: complaint handling, customer commitment, customer loyalty, customer trust, perceived justice

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The research encountered significant challenges in gathering respondents, particularly those from Generation Z and Generation X (Millennials). Most respondents identified during the research process were from Generation Alpha or Boomers, which limits the generalizability of the research findings. The research also faced some challenges in adapting the foundational theories on complaint typologies to the specific context of e-commerce complaints. This introduced a risk of misinterpretation when aligning theoretical concepts with real-world applications in the e-commerce domain. These issues underscore the complexities inherent in conducting research in dynamic, multi-generational settings and highlight the need for further refinement in methodological approaches to ensure broader applicability of findings.



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1. Introduction

Indonesia's rapid e-commerce expansion has established it as a major digital economy in Southeast Asia, accounting for nearly 40-50% of the region's digital market value (We Are Social, 2024). Among various product categories, fashion ranks as the most purchased item online, attracting significant consumer interest and driving annual transaction values (We Are Social, 2024). Despite this growth, the industry struggles to maintain customer satisfaction, particularly in the post-purchase stage. Dissatisfaction often arises from product misrepresentation, delivery delays, or unmet expectations, leads to complaints, reduced loyalty, and distrust toward sellers (Tridalistari et al., 2022).

Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB) Theory provides a foundational framework for dissatisfied customers and can be categorized into four types: passive, voicers, irate, and activists (Singh, 1990). Passive customers avoid voicing complaints due to lacking motivation or confidence, while voicers actively seek resolution directly from companies. Irate consumers often emotionally express dissatisfaction through negative word-of-mouth, avoiding direct business engagement. On the other hand, activists escalate complaints to third parties, driven by a sense of justice and a desire for systemic change. This typology underscores the importance of tailored complaint management strategies to mitigate negative outcomes, such as customer churn or reputational damage, while leveraging complaints to enhance customer relationships (Prasetyo et al., 2016). Complementing this perspective, the Complaining Behavior Process Theory emphasizes the stages customers undergo when addressing dissatisfaction. Lovelock and Patterson (2015) argued that customers first assess whether to voice complaints by weighing perceived costs against potential benefits. Satisfaction with the complaint-handling process depends on perceived justice dimensions: procedural justice (fairness of processes), interactional justice (courtesy and empathy during interactions), and distributive justice (equity of outcomes).

Research highlights that fair complaint handling fosters trust, loyalty, and advocacy, while unresolved complaints often lead to disengagement and negative word-of-mouth (Neves & Iglesias, 2022). The three dimensions of perceived justice—interactional, procedural, and distributive—are pivotal in shaping customer satisfaction with complaint handling. Interactional justice concerns the interpersonal treatment customers receive, emphasizing respect, empathy, and courtesy. Procedural justice focuses on the fairness, clarity, and efficiency of the complaint-handling process, ensuring transparency and accessibility. Distributive justice evaluates the equity and adequacy of the resolution, such as refunds, replacements, or other compensations (Idris et al., 2023). Studies indicate that these dimensions collectively enhance customer satisfaction and retention, reinforcing their role in effective complaint-handling strategies (Lal, 2023). Furthermore, perceived justice can transform dissatisfied customers into loyal advocates, emphasizing the critical role of fairness in complaint management (Morgeson et al., 2020).

Beyond perceived justice, relationship marketing theory provides a broader framework for understanding how businesses cultivate long-term customer relationships through trust, commitment, and satisfaction. As a core component of relationship marketing, relationship quality highlights the interdependence of these factors in shaping customer loyalty (Kalubanga & Namagembe, 2021). Trust mediates the relationship between satisfaction and commitment, as higher customer satisfaction fosters trust, which in turn strengthens brand commitment (Mungra & Yadav, 2019; Wu et al., 2021). However, theoretical debates persist regarding the interplay among these variables. Some scholars argue that satisfaction directly influences commitment without trust as a mediator (Huang et al., 2022), while others suggest that contextual factors, such as digital engagement and industry dynamics, may modify these relationships (Deng et al., 2024).

The commitment-trust theory posits that trust and commitment are essential for relationship marketing success, reinforcing their role in maintaining long-term consumer relationships (Gervilla & Ventura, 2015). As e-commerce platforms evolve, businesses must balance transactional efficiency with relational depth to sustain customer engagement and loyalty.

Perceived justice provides a robust framework for understanding how fairness perceptions influence satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Satisfaction with complaint handling is essential, as it directly impacts trust and commitment, which are key drivers of customer loyalty. Trust reflects the belief that the seller will act in the customer's best interest and uphold integrity, particularly when complaints are resolved transparently and fairly (Knox & Van Oest, 2014). Commitment, by contrast, represents a customer's emotional attachment and willingness to maintain a long-term relationship with the seller. High satisfaction fosters commitment by instilling reliability and assurance in the business relationship (Mahmoud et al., 2018).

Effective complaint handling strengthens loyalty by enhancing both trust and commitment. Trust significantly influences customer loyalty by encouraging repeat purchases and long-term engagement (Bengül & Yılmaz, 2018). Similarly, quality complaint management improves customer perceptions, fosters stronger relationships, and drives loyalty (Bengül & Yılmaz, 2018). Timely and effective resolutions reinforce satisfaction, directly impacting loyalty and retention (Ahmed et al., 2020). Effective complaint handling can reduce customer attrition, as dissatisfied customers are more likely to remain loyal when their concerns are addressed adequately (Iqbal et al., 2017). These findings highlight the importance of perceived justice, trust, and commitment in fostering consumer satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in competitive e-commerce markets.

While extensive global research has explored complaint handling, perceived justice, and customer loyalty, their application within Indonesia's dynamic e-commerce market remains under-examined. Unlike developed markets, Indonesia's e-commerce sector is highly competitive and rapidly expanding, with frequent service failures and rising consumer expectations for fair resolutions. This study examines the interplay of perceived justice dimensions—interactional, procedural, and distributive—and their impact on satisfaction with complaint handling, trust, and commitment as determinants of loyalty. The research focuses on the fashion sector, the leading contributor to online transaction volumes, and offers actionable strategies to improve customer retention in a region accounting for nearly 50% of Southeast Asia's digital economy. This study's novelty lies in its comprehensive approach, integrating these variables into a single framework to demonstrate how perceived justice shapes satisfaction, which in turn fosters trust, commitment, and loyalty. By examining Indonesia's unique e-commerce landscape, this study advances theoretical understanding and provides practical insights to address consumer dissatisfaction, build trust and commitment, and strengthen long-term loyalty in a key digital economy market.

This study examines the relationships between perceived justice dimensions—distributive, procedural, and interactional justice—satisfaction with complaint handling, and their potential effects on customer trust, commitment, and loyalty. This research examines whether satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived justice and key customer outcomes and how each justice dimension enhances satisfaction. This study also examines the roles of trust and commitment in fostering customer loyalty in the e-commerce fashion sector. Analyzing these relationships provides insights into effective complaint-handling strategies that emphasize fairness, transparency, and empathetic communication. The findings are expected to guide e-commerce sellers in enhancing

customer satisfaction, strengthening relationships, and fostering long-term loyalty in a competitive digital marketplace.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB) Theory

Singh's (1990) Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB) Theory provides a framework for understanding consumer responses to dissatisfaction based on their level of activity and intent. The theory categorizes consumers into four types. Passive consumers are those who refrain from voicing complaints despite experiencing dissatisfaction. They typically lack the motivation or confidence to engage in complaint behavior. Voicers directly communicate their dissatisfaction to the company, seeking resolution constructively as they believe in potential improvement. Irate consumers, by contrast, express dissatisfaction emotionally, often through negative word-of-mouth, avoiding direct engagement with the company and potentially harming its reputation. Activists proactively escalate complaints to third parties, such as consumer advocacy groups or public platforms, driven by a sense of justice and a desire for systemic change. These behavioral typologies highlight the need for tailored complaint management strategies to mitigate negative outcomes, such as customer churn or reputational damage, while leveraging complaints to strengthen customer relationships (Prasetyo et al., 2016).

2.2 Complaining Behavior Process (CBP) Theory

The Complaining Behavior Process Theory, articulated by Lovelock and Patterson (2015), outlines the sequential stages consumers undergo when addressing dissatisfaction. Initially, consumers decide whether to voice complaints by weighing perceived costs—such as time and effort—against the potential benefits of resolution (Kumar & Kaur, 2022). If consumers choose to express their grievances, their satisfaction depends on the perceived fairness of complaint handling, evaluated through three dimensions of justice: procedural justice, which concerns the fairness and clarity of the process; interactional justice, which reflects the courtesy and empathy of staff; and distributive justice, which assesses the equity of the resolution (Nasurdin et al., 2020). Complaint-handling outcomes significantly shape post-resolution behaviors. Satisfied consumers are more likely to trust in the company, remain loyal, and advocate for it, whereas unresolved complaints often result in negative word-of-mouth and brand disengagement (Neves & Iglesias, 2022). Unlike the Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB) Theory, which categorizes consumer responses, the Complaining Behavior Process focuses on the dynamic stages and outcomes of complaints, emphasizing fairness as a key driver of consumer trust and loyalty. These insights highlight the need to examine how perceived fairness in complaint handling influences satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in e-commerce, forming the foundation of this study.

2.3 Relationship Marketing Theory

Relationship marketing theory prioritizes long-term relationships over transactional exchanges. At its core, relationship quality—comprising trust, commitment, and loyalty—drives customer retention and engagement (Kalubanga & Namagembe, 2021). Trust acts as a key mediator in this framework, reinforcing the business-consumer bond through reliability, integrity, and consistency (Mungra & Yadav, 2019; Wu et al., 2021). Higher trust levels foster customer commitment by creating a psychological attachment to the brand, increasing willingness to maintain long-term relationships (Gervilla & Ventura, 2015). Commitment significantly drives customer loyalty, as emotionally invested customers demonstrate stronger repurchase intentions and advocacy behaviors (Huang

et al., 2022). While some studies suggest trust is a prerequisite for commitment, others argue that satisfaction alone can directly influence commitment, bypassing trust in certain contexts (Durmuş & Akbolat, 2020). Trust-commitment dynamics may vary due to industry-specific factors, customer expectations, or market competition, highlighting the context-dependent nature of relationship marketing theory (Schirmer et al., 2016). Businesses that foster strong trust and commitment are more likely to achieve sustained loyalty, underscoring the vital role of relationship marketing in modern consumer interactions.

2.4 The Role of Interactional Justice in Enhancing Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

Interactional justice significantly influences customer satisfaction with e-commerce complaint handling, as it reflects the fairness of interpersonal treatment during resolution processes (Idris et al., 2023; Girsang, et al., 2022). This dimension includes politeness, empathy, and clear communication, enhancing satisfaction when customers feel respected and acknowledged (Lal, 2023; Filho et al., 2023). In e-commerce, digital interactions heighten the importance of interactional justice, as the absence of face-to-face communication can lead to misunderstandings and detachment (Cambra-Fierro & Melero-Polo, 2017). Effective complaint handling, marked by timely responses and empathetic communication, enhances satisfaction and loyalty (Girsang et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2019). For instance, Neira et al. highlight that procedural and informational justice, closely tied to interactional justice, significantly influence satisfaction levels (Lal, 2023).

The integration of interactional, procedural, and distributive justice improves satisfaction. Procedural justice ensures fair processes, while distributive justice focuses on equitable outcomes (Idris et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2019; Petzer et al., 2017). A holistic approach integrating these dimensions is essential for enhancing customer perceptions and satisfaction (Petzer et al., 2017; Filho et al., 2023). Yanamandram and White (2010) emphasize that all three dimensions significantly influence satisfaction, highlighting the importance of comprehensive justice in service recovery.

H1: Interactional justice positively influences satisfaction with complaint handling.

2.5 The Role of Procedural Justice in Enhancing Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

Procedural justice is crucial in shaping customer satisfaction with e-commerce complaint handling. It reflects the perceived fairness of complaint resolution processes, including clarity, timeliness, and consistency (Russo et al., 2022). In digital environments, fair and transparent processes enhance satisfaction and reduce customer vulnerability caused by the absence of face-to-face interaction. Research shows that clear and efficient complaint handling improves satisfaction and fosters loyalty (Chen & Kim, 2017). Customers with high service recovery expectations are more satisfied when fair procedures are implemented (Sawy & Fayyad, 2018). Strategies that emphasize procedural fairness also promote positive word-of-mouth and loyalty (Zulkieflimansyah et al., 2021).

The interplay of procedural, distributive, and interactional justice enhances satisfaction. Procedural justice ensures fair processes, distributive justice guarantees equitable outcomes, and interactional justice emphasizes respectful communication (Filho et al., 2023). Research suggests that integrating these dimensions holistically significantly improves satisfaction in e-commerce.

H2: Procedural justice positively influences satisfaction with complaint handling.

2.6 The Role of Distributive Justice in Enhancing Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

Distributive justice plays a crucial role in customer satisfaction with e-commerce complaint handling, as it reflects the perceived fairness of outcomes such as refunds, replacements, or compensation (Aslam et al., 2019). Equitable resolutions enhance satisfaction, especially in cases involving delays, incorrect items, or poor product quality (Rizan et al., 2020). Research shows that customers who receive timely and appropriate resolutions report higher satisfaction than those who feel inadequately compensated (Winarko, 2022). Service recovery expectations mediate this relationship, as satisfaction increases when outcomes align with perceived fairness (Muharam et al., 2021). This is particularly relevant in e-commerce, where expectations vary based on prior experiences and retailer reputation (Al-Adwan & Al-Horani, 2019).

The interplay of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice enhances satisfaction. Distributive justice ensures fair outcomes, procedural justice emphasizes fairness in complaint processes, and interactional justice focuses on respectful communication (Evelina, 2022). Research suggests that integrating these dimensions into a comprehensive approach significantly enhances customer satisfaction in e-commerce (Pham & Ahammad, 2017).

H3: Distributive justice positively influences satisfaction with complaint handling.

2.7 The Role of Satisfaction with Complaint Handling in Enhancing Customer Trust

Satisfaction with complaint handling significantly strengthens customer trust in e-commerce, directly influencing loyalty and retention. Effective complaint management fosters trust by demonstrating reliability and nurturing long-term consumer-retailer relationships (Pashaie et al., 2022). When complaints are resolved satisfactorily, customers perceive the retailer as trustworthy. Morgeson et al. (2020) found that satisfaction positively influences trust and fosters loyalty. Umbroh (2024) further highlights a direct correlation between satisfaction and trust in e-commerce, emphasizing that effective complaint handling alleviates product quality and service reliability uncertainties. This reinforces trust and strengthens customer relationships, especially in environments where trust is essential. Similarly, Indrawati (2024) demonstrates that perceived service quality significantly influences satisfaction, which, in turn, enhances trust in e-commerce platforms.

Post-complaint satisfaction plays a crucial role in building trust. Kania and Salsabila (2023) demonstrate that effective complaint handling fosters positive justice perceptions, enhancing both satisfaction and trust. Their meta-analysis highlights the importance of robust complaint management systems in improving customer experiences and strengthening trust.

H4: Satisfaction with complaint handling positively influences customer trust.

2.8 The Role of Satisfaction with Complaint Handling in Enhancing Customer Commitment

Satisfaction with complaint handling significantly impacts customer commitment in e-commerce. Customer commitment reflects a psychological attachment to a brand, fostering repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth (Utama et al., 2024; Evelina,

2022). Effective complaint handling that enhances customer satisfaction is a key driver of commitment. Prompt and satisfactory resolution of complaints makes customers feel valued, reinforcing their commitment to the brand (Utama, 2024). Evelina (2022) highlights that higher satisfaction levels enhance retention and loyalty, particularly in competitive e-commerce markets with abundant alternatives. Customers who perceive complaint handling as fair and effective are more likely to remain loyal and committed to the retailer.

E-service quality also plays a crucial role in shaping satisfaction and commitment. Ellitan and Suhartatik (2023) found that service satisfaction, including complaint handling, significantly influences customer loyalty and commitment. Similarly, Olawale et al. (2023) demonstrated that satisfaction from effective complaint handling enhances commitment, leading to repeat purchases and positive referrals.

H5: Satisfaction with complaint handling positively influences customer commitment.

2.9 The Role of Customer Trust in Enhancing Customer Loyalty

Customer trust plays a crucial role in fostering loyalty in e-commerce, serving as the foundation for long-term relationships. Defined as the belief that a company acts in the customer's best interest, trust is especially vital in e-commerce due to the absence of face-to-face interactions. Research consistently shows that higher trust levels enhance customer loyalty, which is essential for e-commerce sustainability (Nofrizal et al., 2023; Aslam et al., 2019). When clients see Shopee's online transactions and services as highly trustworthy, their overall satisfaction with the platform increases. Greater customer satisfaction directly influences repeat purchases, loyalty, and the development of strong, long-term relationships between users and online stores (Kuska et al., 2024).

Trust directly influences customer loyalty by encouraging repeat purchases. In the fashion sector, trust positively impacts purchase decisions and strengthens consumer loyalty (Nofrizal et al., 2023). Fahira and Djamaludin (2023) found that brand trust has a significant positive influence on consumer loyalty. Similarly, Aslam et al. (2019) emphasize that trust is a crucial strategy for online retailers to foster customer loyalty. This relationship is often mediated by customer satisfaction, as trust strengthens loyalty when combined with positive customer experiences (Kurniadi & Ali Saeed Rana, 2023). Zhang et al. (2023) further reveal that trust partially mediates the impact of satisfaction on loyalty, highlighting the interconnectedness of these constructs. Beyond transactional loyalty, trust also fosters brand loyalty with Cardoso et al. (2022) demonstrating that cultivating trust enhances overall brand commitment.

H6: Customer trust positively influences customer loyalty.

2.10 The Role of Customer Commitment in Enhancing Customer Loyalty

Customer commitment significantly influences customer loyalty in e-commerce, directly affecting business sustainability and profitability. Commitment refers to the customer's psychological attachment to a brand, which strengthens loyalty and drives repeat purchases. Research consistently indicates a positive correlation between commitment and loyalty, particularly in e-commerce. Yo et al. (2021) found that loyalty is related to commitment, shaped by customers' cumulative experiences with an e-commerce platform. Committed customers tend to continue purchasing from a brand despite competitive pressures, emphasizing the need for positive experiences and effective engagement strategies. Similarly, Ajit et al. (2024) highlight that consistently fulfilling promises fosters commitment, leading to repeat purchases and

recommendations, which enhance loyalty.

Goutam and Gopalakrishna (2018) Integrating commitment-trust theory with e-service quality demonstrates that satisfaction and trust are critical for developing commitment and loyalty. High service quality increases brand commitment, underscoring the need to maintain service standards to cultivate loyalty. Rahman et al. (2022) further emphasize that e-commerce innovation and service quality improve satisfaction, strengthening customer commitment and loyalty.

H7: Customer commitment positively influences customer loyalty.

3. Conceptual Framework

Based on the reviewed empirical studies, this study hypothesizes that perceived justice (interactional, procedural, and distributive) and satisfaction with complaint handling affect customer trust and customer commitment, which influences customer loyalty. Additionally, customer trust and commitment are expected to mediate the relationship between satisfaction with complaint handling and customer loyalty. This framework emphasizes the indirect effects of perceived justice on loyalty through satisfaction, trust, and commitment, highlighting their interconnected roles in fostering long-term consumer relationships in the e-commerce fashion industry. The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.

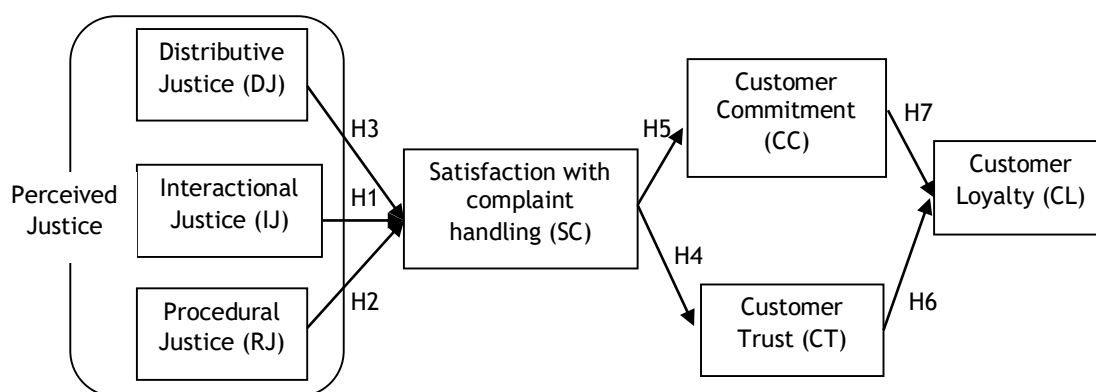


Figure 1. Conceptual framework perceived justice and complaint handling satisfaction on trust and commitment in Indonesia's e-commerce fashion sector

Based on the relationships established in the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Interactional justice positively influences satisfaction with complaint handling.
- H2: Procedural justice positively influences satisfaction with complaint handling.
- H3: Distributive justice positively influences satisfaction with complaint handling.
- H4: Satisfaction with complaint handling positively influences customer trust.
- H5: Satisfaction with complaint handling positively influences customer commitment.
- H6: Customer trust positively influences customer loyalty.
- H7: Customer commitment positively influences customer loyalty.

4. Methods

4.1 Research Design

This study was conducted among consumers in the Jabodetabek area from September to November 2024. The research adopts a cross-sectional survey design, which collects data at a single point in time to describe the characteristics of the population or phenomenon without considering temporal changes (Wang & Cheng, 2020). This method captures the current state of variables under investigation without requiring repeated observations. The research also employs an explanatory approach to identify causal relationships between variables, determine influencing factors, and explain these connections based on strong empirical evidence.

4.2 Sampling

The study employs a non-probability purposive sampling technique, selecting respondents based on predetermined criteria to ensure relevance to the research objectives. Initially, respondents were identified as Jabodetabek residents who had purchased fashion products such as clothing, shoes, bags, or accessories from online marketplaces and experienced dissatisfaction. Further, specific criteria targeted consumers categorized as voicers, irates, or activists, representing individuals who had formally lodged complaints regarding their dissatisfaction. Additionally, only respondents whose complaints had been addressed and partially resolved were included. The sample size was determined based on Hair et al. (2017), who recommend a range of 100-200 respondents for SEM-PLS analysis to ensure statistical accuracy and reliability, particularly in models with independent, intervening, and dependent variables. This study utilized data from 174 respondents, meeting the SEM-PLS standard criteria, which recommends a sample size of 100-200 respondents for generating valid and reliable findings in a moderately complex model.

4.3 Measurement

The study employs Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for data collection. It examines seven variables with a total 41 indicators: Interactional justice (6 indicators, Smith et al., 1999), procedural justice (6 indicators, Smith et al., 1999), distributive justice (6 indicators, Smith et al., 1999), satisfaction with complaint handling (6 indicators, Tax et al., 1998), customer trust (6 indicators, Tax et al., 1998), customer commitment (6 indicators, Tax et al., 1998), and customer loyalty (5 indicators, Wu et al., 2020). Table 1 presents the research instruments.

Table 1. Operational definition and variable indicators of the variables studied

Variables	Operational Definition	Indicators
Interactional Justice (Smith et al., 1999)	How customers are treated during the complaint handling process, including aspects such as politeness, empathy, and respect demonstrated by customer service staff.	1) The employee handling my complaint treated me with courtesy and respect. 2) The employee handling my complaint demonstrated empathy toward the issue I experienced. 3) The employee provided honest and transparent information during the complaint-handling process.

Table 1. Operational definition and variable indicators of the variables studied (Continue)

Variables	Operational Definition	Indicators
Interactional Justice (Smith et al., 1999)	How customers are treated during the complaint handling process, including aspects such as politeness, empathy, and respect demonstrated by customer service staff.	4) I felt involved and heard throughout the complaint-handling process. 5) I felt valued as a customer during the complaint-handling process. 6) The employee communicated in a friendly and professional manner while handling my complaint.
Procedural Justice (Smith et al., 1999)	Customer perceptions of fairness in the processes used to resolve complaints. This includes aspects such as procedural clarity, consistency, and flexibility in handling complaints.	1) The process for lodging complaints with this seller is easily accessible. 2) The procedures used by the seller to handle my complaint are clear and easy to understand. 3) I feel I have the opportunity to voice my opinions during the complaint-handling process. 4) My complaint was handled promptly by the seller. 5) The seller's complaint-handling procedures are flexible and adaptable to my situation. 6) The complaint-handling process with this seller is carried out consistently and fairly.
Distributive Justice (Smith et al., 1999)	Customer perceptions of how fair the outcomes or compensation they receive are after filing a complaint.	1) The outcome of my complaint handling met my expectations. 2) The outcome of my complaint handling was fair. 3) The compensation provided by the seller was proportional to the loss I experienced. 4) The solution offered by the seller matched the level of loss I experienced. 5) The seller provided adequate compensation to address the loss I experienced. 6) I feel that the complaint-handling process left me satisfied overall.

Table 1. Operational definition and variable indicators of the variables studied (Continue)

Variables	Operational Definition	Indicators
Satisfaction with Complaint Handling (Tax et al., 1998)	How customers evaluate the way a company handles their complaints, including the process, outcomes, and interactions during the process.	1) Overall, I am satisfied with the way the seller handled my complaint. 2) My complaint was resolved thoroughly and satisfactorily. 3) Overall, the complaint-handling process with this seller provided me with a positive experience. 4) If I encounter an issue again, I would not hesitate to lodge a complaint with this seller. 5) I feel that this seller is committed to resolving my complaint effectively. 6) I feel that the complaint-handling process was carried out effectively.
Customer Trust (Tax et al., 1998)	Customer confidence that the company will keep its promises and act with integrity, especially in handling complaints.	1) I believe that this seller can be relied upon to fulfill their promises. 2) I trust that this seller handled my complaint honestly and fairly. 3) I feel that this seller had good intentions in resolving my issue. 4) I believe that this seller has the necessary capabilities to handle my complaint. 5) I am confident that this seller will resolve my issue even in unforeseen circumstances. 6) Based on my previous experience, I trust that this seller is always dependable in resolving complaints.
Customer Commitment (Tax et al., 1998)	The level of customer commitment to continue their relationship with the company after experiencing issues or dissatisfaction.	1) I intend to continue using this seller's products/services in the future. 2) I am inclined to choose this seller over competitors despite having experienced an issue. 3) I am satisfied with how the seller handled my complaint, which makes me committed to remaining a customer.

Table 1. Operational definition and variable indicators of the variables studied (Continue)

Variables	Operational Definition	Indicators
Customer Commitment (Tax et al., 1998)	The level of customer commitment to continue their relationship with the company after experiencing issues or dissatisfaction.	<p>4) I feel that I have invested time and effort in my relationship with this seller, and I want to stay committed.</p> <p>5) Despite previous issues, I still feel that this seller is the best choice for me.</p> <p>6) My past experiences make me want to remain loyal to this seller.</p>
Customer Loyalty (Wu et al., 2020)	The consumer's commitment to remain a customer and continue using a company's products or services.	<p>1) I plan to repurchase fashion products from this brand.</p> <p>2) I feel comfortable recommending fashion products from this brand to others.</p> <p>3) I prefer buying fashion products from this brand even when other options are available.</p> <p>4) I am not tempted to try fashion products from competitors, even if they offer significant discounts.</p> <p>5) I actively participate in the loyalty programs offered by this brand.</p>

4.4 Data Collection

Data for this study were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The link was shared through social media platforms such as Twitter, Line, WhatsApp, and Instagram. The questionnaire comprised five sections: general instructions, respondent screening, demographic and profile data, complaint behavior, personality categorization (passive, voicer, irate, activist), and statements related to research variables. Only respondents meeting specific criteria proceeded to answer research-related questions, assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. This structured, self-administered survey ensured the data collection aligned with the research objectives.

4.5 Data Analysis

This study employed Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) for data analysis, comprising two main stages: outer model evaluation and inner model evaluation (Hair et al., 2010). The outer model evaluation assessed construct validity and reliability using factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability (CR). Factor loadings of ≥ 0.70 were ideal, while values between 0.50 and 0.70 were acceptable in certain conditions. AVE ≥ 0.50 indicated good convergent validity, and CR ≥ 0.70 demonstrated strong construct reliability. Cross-loadings were analyzed to confirm discriminant validity.

The inner model evaluation examined the relationships between latent constructs using path coefficients, bootstrapping for statistical significance, and R-squared (R^2) values. Path coefficients above 0.50 were considered strong, while those above 0.20 were weak but significant. R^2 values indicated model predictive strength, categorized as substantial (0.75), moderate (0.50), or weak (0.25). Mediation analysis identified indirect effects, with bootstrapping using significance testing. These steps ensured model robustness and validated the research findings.

5. Findings

The study analyzed data from 174 respondents, predominantly male (68.97%) and aged 17-24 years (31.03%) and over 54 years (40.23%). Most resided in Bekasi (31.40%) and Jakarta (27.91%). A majority (72.99%) held a bachelor's degree or equivalent, indicating a high educational level. The majority were employed in the private sector (51.15%), while others were entrepreneurs (13.79%) or unemployed (10.34%). Regarding income, 35.63% earned above IDR 10,000,000 (35.63%), while 23.56% earned IDR 7,500,001-IDR 10,000,000. These characteristics highlight the respondents' high educational and income levels, factors that are critical in shaping consumer behavior and complaints in the e-commerce fashion industry.

5.1 Respondent Complaint Behaviour

The distribution of complaint types revealed that Voicer was the most dominant (130) complaints, followed by passive (80), irate (77), and activist (19). In terms of personality, most respondents were categorized as "Tends to Assertive" (87), followed by "Tends to Passive" (50). Assertive individuals, such as voicers (68) and irates (41), were more likely to file complaints, while passive individuals preferred non-confrontational methods. This aligns with research suggesting that assertive individuals actively address dissatisfaction, while passive personalities avoid overt complaints (Berry et al., 2018; Dörtyol et al., 2015).

Respondents highlighted various reasons for their complaints, reflecting different behaviors. Passive respondents often avoided complaining due to the perceived hassle (31) or chose to switch sellers (27). Voicers, motivated by obtaining compensation (70) and service improvements (67), predominantly used official marketplace channels (82) or directly contacted sellers (79). Irate respondents typically expressed dissatisfaction through low ratings to warn other consumers (53) or as an outlet for frustration (15). These findings underscore the importance of proactive complaint management, particularly for voicers and irates, whose feedback can significantly influence other potential customers.

The most complained-about products were upper wear (123 respondents), followed by pants (70) and shoes (54). The primary issue was mismatched product descriptions (119) and incorrect sizing (95). Complaints were most frequent for products priced between IDR 100,001 - IDR 200,000 (80). These findings align with studies showing that discrepancies in product descriptions and quality issues, such as substandard materials or manufacturing defects, are the main drivers of dissatisfaction in mid-tier online fashion purchases (Kim & Kim, 2010; Wang et al., 2023).

5.2 Descriptive Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted on key study variables to examine respondents' perceptions of Distributive Justice (DJ), Procedural Justice (RJ), and Interactional Justice (IJ) in complaint handling, as well as their levels of Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

(SC), Customer Trust (CT), Customer Commitment (CC), and Customer Loyalty (CL). The descriptive statistics, including mode, mean, standard deviation, and top-two box scores, help identify patterns in customer experiences and satisfaction levels with e-commerce complaint handling. Table 2 presents the result of descriptive analysis for this study.

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice in complaint handling, as well as their levels of satisfaction with complaint handling, customer trust, customer commitment, and customer loyalty

Indicators	Mode	Average	Standard Deviation	Top-Two Box (%)
Distributive Justice				
The complaint resolution met my expectations.	4	3.44	0.89	51.67
The complaint resolution was handled fairly.	4	3.48	0.85	56.67
The compensation provided was proportional to my loss.	4	3.26	0.93	44.17
The solution matched the extent of my loss.	4	3.35	0.87	46.67
The company provided appropriate compensation for my loss.	4	3.30	0.92	45.83
I feel overall satisfied with the complaint handling.	4	3.41	0.90	51.67
Interactional Justice				
The employee treated me with courtesy and respect.	4	3.54	0.82	60.00
The employee showed empathy for my issue.	4	3.42	0.83	53.33
The employee provided honest and transparent information.	4	3.43	0.77	50.00
I felt involved and heard.	4	3.48	0.85	58.33
I felt valued as a customer.	4	3.56	0.79	62.50
The employee communicated in a friendly and professional manner.	4	3.61	0.74	65.00
Procedural Justice				
The complaint submission process is accessible.	4	3.67	0.78	70.83
The complaint handling procedures are clear and understandable.	4	3.63	0.78	69.17
I have the opportunity to express my opinions.	4	3.70	0.74	72.50
My complaint was handled quickly.	4	3.48	0.91	56.67
The procedures are flexible and adaptive.	4	3.46	0.85	54.17
The process is consistent and fair.	4	3.63	0.74	60.83
Satisfaction with Complaint Handling				
Overall, I am satisfied with how the company handled my complaint.	4	3.51	0.83	59.17
My complaint was resolved thoroughly and satisfactorily.	4	3.52	0.85	55.83
Overall, the complaint handling provided a positive experience.	4	3.53	0.81	58.33
If I face an issue again, I will not hesitate to file a complaint with this company.	4	3.84	0.68	80.83
I feel that this company is committed to resolving complaints effectively.	4	3.70	0.73	69.17
I feel the complaint handling process was conducted effectively.	4	3.66	0.74	68.33

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice in complaint handling, as well as their levels of satisfaction with complaint handling, customer trust, customer commitment, and customer loyalty (Continue)

Indicators	Mode	Average	Standard Deviation	Top-Two Box (%)
Customer Commitment				
I believe this company is reliable in fulfilling its promises.	4	3.33	0.89	48.33
I trust that this company handles my complaints honestly and fairly.	4	3.25	0.93	45.00
I feel that this company has good intentions in resolving my issues.	4	3.39	0.84	51.67
I believe this company has the necessary ability to handle my complaints.	4	3.32	0.87	47.50
I am confident that this company will resolve my issues even in unexpected situations.	4	3.32	0.93	47.50
Based on my previous experience, I trust that this company is always dependable in handling complaints.	4	3.27	0.94	47,50
Customer Trust				
I intend to continue using this company's products/services in the future.	4	3.44	0.76	50.83
I am inclined to choose this company over competitors despite past issues.	4	3.54	0.68	57.50
I am satisfied with how the company handled my complaint, so I am committed to remaining a customer.	4	3.61	0.75	65.83
I feel that I have invested time and effort in my relationship with this company, so I want to stay committed.	4	3.65	0.73	66.67
Despite past issues, I still believe this company is the best choice for me.	4	3.50	0.83	57.50
My previous experience makes me want to remain loyal to this company.	4	3.48	0.86	55.00
Customer Loyalty				
I plan to repurchase fashion products from this company/brand.	3	3.06	0.90	32.50
I feel comfortable recommending fashion products from this brand/company to others.	3	3.09	0.91	36.67
I prefer buying fashion products from this brand despite other available options.	3	3.02	0.95	33.33
I am not tempted to try fashion products from competitors even if they offer big discounts.	3	2.91	0.94	28.33
I actively participate in the loyalty programs offered by this brand/product.	3	2.93	0.94	28.33

The descriptive analysis highlights key customer perceptions of justice dimensions, satisfaction, trust, commitment, and loyalty in e-commerce complaint handling. Procedural justice received the highest ratings, with complaint process accessibility achieving a Top-Two Box of 70.83%, indicating that customers perceive the process as transparent and easy to navigate. Interactional justice also performed well, with professional communication scoring 65.00%, emphasizing the importance of respectful interactions. However, distributive justice scored lower, particularly in compensation fairness (44.17%-45.83%), suggesting customers may perceive complaint resolutions as

inadequate. While satisfaction with complaint handling was moderately high (Top-Two Box = 69.17%), customer trust and loyalty remained lower, with trust in fair complaint handling at 45.00% and repurchase intent at only 32.50%. These findings indicate that satisfaction contributes to trust and commitment but does not consistently drive loyalty. Businesses should enhance distributive fairness and trust-building efforts to strengthen long-term customer retention and brand loyalty.

5.3 Outer Models

Table 3 presents the factor loading results and AVE for each variable. According to Hair et al. (2010), factor loading should exceed 0.7, while AVE values must be at least 0.5. In this study, all indicators meet the factor loading criteria. Furthermore, each variable satisfied the AVE and Cronbach Reliability criteria, exceeding the 0.5 threshold, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The value of factor loadings, cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, AVE, and r-square.

Variables and Indicators	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	AVE	R-Square
Distributive Justice (DJ)					
DJ1	0.892	0.954	0.963	0.812	
DJ2	0.875				
DJ3	0.896				
DJ4	0.918				
DJ5	0.914				
DJ6	0.912				
Interactional Justice (IJ)					
IJ1	0.775	0.904	0.925	0.675	
IJ2	0.788				
IJ3	0.763				
IJ4	0.850				
IJ5	0.873				
IJ6	0.871				
Procedural Justice (RJ)					
RJ1	0.851	0.936	0.949	0.756	
RJ2	0.899				
RJ3	0.878				
RJ4	0.843				
RJ5	0.876				
RJ6	0.869				
Satisfaction with Complaint Handling (SC)					
SC1	0.904	0.936	0.950	0.762	0.743
SC2	0.902				
SC3	0.765				
SC4	0.830				
SC5	0.906				

Table 3. The value of factor loadings, cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, AVE, and r-square (Continue)

Variables and Indicators	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	AVE	R-Square
Customer Commitment (CC)					
CC1	0.879	0.956	0.964	0.819	0.462
CC2	0.907				
CC3	0.892				
CC4	0.921				
CC5	0.919				
CC6	0.910				
Customer Trust (CT)					
CT1	0.842	0.945	0.956	0.785	0.771
CT2	0.894				
CT3	0.894				
CT4	0.893				
CT5	0.911				
CT6	0.882				
Customer Loyalty (CL)					
CL1	0.890	0.922	0.941	0.762	0.569
CL2	0.898				
CL3	0.897				
CL4	0.792				
CL5	0.883				

5.3 Inner Models

Table 4 presents the results of the path coefficient analysis, highlighting the direct effects between the variables in the research model. These coefficients illustrate the magnitude and significance of the direct relationships, offering insights into how each independent variable influences the dependent variables.

Table 4. Path coefficient of direct relationship between variables

Paths	Path Coefficient (O)	t-statistics	p-values	Hypothesis Conclusion
CC → CL	0.728	9.686	0.000**	Accepted
CT → CL	0.036	0.353	0.724	Rejected
DJ → SC	0.373	2.617	0.009**	Accepted
IJ → SC	0.153	1.998	0.046*	Accepted
RJ → SC	0.435	2.560	0.010**	Accepted
SC → CC	0.680	10.532	0.000**	Accepted
SC → CT	0.878	34.599	0.000**	Accepted

Note: DJ= Distributive Justice; IJ=Interactional Justice; RJ=Prosedural Justice; SC=Satisfaction with Complaint Handling; CT=Customer Trust CC=Customer Commitment, CL=Customer Loyalty; *: significant on 5%; **: significant on 1%

The results highlight significant relationships among the studied variables, emphasizing key drivers of customer loyalty and satisfaction. Customer commitment strongly influences customer loyalty ($B = 0.728$, $t\text{-value} = 9.686$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that emotional attachment fosters loyalty even in competitive e-commerce environments. In contrast, customer trust does not significantly impact customer loyalty ($B = 0.036$, $t\text{-value} = 0.353$, $p = 0.724$), suggesting that trust alone is insufficient to drive loyalty.

Among the justice dimensions, distributive justice significantly enhances satisfaction with complaint handling ($B = 0.373$, $t\text{-value} = 2.617$, $p = 0.009$), demonstrating that fair resolutions improve customer satisfaction. Interactional justice also positively affects satisfaction with complaint handling ($B = 0.153$, $t\text{-value} = 1.998$, $p = 0.046$), indicating that respectful and empathetic treatment during complaint resolution enhances customer perceptions. Procedural justice has a strong positive effect on satisfaction with complaint handling ($B = 0.435$, $t\text{-value} = 2.560$, $p = 0.010$), underscoring the importance of transparent and efficient complaint processes. Moreover, satisfaction with complaint handling significantly enhances customer commitment ($B = 0.680$, $t\text{-value} = 10.532$, $p = 0.000$), revealing that satisfied customers develop stronger commitment to the company. Additionally, it has a highly significant impact on customer trust ($B = 0.878$, $t\text{-value} = 34.599$, $p = 0.000$), reinforcing that effective complaint handling fosters trust. These findings suggest that commitment, rather than trust, plays a more dominant role in fostering customer loyalty, while perceived justice strongly influences satisfaction, which in turn strengthens trust and commitment in e-commerce fashion. In addition to the direct relationships between variables discussed earlier, the bootstrapping process also revealed indirect effects mediated by intervening variables, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Path coefficient of indirect relationship between variables

Indirect Paths	Original sample (O)	t-statistics	p-values	Hypothesis Conclusion
DJ \rightarrow SC \rightarrow CC \rightarrow CL	0.185	2.449	0.014*	Accepted
IJ \rightarrow SC \rightarrow CC \rightarrow CL	0.076	1.918	0.055	Rejected
DJ \rightarrow SC \rightarrow CT \rightarrow CL	0.012	0.310	0.757	Rejected
IJ \rightarrow SC \rightarrow CT \rightarrow CL	0.005	0.280	0.780	Rejected
RJ \rightarrow SC \rightarrow CT \rightarrow CL	0.014	0.358	0.721	Rejected
RJ \rightarrow SC \rightarrow CC \rightarrow CL	0.216	2.395	0.017*	Accepted

Note: DJ= Distributive Justice; IJ=Interactional Justice; RJ=Prosedural Justice; SC=Satisfaction with Complaint Handling; CT=Customer Trust CC=Customer Commitment, CL=Customer Loyalty; *: significant on 5%; **: significant on 1%

The analysis of indirect effects in Table 5 shows that most pathways to customer loyalty are non-significant. Distributive justice, interactional justice, and procedural justice do not significantly impact customer loyalty through customer trust ($p = 0.757$, 0.780 , and 0.721 , respectively), indicating that trust is not a crucial mediator. Additionally, the indirect effect of interactional justice on customer loyalty via satisfaction with complaint handling and customer commitment is only marginally significant at a 10% error level ($B = 0.076$, $p = 0.055$), suggesting that while empathetic interactions improve satisfaction, they do not strongly drive loyalty. However, two pathways show significant effects: distributive justice enhances customer loyalty through satisfaction with complaint handling and customer commitment ($B = 0.185$, $p = 0.014$), while procedural justice influences customer loyalty through the same mediators ($B = 0.216$, $p = 0.017$). These results highlight that commitment, rather than trust, plays a stronger role in driving loyalty, and that fair complaint-handling processes and outcomes are crucial for sustaining customer relationships in e-commerce.

6. Discussion

6.1 The Role of Interactional Justice in Enhancing Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

The study confirms that interactional justice positively influences satisfaction with complaint handling, highlighting the importance of respectful, empathetic, and transparent communication in shaping fairness perceptions during complaint resolution. Customers who feel valued and respected are more likely to view the process positively,

even if the final resolution does not fully meet their expectations. However, the moderate impact of interactional justice suggests that courteous interactions alone are insufficient to drive satisfaction. This underscores the need to integrate procedural and distributive justice, which have a stronger influence on satisfaction. In digital e-commerce environments, where face-to-face interactions are absent, clear and proactive communication is essential to ensuring customers feel heard and supported throughout the complaint-handling process.

These findings align with prior research by Idris et al. (2023) and Girsang et al. (2022), which underscore the role of Interactional Justice in enhancing satisfaction through respectful treatment. Furthermore, Cambra-Fierro et al. (2015) highlight that the absence of direct interaction in e-commerce heightens the need for clear and timely communication. Studies by Petzer et al. (2017) and Filho et al. (2023) emphasize that Interactional Justice is most effective when complemented by procedural and distributive justice, creating a holistic justice framework that maximizes customer satisfaction and loyalty.

6.2 The Role of Procedural Justice in Enhancing Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

This study confirms that the hypothesis stating procedural justice significantly enhances satisfaction with complaint handling is accepted, emphasizing the importance of clear, timely, and consistent complaint resolution processes. The findings suggest that when customers perceive the complaint-handling process as structured, accessible, and transparent, their satisfaction increases. Procedural justice plays a crucial role in reducing uncertainty, ensuring that customers feel their concerns are handled fairly and efficiently. The significant impact of procedural justice highlights the necessity of well-defined complaint mechanisms for improving customer satisfaction, particularly in e-commerce environments where interactions are predominantly digital. In the absence of face-to-face engagement, clear procedural guidelines, responsive support systems, and flexible complaint-handling policies are essential for reinforcing fairness perceptions and ensuring a positive resolution experience for customers.

These results align with prior research emphasizing the pivotal role of Procedural Justice in complaint handling. Russo et al. (2022) and Chen and Kim (2017) highlight that transparent and efficient processes significantly enhance satisfaction by alleviating customer vulnerability in the absence of face-to-face interactions. Additionally, studies by Filho et al. (2023) and Zulkieflimansyah et al. (2021) demonstrate that integrating Procedural, Distributive, and Interactional Justice creates a holistic approach that enhances customer perceptions and fosters loyalty. Procedural Justice thus emerges as a cornerstone of effective complaint handling, reinforcing its importance in shaping customer experiences and strengthening competitive positioning.

6.3 The Role of Distributive Justice in Enhancing Satisfaction with Complaint Handling

This study confirms that the hypothesis regarding the significant impact of distributive justice on satisfaction with complaint handling is accepted, emphasizing the importance of fair and proportional resolutions in addressing customer complaints. Distributive justice reflects the perceived fairness of outcomes, such as refunds, replacements, or compensations, which play a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction. The findings indicate that customers who perceive resolutions as fair and aligned with their expectations report higher satisfaction levels, reinforcing the necessity of ensuring equitable complaint resolutions. In e-commerce, where issues such as delivery delays

and product mismatches are common, timely and appropriate compensations are essential for maintaining positive customer perceptions and fostering long-term loyalty.

These findings align with previous research. Studies by Aslam et al. (2019) and Rizan et al. (2020) affirm that fair and timely outcomes significantly enhance satisfaction, particularly in cases of delays or defective products. Similarly, Winarko (2022) emphasizes that resolutions aligned with customer expectations improve satisfaction. Moreover, Evelina (2022) and Pham and Ahammad (2017) highlight that integrating Distributive Justice with Procedural and Interactional Justice creates a holistic approach to complaint handling, ensuring fairness across all dimensions, fostering loyalty, and supporting long-term retention in the competitive e-commerce landscape.

6.4 The Role of Satisfaction with Complaint Handling in Enhancing Customer Trust

This study confirms that satisfaction with complaint handling has a significant and strong influence on customer trust, highlighting that effective complaint handling fosters trust in e-commerce platforms. Fairness, transparency, and responsiveness in addressing complaints play a crucial role in shaping customer perceptions of reliability and commitment. When customers feel that their concerns are handled satisfactorily, they develop greater trust in the retailer, reinforcing confidence in future interactions. This trust forms the foundation for long-term customer relationships, ensuring consumers perceive the company as dependable and fair in addressing issues.

These results align with prior research, such as Pashaie et al. (2022) and Morgeson et al. (2020), who emphasize that satisfaction with complaint handling builds trust by demonstrating retailer reliability and fostering stronger relationships. Kania and Salsabila (2023) highlight that satisfaction enhances positive justice perceptions, directly strengthening trust. Furthermore, Indrawati (2024) notes that perceived service quality boosts satisfaction, ultimately improving trust in e-commerce platforms. Collectively, these studies confirm that satisfaction is a key driver of trust and loyalty, especially in competitive online marketplaces where trust is vital for sustaining customer relationships.

6.5 The Role of Satisfaction with Complaint Handling in Enhancing Customer Commitment

This study confirms that satisfaction with complaint handling strongly influences customer commitment, emphasizing the role of effective complaint resolution in fostering psychological attachment and long-term loyalty. Customers who perceive fair and prompt resolution feel valued and appreciated, strengthening their commitment to the brand. This commitment encourages repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth, even in highly competitive e-commerce markets with readily available alternatives. These findings highlight the crucial role of customer satisfaction in sustaining long-term relationships and ensuring continued engagement and loyalty despite previous service failures.

These findings align with prior research by Utama (2024) and Evelina (2022), which emphasize that prompt and fair complaint handling enhances customer commitment by fostering trust and a sense of value. Ellitan and Suhartatik (2023) and Olawale et al. (2023) further highlight that e-service quality and effective resolution processes are key factors in fostering commitment, leading to repeat purchases and positive referrals. Collectively, these studies reinforce that satisfaction with complaint handling is essential for building emotional connections and securing long-term customer loyalty in e-commerce settings.

6.6 The Role of Customer Trust in Enhancing Customer Loyalty

This study reveals that the hypothesis that customer trust significantly influences customer loyalty is rejected, suggesting that trust alone is insufficient to drive loyalty in this context. This finding contrasts with its conventional role as a key factor in sustaining long-term customer relationships. While trust is traditionally considered essential for sustaining long-term relationships, the results indicate that other factors, such as satisfaction with complaint handling and customer commitment, play a more substantial role in fostering repeat purchases and long-term loyalty. In competitive e-commerce markets, with abundant alternatives, emotional commitment, and positive complaint-handling experiences may exert a stronger influence on consumer retention than trust alone.

These results differ from prior research, which consistently emphasizes trust as a key driver of loyalty. Studies by Nofrizal et al. (2023) and Aslam et al. (2019) highlight that trust fosters repeat purchases and strengthens customer relationships. Additionally, Zhang et al. (2021) and Kurniadi (2023) find that trust's role is often mediated by satisfaction, suggesting a conditional rather than direct influence. This study aligns with these nuances, underscoring that trust alone may not be a primary driver of loyalty in all contexts, particularly in digital marketplaces.

6.7 The Role of Customer Commitment in Enhancing Customer Loyalty

This study confirms that customer commitment significantly influences customer loyalty, reinforcing the crucial role of emotional attachment in sustaining long-term customer relationships. Customers with a strong psychological bond to a brand are more likely to remain loyal despite competitive alternatives. These findings emphasize that commitment, rather than trust alone, is the primary driver of repeat purchases and advocacy. To enhance loyalty, brands must foster positive customer experiences and consistently deliver on promises, ensuring deep and lasting customer connection.

These findings align with previous research, such as Yo et al. (2021) and Ajit et al. (2024), which emphasize that customer commitment significantly correlates with loyalty, driven by positive experiences and reliable service. Goutam and Gopalakrishna (2018) further highlight the interconnection between commitment and loyalty, with trust and service quality as foundational factors. Rahman et al. (2022) add that e-commerce innovation and service quality enhance satisfaction, reinforcing both commitment and loyalty. This study reaffirms the critical role of commitment in fostering loyalty, particularly in competitive e-commerce markets.

6.8 Managerial Implication

This study provides actionable insights for e-commerce businesses, particularly in enhancing customer satisfaction with complaint handling. Procedural and distributive justice emerged as the most critical factors influencing satisfaction, reinforcing the need for businesses to focus on efficient resolution processes and fair outcomes. Descriptive analysis supports this, revealing strong agreement on complaint accessibility (procedural justice) but lower perceptions of fairness in compensation (distributive justice). While customers appreciate clear and accessible complaint procedures, businesses must improve complaints resolutions to ensure refunds, replacements, or compensations are perceived as fair. Strengthening these aspects will enhance trust, satisfaction, and overall customer experience.

The study also highlights the importance of interactional justice in shaping satisfaction with complaint handling. Customers responded positively to courteous and professional communication, indicating that empathetic and transparent interactions significantly impact satisfaction. However, moderate trust ratings (regarding fairness in complaint handling) suggest that politeness alone is insufficient to build strong trust. Businesses should invest in digital tools such as automated responses and proactive updates to keep customers informed throughout the complaint-handling process. Additionally, training customer service representatives in empathetic communication will further enhance trust and long-term customer relationships.

Furthermore, satisfaction with complaint handling plays a key mediating role in driving customer commitment and trust. The descriptive analysis indicates relatively strong satisfaction ratings (for the company's commitment to resolving complaints), suggesting that customers value effective complaint resolution. However, customer loyalty remains moderate (for repurchase intentions), indicating that satisfaction does not always translate into strong brand loyalty. To improve this, businesses must move beyond transactional fairness and focus on fostering emotional connections with customers through personalized engagement, proactive communication, and relationship-building strategies.

The study also reveals that customer commitment is a stronger driver of customer loyalty than trust, underscoring the role of emotional attachment in retaining customers. Given that commitment received moderate ratings, businesses must prioritize strategies that reinforce commitment, such as consistent service quality, reliable fulfillment of promises, and personalized customer experiences. Investing in CRM systems, loyalty programs, and proactive post-complaint follow-ups can strengthen customer bonds and encourage repeat purchases, which are essential for sustaining long-term relationships in e-commerce.

E-commerce businesses must integrate trust-building efforts into broader strategies that emphasize satisfaction and emotional commitment. Transparent practices, effective communication, and high service quality should be complemented by adaptive resolution mechanisms to maximize loyalty. Since satisfaction with complaint handling strongly influences both trust and commitment, companies must ensure that resolutions are not only fair but also effectively communicated and implemented. By adopting holistic complaint management strategies, businesses can enhance customer retention, strengthen long-term relationships, and gain a competitive edge in the digital marketplace.

6.9 Theoretical Contribution

This study advances the theoretical understanding of justice theory, consumer behavior, and complaint handling in e-commerce by demonstrating the distinct impacts of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice on satisfaction with complaint handling, with distributive and procedural justice exerting stronger influences. The findings highlight satisfaction as a critical mediator linking justice perceptions to customer trust and customer commitment, with commitment emerging as the dominant driver of loyalty. This reinforces the greater role of emotional engagement over cognitive trust in fostering long-term loyalty. While interactional justice positively affects satisfaction, descriptive analysis indicates that customers prioritize fair outcomes and structured processes, emphasizing the need for transparent and efficient complaint resolution.

By applying justice theory to the e-commerce fashion industry, this study extends its scope by linking fairness perceptions to post-complaint consumer behavior and long-term relational outcomes. The research underscores that satisfaction with complaint handling enhances and also strengthens commitment, ultimately driving repeat purchases and brand advocacy. These insights contribute to both theoretical advancements and managerial strategies, emphasizing the need for fair resolutions, structured complaint-handling mechanisms, and proactive customer engagement to sustain loyalty and competitiveness in the digital marketplace.

6.10 Limitations

This study has several limitations. Its focus on the e-commerce fashion industry in the Jabodetabek region may limit the generalizability of findings to other industries or regions. The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as social desirability and recall inaccuracies, which may affect response objectivity. Additionally, the study does not account for moderating variables, such as demographics, cultural differences, or personality traits, which could influence the relationships among variables. The use of cross-sectional data further limits the ability to observe changes in customer perceptions and behaviors over time, restricting causal inferences. Future research should explore diverse industries and regions, adopt longitudinal designs to track shifts in customer loyalty, and incorporate moderating factors to refine insights into how customer segments respond to complaint handling practices. Additionally, examining the role of emerging technologies, such as AI and automation, in enhancing justice perceptions and complaint resolution could provide valuable practical and theoretical contributions to the evolving digital consumer landscape.

7. Conclusions

This study concludes that satisfaction with complaint handling serves as a crucial mediator between justice dimensions (distributive, procedural, and interactional justice) and key customer outcomes, namely customer commitment and customer trust. Among these dimensions, distributive and procedural Justice emerged as the most influential factors, emphasizing the importance of fair outcomes and transparent processes in e-commerce complaints-handling. While interactional justice had a less pronounced effect, its role in fostering respectful and empathetic interactions remains important in complementing procedural and distributive fairness.

The findings further highlight that customer commitment is a stronger driver of loyalty compared to trust, emphasizing the importance of fostering emotional attachment through effective complaint resolution. This underscores the necessity for e-commerce businesses to invest in robust complaint handling systems that prioritize fair resolutions, efficient processes, and empathetic communication. By addressing these factors, companies can enhance customer satisfaction, build trust, and cultivate long-term loyalty, ensuring sustainable growth in a competitive digital marketplace. These conclusions provide valuable insights for both academic discourse and managerial practices in e-commerce.

8. Recommendation

Future research should expand beyond the e-commerce fashion sector in Jabodetabek to include diverse industries, such as electronics, home goods, and services, as well as cross-cultural and international comparisons to identify universal principles and localized strategies for complaint handling. Longitudinal designs could provide insights into the long-term sustainability of loyalty by capturing how satisfaction, trust, and commitment

evolve over time. To address methodological limitations, future studies should incorporate diverse data sources, such as behavioral analytics, transactional data, and customer reviews, to complement self-reported surveys. Examining moderating factors, such as demographics, cultural differences, and personality traits, could refine theoretical frameworks and improve segmentation strategies. Additionally, investigating the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, chatbots, and automation, in shaping justice perceptions and satisfaction would offer valuable insights into modernizing complaint management. These advancements would deepen theoretical understanding and inform practical strategies for improving customer experiences in the evolving e-commerce landscape.

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