BUILDING THE MODEL OF A RELATIONSHIP'S QUALITY: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to develop a model of the quality of a relationship and investigate the links among its constructs. This empirical study aims to explore the constructs' links between the key constituents of the model of the relationship's quality: trust, satisfaction, and commitment. A structural equation model is employed to confirm the model and investigate the correlations and influences between the constructs. The results of the analysis confirm the direct influence of commitment towards loyalty. Satisfaction does not have a direct influence on loyalty; it does so through the mediate variable of commitment. The finding confirms the model of the relationship's quality with strong influences among its constituents: satisfaction, trust, and commitment. Commitment is the only variable that has a direct influence on customer loyalty.

Keywords: B2B relationship, trust, satisfaction, commitment, loyalty

Abstrak. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah membangun model relationship quality dan melakukan analisis hubungan konstruk pembentuk model. Studi empiris ini mencoba untuk menggali lebih jauh terhadap konstruk pembentuk model relationship quality: satisfaction, trust dan commitment. Metode SEM digunakan guna mengkonfirmasi model dan menguji hubungan antar konstruk. Hasil penelitian mengkonfirmasi hubungan langsung antara commitment dan loyalty. Satisfaction tidak memilik ipengaruh langsung terhadap loyalty, namun harus melalui commitment sebagai mediate variable. Hasil penelitian juga mengkonfirmasi bahwa model relationship quality memiliki konstituen yang memiliki hubungan satu dengan yang lain: trust, commitment dan satisfaction. Commitment merupakan satu-satunya konstruk yang memiliki hubungan dan pengaruh langsung terhadap loyalty.

Kata kunci: hubungan B2B, kepercayaan, kepuasan, komitmen, loyalitas

INTRODUCTION

In very competitive business environments, industries need their customers' loyalty in order to achieve business sustainability (Lam, Shankar, Erramilli, & Murthy, 2004; Rauyruen & Miller, 2007; Rust, Zeithaml, & Lemon, 2000). In the B2B context, marketing has shifted from a transactional focus to a relationship focus (Gounaris, 2005; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Customer retention is an essential objective for every business organisation. What is behind customer retention is a critical factor, which needs to be explored. Some researchers have studied the importance of business sustainability in the past (Al-Hawari & Ward, 2006; Gupta, Lehmann, & Stuart, 2004; Reinartz & Kumar, 2002). In businesses with very tough competition, loyalty becomes a critical objective to ensure a company's existence (Evanschitzky & Wunderlich, 2006; Gummesson, 2004; Lindgreen & Wynstra, 2005; Ravald & Grönroos, 1996; Sharma & Patterson, 1999). For the purpose of improving loyalty, firms have to focus on developing and maintaining their customer relationships (Eiriz & Wilson, 2006; Harker & Egan, 2006; Wu, Chen, Chien, & Wu, 2016). KPMG Nunwood Consulting Limited says that a key success factor of the B2B business world lies in companies' relationships with their customers (KPMG-Nunwood, 2017).

The chemical industry used to be a monopoly market structure from 1987 until 2002 (Asosiasi Industri Formalin dan Thermosetting Adhesive [AIFTA], 1996). The shifting of the market structure from monopoly to oligopoly created market competition among the chemical industry's players, within the chemicals' market. Once the competition started, relationship marketing became more important for keeping businesses sustainable. This is the background and the research gap for an empirical study.

The empirical study is necessary to ensure that the model of the relationship's quality fits with the changes to the business environment (Hu, Wu, & Chen, 2013; Roberts-Lombard, Mpinganjira, & Svensson, 2017). In past empirical research, scholars have investigated a wide variety of 'relationship' concepts and characteristics (Cannon & Perreault Jr., 1999; Hewett, Money, & Sharma, 2002). Many past studies identified trust and commitment as constituents of a relationship's quality and as the antecedents of loyalty (Doney & Cannon, 1997; Christine Moorman, Deshpande, & Zaltman, 1993). Trust, satisfaction, and commitment are three basic predictors of loyalty (Hunt & Morgan, 1994; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006a; Walter, Mueller, & Helfert, 2000). This paper describes the influence of trust, satisfaction, and commitment on loyalty in the context of the chemical industry, based on empirical studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

B2B relationship and relationship quality model. In the last few decades, B2B relationships have become standard practice for a buyer-supplier relationship, especially in the manufacturing sector. To improve performance, a supplier needs to interact intensively with the customer (Heirati, O'Cass, & Ngo, 2013; Samudro, Sumarwan, Yusuf, & Simanjuntak, 2018a; Tai, 2011), and to maintain the customer's loyalty (Hetesi, 2014). The purpose is to keep the supplier's position against alternative suppliers, and to deliver value beyond the product itself; this is where the relationship's quality takes place. Mummalaneni (1987) and Hollyoake (2009) identified a buyer-seller relationship undertaken by specific departments in both companies. The marketing activities were related to other activities from other departments (Cravens & Piercy, 2013). The relationship involved some people from different departments, such as production, quality control, logistics, sales, and finance, at different levels.

Relationship quality definitions vary across past studies (Roberts-Lombard et al., 2017), but some factors, such as a combination of trust, commitment, and satisfaction, are most commonly used (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990; Dorsch, Swanson, & Kelley, 1998; Hewett et al., 2002). Some other researchers also developed models of relationships' qualities, which had trust, commitment, and satisfaction in them (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Samudro, Sumarwan, Yusuf, & Simanjuntak, 2018b; Segarra-Moliner, Moliner-Tena, & Sánchez-Garcia, 2013; Skarmeas, Katsikeas, Spyropoulou, & Salehi-Sangari, 2008; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006a; Vesel & Zabkar, 2010; Walter et al., 2000). Hewett *et al.* (2002) found that a buyer's perception of a relationship's quality influences his or her intentions of repurchasing. Rauyruen and Miller (2007) found that a relationship's quality influences loyalty, and other researchers also got the same result as Helfert and Gemünden (1998) and Hennig-Thurau (2000).

Hypotheses development
Satisfaction. Various past empirical studies put satisfaction as a central element of the marketing concept (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Tse & Wilton, 1988). Satisfaction is the customer's judgment of a vendor's performance (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Susanti, Sumarwan, Simanjuntak, & Yusuf, 2019a) and relationship experience (E. W. Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994; Everelles & Leavitt, 1992; Fournier & Mick, 1999; Susanti, Sumarwan, Simanjuntak, & Yusuf,

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2019b). Both of these definitions show greater rational and cognitive thinking towards satisfaction. In an empirical study with the manufacturing sector as respondents, Ulaga and Eggert (2006) found satisfaction was a direct driver of trust and loyalty. Satisfaction positively influences trust (Askariazad & Babakhani, 2015; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006a; Walter et al., 2000). Social and economic satisfaction influences the partner's trust (Ha, Lee & Janda, 2016). However, satisfaction also influences commitment (Palaima & Auruškevičiene, 2007; Sanchez-Franco, 2009; Soni, Wilson & O'Keefe, 1996). In the B2B context, some researchers find that satisfaction positively influences loyalty, as Gil-Saura *et al.* (2009) state in their research into mixed industries' populations. Fornell (1992) discovered that customer satisfaction is, in general, positively connected with loyalty. Some researchers find that satisfaction positively influences loyalty (E. W. Anderson, Fornell & Mazvancheryl, 2004; E. W. Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Molinari, Abratt & Dion, 2008; Patterson & Spreng, 1997). In this empirical study, satisfaction is developed by a construct whose major cognitive approach, but only indicator, is with the affective approach (CS-2, for the relationship). The development of a satisfaction construct refers to past studies. It states that logic, testing, and facts drive industrial buying; hence, it tends to be a more cognitive approach (Kemp, Borders, Anaza & Johnston, 2018; Patti, Hartley & Kennedy, 1991). However, industrial buying is also driven by emotions; thus, an affective approach is also necessary to build a satisfaction construct (Bagozzi, 2006; Borg & Johnston, 2013; Guo & Ng, 2012; Kadic-Maglajlic, Vida, Obadia, & Plank, 2016).Satisfaction is an affirmative and emotional state that results from a working relationship between parties (Kundu & Datta, 2015).

H1. Satisfaction positively influences customer loyalty.
H2. Satisfaction positively influences commitment.
H3. Satisfaction positively influences trust.

Trust. Trust is the willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence (C. Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). Two domains separate the trust definition; in one domain, trust influences attitudes, and in another domain, trust influences perceptions (Lee, Lee, & Hwang, 2014; Lien, Wu, Chen, & Wang, 2014; Lu, Yang, Chau, & Cao, 2011). This definition tends to be a more cognitive process. In the past, the traditional view of trust had a more psychological aspect. Trust is traditionally defined as the level of confidence between parties. So, it is defined as the content of two points. The first aspect is the affective approach, which is that one party has more confidence than the other. The second aspect is a more behavioural aspect, which is that one party relies on the other party.

Furthermore, trust is developed in two dimensions (Moorman et al., 1992). The first dimension is cognitive trust. It means a more rational view and willingness to rely on the vendor's competency and ability. The second dimension is affective trust, which means a more emotional point of view or perception of the partner who motivates the other to maintain the relationship. The other concept is similar, for which trust has two elements: credibility, or the extent to which one party relies on the other party because of its competence, and benevolence, which is a belief in the good intentions of the other party in the relationship (Ganesan, 1994; Kumar, Scheer, & Steenkamp, 1995). Wilson and Jantrania (1994) define trust as the perception of one party regarding the other party's ability, expertise, knowledge, and motives and intentions. Trust is a critical mediating variable (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Palmatier, Dant, Grewal, & Evans, 2006).

Trust positively influences commitment (Anderson & Narus, 1990; Gil-Saura et al., 2009; Gounaris, 2005; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Ulaga & Eggert, 2006b). In the B2B literature, there is a variety of definitions of trust (Brashear, Boles, Bellenger, & Brooks, 2003; Järvinen, 2014; Mouzas, Henneberg, & Naudé, 2007; Poon, Albaum, & Chan, 2012). The first definition refers to the trust of a person, or inter-personal trust. The second definition addresses inter-organisational trust (Gil-

Saura et al., 2009). Inter-organisational trust is short-hand for two sets of individuals, each of which trusts the organisation of which the other is a member (Blois, 1999). In this empirical study, from the customer's perspective, the wood industry interprets trust as having both inter-personal and inter-organisational relationships. This study uses cognitive and major affective approaches. In the context of the B2B relationship, past research has discovered the importance of the affective aspect of trust in a buyer-seller relationship (Akrout, Diallo, Akrout, & Chandon, 2016). In past studies, emotions played a crucial role in the behavioural formation of the product (Bakalash & Riemer, 2013; Borg & Johnston, 2013; Edell & Burke, 1987; Kadic-Maglajlic et al., 2016).

H4. Trust positively influences commitment.

Commitment and Loyalty. Commitment is the parties' intentions to act and interact with each other (Storbacka, Strandvik, & Gronroos, 1994). Commitment is an essential factor in a successful relationship (Walter et al., 2000). The customers' commitment to the relationship pays off with business continuity, retention, market share, and profit. Commitment will directly and positively influence loyalty (Bataineh, Al-Abdallah, Salhab, & Shoter, 2015; Gounaris, 2005; Palaima & Auruškevičiene, 2007; Samudro, Sumarwan, Simanjuntak, & Yusuf, 2019). The relationship is a sustainable connection between two parties and identifies commitment as a critical factor in achieving valuable outcomes (Gilliland & Bello, 2002). The essence of commitment in any relationship (inter-organisational, intra-organisational, and inter-personal) is stability and sacrifice; from this point of view, the definition of commitment is the desire to develop and believe in a stable relationship, and a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to maintain the relationship (E. Anderson & Weitz, 1992). Most studies describe commitment as an intention to develop and maintain a long-term relationship (Dwyer, Schurr & Oh, 1987; Gundlach, Achrol & Mentzer, 1995; C. Moorman et al., 1992). This study allows for commitment from an inter-organisational relationship's context, with a more cognitive sense approach, although, most likely, the inter-personal approach might be involved in the decision process. This study also examines commitment's antecedents, based on the affective commitment approach. Affective commitment is a willingness to continue a relationship because of its positive effects (Kumar et al., 1995) and emotional attachment (Fullerton, 2003).

Dick and Basu (1994) found loyalty to be an essential objective in an industrial relationship. They called it vendor loyalty. Barroso and Picón (2012) support this finding and cite customer loyalty as the most important company concern. From a behavioural dimension, Rauyruen and Miller (2007) described loyalty as a customer's willingness to repurchase a product and/or service from the same provider. Meanwhile, Briggs et al. (2007) define loyalty from the attitudinal dimension, which is a buyer's commitment to a product, service, brand, or organisation. Oliver (1993) determines loyalty from a more significant spectrum of attitudinal, behavioural, and cognitive dimensions: a deep commitment to rebuy a product and/or service from the same vendor. In past research, loyalty was manifested as a variety of behaviour, such as a recommendation, word of mouth, patronising or advocating vendors, retention, and repurchase intentions (Dwyer et al., 1987; Fornell, 1992; Himanka, 2017; Jones, Reynolds, Mothersbaugh, & Beatty, 2007; Lam et al., 2004). This study refers to the loyalty concept (Oliver, 1999) as a process, starting with a cognitive sense first (cognitive loyalty), followed by an affective sense (affective loyalty), a conative manner (conative loyalty), and finally, action control (action loyalty

H5. Commitment positively influences customer loyalty.

METHOD

The research method is conclusively descriptive and uses a quantitative study. It starts with a literature review, studying each latent variable and their connections, and then develops an initial model, as in Figure 1. The literature leads us to the five hypotheses: satisfaction directly and positively influences loyalty; satisfaction directly and positively influences commitment; satisfaction directly and positively influences trust; trust directly and positively influences commitment; commitment directly and positively influences loyalty.
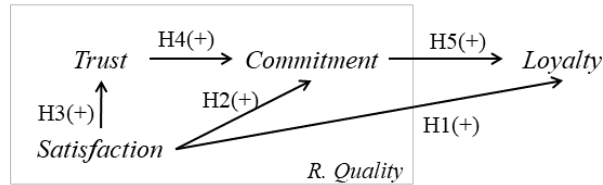
Figure 1. Initial model

Sampling and respondents. Before the field research, a pre-test was done by sending questionnaires to 30 respondents. The questionnaires were validated by a professional peer review (Carmine & Zeller, 1979). Since this research is in a B2B context with a limited number of companies, the study used census techniques; in other words, there was no sample. The entire industry is composed of 164 companies, with 105 companies as the unit analysis for this research (Table 1). The field research was conducted by the research team from the 2nd April to the 10th August 2018. Field research was done through face-to-face interviews with a minimum total sample of 200 (Loehlin & Beaujean, 2017). Every company (unit analysis) contributed two or more samples since they had multi-supplier policies. The total number of collected and valid samples came to 269. The respondents' working experience and profiles are presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 1. Respondents' Companies Profiles

	Company		Unit Analysis	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
Wood-based Industry				
• PB/Particle Board	4	2.44	2	1.90
• MDF/Medium Density Fibreboard & HDF/High Density Fibreboard	3	1.83	1	0.95
• Plywood, Blockboard, Bare Core, Rockwool, Film Face, Laminated Paper, Wood Decking, Parquet Flooring, and Furniture	157	95.73	102	97.15
Total	164	100.00	105	100.00

Table 2. Respondents' Working Experience by Job Position

Working Experience	Owner/ Director	Manager/ GM	Staff	Production Head	QC Head	Supervisor/ Foreman
< 5 years			3	4	2	
5-10 years	8	7	5	57	14	11
> 10 years	37	24	3	32	6	4
Total=217	45	31	11	93	22	15
Total=100%	21%	14%	5%	43%	10%	7%

Table 3. Respondents' Demographic Profile

Demography		Count	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	170	78.53
	Female	47	21.47
Education	High School	19	8.80
	College	62	28.80
	Undergraduate (Bachelor)	125	57.60
	Postgraduate (Masters Degree)	10	4.80
Age	< 36 years	67	30.65
	36-45 years	67	30.65
	46-55 years	69	31.72
	> 55 years	15	6.99

Measurement

Measurement model testing. The data analysis started with the overall model's fit, the measurement of the model's fit, and ended with an estimation of the structural model's fit. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) technique was employed to verify the hypotheses by using the AMOS (Analysis of a Moment Structures) software program. The study used RMSEA to avoid sample size issues and anticipated the missing standard of chi-square, a close fit standard of RMSEA is ≤ 0.05, and a good fit standard of RMSEA is ≤ 0.08 (Brown & Cudeck, 1993). RMR, CFI, and PNFI are the standards for the overall model's fit testing, as in Table 4 (Wijanto, 2015).

Table 4. Overall Model's Fit

No		Goodness of Fit	Standard	Result	Information
1	RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	≤ 0.08	0.065	Good fit
2	RMR	Root Mean Square Residual	≤ 0.05	0.028	Good fit
3	CFI	Comparative Fit Index	$0.80 \leq$ CFI<0.90	0.850	Marginal fit
4	PNFI	Parsimonious Normed Fit Index	> 0.50	0.697	Good parsimonious fit

90% Confidence interval for RMSEA=0.062-0.068 and *p*-value (close fit RMSEA<0.05)=0.000

The second step is the measurement model's fit. Using an SEM technique, an indicator is valid if it has a factor loading ≥ 0.50 and a t-*value* ≥ 1.96 (Igbaria, Zinatelli, Cragg, & Cavaye, 1997). In Table 5, all the indicators are valid and significantly contribute to their constructs.

Table 5. Factor loadings and t-value

Variables	Indicators		Lambda	t-value	Remark
Trust	Tru1	This supplier is honest	0.83		Valid
	Tru2	This supplier keeps promises	0.84	16.47	Valid
	Tru3	Communicates transparently	0.50	7.93	Valid
	Tru4	Concerned with our interests	0.60	10.67	Valid
	Tru5	Transparent in any technical issue	0.68	12.37	Valid
Satisfaction	CS1	Good product quality and service	0.87		Valid
(Sat)	CS2	Good relationship	0.90	21.47	Valid
	CS3	Fair treatment	0.77	15.88	Valid
	CS4	A good performance in general	0.78	16.21	Valid
	CS5	Helpful	0.79	16.70	Valid
Commitment	Com1	Benefit from the relationship	0.81		Valid
(Com)	Com2	We care about the relationship	0.89	19.13	Valid
	Com3	We keep the relationship	0.83	15.38	Valid
	Com4	We develop the relationship	0.75	13.30	Valid
	Com5	We keep the relationship forever	0.60	10.59	Valid
Loyalty	Loy1	Repurchase the existing product	0.76		Valid
(Loy)	Loy2	Repurchase a greater quantity	0.79	14.17	Valid
	Loy3	Purchase another type of product	0.77	12.31	Valid
	Loy4	We put this supplier as our top priority	0.80	12.89	Valid
	Loy5	We will recommend this supplier	0.66	10.40	Valid

Note: All items are collected and bundled using top and bottom two boxes first. The cluster data are measured by using a 5-point Likert scale, which runs from 1=fully disagree to 5=fully agree

The minimum threshold of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was 0.50 for each construct, which indicates favourable discriminant validity for each construct. At the same time, the minimum threshold for the Construct Reliability (CR), which was 0.70, indicates the reliability and consistency of the measurements' indicators (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Every construct passes the minimum suggested threshold, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Construct Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (VE)

No	Latent Variable	Symbol	AVE	CR
1	Trust	Tru	0.557	0.831
2	Satisfaction	CS	0.693	0.936
3	Commitment	Com	0.581	0.909
4	Loyalty	Loy	0.574	0.902

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The final step is a structural model fit; all the hypotheses are verified by the estimated coefficient and t-*value* for significant status.

Table 7. Structural Model Coefficient and t-value

No	Pathline	Hypothesis	Coefficient	t-value	Conclusion
1	Satisfaction → Loyalty	H1	-0.370	-1.32	Rejected
2	Satisfaction → Commitment	H2	**0.779**	9.05	Supported
3	Satisfaction → Trust	H3	**0.405**	5.08	Supported
4	Trust → Commitment	H4	**0.185**	2.39	Supported
5	Commitment → Loyalty	H5	**0.860**	2.85	Supported

Note: Coefficients that are significant at the 0.05 or lower level (one-tailed) are in bold

In Table 7, the path coefficient of satisfaction-loyalty (-0.370 and t-value -1.32) indicates that satisfaction does not directly influence loyalty (reject H1). Customer satisfaction with the chemicals market will not instantly trigger loyalty in a customer. The path coefficient of satisfaction-commitment (0.779, and a t-value of 9.05) supports H2, which indicates that satisfaction significantly influences commitment. In other words, if a customer is satisfied, he/she will maintain the relationship with their chemicals' supplier. At this stage, the customer has not yet put the chemical suppliers in first place nor is he/she even loyal. The path coefficient of satisfaction-trust is 0.405, with a t-value of 5.08; hence it supports H3. Customer's satisfaction develops the customer's trust in the relationship. Furthermore, the customer's trust influences their commitment. It is indicated by the path coefficient of trust-commitment (0.185, with t-value 2.39), which supports H4. Finally, with the path coefficient of commitment-loyalty (0.860 and t-value 2.85), this supports H5. It indicates that commitment influences loyalty.

*: Significant: *t-value* > 1.96

Figure 2. Path coefficients of the model

Figure 3. The final model of the relationship's quality

Table 8. Total Effect

Items	Trust	Satisfaction	Commitment	Loyalty
Trust	0.00	0.405	0.00	-
Satisfaction	0.00	0.00	0.00	-
Commitment	0.185	0.854	0.00	-
Loyalty	**0.159**	**0.364**	**0.860**	-

Note: coefficients that are significant at the 0.05 or lower level (one tail) are in bold

Table 8 shows that loyalty is influenced indirectly by satisfaction (total effect 0.364), which is relatively stronger than trust. Hence, chemical manufacturers need to focus on their customers' satisfaction; all the indicators that develop the construction of satisfaction must be a priority.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to develop a relationship model that fits the business's context, which is the relationship between the chemical industry and the chemical market in Indonesia. Hence, the author conducted an in-depth analysis, by investigating the links and correlations among the constructs.

The findings showcase the relational insight among the constructs, including the only construct that has a direct influence on earning customers' loyalty (commitment) and the constructs that have an indirect influence on customers' loyalty (satisfaction and trust). This study finds consistency in the relationship between the constructs, as reflected in past studies, and delivers empirical implications for the business's context.

The first significant contribution of the study is the final model of the relationship's quality in the business's context, as shown in Figure 3. As in the industry part (the section on the theoretical framework), since the market structure shifted to an oligopoly in 2002, there has been no study of the model of the relationship's quality that fits the business's context of the relationship between the chemical industry and the chemical market. Hence, similar industries in a similar business context might adopt the model of the relationship to improve their customers' loyalty. From this relationship model, the finding of the satisfaction-commitment link (coefficient 0.779 and t-value 9.05) and total effect satisfaction to loyalty is 0.364. The implication suggests that the chemical industry should enhance satisfaction, because of the positive and strong correlation between satisfaction and commitment; furthermore, a commitment will be the single intermediate variable to get the customers' loyalty. In reference to the satisfaction indicators, the chemical industry must deliver an improved performance in terms of its products' quality, consistency, and service; treat customers fairly and helpfully; and perform well in general.

The second contribution of the study is an uncorrelated satisfaction-loyalty path. Referring to the findings, H1 is rejected, and satisfaction does not directly influence loyalty. This study refers to the loyalty concept of Oliver (1999), which, as a process, starts with cognitive loyalty, followed by affective and conative loyalty, and ends with action loyalty. Commitment is an antecedent of loyalty. In the post-purchase study, Oliver (1993) found that a satisfying purchase experience leads to repeat purchases and loyalty. The concept fits this study, but it takes time to ensure that the customer becomes more confident. Since the product's character is a non-commodity, it takes time to convince customers, or prospective ones, to commit to a business relationship. There must be a commitment from both parties in between satisfaction and loyalty; hence, commitment is a mediator.

The direct implication of uncorrelated satisfaction-loyalty creates the necessity for the chemical market to focus on satisfaction. The chemical market needs quality products and performance, consistency, service, and other non-relationship factors in the beginning. If these are in place, the chemical market starts to commit to the chemical suppliers. The performance consistency of the chemical industry will be paid for by repeat orders, including the gradual increase in the volume ordered. The background explains why satisfaction is not instantaneously correlated to loyalty. This path implies that the chemical industry needs to ensure that all the indicators of satisfaction are well-performed. The chemical industry must develop a relationship programme purposely to persuade customers affectively. The personal and relationship programme would be a catalyst for achieving customer loyalty.

Limitations and future research. This research has a few limitations that offer opportunities for further research and exploration. First, this study only did a field survey in Indonesia. Hence, the findings will contribute benefits to industries in places with a similar cultural background and a similar business context's application. On the other hand, the ability to generalise the findings may be limited. Future research may refer to this paper and replicate it in other branches or countries. Second, the respondents vary in terms of their scale, from a small home industry to a large-scale company. There should be different management decision processes that moderate or strengthen the relationship between the constructs. This offers the chance for further research into specific segments, based on demographics, using a case study research method.

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