**JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS**
***SOCIAL SCIENCE AND POLITICAL SCIENCE***
**DHARMAWANGSA UNIVERSITY**

# CONSUMER TRUST IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Cut Alma Nuraflah

Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik
Universitas Dharmawangsa
Email: cutalmanurfalah@dharmawangsa.ac.id

***Abstract***

Consumer trust is a critical aspect in business relationships and communication. When consumers have a high level of trust in a business, they are more likely to make transactions, choose products or services, and maintain long-term relationships. Currently, consumer trust is decreasing during the Covid-19 pandemic. The intention to shop for Indonesian people has decreased along with a decrease in the Purchase Plan Index of 10.5%. Separately, consumer shopping priorities have also changed, with more emphasis on basic needs such as electricity, medicines, and vitamins, as well as packages and loans that are often used for online activities. Meanwhile, people's consumer goods have also decreased. For example, eating out activities decreased by 84 percent, tourism-related trips decreased by 80 percent, and overnight stay activities decreased significantly. Consumer trust is known to be measured using the Consumer Confidence Index which is an indicator of consumer optimism or pessimism towards the current and future economic situation. So with this happening, efforts are made to increase consumer trust by building an interaction process between parties who do not yet know each other to build trust. There are three factors that shape a person's trust in others, namely ability, kindness and integrity, namely: Ability, Benevolence, Integrity.

*Keywords: Trust, Consumers.*

## Introduction

a. Understanding Consumer Trust Trust is the strength that a product has certain attributes. Consumers will express trust in various attributes owned by a brand and the product they evaluate. This trust is often referred to as object-attribute linkages, namely consumer trust about the possibility of a relationship between an object and its relevant attributes. (Sumarwan, 2011: 75). According to Mowen and Minor, consumer trust is all the knowledge possessed by consumers and all conclusions made by consumers about objects, attributes and their benefits. Objects can include products, people, companies, and anything that someone believes or does. Attributes are properties or characteristics that can be possessed by an object. (Mowen, 2002: 312) According to Hussein, attributes are characteristics of a product that are the basis of consumer trust. (Umar, 2003: 13) Two broad classes of attributes have been identified:

1) Intrinsic attributes are attributes that relate to the actual characteristics of the product.
2) External attributes are anything that comes from the external aspects of a product, such as brand name, packaging, and labels. Finally, benefits are the positive results that an attribute gives to consumers. (Mowen 2002: 312). Types of Consumer Trust In general, everyone who does business realizes that trust in objects, attributes, and benefits indicates consumer perception. However, what must be realized is that one consumer's trust is different from another consumer. They must also remember that their own trust in a particular brand is very different from the target market. Trust is said to represent the associations that consumers form between objects, attributes, and benefits based on cognitive learning processes.

A person forms three types of trust:

1) Object-attribute trust Knowledge about an object has a special attribute called object attribute trust. Object attribute trust connects an attribute with an object, such as a person, a good, or a service. So, the belief that a four-wheeled vehicle is driven on a country road is an object attribute trust. Through object attribute trust, consumers state what they know about something in terms of its attribute variations.
2) Benefit-attribute beliefs People look for products and services that will solve their problems and meet their needs. In other words, have attributes that will provide recognizable benefits. This relationship between attributes and benefits illustrates the second type of belief, called benefit-attribute beliefs. Benefit-attribute beliefs are consumers' perceptions about the extent to which a particular attribute produces, or delivers, a particular benefit. The perception that a vehicle driven on open ground provides a better view of the road is a benefit-attribute belief.
3) Benefit-object beliefs The third type of belief is formed by linking an object to its benefits. Benefit-object beliefs are consumers' perceptions about the extent to which a particular product, person, or service will deliver a particular benefit. (Mowen 2002: 312.)

**JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS**
***SOCIAL SCIENCE AND POLITICAL SCIENCE***
**DHARMAWANGSA UNIVERSITY**

b. Consumer Trust Indicators Trust occurs between parties who do not know each other in a dialogue or dialogue process. Trust itself is divided into two aspects, namely the intention to trust and the belief to trust. The intention to trust is something that happens intentionally when someone tries to rely on others in a certain situation, while the belief is the perception of the party who trusts (consumers) towards the party who trusts (sellers). Sellers have characteristics that benefit consumers. Bachman & Akbar stated that trust consists of three components, namely those that build trustworthiness (Bachman, 2006).

1. Integrity Consumer perception that the company follows acceptable principles such as keeping promises, ethical behavior, and honesty. The integrity of a company is determined by its consistency in the past, whether its communication with other groups is reliable, and whether the actions it takes are consistent with its promises and words. Integrity Indicators are honesty in providing information about a product. (Maulidiyahwati, 2017)
   1) Charity. This is based on the level of trust in partnerships with goals and motivations that are beneficial to other organizations when new conditions arise, namely non-committal conditions. The quality indicator is the goodness in providing guarantees for products purchased.
   2) Competence Competence is the ability to solve problems faced by consumers and meet all their needs. Ability refers to the expertise and characteristics that allow a group to have a dominant influence. The indicator of the competence dimension is the ability to solve problems faced by consumers.Kualitas Pelayanan

**a.** Definition of Service Quality According to Lupiyoadi, quality is the overall characteristics and features of a product/service in relation to its ability to meet specified or potential needs. (Rupiyoadi, 2011: 144). On the other hand, according to Kotler, quality is the overall characteristics and features of a product or service that affect its ability to meet stated or implied needs. This is the definition of quality that focuses on customers.

A seller can be considered to provide quality if the seller's product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations. (Kotler, 1997: 49) Service is basically an act or service that is intangible and for which a party does not have ownership rights that can be given to another party. (Kotler, 2006: 36). Service quality is the level of excellence expected and the management of that level to meet customer needs. In other words, there are two main factors that affect service quality: expected service and perceived service. Service quality is perceived as good and satisfying if the service received or felt (perceived service) meets expectations. Service quality is perceived as ideal if the service received exceeds customer expectations. However, if the service received is worse than expected, then the perceived service quality will be low. Good service quality depends on the service provider's ability to consistently meet customer expectations (Tjiptono, 2000: 59-60).Prinsip-Prinsip Kualitas Pelayanan

**Service Quality Indicators**

One of the factors that determine the success and quality of a business is the company's ability to serve consumers. The success of a company in providing high-quality service to customers, achieving high market share and increasing company profits is largely determined by the approach used. Its impact on product sales and service quality is very important for the company's strategy to protect itself and compete successfully. (Rupiyoadi, 217). The service quality approach that is often used as a reference for market research is the SERVQUAL (service quality) model. The service quality approach that is often used as a reference for market research is the SERVQUAL (service quality) model. This is based on a comparison of two main factors: the actual service received (perceived service) and customer perception. The actual service they expect (expected service). A SERVQUAL survey of 800 customers aged 25 years and over (divided across four companies) concluded that there are five SERVQUAL metrics:

1) Tangible, namely the ability of a company to prove its existence to outsiders.

The reliability of the appearance and performance of a company's physical facilities and infrastructure in this area is real evidence of the service provided by the service provider. This includes physical facilities, equipment and tools used, and employee appearance. The visible dimension indicator is the ability to organize products clearly and attractively.

2) Reliability, namely the company's ability to provide promised services accurately and reliably. Performance must meet customer expectations: timeliness, error-free and equal service to all customers, friendly attitude, and high accuracy. The reliability dimension indicator is reliability in providing services.
3) Responsiveness Our policy is to support and provide fast (responsive) and accurate service to our customers by conveying clear information. When customers are made to wait, this creates a negative perception of service quality. The indicator in the responsiveness dimension provides fast and accurate service in solving problems faced by consumers.
4) Assurance and Assurance Namely the knowledge, politeness, and competence of a company's employees to increase customer trust in the company. This includes several factors such as communication, reliability, security, competence, and politeness. The indicator in the field of assurance and assurance is the provision of assurance in the form of product guarantees.
5) Empathy is giving sincere and personal or personal attention to customers by trying to understand their needs. The empathy dimension indicator shows that consumers really pay attention to the products they buy.

**a. Price**

Definition of Price According to Basu, price is the amount of money needed to obtain a certain combination of products and services (and possibly more than one product). (Swasta, 2008: 241) According to Chiptono, price is the amount in Rupees that the market is willing to pay. From a marketing perspective, money or other units of measurement (commodities or products) exchanged to obtain ownership or use of goods or products. Price plays two main roles in the buyer's decision-making process: the allocative role and the informational role. (Tjiptono, 2000: 290) Price is a factor that directly affects a company's profits. The price level you set affects the quantity of sales. In addition, price also affects costs indirectly, because sales volume affects costs incurred in connection with production efficiency. Pricing decisions and strategies play an important role in any business because pricing affects overall revenue and costs.

The Role of Price From a consumer perspective, price is often used as an indicator of value when the price is associated with the perceived benefits of a good or service. Thus, it can be concluded that at a certain price level if the benefits felt by consumers increase, then its value will also increase. Likewise, conversely at a certain price level, the value of a good or service will increase along with the increase in benefits felt. In general, the role of price can be described as follows: (Tjiptono, 2000: 291)

1) The price chosen directly affects demand and determines the level of activity. Prices that are too high or too low can hinder product development. Therefore, measuring price sensitivity is very important.
2) The selling price directly determines business profit.
3) The price set by a company affects public perception of the product or brand. Consumers often use price as an indicator of quality, especially in the consumer goods market.
4) Price is a direct measure or instrument for comparing competing products or brands.
5) Pricing strategies must be coordinated with other elements of the marketing mix. Prices must cover the costs of product development, advertising, and distribution.
6) Accelerating technology development and shortening product life cycles requires accurate pricing from the start.
7) Government regulations, ethical and social considerations (such as price controls, maximum profit margins, and the allowance of price increases) limit the autonomy and flexibility of companies in setting prices.
8) Declining purchasing power in various regions of the world has resulted in increased price sensitivity, thus strengthening the role of price as a tool to increase sales and market share.

**b. Pricing Objectives Price is a factor that directly affects a company's profits.**

The price level you set affects the quantity of sales. In addition, price also affects costs indirectly, because sales volume affects the costs incurred in relation to product efficiency. Therefore, pricing decisions and strategies play an important role in any company because pricing affects total revenue and total costs28. Basically, pricing has different objectives. (Tjiptono, 200: 291)

1) Profit-oriented objectives Designed to maximize prices relative to competitors' prices, perceived product value, company cost structure, and production efficiency. Profit targets are usually based on profit targets, not pure profit maximization.
2) Quantity-oriented objectives Pricing that maximizes sales volume (rupiah and units). This objective sacrifices profit margins to increase product sales.
3) Image-oriented objectives The company's image is shaped by the pricing strategy. A company may charge high prices to build or maintain a prestigious image.
4) Other Objectives Prices may also be set to prevent the entry of competitors, maintain customer loyalty, encourage repeat sales, generate immediate cash flow, or avoid government interference.

**b. Factors to Consider in Pricing**

**a. Price Indicators**

As with other marketing management strategies, developing effective pricing requires companies to consider various internal and external factors. These include internal factors that need to be considered when setting prices. (Tjiptono, 2000: 294) 1) Company marketing objectives 2) Marketing mix strategy 3) Costs 4) Organizational considerations While external factors of the company are pricing that requires: 1) Market characteristics and demand 2) Competition 3) Environmental factors Price is one element of the marketing mix that can generate company revenue. There are 3 indicators used in measuring prices, namely: Price affordability Indicator: the existence of prices that are affordable for customers. 1) Price suitability with product quality Indicator: the existence of prices that are in accordance with quality and quantity. 2) Price suitability with benefits Indicator: the existence of prices that are in accordance with the benefits of the product purchased. (Kotler, 2008: 112)

**Consumer Loyalty**

Definition of Consumer Loyalty Loyalty is a deep commitment from a customer to re-subscribe or re-purchase a selected product/service routinely in the future. However, changes in behavior may be caused by situational influences or marketing efforts. (Hurriyati, 2005: 129) Customer loyalty plays an important role in a company. Maintaining it means improving financial performance and ensuring the survival of the company. This is the main reason why businesses attract and retain customers. Efforts to get loyal customers cannot be done all at once. This is done through several stages, starting from finding potential customers and ending with attracting partners. (Hurriyati, 2005: 129) When a company gets loyal customers, it has several advantages such as: 1) Can reduce marketing costs (because the cost of acquiring new customers is high). 2) Transaction costs can be reduced. 3) Reduce customer replacement costs (because customers switch less). 4) Can increase cross-selling, thereby increasing the company's market share. 5) Encourage more positive reviews, assuming loyal customers mean satisfied customers. 6) Downtime costs (replacement costs, etc.) can be reduced.

**b. Designing and Creating Consumer Loyalty**

When talking about consumer experience, customer loyalty is not something that can be built just like that, but must be designed by the company. The loyalty design phase is: 1) Defining customer value a) Identifying customer segments in the market b) Determining customer value targets and determining which customer values influence purchasing decisions and create loyalty. c) Differentiating yourself with a brand promise. 2) Design a brand experience for your customers. a) Increasing your understanding of customer experience. b) Designing employee behavior to fulfill the brand promise. c) Designing overall strategic changes to deliver new customer experiences. 3) Equipping a) Preparing leaders to deliver experiences to customers. b) Equipping employees with the knowledge and skills to deliver exceptional customer experiences in every customer interaction with the company. Improving organizational performance through measurement and leadership activities. (Hurriyati, 2005: 131) 4) Maintaining and Improving Performance a) Utilizing customer and employee interactions to continue to retain customers and maintain customer experience. b) Designing collaboration between HRD (human resource development) systems and business processes directly involved in delivering and creating customer experiences. c) Continuous development and communication of results to communicate branded customer experiences implemented by the company.

**c. Consumer Loyalty**

Indicators Loyal customers are valuable assets for a company. To attract loyal customers, companies must offer high-quality products and services and be able to follow the latest developments to attract potential consumers to buy. How to determine whether consumers are loyal. The characteristics of loyal consumers are: (Hurriyati, 2005: 132) 1) Buying regularly. Indicator: Consumers repurchase the same product offered by a company. 2) Recommend your product to others Indicator: Consumers communicate verbally with others about the product. 3) Customer loyalty to the company Indicator: - Consumers do not switch to competitors' products - Consumers are not interested in similar products from other companies

**d.Business Communication**

Business communication is the exchange of information between people within an organization or between organizations for the purpose of achieving business goals. Effective business communication is critical to the success of a company because it can impact productivity, customer satisfaction, and relationships with business partners. Here are some important principles and elements of business communication:

1. Transparency: Clear and open information can avoid misunderstandings and build trust between team members and business partners.
2. Timeliness: Effective communication must be timely. Delays in providing information can hinder decision making and hinder project progress.
3. Clear and Simple: The message conveyed must be clear and easy to understand. Avoid using jargon that may not be understood by everyone involved.

4. Targeting (Relevance): Ensure that the information communicated is relevant to the business objectives and the role of each recipient of the message.
5. Feedback: Encouraging feedback from recipients of the message helps ensure proper understanding and provides opportunities for improvement if needed.
6. Appropriate communication medium: Choose a communication medium that is appropriate to the context and urgency of the message. For example, for important information, a phone call or face-to-face meeting may be more effective than an email.
7. Listening Skills: Communication is not just about talking, listening well is also important. Understanding the perspectives and needs of others can improve collaboration.
8. Consistency: Ensure that the message delivered is consistent with the company's values, mission, and goals. Consistency helps build a strong corporate image.
9. Adaptability: Companies often operate in a dynamic environment. The ability to adapt to changes in communication is essential.
10. Communication Ethics: Ensure that all business communications are conducted with a high level of ethics. Do not convey false or misleading information that could damage the company's reputation. Involving employees in the communication process, fostering collaboration, and facilitating the flow of information within an organization are key to successful business communications.

**Discussion How to Optimize Customer Satisfaction**

Business competition is getting tighter because people are competing to find innovative ideas to increase profits. Some people think about making products more attractive than just appearance and quality. However, the key to customer loyalty is to continue to provide excellent and satisfying service. 1. Respond to problems quickly and be polite to customers. Providing responsive service is very important in any workplace, especially when meeting customer needs. Reactivity is a performance statistic of disciplined people, so it will increase naturally if you practice it every day. Friendly attitudes and behaviors are a highly valued cultural heritage. Wherever you are or in the world of work, hospitality plays an important role in bringing consumers and producers together and making each other feel appreciated. 1. Building Mutually Beneficial Relationships When mutual respect is ingrained, providing information and new products to consumers is a good idea to achieve mutual benefit. By offering promotional programs to customers to honor their product subscriptions. Maybe consumers can share product information with relatives, friends, and others. This will help spread the word about our products and someday bring in new customers. Don’t forget to include everyone who can benefit from the discount and even do business with each other. 3. Receive Loyalty Rewards Get a little surprise as a reward for your business partnership with your customers. It doesn’t have to be expensive, like giving out discount coupons to make customers happy and buy products from the company you do business with. Sometimes it’s the little things that make us happy. 4. Handle Customer Complaints It’s true that not all orders always go well. Sometimes there are things, whether it’s technology or communication, that can hinder a company and give it a bad reputation. It’s a good idea to address the issues and listen to the customer’s complaints. If so, don’t make the same mistake. Responding calmly to complaints will not solve the problem by simply following the customer’s anger. If you make a mistake, be prepared to apologize. Otherwise, your reputation will be damaged. 5. Train Your Employees to Behave Well. All employees should be instructed to follow existing SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures). By including etiquette to avoid losing customers, good attitude towards customers, greetings according to the weather, appropriate response to consumer problems, and others in the SOP, you will avoid losing customers. All employees must carry out the SOP consistently and with full dedication. Because maintaining the best service makes added value very "important" so that consumers continue to choose the products we offer. We always try to provide comfort to our customers. (https: //www.gramedia.com/literasi/kepuasan-pelanggan/)

**Conclusion**

Customer satisfaction and loyalty are very important for the business world. Because it is related to the company you are running or other companies. If you provide something that meets their needs, your customers will be satisfied. SOPs must be implemented and trained such as: Etiquette, attitude, and how to communicate with customers are very important. Factors that affect customer service, quality, price and promote the right marketing strategy that allows the company to grow and achieve more than planned

## Bibliography

Basu Swasta, *Manajemen Pemasaran Modern* ,Liberty, Yogyakarta, 2008

Fandy Tjiptono, *Manajemen Jasa* (Andi, Yogjakarta, 2000), 59-60

Husein Umar, *Metode Riset Perilaku Konsumen Jasa* .Ghalia Indosia, Bogor,2003

John C. Mowen dan Michael Minor, *Perilaku Konsumen* Erlangga, Jakarta,2002

Philip Kotler, *Manajemen Pemasaran* .Prentice-Hall inc, New Jersey, 1997

Philip Kotler dan Kevin Lane Keller, *Marketing Manajemen* Erlangga,Jakarta, 2006

Rambat Lupiyoadi, *Manajemen Pemasaran Jasa* .Salemba Empat, Jakarta, 2001

Ratih Hurriyati, *Bauran Pemasaran dan Loyalitas Konsumen* .Bandung, Alfabeta, 2005

Ujang Sumarwan, *Perilaku Konsumen* Ghalia Indonesia, Bogor, 2011

Bachman, R & Akbar Z, *Hanbook of Trusst Reseacrh* (USA, Edwar ElgarPublising, 2006). www.researchgate.net/publication.

Septi Maulidiyahwati, *Pengaruh Kepercayaan, Keamanan, Kualitas Pelayanan dan Persepsi Risiko menggunakan E-Commerce Terhadap KeputusanPembelian online*, Jurnal, Fak. Ekonomi Universitas Yogyakarta,2017

https://www.gramedia.com/literasi/kepuasan-pelanggan/