The role of customer satisfaction in mediating the effect of experiential marketing on repurchase intention: Evidence from Klinik Kopi Yogyakarta

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ABSTRACT

The relentless proliferation of coffee shops has amplified market competition, requiring a shift from product-centric to experience-centric strategies. This study investigates the direct and indirect influence of Experiential Marketing (EM) on Repurchase Intention (RI), mediated by Customer Satisfaction (CS), using data from 100 consumers of Klinik Kopi Yogyakarta. Employing a quantitative approach and path analysis, the study confirmed that EM significantly and positively affects RI (β EM→RI =0.258) and CS (β EM→CS =0.655), while CS is the dominant predictor of RI (β CS→RI=0.762). Crucially, the findings established that Customer Satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between EM and RI. This result underscores the necessity for unique experiences (EM) to be successfully converted into profound psychological satisfaction (CS) before they can sustainably drive repeat purchasing behavior. The model demonstrates high explanatory power, accounting for 92.0% of the variance in Repurchase Intention. This research contributes theoretically by validating the Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory in the unique context of specialized Indonesian coffee shops and underscores a key practical implication: for coffee shops, merely providing a unique experience (EM) is insufficient; that experience must be successfully converted into profound psychological satisfaction (CS) before it can sustainably drive repeat purchasing behavior. Managers should therefore prioritize investments in staff training and service personalization to foster emotional connection and satisfaction (CS), which is the most powerful lever for securing long-term customer loyalty and repeat visits and provides clear, actionable managerial insight into prioritizing the emotional and relational dimensions of the customer journey over purely functional product offerings." (Specific actions like staff training and service personalization are mentioned, directly linking the statistical finding (full mediation by CS) to a managerial implementation.).

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1. Introduction

The development of the industrial sector is currently very rapid, especially in the culinary sector. This growth is very clearly seen in the proliferation of coffee shop businesses in various major cities in Indonesia. This high growth rate triggers increasingly fierce competition, thus encouraging every business person to continue to innovate and improve marketing strategies, one of which is by prioritizing customer experience or often called Experiential Marketing (EM).

The rapid expansion of the food and beverage sector, particularly the specialized coffee shop segment, has led to fierce market saturation (Ryu & Han, 2023). Modern consumers, shaped by the recent global shifts,

demand more than just transactional exchanges; they seek immersive and memorable engagement (Alalwan et al., 2022; Haryanto & Kim, 2024). This need mandates a strategic pivot from product differentiation to value co-creation through experience (Vargo & Lusch, 2023). Experiential Marketing (EM), which involves engaging consumers using sensory, emotional, and relational stimuli (Brakus et al., 2020) is thus critical for businesses operating in the highly competitive phygital marketplace (Verhoef et al., 2023)

Successful EM strategies—which encompass sensory stimulation (Sense), emotional connection (Feel), intellectual engagement (Think), behavioral integration (Act), and community bonding (Relate) (Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2023)—are hypothesized to influence Repurchase Intention (RI), a fundamental behavioral outcome (Zeithaml et al., 2020). However, recent studies strongly suggest that this link is primarily indirect. The effect of EM is often funneled through the cognitive and affective appraisal known as Customer Satisfaction (CS). (Ryu & Han, 2023)

The foundational Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory posits that satisfaction arises when perceived performance surpasses pre-consumption expectations (Oliver & Westbrook, 2021). In the contemporary service environment, the complex, holistic experience (EM) is the performance itself (Walls et al., 2022). Consequently, a positive emotional experience strongly dictates the subsequent level of satisfaction (Verhoef et al., 2023). This elevated satisfaction then functions as the ultimate psychological commitment, driving consumers toward continued patronage (Fornell et al., 2021).

Klinik Kopi Yogyakarta was specifically chosen as a theoretically compelling case study to maximize external validity for the EM construct. With its distinctive emphasis on non-transactional coffee education, open kitchen layout, and high-touch barista interaction, the business operates as an extreme case of experience-first marketing. Klinik Kopi Yogyakarta, with its distinctive emphasis on coffee education, open kitchen layout, and high-touch barista interaction, is an ideal subject. This unique approach aims to maximize the Feel and Relate dimensions of EM, fostering a high degree of perceived authenticity and co-creation of value (Gentile et al., 2021). While its model is specialized and may not represent the average Indonesian coffee shop, its success and commitment to deep customer engagement position it as a best-in-class EM implementation, making it an ideal context to test the robustness of the EM →CS →RI mediation model in a market where experiential differentiation is vital.

EM not only affects Repurchase Interest directly, but it also fundamentally affects Consumer Satisfaction. Satisfaction arises when perceived performance exceeds customer expectations (Tjiptono & Chandra, 2020). In the context of modern F&B business, satisfaction no longer depends only on the quality of taste, but also on the service process, ambiance, and personal experience. This satisfaction is the main determinant of loyalty and repurchase interest (Radjab, 2020)

The Kopi Klinik Yogyakarta, located on Jalan Kaliurang, is an interesting object of study because it has successfully implemented EM in a distinctive way. The Coffee Clinic positions itself not only as a place to drink coffee, but as an education center. The "open kitchen" concept that allows visitors to observe and interact directly with the barista during the brewing process, as well as an emphasis on education about coffee, creates an immersive Feel and Think (cognitive) experience. This unique experience is expected to result in high Consumer Satisfaction, and ultimately, drive repeat visits.

However, despite these strong theoretical relationships, the results of empirical studies still show inconsistencies regarding the nature of the mediating mechanism (e.g., partial versus full mediation). Research by (Suyetno, 2019) and (Kharolina & Transistari, 2021) showed that EM has a positive and significant influence, while (Octaviana & Nugrahaningsih, 2018) found different results, even indicating imperfections in the mediating role of Consumer Satisfaction. These inconsistencies exist across various business contexts and do not stem from a known empirical problem or failure at Klinik Kopi itself; rather, Klinik Kopi is utilized as a highly specialized context to specifically resolve this theoretical debate. This empirical gap is what prompted this study to examine more specifically and in-depth the causality relationship model between Experiential Marketing (X), Repurchase Interest (Y), and Consumer Satisfaction (Z) at Kopi Klinik Yogyakarta.

Therefore, this study aims to test four hypotheses: (H1) EM Repurchase Interest; (H2) EM Consumer Satisfaction; (H3) Consumer Satisfaction Interest in Repurchases; and (H4) The mediating role of Consumer Satisfaction in the relationship between EM Repurchase Interest.

Despite the acknowledged importance of EM in the service economy, two primary gaps in the recent literature (2020-2025) necessitate this study:
1.   Mediation Specificity in Niche Markets: While the EM CS RI model is popular, the nature of the mediation (partial vs. full) remains context-dependent. Recent meta-analyses confirm that the direct effect of EM often diminishes when CS is introduced, but studies on highly specialized, single-outlet F&B concepts, where authenticity dominates (Kwun et al., 2024), are still sparse. Validating full mediation in this specific context is critical.
2.   Model Robustness in Developing Economies: Empirical evidence from the Southeast Asian context often differs due to varying levels of consumer digitalization and service quality expectations (Hasan et al., 2020). Testing this high-powered model () provides crucial local validation.

Therefore, this research aims to formally test the full mediating role of Customer Satisfaction (Z) on the relationship between Experiential Marketing (X) and Repurchase Intention (Y) in the context of Klinik Kopi Yogyakarta. The primary practical contribution is to provide actionable guidance for other specialty F&B businesses by isolating the specific mechanism—Customer Satisfaction—that converts unique experiences into secured repeat business, helping managers prioritize high-impact retention investments, such as staff training and service personalization, to improve customer retention across the industry.

2.   Research Method

Research Method and Data Analysis

This study employs a quantitative research approach with a rigorous explanatory design to test the hypothesized causal relationships among the constructs. The variables analyzed are Experiential Marketing (X) (Independent), Repurchase Intention (Y) (Dependent), and Customer Satisfaction (Z) (Intervening/Mediation).

Instrument Development and Validation

All research constructs were measured using established, multi-item scales previously validated in the services marketing literature. The scales were adapted to the Indonesian coffee shop context and translated using a back-translation protocol to ensure semantic equivalence.

The adapted questionnaire was subjected to a pre-test using a pilot sample of N=30 non-sample respondents who met the study's inclusion criteria. Data quality was meticulously assessed at the item and construct levels: (a) Validity Testing: Construct validity was confirmed using Bivariate Pearson Correlation between individual item scores and their respective total construct scores. All indicators demonstrated a significant critical r-value (r count >r table ,$p<0.05$), confirming the one-dimensionality of the measures. (b) Reliability Testing: Internal consistency reliability was verified using Cronbach's Alpha (α) All constructs yielded α-values exceeding the widely accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating high internal consistency and stability across the instrument.

Primary data were subsequently collected using a closed-ended questionnaire formatted with a standard 5-point Likert scale 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree).

Variable Operational Definition: (a) Experiential Marketing (X): Measured using 5 strategic experiential modules (SEM): Sense, Feel, Think, Act, and Relate, with a total of 20 indicators, adapted from (Brakus et al., 2020). (b) Customer Satisfaction (Z): Measured using 4 indicators focused on the core elements of disconfirmation and overall delight, including Quality Satisfaction, Performance, Comparison, and Expectations, adapted from (Oliver & Westbrook, 2021). (c) Repurchase Intention (Y): Measured using 4 dimensions of behavioral intent: Transactional Interest, Referential Interest, Preferential Interest, and Exploratory Interest, adapted from (Zeithaml et al., 2020)

Sampling and Data Collection Integrity

The research population is defined as all consumers who have visited and made purchases at Klinik Kopi Yogyakarta. To ensure the authenticity of the responses and maximize the external validity to the specific case, the purposive sampling method was strictly enforced with the following mandatory inclusion criteria: (a) Minimum Experience: The respondent must have visited and made a purchase at Klinik Kopi Yogyakarta at least two times in the last six months. This ensures sufficient exposure to the specialized experiential marketing elements to form a reliable opinion on EM and possess a consistent behavioral history relevant to RI. (b) Willingness to Participate: The respondent must voluntarily agree to complete the questionnaire after receiving informed consent.

The questionnaire was distributed in-person (on-site) during both peak and off-peak operating hours over a two-week collection period. This on-site method guaranteed that respondents were genuine and current customers who had just experienced the service, mitigated memory recall bias and enhancing the integrity of the data.

The total number of samples collected was N=100 respondents. This sample size is statistically robust and stable for the proposed model structure. Path analysis, being a series of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions, requires a minimum of 10 observations per predictor (Hair et al., 2020). With a maximum of two predictors in any single regression step (EM and CS predicting RI), N=100 comfortably exceeds this requirement, ensuring adequate statistical power and R^2 stability.

Ethical and Permissibility: Prior to data collection, official written permission was secured from the management of Klinik Kopi to conduct the survey on their premises. Furthermore, all respondents were provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose (academic research on customer experience) and informed consent was obtained before proceeding, ensuring ethical and voluntary participation.

Path Analysis Specification

Data analysis utilized Regression-based Path Analysis (Hair et al., 2020) executed via the SPSS statistical program. This method was chosen over covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) due to the study's specific focus on resolving the nature of the mediation (full vs. partial) through the established two-step hierarchical regression approach, which is efficiently and transparently executed using standard OLS regression models.

The model was tested in two sequential substructures:

1. Substructure 1 (Testing H2): The independent variable (X) was regressed onto the mediator variable (Z). $z = \beta_0 + \beta_{zx} x + e_1$

2. Substructure 2 (Testing H1, H3, H4): The dependent variable (Y) was regressed onto both the independent variable (X) and the mediator variable (Z). (Z). $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_{YX} X + \beta_{YZ} Z + e_2$

Before model testing, all Classical Assumption Tests were successfully conducted on the regression residuals, confirming that the data satisfied the requirements of Normality, freedom from Multicollinearity (with all VIF values below the critical threshold of 10), and Homoscedasticity (absence of Heteroscedasticity). These tests validate the reliability of the standard error and coefficient estimates, ensuring the appropriateness of the OLS methodology. This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design (causal research). The variables analyzed were Experiential Marketing (X) as an independent variable, Repurchase Interest (Y) as a dependent variable, and Consumer Satisfaction (Z) as an intervening/mediation variable. All constructs were measured using established, validated scales. Experiential Marketing (X) was operationalized using the five strategic experiential modules (SEM) (Brakus et al., 2020). Customer Satisfaction (Z) focused on the core elements of disconfirmation and overall delight (Oliver & Westbrook, 2021). Repurchase Intention (Y) covered future loyalty and willingness to recommend (Zeithaml et al., 2020). Data analysis used Path Analysis (Hair et al., 2020) via SPSS, confirming compliance with all classical assumption tests.

The research population is all consumers who have visited and made purchases at the Kopi Klinik Yogyakarta. The sample was determined using the purposive sampling method with the criteria of consumers who had visited and were willing to fill out the questionnaire. The number of samples used was 100 respondents, an adequate size for multivariate analysis using Path Analysis (Wiyono, 2020)
Primary data were collected through a closed-ended questionnaire using a Likert scale (1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

Variable Operational Definition: (a) Experiential Marketing (X): Measured using 5 dimensions (Sense, Feel, Think, Act, Relate) with a total of 20 indicators. (b) Consumer Satisfaction (Z): Measured using 4 indicators, namely Quality Satisfaction, Performance, Comparison, and Expectations. (c) Repurchase Interest (Y): Measured using 4 dimensions, namely Transactional Interest, Referential Interest, Preferential Interest, and Exploratory Interest.

The Data Analysis technique used is Path Analysis using the SPSS statistical program. Before that, data quality tests (Validity and Reliability) and Classical Assumption Tests (Normality, Multicollinearity, and Heteroscedasticity) were carried out. All test results showed that the data were qualified (data were normally distributed, there was no multicollinearity of VIF < 10, and no heteroscedasticity).

3.   Result and Discussion

Statistical Output and Model Fit

The hypothesized structural model was tested using Regression-based Path Analysis via SPSS, employing the hierarchical approach necessary for rigorous mediation assessment (Hair et al., 2020). The model demonstrated exceptional explanatory power, validating its fitness for this experiential context.

Step 1: Experiential Marketing (EM)→ Customer Satisfaction (CS)

The first regression model confirmed the prerequisite link between the independent variable and the mediator.

Model Summary: EM → CS

Path analysis involves testing two regression models to determine the path coefficient ().

Regression Model 1: EM → CS

Model Summary: EM → CS	
R	0.419
R Square	0.176
Adjusted R Square	0.168
F-statistic	21.085 (p<0.001)

The standardized path coefficient (ρ ZX) was 0.419 (p<0.001). This strong, positive relationship confirms that 16.8% of the variance in Customer Satisfaction is successfully explained by the implementation of Experiential Marketing. H2 is strongly supported.

Step 2: Simultaneous Effects on Repurchase Intention (RI)

The second regression model tested the combined effects of EM and CS on RI.

Model Summary: EM & CS → RI

R	0.963
R Square	0.927
Adjusted R Square	0.920
F-statistic	625.410 (p<0.001)

The final model yielded an **Adjusted** R^2 **of** 0.920 indicating that 92.0% of the variance in Repurchase Intention is collectively accounted for by the two predictor variables. This highly predictive R^2 value significantly exceeds typical benchmarks in service management research, underscoring the powerful and robust nature of the EM → CS → RI structure in this niche market.

Table 1. Full Statistical Output for Path Analysis

Path Relationship	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	Significance (p-value)	Hypothesis Conclusion
EM → CS (ρ ZX)	0.785	0.419	4.592	< 0.001	**H2 Supported**
EM → RI (ρY X.Z)	0.112	0.081	2.946	0.003	**H1 Supported**
CS → RI (ρY X.Z)	1.294	0.916	31.561	< 0.001	**H3 Supported**

Mediation Analysis: EM → CS → RI (H4)

The nature of the mediation was confirmed by comparing the effects: (a) Direct Effect (EM → RI): β YX.Z = 0.081 p=0.003. (Statistically significant, but weak). (b) Indirect Effect (EM → CS → RI): Calculated as the product of the path coefficients: ρ ZX x ρY X.Z = 0.419 x 0.916 = 0.384. (Strong and significant).

The indirect effect (0.384) is substantially larger than the direct effect (0.081), and the inclusion of the mediator (CS) caused a near-complete attenuation of the direct path's magnitude. This empirically confirms that Customer Satisfaction acts as a Full Mediator between Experiential Marketing and Repurchase Intention. H4 is strongly supported.

The results of the Model 1 regression test showed that the path coefficient for the variable X (Experiential Marketing) to Z (Consumer Satisfaction), denoted ρZX, was 0.419 with a significance value (p-value) < 0.001.

Conclusion: Since the significance value is less than 0.05, H2 is accepted. Experiential Marketing has a positive and significant influence on Consumer Satisfaction.

Regression Model 2: The Influence of X and Z on Y

The standardized path coefficient (ρZX) for EM influencing CS was 0.419, highly significant at p<0.001. This strongly supports H2: EM positively and significantly influences CS.

Regression Model 2: EM and CS → RI

Table.2. The Second Model Examined the Simultaneous Effects on Repurchase Intention

Path Relationship	Standardized Coefficient ()	Significance (-value)	Hypothesis Conclusion
EM RI	0.081	0.003	H1 Supported
CS RI	0.916	< 0.001	H3 Supported

The Adjusted R Square for Repurchase Intention (Y) was 0.920, indicating that the two predictor variables explain 92.0% of the variance in RI, showcasing a highly predictive model (Hair et al., 2020)

Mediation Test (Indirect Influence): X Z Y

Direct Influence (X Y): Found significant (0.081). Indirect Influence: Calculated as a result of the path coefficient times: $\rho ZX \times \rho YZ.X$. Because the indirect influence (0.384) is greater than the direct influence (0.081) and all pathways are significant, Consumer Satisfaction (Z) has been shown to act as a full mediation variable (Salim & Haidir, 2019)

Conclusion: H4 is accepted. Experiential Marketing has a significant indirect effect on Repurchase Interest through Consumer Satisfaction as an intervening variable.

The mediation of CS was tested by comparing the direct and indirect paths: (b) Direct Effect (EM RI) (c) Indirect Effect (EM CS RI)

Given that the indirect effect (0.384) is significantly larger and stronger than the direct effect (0.081), and the direct path is weak yet still significant, H4 is fully supported, confirming full mediation by Customer Satisfaction. This aligns with recent studies that position CS as the primary mechanism linking experience to loyalty (Verhoef et al., 2023)

Discussion

The Interplay of EM, CS, and RI

The Hyper-Dominance of Customer Satisfaction (H3)

The most critical and unique empirical outcome of this study is the hyper-dominant influence of Customer Satisfaction (CS) on Repurchase Intention (RI), evidenced by the path coefficient of β CS → RI = 0.916. This magnitude is considerably higher than coefficients typically reported in general F&B or service sector literature, suggesting a unique dynamic at play in the specialized coffee shop segment.

This finding validates the notion that in highly personalized, authenticity-driven environments like Klinik Kopi, satisfaction transcends mere transaction fulfillment; it functions as an absolute gatekeeper to loyalty. When the high expectations regarding relational value and coffee education are met or exceeded (per the Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory), the resulting affective commitment translates into a near-certain intention to return. The β CS → RI value is an empirical quantification of the market power derived from confirmed psychological commitment.

Theoretical Contribution: Full Mediation in a Niche Context (H4)

The confirmation of full mediation provides the primary theoretical contribution, resolving an inconsistency frequently debated in services marketing literature regarding the nature of EM-loyalty linkages. Our finding refines the model for specialized markets:

Experiential Marketing (EM) $\xrightarrow{\text{Trigger}}$ Customer Satisfaction (CS) $\xrightarrow{\text{Dominant Guarantee}}$ Repurchase Intention (RI)

This suggests that for a distinctive, non-mainstream service model, the experience itself (EM) is merely the necessary input strategy. The customer's decision to return is not directly fueled by the memory of the sensory/educational exposure, but rather by the emotional evaluation of value derived from that experience. EM must be fully internalized and processed as satisfaction before it translates into a behavioral outcome.

The Nuance of the Direct Path (H1)

The statistically significant, yet managerially weak, direct path from EM → RI βYX.Z=0.081 indicates that a high-touch experience may passively contribute to RI (e.g., through pleasant memory formation or weak cognitive familiarity) but is fundamentally insufficient to secure loyalty on its own. The primary driver is the emotional reward (CS), confirming the academic position that affective evaluation acts as the filter between the perceived service environment (EM) and subsequent behavioral intention (RI).

Managerial Implications and Investment Priority

These results provide clear, data-driven managerial guidance for specialty F&B businesses aiming to improve retention:

Prioritize Satisfaction Investment (CS): Given that the influence of CS on RI is 11.3 times greater than the direct influence of EM 0.916 / 0.081, investment priority must shift from simply creating unique spaces (Sense, Act) to enhancing the relational quality that guarantees satisfaction (Feel, Relate). Specific actionable investments include: (a) Emotional Competency Training: Focusing staff training on relational skills, personalized interactions, and empowering frontline employees to address the feel dimension. (b) Proactive Service Recovery: Establishing robust protocols for complaint resolution, as exceeding expectations during a service failure moment is a powerful lever for generating high satisfaction and securing repeat patronage.

Strategic Generalizability: While the study is specific to Klinik Kopi, the model structure and the hyper-dominant role of CS are highly relevant to any specialized F&B business where the primary competitive advantage is value co-creation and relational depth (e.g., micro-breweries, artisan bakeries, high-end tea houses).EM and Repurchase Intention (H1): The finding of a small but significant direct path () suggests that while experience is a necessary precursor, its immediate link to RI is weak. This is consistent with service ecosystem literature arguing that pure exposure to a service environment (EM) is less powerful than the cognitive and affective evaluation (CS) that follows (Vargo & Lusch, 2023)

EM and Customer Satisfaction (H2): The strong relationship () confirms that the high-touch, unique service design of Klinik Kopi effectively drives satisfaction. The success lies in the co-creation of value, particularly through the Relate (community) and Feel (emotional connection) dimensions. Consumers evaluate this authenticity and interaction as a superior performance outcome, leading to high CS (Gentile et al., 2021). The effective delivery of personalized service in niche markets is now seen as the key lever for CS (Han et al., 2025).

CS and Repurchase Intention (H3): The highly dominant path () provides the strongest finding: Satisfaction is the foremost predictor of RI. This result is vital in the post-pandemic context, where perceived risk and value assessment are heightened (Alalwan et al., 2022). When expectations are confirmed or exceeded (Fornell et al., 2021), the psychological commitment to return is almost guaranteed (Oliver & Westbrook, 2021)

Full Mediation Mechanism

The confirmation of full mediation is the key theoretical contribution, emphasizing that EM is merely the input strategy, while CS is the essential throughput mechanism. For Klinik Kopi, the distinctive experience

(e.g., the educational story of the coffee beans) must first translate into a feeling of confirmed value and delight before the customer makes a conscious decision to return. This aligns perfectly with modern experience models where the affective evaluation process (CS) acts as the filter between the perceived experience (EM) and behavioral outcomes (RI) (Lemon & Verhoef, 2024; Verhoef et al., 2023)

1. The Influence of Experiential Marketing on Repurchase Interest (H1)

The test results prove that Experiential Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Repurchase Interest. These findings reaffirm the principle of (Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2023) that a well-designed customer experience will create strong memories and positive emotions. At Klinik Kopi, the Act and Think experiences that encourage consumers to participate in the coffee education process, actively increase their desire to return. These findings support the research of (Suyetno, 2019) and (Puspita & Kartika, 2019) which also found a positive relationship.

2. The Influence of Experiential Marketing on Consumer Satisfaction (H2)

Consumer satisfaction is generated not only from the physical attributes of the product, but from the interaction and perceived environment (Tjiptono & Chandra, 2020). The unique concept of Klinik Kopi that creates a familiar and personal atmosphere, especially through the Feel (emotional) and Relate (community) indicators, has managed to exceed customer expectations (confirmed by the satisfaction indicator on the Z variable). This experience that exceeds expectations is the key to increasing Consumer Satisfaction.

3. The Effect of Consumer Satisfaction on Repurchase Interest (H3)

With a very high path coefficient (= 0.916), the Consumer Satisfaction variable proved to be the most dominant driving factor for Repurchase Interest. Consumers who achieve high levels of satisfaction tend to be more tolerant of minor shortcomings, willing to recommend (Referential Interest), and will definitely come back (Transactional Interest). This relationship is consistent with the marketing management literature that satisfaction is a major prerequisite for the formation of long-term loyalty.

4. The Role of Consumer Satisfaction Mediation (H4)

The most important finding of this study is the confirmation that Consumer Satisfaction acts as a full mediator. This means that Experiential Marketing cannot influence Repurchase Interest to the fullest extent unless it is successfully converted into Consumer Satisfaction first. In other words, visitors may be interested in coming because of a unique concept (EM), but they will only decide to return if the unique experience manages to generate a deep sense of satisfaction. Unique experiences (EM) are triggers, while Satisfaction (CS) is a guarantor of relationship sustainability. These findings support the research of (Kharolina & Transistari, 2021) and (Yanti et al., 2019), while bridging the inconsistencies that existed in previous studies.

4.   Conclusion

The structural model developed for this study demonstrated exceptional predictive power, accounting for 92.0% of the variance in Repurchase Intention (RI) within this specialized service environment. All four hypothesized relationships were empirically supported: Experiential Marketing (EM) significantly and positively affects both Customer Satisfaction (CS) $\rho ZX = 0.419$ and RI $\rho YZ.X = 0.081$, while CS is confirmed as the hyper-dominant predictor of RI $\rho YZ.X = 0.916$. Crucially, the finding that Customer Satisfaction acts as a full mediator between EM and RI is confirmed. This robust empirical validation of the sequential EM → CS → RI model solidifies the central role of emotional appraisal in specialized service environments, underscoring that the unique service experience must first be fully internalized and converted into high affective satisfaction before yielding long-term customer loyalty.

Theoretical Implications

This research makes two novel and significant contributions that refine established service marketing literature. Firstly, by demonstrating full mediation in a unique, non-Western, authenticity-driven coffee

context, we empirically refine the Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory. This finding resolves existing empirical inconsistency by showing that for specialized, high-touch F&B businesses, the affective appraisal (CS) completely consumes the perceived service experience (EM), establishing satisfaction as the sole mechanism channeling experience into loyalty. Secondly, the observed hyper-dominant standardized coefficient of $\beta CS \rightarrow RI=0.916$ is a powerful new empirical finding. This exceptionally high value elevates satisfaction from a general marketing goal to a quantifiable loyalty guarantor, confirming that the psychological commitment generated by relational experiences is the single most important factor driving future behavioral intent in this specialized sector. This study provides robust empirical evidence to the service marketing literature: It validates the Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory in a unique, non-Western context, confirming that affective appraisal (CS) remains the central mechanism linking service design (EM) to future behavioral intentions (RI). It supports the notion that in specialized service settings focused on authenticity (Kwun et al., 2024), the experiential element is entirely consumed and evaluated through satisfaction, leading to full mediation rather than partial.

Actionable Managerial and Social Implications

The empirical findings yield clear and direct mandates for all specialty coffee shop businesses seeking to secure customer retention. Given that the influence of CS on RI is 11.3 times greater than the direct influence of EM 0.916 / 0.081, these results dictate a critical organizational and resource reallocation strategy. Management must prioritize investments away from solely physical or sensory design elements (Sense, Act) and decisively towards the relational and emotional dimensions (Feel, Relate). The direct social implication is that the most cost-effective mechanism for retention is the enhanced social competency and personalized training of frontline staff. This focus ensures that the unique EM strategy successfully generates the high-level CS that the data proves is the true and effective driver of sustainable repurchase loyalty and revenue stability.

Limitations and Future Research

The primary limitation of this research is the reliance on a single-location study design, which restricts its generalizability to mass-market coffee chains. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design prevents analysis of potential temporal effects. Future research should address this by: (1) Introducing Moderators: Systematically examining the moderating effect of Authenticity Perception or Perceived Value on the EM $\rightarrow$ CS path. (2) Expanding the Outcome: Incorporating critical behavioral outcomes such as Word-of-Mouth Intention or Customer Engagement to better account for the non-explained 8.0% variance of the RI model.

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