



The impact of in-store customer experience on customer satisfaction and loyalty: empirical evidence using structural equation modeling

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Abstract: *The primary objective of this investigation is to examine the interrelationship between in-store experience and consumer satisfaction and loyalty. In pursuit of this objective, the study synthesizes extant literature pertaining to shopping experience, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. It posits a pioneering conceptual framework that amalgamates diverse facets of in-store experience factors, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty into a cohesive framework. The research adopts a quantitative methodology, procuring data through a survey administered to customers patronizing various types of retail establishments. The findings derived from the path analysis underscore that in-store experience factors—cognitive, affective, and social—exert a positively significant impact on customer satisfaction.*

Key Words: *In-store experience, customer experience, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Delivering a significant and lasting Customer Shopping Experience (CSE) is central to the retail experience economy. Retailers pursue particular strategic paths to establish a unique customer journey. They design compelling store atmospheres, incorporating various touchpoints like smartphones, monitors, and digital video walls that are relevant to their product offerings (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). The goal of these initiatives is to impress, engage the senses, and captivate and energize customers.

A plethora of investigations within the service literature (e.g., Gentile et al., 2007; Helkkula, 2011; Lipkin, 2016; Meyer & Schwager, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999) highlighted Customer Experience as an intricate and multi-faceted concept. In her work, Helkkula (2011) outlined three layers of customer experience: phenomenological or sense-based (a comprehensive phenomenon unique to each customer and context), process-based (stages of learning over time leading to a memory), and outcome-based (an immediate result, modeled as a variable dependent on measurable attributes). In a thorough examination of customer experience within the service landscape, Lipkin (2016) categorized diverse theoretical approaches based on two principal characteristics emphasized in most studies: firstly, the subjective, personal, and at least partially internal nature of customer experience, which can be explored through three different lenses—stimulus, interaction, and sensemaking; and secondly, the event-specific, contextual nature, which can be scrutinized from three distinct perspectives—dyadic, service ecosystem, and customer-ecosystem.

Researchers and industry professionals underscored the crucial necessity for comprehensive scholarly inquiries spanning diverse contexts to construct an all-encompassing comprehension of Customer Experience, encompassing its origination, efficacy, and execution (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Furthermore, there is a plea for tools that can enhance managerial practices across various service settings to acquire a more profound insight into customer experience, as highlighted by Lipkin (2016). These research voids are notably apparent in the retail service sector. In their conceptualization, Verhoef et al. (2009) put forth a conceptual framework for customer experience and advocate for a scale that measures a wide spectrum of In-Store Customer Experience extending beyond traditional cognitive and affective reactions to shopping stimuli.

Retailers can enrich and mold the customer experience across the entire customer journey. The framework underscores the significance of cognitive, affective, social, and physical elements as pivotal dimensions within retail atmospherics. By synthesizing research on store, the framework explores the influence of customer experience

factors on satisfaction and loyalty. In essence, a comprehensive comprehension and adept application of these factors empower retailers to construct a unified and captivating customer experience, ultimately fostering customer satisfaction and long-term loyalty (Bonfanti & Yfantidou, 2021; Hosseini & Hamelin, 2021; Pei et al., 2020).

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of the in-store experience on both customer satisfaction and loyalty. The research employed the conceptualization of customer experience as outlined by Bustamante and Rubio (2017) to better understand the link between in-store experience elements and customer satisfaction in the context of shopping.

2. THEORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Conceptualization of customer experience

In their work, Poulsson and Kale (2004) posited a formal definition of experience, characterizing this construct as a state evoked in an individual in response to a stimulus. Similarly, Schmitt (1999) stated that identifiable stimuli are specifically immediate experiences; they are not inherently generated but rather induced, bearing a discernible cause and purpose. Consequently, experiences are not evaluations or intrinsic affective states within the individual but rather manifestations that arise in the presence of a stimulus, as underlined by Brakus et al. (2009). In the same vein, Goode et al. (2010) identified key elements in an experience: thoughts, emotions, activities, and appraisals linked to a stimulus. Further, Poulsson and Kale (2004) asserted these states intricately influence each other during the experience.

Experience in retail relies on the dynamic interplay between the customer (subject) and the experience provider (object). This collaborative co-creation process leads to the customer experience, occurring when customers engage with products (product experience) or the physical retail environment, involving interactions with personnel, adherence to policies, and engagement with established practices (shopping experience). Customer experience goes beyond the purchase, covering the phase where customers actively use the acquired product, forming the consumption experience. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) defined customer experience as a comprehensive, multidimensional construct focusing on customers' cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensorial, and social responses to a firm's offerings throughout the entire purchase journey.

Poulsson and Kale (2004) posited that the transformation of an encounter into an experience relies on its capacity to evoke sensations or emotions consciously apprehended by the customer, thereby infusing it with memorability. The interaction between the customer and the experience provider is crucial for memorability, requiring personal

relevance, novelty, surprise, learning, and engagement. In the same vein, the work of Pine and Gilmore (1998) asserted that the memorability of experiences, particularly in physical stores, is largely dependent on the provider's ability to establish a strong connection with the customer. This connection is characterized by immersing the customer in the shopping activity or environment, fostering active participation in the shopping process.

Given the paramount significance attributed to memorable customer experiences in influencing consumer behavior, enterprises actively pursue the deliberate orchestration of customer experiences. This strategic endeavor involves leveraging services as a foundational platform and utilizing goods as ancillary elements, thereby engaging individual customers in a manner that forges lasting and impactful events (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). The effectiveness of customer experience relies on the customer's perceived value and subsequent recall. Several research (e.g., Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Poulsson & Kale, 2004) underlined that shopping experiences are personal, purposeful, and shaped by direct and indirect interactions with the company (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). According to Gentile et al. (2007), these experiences require diverse customer engagement across rational, emotional, sensory, social, and physical dimensions.

In the context of retail services, the work of Verhoef et al. (2009) presented a comprehensive theoretical framework for retail customer experience. The researchers viewed the customer's retail encounter as a holistic construct, encompassing cognitive, affective, social, and physical responses to the retail environment. Moreover, they argued that the customer's retail experience is shaped by controllable elements (service interface, retail atmosphere, assortment, price, store brand) and uncontrollable elements (influence of third parties, reason for buying, situational factors).

In accordance with the research conducted by Verhoef et al. (2009), this study conceptualizes in-store customer experience as a subjective internal response to and interaction with the physical retail environment. Within the confines of the retail space, customers not only perceive and interpret stimuli but also engage in internal cognitive, emotional, and physical processes to respond to them. Concurrently, they partake in social processes by interacting with other entities involved in the service encounter.

2.2. In-store customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction represents a primary goal for businesses, valuing existing clientele over acquiring new ones. Experts in management and marketing stressed customer satisfaction as a crucial factor for business success (McColl-Kennedy & Schneider, 2000; Reichheld & W. Earl Sasser, 1990). This concept is critical in marketing

literature, linking the purchasing process consumption and post-purchase behavior such as attitude changes, repeat purchases, and brand loyalty. Scholars diligently examine the intricate relationship between satisfaction, loyalty, and fiscal consequences, thereby accentuating the indispensability of gratifying customers for enduring and sustained success over a long-term relationship (Vega-Vazquez et al., 2013).

Diverse conceptualizations of customer satisfaction persist within scholarly discourse, marked by a lack of consensus among researchers. Oliver (1997) posited it as the consumer's responsive stance toward the fulfillment of pre-established expectations, while Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) conceptualized it as an ongoing evaluation rooted in the unexpected aspects arising during the acquisition or consumption of a product. The paradigm of disconfirmation, as expounded by Kursunluoglu (2011) and Levy & Weitz (2007), operationalizes satisfaction through a comparative analysis between the supplier's performance and customer expectations.

Kotler and Armstrong (1996) defined customer satisfaction as an individual's assessment of a product's performance relative to expectations. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) described it as evaluating whether a product or service meets customer needs. The University of Michigan's American Customer Satisfaction Index, detailed by Fornell et al. (1996), systematically tracks satisfaction across industries, highlighting its crucial role in quantifying satisfaction with a product or service.

Considerable research has substantiated the advantageous influence of customer satisfaction on diverse business outcomes. It catalyzes cultivating customer loyalty (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003), facilitates the generation of positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Bhattacharjee, 2001), influences the tendency for subsequent purchases (Kim, 2010), and ultimately contributes to the augmentation of both market share and profitability (Reichheld & Scheffer, 2000).

2.3. Store loyalty

According to Sivadas & Baker-Prewitt (2000) the concept of consumer loyalty is multifaceted, encompassing a range of definitions that emphasize factors like repeat purchases, financial allocation to a specific brand or store, and a favorable disposition towards a retail outlet (East et al., 2000). Loyalty is seen as both an attitude and a manifestation of shopping behavior, with researchers identifying cognitive and affective components as fundamental drivers (Dick & Basu, 1994; Mellens et al., 1996). Jacoby & Kyner (1973) and Sheth & Parvatiyar (1995) underscored that loyalty is often viewed as a relational phenomenon where emotional affinity and contentment play crucial roles.

Several scholars have also contended that loyalty is inherently a relational phenomenon (e.g., Jacoby & Kyner, 1973; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995). Within the context of relationship marketing, the primary antecedent appears to be an affective component, inclusive of factors such as contentment and the emotional affinity or sentiment toward a brand or retail establishment. In harmony with the relational perspective, Bloemer and De Ruyter (1998) regard store loyalty as an intended, tending behavioral response typified by recurrent visits over time by a decision-making unit concerning a specific store among a set of options. This conduct is an outcome of psychological processes, encompassing decision-making and evaluative facets, pinnacled in-store commitment. The nature of this definition pivots on store commitment, the absence of which relegates a consumer's visits to a store to mere superficial acts of loyalty (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2006).

According to Dick and Basu (1994), most research on consumer loyalty focuses on measurement and segmentation, suggesting a need for a more comprehensive understanding of loyalty within marketing theory. However, Henry (2000) warns that loyalty is often overlooked and often linked to consumer retention and retention determinants. To provide a more holistic perspective, the work of Dick and Basu (1994) propose a conceptual framework based on a consumer's attitude and recurrent purchase behavior, considering factors such as attitude precursors and mediators in the relationship between attitude and behavior (Terblanche & Boshoff, 2006).

Based on this literature review, this study formulates a series of hypotheses presented in Figure 1. These hypotheses revolve around different aspects of the in-store environment factors, including design, social atmosphere and trialability.

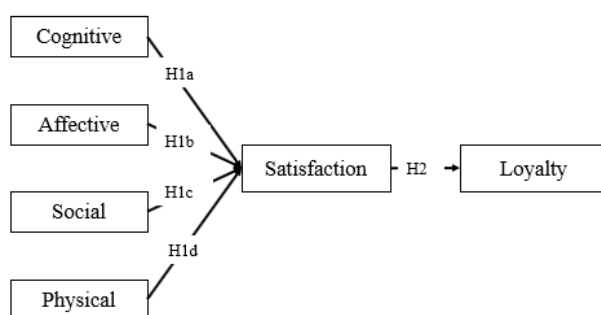


Figure 1 : Conceptual model

2.4. Hypotheses

H1. Customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by customer experience.

H1a. Customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by the cognitive factor.

H1b. Customer satisfaction is significantly affected by the affective factor.

H1c. Customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by the social factor.

H1d. Customer satisfaction is significantly impacted by the physical factor.

H2. Customer Loyalty is significantly influenced by customer satisfaction.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

The hypotheses of the study underwent testing through the application of a Structural Equation Model (SEM). The acquisition of data employed a quantitative survey approach (Appendix 1). Subsequently, by the methodology outlined by Lleras (2005), the data underwent analysis through path analysis—an esteemed statistical technique recognized for its efficacy in gauging the interdependencies among variables and elucidating potential causal relationships.

3.2. Measurement of variables

The study systematically investigated the primary constituents of customer experience that wield discernible influence over customer satisfaction and loyalty. These constituents comprised cognitive, affective, social, and physical dimensions. The cognitive dimension was evaluated employing established scales by Cacioppo and Petty (1982), Brakus et al. (2009), Garbarino and Edell (1997), and Schmitt (1999). The measurement of the affective dimension was executed through the scales developed by Laros and Steenkamp (2005) and Richins (1997). In a parallel manner, social component items were drawn from the work of Strizhakova et al. (2008). The assessment of the physical dimension employed scales introduced by Lan et al. (2010) and Skandrani et al. (2011). Respondents provided evaluations for these dimensions on a 5-point scale. Satisfaction levels were measured using a 5-point Likert scale developed by Mishra et al. (2021), while loyalty was measured employing the measures presented by Brakus et al. (2009) and Yoo and Donthu (2001).

Confirmatory factor analysis was systematically executed to validate the discernible association between each item and the respective measured variable.

3.3. Sampling and data collection

The investigation centered on individuals partaking in diverse shopping activities within store environment. An initial assessment was conducted with a cohort of 50 participants to validate the questionnaire's simplicity and clarity, ensuring its efficacy. For the principal research initiative, a convenient sampling methodology was employed, with the questionnaire disseminated online.

This methodology is widely adopted in market research due to its cost-effectiveness and practical utility.

The conclusive version of the survey was made available via online channels for a duration of nine weeks (From August 25, 2023 to November 1, 2023). From the 283 responses garnered, a subset was disqualified for analysis due to deficiencies or omissions in their responses, resulting in a definitive study sample size of 248 participants. The response rate was subsequently computed at 87.63%.

3.4. Data analysis

Within the framework of this investigation, IBM SPSS version 25 was employed to conduct an exploratory analysis utilizing Principal Components Analysis (PCA) on the amassed dataset. PCA, a method of considerable utility, facilitates the evaluation of the characteristics inherent in the measuring instruments utilized in this study, concomitantly mitigating the number of measurement items. Esteemed scholars such as Gerbing and Hamilton (1996) endorse this approach for discerning latent components within measurement scales, particularly instrumental in managing expansive datasets and serving as a preliminary refinement procedure.

In scrutinizing the measurement and structural model, this research employed a structural equation model (SEM) within Amos version 23. The analytical process entailed a comprehensive reliability and validity assessment, succeeded by a meticulous review of the research hypotheses.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Demographic information

The sample's demographics include 41.53% men and 58.47% women, with 62.50% aged 18-24 and 27.42% aged 25-34. Over 30% of participants completed a master's degree. In terms of their socio-professional status, the majority are students (57.47%) followed by employees (32.26%) in their socio-professional positions. 39% of the sample made more than three internet purchases, indicating a high level of internet usage among respondents (see table 1). In terms of incomes 82.66% of participants gain between 0-10000 MAD. Over 50% of the sample are interested in visiting grocery stores.

Table 1- Demographic information

Item	frequency	percentage
Gender		
male	103	41,53
female	145	58,47
age		
18-24	155	62,50

25-34	68	27,42
35-44	15	6,05
45-56	10	4,03
education		
Baccalaureate	80	32,26
License/bachelor	65	26,21
Masters	91	36,69
Ph.D.	12	4,84
Occupation		
Student	145	58,47
Employee	80	32,26
Official	21	8,47
Freelancer	2	0,81
Incomes (MAD)		
0-5000	140	56,45
5000-10000	65	26,21
10000-15000	21	8,47
15000-20000	15	6,05
>20000	7	2,82
Store type		
Grocery store	135	54,44
Electronic store	63	25,40
Sport equipment	50	20,16

4.2. Measurement model

To investigate the measurement model and proposed links, we conducted exploratory factor analysis (EFA) followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Next, IBM SPSS Amos statistical software was put to use to test the study hypotheses.

4.2.1. Fit between the measurement model and the index

The study confirmed the unidimensionality and internal consistency of the components through exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Constructs were derived from existing literature, and the unidimensional structure of measuring scales for loyalty, satisfaction, and in-store experience was validated. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values exceeded the 0.6 threshold, indicating robustness. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) optimization yielded excellent goodness-of-fit indices. Measures exhibited high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values consistently surpassing the 0.7 cutoff (Nunnally, 1978), and all constructs' composite reliability (CR) values exceeded 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) (see table 2).

4.2.2. Convergent and discriminant validity

The average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct as well as the contributions of individual items were examined in order to ascertain the convergent validity of the study. According to the findings, all constructs had substantial convergent validity since the AVE values were higher than the minimal cutoff point of 0.50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). A comparison study of the square root of the AVE and correlation values was also used to assess discriminant validity. The thorough evaluation validated the achievement of discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), as no square root of the AVE shown correlations with other components that were less than unity, supporting the methodical creation of discriminant validity across the constructs.

4.3. STRUCTURAL MODEL

4.3.1. Structural model fitting index and correlation

The study examined the measurement model and its linkages using a variety of goodness-of-fit criteria (Table 3). A few of these measures were the Tucker and Lewis index (TLI), root mean residual (RMR), comparative fit

index (CFI), degree of freedom (DF), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA). Robustness of the model was validated by low values of $\chi^2/df = 171.106$, AGFI = 0.933, and GFI = 0.963, all of which were higher than 0.9. A very good model fit was suggested by the RMSEA value of 0.022, while the CFI value of 0.994 approximated a near-perfect match (1.0) (see table 3).

In order to understand how the variables relate to one another, a thorough correlation study was carried out (Table 4). The statistical significance of relationships between variables ($r > 0.05$) was ascertained by computing Pearson's correlation coefficient. The correlation between "social" and "affective" was the highest (0.821). The correlations between "cognitive" and "in-store satisfaction" (0.425) and "cognitive" and "physical" (0.422) were the least significant (see table 4).

4.3.2. Hypothesis testing

The measurement model was converted into a structural model in order to examine the theories put forward in this study.

The study analyzed the relationship between cognitive, affective, social, and physical components of customer experience and their relationship with customer satisfaction and loyalty using a conceptual model. The results showed a positive and statistically significant path from "cognitive" to "In-store satisfaction" ($\beta = 0.423$, $t = 4.059$), supporting the hypothesis H1a. The path from "affective" to "In-store satisfaction" was also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.310$, $t = 4.789$), supporting H1b. The path

from "social" to "In-store satisfaction" was significant ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 2.233$) and thus supported H1c. Surprisingly the result showed that the path from "physical" to "In-store satisfaction" is not significant ($\beta = 0.099$, $t = 1.040$), not supporting H1d. The results showed a positive and statistically significant path from "In-store satisfaction" to "loyalty" ($\beta = 1.047$, $t = 8.644$) which supports H2 (see Table 5).

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5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study's main goal was to assess how customer experience elements affect his satisfaction within a store and his loyalty. The present study significantly advances our comprehension of how experience's components that affect consumer behavior. Furthermore, it offers insightful management and theoretical perspectives grounded in the previously mentioned empirical facts.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

Previous research (e.g., Bustamante & Rubio, 2017; Chandra, 2014; Hosseini & Hamelin, 2021; Pei et al., 2020; Zaid & Patwayati, 2021) has highlighted the significant impact of customer experience on customer satisfaction and loyalty. In our study, we specifically examined the results of the experience components (cognitive, affective, social and physical) in a physical environment. The aim of this research was to experimentally verify the influence of these factors and present them within the framework of a comprehensive conceptual model. The validity of the measurement model was reinforced by empirical data, and the analysis supports the robust performance of the structural model. The results of this study indicate that the components of customer experience all have a positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty during their shopping journey. These findings are similar to those in the literature (Bonfanti & Yfantidou, 2021; Bustamante & Rubio, 2017; Chandra, 2014; Hosseini & Hamelin, 2021; Terblanche & Boshoff, 2006; Zaid & Patwayati, 2021), which assert that experience components have a considerable influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Surprisingly, this study finds that physical component does not affect customer satisfaction. In the intricate landscape of customer satisfaction, certain factors emerge as pivotal in determining the success of the physical component. Among these, the alignment of the physical environment with service expectations stands out as a critical determinant. A scenario where the initial allure of

a comfortable setting does not seamlessly transition into a service experience that meets heightened expectations can lead to pronounced dissatisfaction. Equally vital is the consideration of health and accessibility issues within the physical space. Neglecting to provide an environment that accommodates health needs or ensures accessibility for all customers can profoundly impact satisfaction levels, particularly for those with specific health or mobility requirements. Furthermore, an often underestimated yet crucial factor is the risk associated with an overemphasis on the physical component. While creating a pleasing ambiance is essential, an undue focus on aesthetics to the detriment of equally significant elements like product quality and customer service can result in an imbalanced customer experience, potentially leading to dissatisfaction. These critical considerations underscore the need for businesses to navigate the intricate interplay between physical environments and other elements of the customer service ecosystem to truly elevate customer satisfaction.

5.2. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The in-store customer experience significantly shapes customer satisfaction and brand loyalty in retail. A nuanced understanding of managerial implications related to cognitive, affective, social, and physical aspects is vital for an effective retail strategy.

For cognitive enhancement, managers should prioritize comprehensive employee training to provide accurate information. Cultivate positive attitudes and emotional connections among staff. Implement strategic merchandising and aesthetics for cognitive engagement and positive emotional responses.

Facilitating positive interactions between employees and customers strengthens the social aspect. In addition, strategically organized events within the store enhance communal participation and foster a sense of belonging. While the physical aspect has limited direct impact, retailers are invited to optimize the store layout for seamless navigation and transactions.

Establish robust mechanisms for systematic customer feedback to understand and refine the in-store experience. Managers should use adaptive strategies informed by feedback, especially addressing consistent dissatisfaction with physical components, ensuring alignment with brand messaging, and integrating technology, like interactive displays, for a more engaging retail environment.

Table 2: Mean, ST.Dev, Cronbach's α , CR, AVE, Square Root of the AVE

component	Mean	ST.Dev	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE	Square Root of the AVE
Cognitive			0.932	0.925	0.752	0.867
This store environment makes me think and reflect.	3.50	1.232				
This store environment teaches me interesting things.	3.43	1.205				
This store environment makes me curious.	3.64	1.216				
This store environment awakens my creativity.	3.55	1.370				
Affective			0.798	0.780	0.645	0.803
This store induces feelings and sentiments	2.23	1.231				
I do have strong emotions for this store.	3.45	1.124				
This store is an emotional store.	3.23	1.238				
Social experience			0.886	0.932	0.775	0.880
Shopping from this store can help me connect with other people and social groups.	4.01	1.054				
My choice of this store says something about the people I like to associate with.	3.90	0.977				
Shopping from this store can help me connect with other people and social groups.	4.07	1.066				
I choose stores that help to express my identity to others.	3.93	1.096				
Physical			0.921	0.940	0.798	0.893
During my visit, I feel energy.	3.82	1.111				
During my visit, I feel vitality.	3.64	1.057				
During my visit, I felt comfort.	3.57	1.317				
During my visit, I felt well-being.	3.57	1.234				
In-store satisfaction						
In general, I was happy with the shopping experience.	3.82	1.111	0.935	0.945	0.882	0.939
In general, I was pleased with the quality of the service this store provided.	3.64	1.057				
In general, my choice to visit this store was a wise one.	3.57	1.317				
Loyalty			0.901	0.903	0.792	0.900
I think I will continue shopping at this store	3.74	1.099				
I consider myself a loyal customer of this store.	3.73	1.101				
I recommend this store to other people.	3.68	1.168				

Table 3: Goodness-of-fit measures.

χ^2	171.106
DF	165
AGFI	0.933
GFI	0.963
REMSEA	0.022
CFI	0.994
TLI	0.991
RMR	0.021

Table 4: correlation

	Cognitive	Affective	Social	Physical	In-store satisfaction	Loyalty
Cognitive	1					
Affective	0.427	1				
Social	0.523	0.821	1			
Physical	0.422	0.680	0.714	1		
In-store satisfaction	0.425	0.623	0.582	0.541	1	
Loyalty	0.478	0.686	0.590	0.687	0.643	1

Table 5- Results of path analysis

Hypotheses	Hypotheses paths	β	T-value	P-value	Results
H1a	Cognitive→ Satisfaction	0.423	4.059	***	Supported
H1b	Affective → Satisfaction	0.310	4.789	***	Supported
H1c	Social→ Satisfaction	0.153	2.233	0.026	Supported
H1d	Physical → Satisfaction	0.099	1.040	0.298	Not supported
H2	Satisfaction → Loyalty	1.047	8.644	***	Supported
***p < .001					

6. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While delving into the impact of customer experience on satisfaction and loyalty yields valuable insights, researchers face substantial limitations. Generalization

represents a hard challenge, as findings may not seamlessly apply across diverse industries, cultures, or geographic locations. The efficacy of customer experience strategies is context-dependent, introducing variability that necessitates a nuanced interpretation of results.

The subjectivity inherent in customer satisfaction and loyalty further complicates research endeavors. These concepts are personal and can differ significantly among individuals due to varying expectations and perceptions. Consequently, accurately measuring and generalizing results becomes a complex task, demanding meticulous consideration of the diverse customer landscape.

External factors influence customer satisfaction and loyalty, introducing another layer of complexity. Economic conditions, market trends, and competitive landscapes can overshadow the impact of customer experience. Isolating these external variables to discern the exclusive contribution of customer experience strategies becomes a tiring task, highlighting the multifaceted nature of the challenges researchers encounter.

In addition to these challenges, the dynamic nature of customer behavior poses a significant limitation. Preferences and behaviors evolve, rendering strategies effective today and potentially ineffective in the future. To overcome these limitations, researchers must embrace a holistic approach, acknowledging the intricate interplay of factors that shape customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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Appendix 1

Survey about the impact of in-store customer experience on customer satisfaction and loyalty

This survey explores the link between in-store customer experience and its influence on satisfaction and loyalty. We want participants to share insights about different kinds of experiences. The goal is to identify elements that shape a positive experience and how they correlate with customer loyalty. Valuable feedback will be used for reasons of academic research solely.

General questions

1. Gender *

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

2. Age *

- ☐ 18-24
☐ 25-34
☐ 35-44
☐ 45-56

3. Education *

- ☐ Baccalaureate
☐ License/bachelor
☐ Masters
☐ Ph.D.

4. Occupation *

☐ Student Employee☐ Official Freelancer☐☐

5. Incomes (MAD) *

☐ 0-5000☐ 5000-10000☐ 10000-15000☐ 15000-20000☐ >20000

6. Store type you have visited *

☐ Grocery store☐ Electronic store Sport☐ equipment**Experience dimensions- Instore satisfaction- Loyalty**

This section is related to the aspect of experience, satisfaction, and loyalty. Please rate all the items based on your personal experience from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).

7. Cognitive experience *

	1	2	3	4	5
I think that this store environment makes me think and reflect.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that the store environment teaches me interesting things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that the store environment makes me curious.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that the store environment awakens my creativity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Affective experience *

	1	2	3	4	5
I think that the store induces feelings and sentiments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think I do have strong emotions for this store.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that this store is an emotional store.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Social experience *

	1	2	3	4	5
I think that this store can help me connect with other people and social groups.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that this store says something about the people I like to associate with.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think that in this store I feel a bond with people who use the same brands as I do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think this store helps me to express my identity to others..	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. Physical experience *

	1	2	3	4	5
I think during my visit, I felt energy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think during my visit, I felt vitality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think during my visit, I felt comfort.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think during my visit, I felt well- being..	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. In-store satisfaction *

	1	2	3	4	5
I think I was happy with the shopping experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was pleased with the quality of the service of this store	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
my choice to visit this store was a wise one.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Store loyalty *

	1	2	3	4	5
I think I will continue shopping at this store.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think I consider myself a loyal customer of this store.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think I will recommend this store to other people..	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐