

# The Mediating Effect of the Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Behavior Relationship of Electronic Gadgets in Bangkok, Thailand

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## Article History

**Received:** 3 March 2022

**Revised:** 21 April 2022

**Published:** 21 April 2022

## Abstract

This research aims to investigate the relationship between customer satisfaction and the repurchase behavior of Thailand's electronic gadget shoppers. This research used a quantitative method by conducting online surveys of 378 customers of electronic gadget shops in Bangkok, Thailand to test the 6 hypotheses. Measures of latent variables were designed and developed through three steps: translation back translation, Item-Objective Congruence, and a pilot test. The research model was analyzed using the confirmatory factor analysis approach in Amos software. Finally, the Structural Equation Modeling technique was finally used for data analysis. The results revealed that customer trust, commitment, and perceived product value provided partial mediation of the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase behavior. Also, this research confirms a previous study that found a significant relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior was influenced but appears to be complex. Future research should investigate unimportant mediators (e.g., information sharing, perceived service values) from this research in other types of items with noticeable repurchase patterns.

**Keywords:** Customer Satisfaction, Repurchase Behavior, Electronic Gadget

## Introduction

In marketing and business management, customer repurchase is recognised as important (Kim et al., 2021) because keeping existing customers is cheaper than finding new ones (Rahim et al., 2021). That is, when customers repurchase products and services from retailers, retailers will incur lower costs as a result of the lower marketing costs (e.g., the costs of advertisement and promotional campaigns) and the higher sales volume from increasing purchases. As a result, the repurchase rate of customers leads to an increase in business profit (Leecharoen, 2019). With respect to the importance of customers repurchase, previous research considerably examines the determinants of repurchase behavior product in the same brand and finds customer satisfaction to be a major factor (Kim et al., 2021).

However, the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior appears to be complex, as some researchers discovered that satisfied customers do not always repurchase products because of previous purchasing and satisfying experiences. A customer's high level of satisfaction, therefore, does not automatically guarantee that he/she would repurchase the products (Leecharoen, 2019). As a result, customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior

**Citation Information:** Leecharoen, B., & Chaiyapan, S. (2022). The Mediating Effect of the Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Behavior Relationship of Electronic Gadgets in Bangkok, Thailand. *Asian Administration and Management Review*, 5(1), 52-64. <https://doi.org/10.14456/aamr.2022.6>.

relationship may need additional explanatory variables in order to enhance the explanation and prediction power of satisfaction on repurchase response. Therefore, the research question is to look into the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior. In response to calls for greater understanding of the relationship, the research questions for this study are what factors influence customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior?

This research particularly focuses on shoppers of electronic gadgets. Electronic gadget is a small mechanical or electronic device that has a practical use but is frequently thought of as a novelty such as a computer, a laptop, a digital camera, a mobile phone, a digital pen, a smart watch, and so on (Ivana et al., 2021). When customers buy gadget, they typically spend time researching the products, comparing prices, and weighing the benefits of different stores before deciding to purchase the products. As a result, buying patterns and reasons for repurchasing gadgets from electronic and IT retail shoppers can be observed and investigated.

Researchers are interested in gadgets since they impact current lifestyles in the 5G age and are a revenue-generating business. Electronic gadgets are now expanding and playing a key role for Thailand's economy (Ma, 2020). The value of purchasing IT products has grown by 5% every year in Thailand. According to a recent Ma (2020), 88 percent of Thai consumers asked anticipated to spend more on consumer electronics in the next three years, or approximately the same as they do currently. Due to the increased acceptance of their parent goods and middle-class customers' eagerness to embrace the newest technology, demand for earbuds, headphones, chargers, and remotes is surging. Moreover, the advancement of technology in Thailand is driving down the prices of electronic items, resulting in a rapid proliferation of electronic gadgets. High-speed internet access and health consciousness are two of the factors that are moving Thailand's consumer electronics sector ahead.

In response to calls for greater understanding of the relationship, this research found two relevant variables which are expected to be mediators of customer satisfaction-repurchase behaviour relationship. Regarding the mediators, the effect of satisfaction on repurchase behaviour is proposed to be mediated by relationship quality (information sharing, customer trust, customer commitment) and perceived shopping values (product value and in-store service value). While there are numerous studies on satisfaction and repurchase behaviour, not many studies identify which factors affect both satisfaction and repurchase behaviour. Our research aims to fill this gap by measuring the impacts of the mentioned factors on satisfaction and repurchase intention in Thailand's gadget shopping market. This research particularly focuses on shoppers of electronic gadgets in Bangkok Because Bangkok is the city with the highest sales of the gadgets (Yongpisanphob, 2021). The findings from this research contributes to the existing literature in enhancing the understanding of repurchase behaviour of satisfied customers and for practitioners in providing an insight into the marketing strategy development in increasing customer's repurchase rate.

Research objectives are: 1) to develop modified conceptual models for the influence of customer satisfaction on repurchase behaviour 2) to verify the developed conceptual models and test hypotheses with regard to the mediating variables; relationship quality (information sharing, customer trust, customer commitment) and perceived shopping values (product value, and in-store service value), on the influence of customer satisfaction on repurchase behaviour and 3) to provide the implication and recommendations for theoretical development and management especially electronic gadget industry in Bangkok, Thailand.

## **Literature Review**

### **Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Behavior Relationship**

Research on the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior has been consistently conducted over the years (Leecharoen, 2020). In regard to the link between the customer satisfaction and repurchase, there are two main views among scholars in terms of the

customers satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationship (Nguyen et al., 2021; Fauzi & Rini, 2022). In general, several researchers have reported that customer satisfaction has a strong effect on customer repurchase (Curtis, 2009). When customers will satisfy with a particular shop, it will very likely that they would purchase the same brand s again (Rodrigues, 2021).

Customer satisfaction is measured at the time of purchase and usage of a product or service, as well as during the process of obtaining a product or receiving service (Gaberamos & Pasaribu, 2022). Consumers usually decide to buy or continue buying after assessing whether their experiences with the service or product have been satisfactory or pleasurable. In contrast, some studies found weak or negative relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior (Leecharoen, 2020). Nguyen et al. (2021) similarly stated that satisfied customers still possibly switch from the shops, and therefore higher customer satisfaction did not guarantee higher customer repurchase. Moreover, current evidence suggests that satisfaction has no direct effect on repurchase behavior under certain situations, for example, impulsive buying and offered better promotions from other shops.

Leecharoen (2020) found that high satisfaction did not lead to high repurchase frequency of product from the same brand. The researchers indicated that the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior will an indirect relationship and suggested that such relationship should be considered as a sequence of relationships with at least one intervening construct involved.

Previous research has found mixed results when it comes to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior. While most researchers indicate a very strong relationship between the two constructs, a few argue that the relationship is weak or non-existent. These findings suggested that the traditional relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior needed to be investigated further and specifically in order to obtain a high explaining and predicting power model. Thus, in this study, mediating variables are proposed to improve the explanatory power of customer satisfaction on repurchase behavior.

According to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior as explained above, it can be concluded that when the degree of overall pleasure of shopping products and services is high, the level of customer's repurchase rate also increases. Therefore, there is a possibility to propose the first hypothesis as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Customer satisfaction has a direct influence on repurchase behavior.

### **Mediating Variables**

**Relationship Quality:** Relationship quality has been discussed as a bundle of intangible value which augments products or services and results in an expected interchange between buyers and sellers (Rachjaibun, 2007). The more general concept of relationship quality is described as the ability for buyers to rely on seller's integrity and have confidence in the seller's future performance because the level of past performance had been consistently satisfactory. In general, a great deal of research has been conducted on various aspects of relationship quality and found that customer trust in the store and customer commitment to the store are two essential aspects of relationship quality and discovered that relationship quality helped attract and retain customer repurchase (Sohaib, 2022).

Tho's research, researchers have used all customer trust, customer commitment and information sharing to describe relationship quality (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The operational definition of the relationship quality is adapted from previous research and defined as the customer's evaluation on the degree of relationship with brand in terms of information sharing, customer trust in the shop, and commitment to brand's gadget.

Information sharing is defined as sharing information about products and services between customer and gadget's brand. Nowadays, several studies show that an increasing number of companies are turning to influencer marketing, with approximately 63 percent of large

companies planning to increase their budget for influencer marketing this year, and large companies' budgets for influencer marketing are growing in tandem with the continued and escalating popularity of social media (Xia et al., 2022). This research proposes that when customers are satisfied with brand's gadget products, they are willing to receive product information from gadget's brand so that they can follow the information related to products and the update of new products. As a result, the dealers would have a higher chance of customers coming back to repurchase the gadgets from the current brand. Therefore, second hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 2: Information sharing mediates the influence of customer satisfaction on repurchase behavior.

Customer trust in the brand plays a critical role in an enduring customer-brand relationship (Ananda et al., 2021; Leecharoen, 2019). This research adapts previous definitions to be the operational definition, which can reflect the facets of trust in the retail context. In this research, customer trust in the brand is defined as the confidence of customer in a brand gadget's reliability and integrity.

This research proposes that when customers are satisfied with shopping experience in the brand's gadget, the customers would have more trust in shopping at the same brand. In regard to the positive relationship between customer trust and repurchase, this relationship is confirmed by a large number of research (Budiyono et al., 2022). Confidence results from the belief that the trustworthy party is reliable and has high integrity (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In order to increase repurchase rate of customers, service providers must first develop trust (Leecharoen, 2020). In conclusion, a review of the literature shows that the higher customers' satisfaction with a brand's gadget, the more trust they have in it, which can directly lead to a higher repurchase rate. As a result, it is possible to propose customer trust as a mediator between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior.

Hypothesis 3: Customer trust mediates the influence of customer satisfaction on repurchase behavior.

Similar to customer trust, customer commitment appears to be one of the most important variables for predicting future repurchase behavior (Ananda et al., 2021). Literature review defined commitment as a desire to maintain a relationship (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), a pledge of continuity between parties (Dwyer et al., 1987), and the sacrifice or potential for sacrifice if a relationship ends (Leecharoen, 2020). To some others, customer commitment referred to an enduring desire to continue the relationship with a service provider (Ananda et al., 2021). The operational definition of customer commitment is therefore adapted from previous research in retail industry (Ananda et al., 2021). Customer commitment is defined as a customer's emotions which provoke the willingness of a customer to develop and maintain a durable relationship with the gadget. The importance of customer commitment for explaining customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationship has been generally recognized in the literature (Ananda et al., 2021). Previous research has shown that satisfaction is related to customer commitment in terms of satisfaction-customer commitment (e.g., Curtis, 2009). In general, satisfied customers were more committed to buyers and were more willing to improve and maintain an affective bond with the shop that made them feel satisfied and enjoyable (Leecharoen, 2019). Based on the relationship between these variables, it appears plausible to hypothesize that customer commitment to the shop could serve as a mediator between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior.

Hypothesis 4: Customer commitment mediates the influence of customer satisfaction on repurchase behavior.

**Perceived Shopping Values:** Pending the results of a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior, perceived shopping value will be proposed as a mediator of the customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationship. Perceived shopping value will

be defined as a customer's overall assessment of a product's utility based on perceptions of what will be received and what will be given (Gaberamos & Pasaribu, 2022). In accordance with the literature review, the operational definition means customers perceive the worthiness of shopping experiences in the gadget. Perceived shopping value in this research is composed two components. First, product value is a customer's perceived quality and expected performance of the product. Second, in-store service value is a customer's perceived service of the brand's gadget.

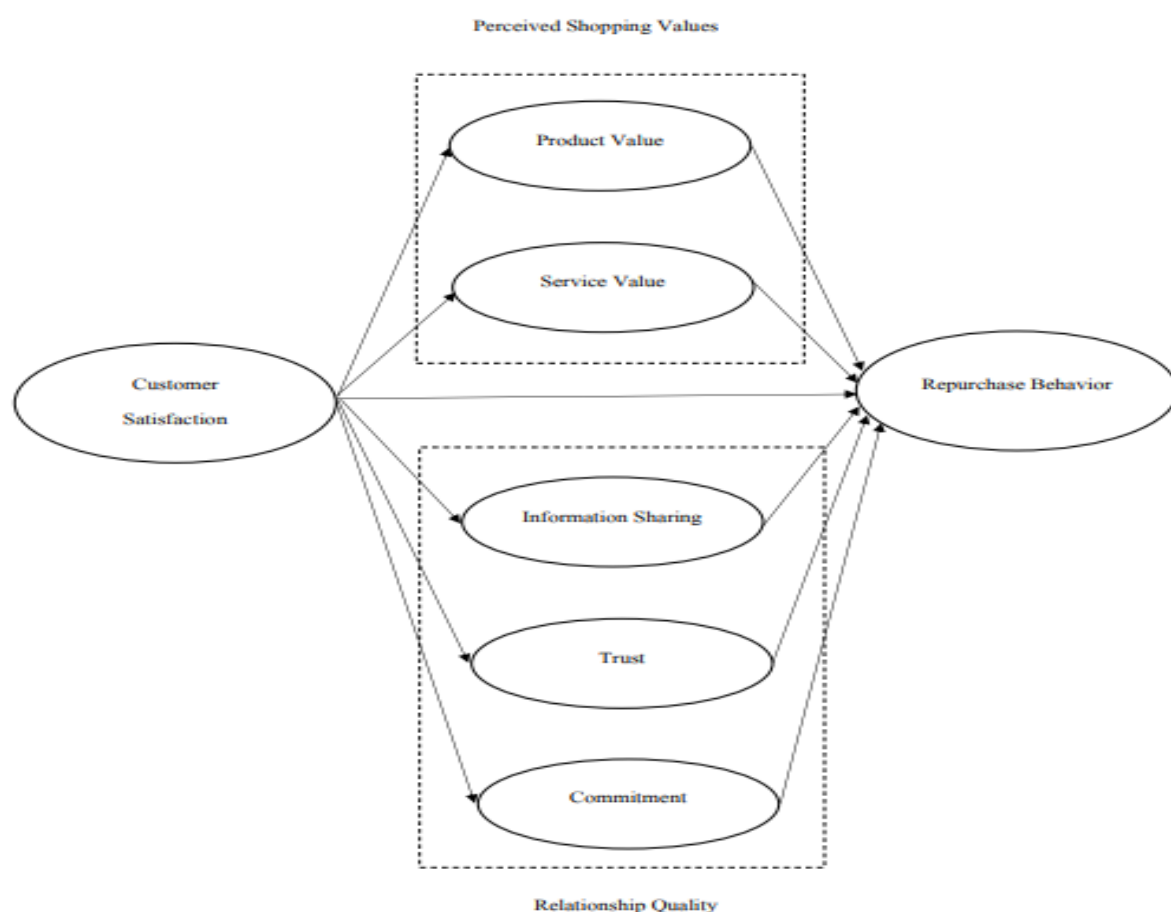
According to the researchers, the more customers perceived value from shopping at a product's brand, the more likely he or she would return to buy again. Based on these considerations, it is possible to conclude that perceived shopping values are a result of customer satisfaction, which leads to higher repurchase rates. This research expects that the relationship between customer satisfaction

and repurchase behavior could be better explained by customer's perceived shopping values. Therefore, hypotheses of shopping values are proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 5: Customer perceived product value mediates the influence of customer satisfaction on repurchase behavior.

Hypothesis 6: Customer perceived in-store service value mediates the influence of customer satisfaction on repurchase behavior.

This research developed a conceptual model by literature review and exploratory research where the independent variable in this research is customer satisfaction and the dependent variable is repurchased behavior. The mediating variables are relationship quality (information sharing, customer trust, customer commitment) and perceived shopping values (product and service value). The conceptual model is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Conceptual model for this research by literature review

## **Methods**

### **Population and Sample**

In this research, the target population refers to customers who have purchased electronic gadgets in Bangkok, Thailand by themselves from the same brands. Specifically, the customers must be in the age group of 22-49 years old because this age group has been a major target group for international electronic gadget e-magazines such as Gadget. This is because the people aged 22-49 years old are highly interested in electronic gadgets and frequently buy electronic gadgets more than other age groups (Buenafe et al., 2022). According to Boateng & Boateng (2018) suggests that a sample size of at least 200 respondents would be an appropriate minimum for Structural Equation Modeling. For conceptual models with seven constructs, the minimum sample size should be 400 (Hair et al., 2022). Therefore, this research was planned to collect data from a minimum of 400 samples.

### **Data Collection**

For this research, the researcher does not know the exact population because the population consists of customers who purchased the gadget between the ages of 22 and 49 in Bangkok, Thailand. In order to make a representative sampling, the sampling method will employ purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, which is a form of non-probability sampling. Then, we used the self-administration online questionnaires as a research tool. The online survey link will distribute to research samples in Bangkok via electronic gadget stores and educational institutions. The questionnaires included three screening questions in order to narrow the target population of this research: 1) Have you purchased electronic gadgets on your own in the last 12 months? 2) Have you ever purchased electronic gadgets under the same brand? 3) Do you fall between the ages of 22 and 49?. The processes of designing and developing questionnaire will composed of 3 steps: translation back translation, Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), and pilot test.

## **Results**

The response rate was 378 out of 400 questionnaires or 94.5%. The respondents were females accounted for 66.8% and males for 32.2% and had income in the range of less than 10,000-20,000 Baht. A large portion of the sample had a bachelor's degree 62.6%. The occupational composition of the respondents was student 22.1%, office worker 30.7%, business owner 19.6%, government official 18.6%, and professionals 9%.

Before analyzing SEM, the measurement items were developed to receive final items by eliminating measurement items and latent factors that did not make the model fit well. These final measurement items of each variable are presented in Table1 These variables have Cronbach's alpha in the range of 0.88-0.91 which can be considered that these variables have construct reliability and also high internal consistency.

**Table 1** Factor loading, % of variance and Cronbach's alpha of final scales

Variables	Items	Factor loadings	% Of variance	Cronbach's alpha
Repurchase behavior	RB 1	0.59	58.82	0.82
	RB 2	0.66		
	RB 3	0.56		
	RB 5	0.86		
	RB 6	0.78		
Customer satisfaction	SAT 2	0.64	72.22	0.86
	SAT 3	0.98		
	SAT 4	0.98		
	SAT 6	0.54		
Information sharing	INF 1	0.91	75.15	0.88
	INF 2	0.79		
	INF 3	0.89		
	INF 4	0.77		
Customer's trust	TRUST 1	0.81	66.04	0.83
	TRUST 2	0.77		
	TRUST 3	0.86		
Customer's commitment	COMMIT 1	0.85	85.53	0.91
	COMMIT 2	0.88		
	COMMIT 3	0.73		
Product value	PRO 1	0.54	69.96	0.88
	PRO 2	0.66		
	PRO 3	0.93		
	PRO 4	0.96		
	PRO 5	0.66		
In-store service value	SERVE 2	0.76	72.11	0.90
	SERVE 3	0.91		
	SERVE 4	0.87		
	SERVE 5	0.79		

### Testing Unmediated Relationship of Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Behavior

In order to test the first hypothesis that was customer satisfaction has a positive association with repurchase behavior, the SEM was first conducted without the mediation effect. The result of the first SEM indicated a good model fit with  $\chi^2 = 10.812$  with 15 degrees of freedom ( $p = 0.766$ ), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.02, Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) = 0.99, Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.97, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.99, and Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.99.

As expected, this research found that customer satisfaction was statistically significant and positively associated with repurchase behavior ( $\beta = 0.25$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, the first hypothesis was supported. Customer satisfaction has a positive relationship with repurchase behavior, according to this study's findings. The link between customer happiness and repurchase behavior, on the other hand, is complicated. Customer happiness explained 17% of the variation in repurchase behavior, according to the squared multiple correlation.

### Testing the Mediating Effects

With regards to the theoretical concept of testing mediators above, five mediators of this research: information sharing, customer trust, customer commitment, perceived product value and in-store service value, were included in to the SEM model as presented in Figure 2.

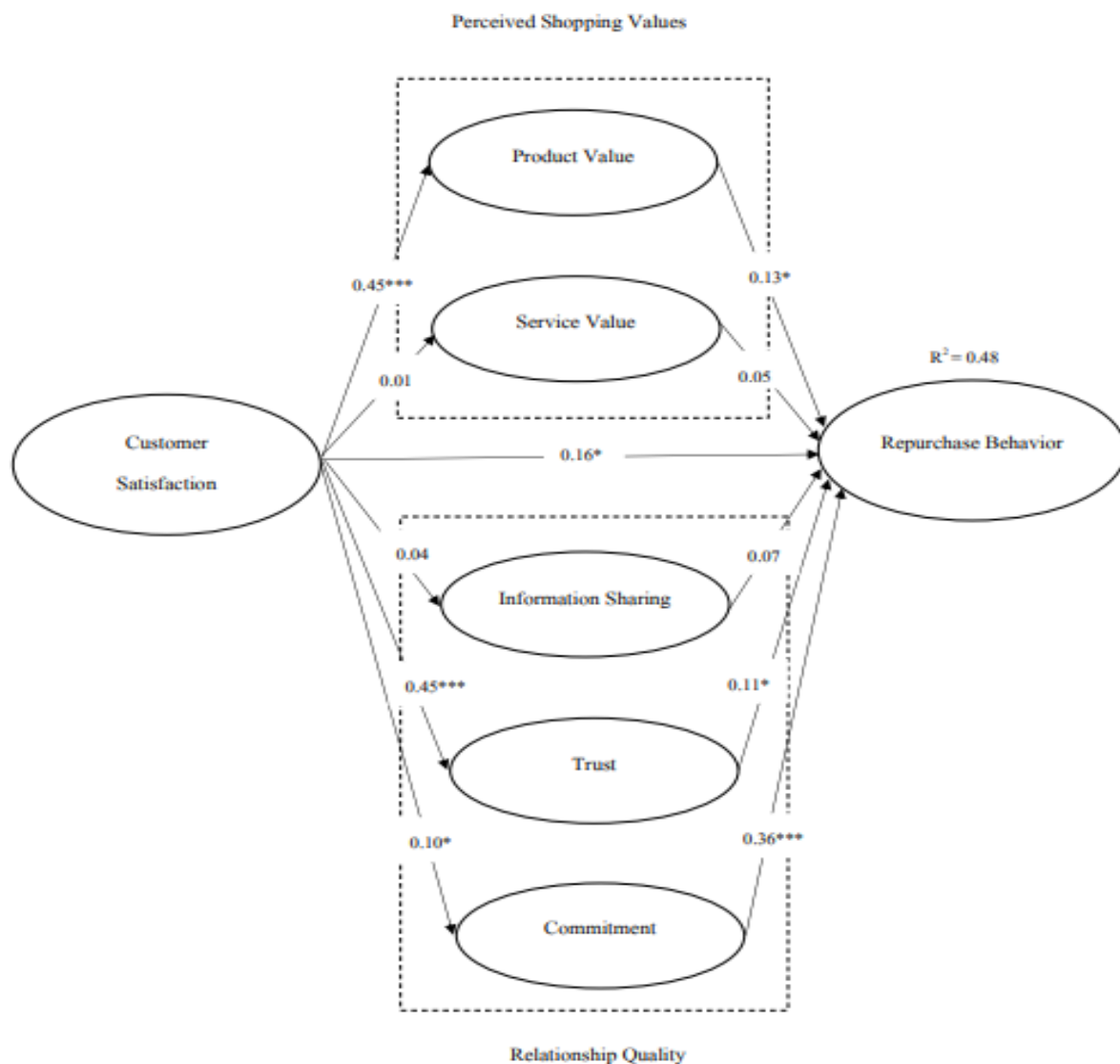


Figure 2 Hypotheses Testing



Those mediators were measured both direct and indirect relationships between customer satisfaction and behavioral repurchase. Path coefficients and their respective significance levels were assessed to determine whether the mediators mediate the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior.

All path coefficients of hypothesized relationships in the Figure 2 were presented in Table 2. This research found that customer's trust and customer's commitment partially mediated the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior. This result could be explained by referring to testing for mediation (Hair et al., 2022). The explanation of partial mediation consists of three steps:

- 1) Before testing mediators, the unmediated relationships between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior were significant influence ( $\beta = 0.25$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This ensures that the direct effect does exist.
- 2) According to Figure 2, customer satisfaction was positively and significantly related to customer's trust, commitment and perceived product value also those variables were significantly related to repurchase behavior. Thus, significant effects among the independent variable, the mediators and the dependent variable were supported.
- 3) The direct influence from the customer satisfaction to the repurchase behavior was reduced from 0.25 to 0.16 when trust, commitment and perceived product value were incorporated into the model. However, the relationship from the customer satisfaction to the repurchase behavior remained significant at  $p < 0.05$ . Therefore, trust and commitment were considered as partial mediators.

From the three-step mediation testing, therefore, the finding provided partial mediators, customer trust, commitment and product value on the influence between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior. Regarding information sharing and perceived in-store service value, the results did not support the mediating effects as shown in Figure 2.

Table 2 presented the squared multiple correlations which indicate the amount of variance in each variable accounted for by its predictors (Hair et al., 2022). The squared multiple correlations of repurchase behavior was 48%, indicating that 48% of the variance in repurchase behavior was explained by customer satisfaction, information sharing, customer trust, commitment, perceived product value and perceived in-store service value.

Regarding customer trust indicated that 47% of the variance in customer trust was explained by customer satisfaction. For customer commitment, 39% of its variance was explained by customer satisfaction. 33% and 4% of the variance in perceived product value and in-store service value respectively were explained by customer satisfaction.

**Table 2** Squared Multiple Correlations

Variable	Estimate
Repurchase behavior	0.48
Trust	0.47
Commitment	0.39
Product value	0.33
In-store service value	0.04

## Discussion and Conclusion

Customer satisfaction is regularly regarded as a key antecedent to repurchase behavior in the research study. Existing research, on the other hand, is unable to adequately explain why

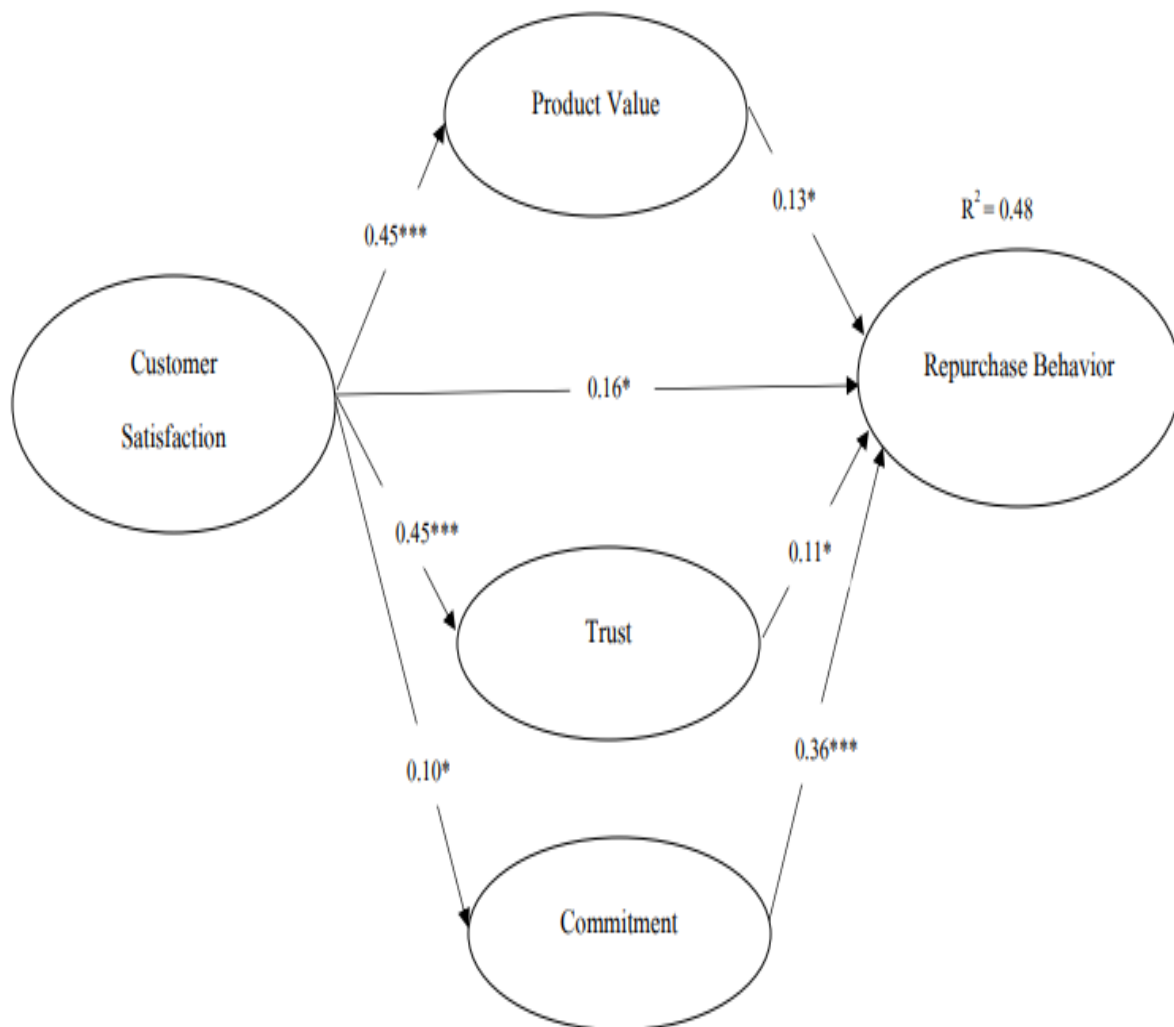
pleased consumers do not return to the same store despite having had a positive experience. In other words, strong customer happiness does not ensure customer repurchase (Tunjungsari et al., 2020). This research proposes five mediating variables are information sharing, customer trust, customer commitment, product value, and in-store service value.

In response to the research questions,

The results of hypotheses testing are presented to support the following hypotheses: H1, H3, H4, and H5. This research found statistically significant mediating effects of customer trust, commitment and perceived product value in the customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationship.

Unexpectedly, statistical tests did not support H2 and H6. The results present a non-significant mediating effect of information sharing and in-store service value on customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationship.

Figure 3 presents the final empirical model of the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior in the context of electronic gadget's brand product for this research.



**Figure 3** Final empirical model

As expected, H1 was supported. This research found that the unmediated relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior was positive and significant. The standardized path coefficient between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior was 0.25 (p 0.01). This finding is consistent with most of the extant literature, which indicates that there is a significant

relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior (e.g., Mariam et al., 2018; Leecharoen, 2019; Amoako et al., 2019). Generally, previous studies indicate that satisfaction positively affects repurchase behavior; customers want to continue their purchase because they are satisfied.

Regarding mediating effects, this research found that the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior was reduced but remained significant when customer trust, commitment, and product value were included as mediators. Therefore, partial mediation was supported.

For customer trust, the finding supported previous research that customers will be expected to purchase electronic gadgets they trust. In addition, trust plays a critical role in determining consumers' purchase decisions and repurchase (Budiyono et al., 2022). That is, a perception of trustfulness that a specific product or item has in the consumer's mind may provide the confidence in its sound performance and therefore motivate its purchase (Leecharoen, 2019). The more consumers trust a brand, the more they buy and use that brand. When customers are satisfied with shopping experiences in terms of user friendliness, quality, uniqueness, and performance, they will have more trust in the brands and shop more frequently at these brands. As a result, customers would continue to buy the same brands (Leecharoen, 2019).

Other researchers, in addition to customer commitment, support the mediating effect of customer commitment on the customer satisfaction-customer repurchase relationship (e.g., Erciş et al., 2012; Leecharoen, 2019). Erciş et al. (2012), for example, discovered a significant mediating effect of customer commitment on the customer satisfaction-customer repurchase relationship. It is understood that the more commitment satisfied customers have to the shop, the more likely they will stay with the same shop and the less likely they will switch to another shop.

Likewise, in fashion clothing retail, a few researchers have studied customer commitment as a mediator in the customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationship (Curtis, 2009; Leecharoen, 2019). For example, Curtis (2009) noted that satisfied customers repurchase jeans from the same brand because they are highly committed to the brand.

Regarding product value, research findings are consistent with the present literature review that found a positive relationship among customer satisfaction, perceived shopping values, and customer purchase. Leecharoen (2019) discovered that when customers are highly satisfied with purchasing product(s) from a specific shop, they perceive a product's value to be high. Study, Gaberamos & Pasaribu (2022) found a positive relationship between customer perceived shopping values and customer purchases on the Gofood application. That is, customer perceived value has a significant and positive effect on purchase intention. This means that the better the customer's perceived value, the higher the purchase intention. If the customer's perceived value decreases, the purchase intention also decreases.

## **Recommendation**

As the generalizability of the findings may be limited due to the scope of this research, future research could study customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationships in a wider range of electronic industries to present different repurchase reasons and patterns. Secondly, the customer satisfaction-repurchase behavior relationship needs to be further investigated to provide additional information about the mediating effects that remain unsolved from this research, such as perceived in-store service values. Previous research actually showed an expected impact of perceived in-store service value on customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior. However, statistical results showed a non-significant mediating effect of perceived shopping values on this relationship.

As a result, a study could be conducted to determine the conditions of significant and insignificant effects of perceived shopping values (i.e., in-store service) on the customer

satisfaction-repurchase behavior model. Future studies need to explore the role of different types of perceived shopping values. A newly established model, as a result, may provide better insight into the reason why satisfied customers repurchase the same brand.

Thirdly, online gadget retail has continuously become very popular nowadays as online shopping offers a wide selection, convenience, and instant repurchases. Therefore, it would be interesting to apply the developed conceptual model from this research to the study of online gadget retail. Such an attempt might reveal findings that contribute to the developed conceptual model and present the differences between online and off-line repurchase behavior.

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