

The FamilyMart Experience: Key Drivers of Customer Satisfaction in Malaysia's Convenience Retail Sector

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ABSTRACT

FamilyMart, a Japanese convenience store franchise in Malaysia since 2016, has quickly become a leading retailer offering Japanese-style food, beverages, and lifestyle products. This study aims to examine the key factors influencing customer satisfaction at FamilyMart (2026). The FamilyMart experience: Key Malaysia, focusing on customer drivers of customer satisfaction in experience. Data were collected from 152 Malaysia's convenience retail sector. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management and Education* with SPSS to test the hypotheses. The findings indicate that store atmosphere, convenience, and service quality have a significant positive impact on the FamilyMart customer experience in Malaysia. Additionally, both service quality and customer experience significantly enhance customer satisfaction. The results further demonstrate a positive relationship between customer experience and satisfaction, suggesting that improvements in the overall shopping experience directly contribute to higher satisfaction levels. These outcomes underscore the critical roles of store atmosphere, convenience, service quality, product quality, and customer experience in shaping customer perceptions and satisfaction within Malaysia's convenience retail sector. The study concludes that enhancing customer experience boosts satisfaction, highlighting the need for FamilyMart to focus on staff training, consistent product quality, and strategic resource allocation to remain competitive in Malaysia's retail market.

Keywords: Customer Experience, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Service Quality, Store Atmosphere, Product Quality, Convenience

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's convenience retail sector has experienced rapid growth in recent years, largely due to shifts in consumer lifestyles, increasing urbanization and a rising preference for quick, convenient, and reliable retail solutions. Modern consumers increasingly seek stores that not only provide accessibility but also offer high-quality products, efficient service, and a pleasant shopping environment. These evolving expectations have intensified competition among convenience store operators, pushing brands to differentiate themselves beyond basic convenience. Against this competitive backdrop, FamilyMart has established itself as a well-recognized convenience store brand since entering the Malaysian market in 2016. Adopting a Japanese-inspired retail concept, FamilyMart stands out through its distinctive store ambiance, wide range of ready-to-eat food, beverages, and daily essentials, as well as its strong focus on product quality and service excellence. Its contemporary store design and innovative offerings have influenced consumer perceptions of modern convenience retailing. As market competition continues to grow, understanding the key factors that shape customer satisfaction is essential for FamilyMart to build customer loyalty, enhance the overall shopping experience, and maintain a sustainable competitive advantage in Malaysia's evolving convenience retail sector.

Past studies have examined various factors influencing customer satisfaction in convenience and retail environments. Ahmad et al. (2018) found that limited product availability, inefficient replenishment systems, and inconvenient purchasing processes negatively impacted customer satisfaction at FamilyMart. Kee et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of marketing strategies and customer satisfaction in the growth and decline of convenience chains such as 7-Eleven. Meanwhile, Fan et al. (2019) highlighted how New Retail and service design innovations enhance customer experience and create value in Taiwan's convenience stores. Beyond traditional retail settings, research in digital and hybrid service environments offers additional insights into customer behavior. Hui et al. (2024) and Kee et al. (2023a, 2023b) examined the determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty toward platforms such as Shopee and McDonald's, demonstrating the critical role of perceived usefulness, convenience, trust, and overall experience. Lew et al. (2024) investigated the impact of COVID-19 on customer satisfaction and business performance, showing how crisis conditions reshape expectations and service quality perceptions. Yo et al. (2021) analyzed key drivers of customer satisfaction in Shopee Malaysia, further reinforcing the importance of convenience, trust, and perceived value. Adding to customer-experience literature, Kee et al. (2025) explored how usability, service responsiveness, order efficiency, and value perception on customer experience and satisfaction in Foodpanda. Their findings underscore that modern consumers prioritize seamless, reliable, and pleasant experiences across both digital and physical touchpoints. Collectively, these studies highlight that an integrated mix of experiential, emotional, and functional dimensions across various service platforms shapes customer satisfaction.

However, existing studies on customer satisfaction in retail contexts primarily focus on individual influencing factors and often overlook how these factors interact within an integrated retail environment. Consequently, limited attention has been given to understanding the combined effects of multiple dimensions of customer experience in convenience store settings. In practice, customers form their evaluations based on an overall experience shaped by the interaction of store environment, product offerings, service encounters, and convenience rather than by isolated attributes.

Store atmosphere plays an important role in influencing customers' emotional responses, comfort, and willingness to spend time in the store. Product quality contributes to perceptions of consistency, reliability, and value, which are essential for building trust and encouraging repeat patronage. Service quality affects interactions between customers and employees, shaping perceptions of staff competence, responsiveness, and friendliness. Convenience, reflected in factors such as store location, layout, operating hours, and ease of access, enhances shopping efficiency and reduces customer effort, which is particularly relevant in fast-paced urban lifestyles. When these elements function together effectively, they contribute to a positive and satisfying shopping experience.

Therefore, developing a comprehensive understanding of how these dimensions interact is essential for explaining customer satisfaction in modern convenience retail formats such as FamilyMart. This study examines how store atmosphere, product quality, service quality, and convenience collectively influence customer satisfaction among FamilyMart consumers in Malaysia. By identifying the most influential determinants, the study provides practical insights for improving the in-store experience, meeting customer expectations, and strengthening long-term customer loyalty. In addition, these findings have broader implications for convenience store operators looking to improve service standards and enhance their competitive edge in the Malaysian retail sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction represents the pleasure or disappointment experienced by consumers when comparing a product or service's actual performance with their initial expectations (Teoh et al., 2021). Essentially, customer satisfaction reflects the degree to which consumers' expectations are met, influencing their evaluation of transactions, service quality, and overall shopping experiences (Jaafri et al., 2024). In the context of convenience stores in Malaysia, including FamilyMart, higher satisfaction levels are strongly associated with better enterprise performance, as satisfied customers are more likely to return and recommend the store to others (Schiebler et al., 2025). Moreover, factors such as affordable pricing and economic value have been shown to significantly enhance satisfaction, loyalty, and retention (Kee et al., 2025; Animashaun et al., 2016). Research across digital and hybrid service platforms, such as online shopping, ride-hailing, food delivery, and mobile applications, has highlighted the key technological, service-quality, and experiential determinants of satisfaction (Hui et al., 2024; Kee et al., 2023b, 2023c; Lew et al., 2024; Yo et al., 2021). For example, Ng et al. (2025a) and Tan et al. (2025) emphasize that satisfaction is strongly influenced by users' perceptions of service quality, responsiveness, and reliability in digital mobility platforms. Similarly, Kee et al. (2023a) demonstrate that satisfaction contributes significantly to brand trust and loyalty in quick-service restaurants. In e-commerce contexts such as Shopee, factors like convenience, system quality, and ease of use enhance satisfaction and subsequently affect users' repurchase intentions (Kee et al., 2023c; Yo et al., 2021). Similarly, Ng et al. (2025b) examined the intention to repurchase taxi-hailing apps and factors influencing customer satisfaction, illustrating the interplay of convenience, service quality, trust, and digital experience in shaping loyalty toward mobility platforms. Kee et al. (2022) further demonstrated in the Malaysian context that retail experiences at Aeon, including store atmosphere, product variety, and service quality, significantly influence customer satisfaction and repeat patronage, illustrating the broader relevance of experiential factors in shaping loyalty across retail settings.

Within the Grab ecosystem specifically, prior research reinforces the importance of technology-driven and experiential factors in shaping customer satisfaction. Kee et al. (2021a) show that Grab's growth was underpinned by strong user-centered design and service reliability, while Kee et al. (2023c) illustrate how pandemic-driven changes in consumer behavior increased reliance on Grab Mart for essential needs. Studies on GrabFood further highlight the role of technology-based features, including artificial intelligence and personalized recommendations, in influencing customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Ravi et al., 2024; Liou et al., 2024). Additionally, operational improvements and enhanced service management during the global pandemic contributed to better user experiences and higher satisfaction levels (Kee et al., 2021b). Collectively, these studies indicate that customer satisfaction arises from the interplay of functional, experiential, and technological factors. In convenience retail stores like FamilyMart, customer satisfaction is closely tied to customer experience elements such as store atmosphere, product quality, service quality, and convenience. These dimensions not only meet customer expectations but also enhance loyalty and long-term business success.

Customer Experience

Customer experience has emerged as a critical determinant of satisfaction and loyalty in both traditional retail and digital service platforms. In convenience retail, we propose that aspects such as store atmosphere are central to shaping customer experience. Store atmosphere influences mood and comfort, while product quality and service interactions affect trust, reliability, and perceived value. Convenience, including location, store layout, and operational efficiency, further enhances the overall experience by reducing effort and time (Kee et al., 2022). In digital service platforms, customer experience is equally important. Hui et al. (2024) and Kee et al. (2023a, 2023b) highlighted that perceived usefulness, trust, and ease of use significantly influence satisfaction and loyalty toward platforms such as Shopee and McDonald's. Yo et al. (2021) examined online shopping behavior in Shopee Malaysia, emphasizing the role of convenience, reliability, and responsiveness in shaping positive experiences. Lew et al. (2024) explored the impact of COVID-19 on customer satisfaction, showing that disruptions in service delivery can significantly affect perceptions of experience and overall satisfaction. Ng et al. (2025b) investigated the intention to repurchase taxi-hailing services, demonstrating that seamless interactions, service efficiency, and trust collectively enhance customer satisfaction in mobility platforms. Extending these insights to food delivery services, Kee et al. (2025) examined customer experience and satisfaction in Foodpanda, focusing on usability, service responsiveness, order efficiency, and perceived value. Their study revealed that an integrated approach to service design, combining functional efficiency with emotional and experiential elements, significantly improves customer satisfaction and loyalty. The findings suggest that both tangible features and less visible experiential aspects play an important role in shaping customer experience in physical stores and digital-based services.

H9: Customer experience positively affects customer satisfaction.

Store Atmosphere

Store atmosphere positively and significantly influences customer satisfaction. (Putri et al., 2025) Nine factors that influence store atmosphere, including querulous, music, sensitive, budget seeker, sensuous, light, idler, space seeker, and comfort seeker. Light and querulous emerged as the dominant factors shaping store atmosphere. (Prashar et al., 2015) An attractive, pleasant, clean, and well-organized store layout encourages customers to return. Store atmosphere refers to designing the shopping environment, including equipment and furniture, to create an emotional impact on customers and increase the likelihood of purchase. (Saman et al., 2023) The results show an estimated

value of 87%, indicating a significant opportunity to increase purchasing decisions when store conditions are pleasant and product prices are affordable. (Kasmad et al., 2022) Retailers should enhance the appearance and image of their stores. Store layout strongly influences customer behaviour and overall store impression. It also affects traffic flow, shopping atmosphere, shopping behaviour, and operational efficiency (Tlapana et al., 2021).

H1: Store atmosphere positively affects customer experience.

H5: Store atmosphere positively affects customer satisfaction

Product Quality

Product quality is essential, as consumers will only choose products that are reliable and well-guaranteed. (Lina et al., 2022) Customer satisfaction and product quality are closely related because the ability of a product to generate customer satisfaction can be used to assess its quality. (Hidayat et al., 2019) Product quality is a key priority, and stores should consistently offer a wide variety of menu items made with quality ingredients. Stores should regularly innovate with signature menus and unique packaging to differentiate their business. (Ratasuk et al., 2022) Product quality, service quality, and price positively influence purchasing decisions and consumer satisfaction, with purchasing decisions further enhancing satisfaction with medical devices. (Chaerudin et al., 2021) Consumer dissatisfaction stems from poor product quality and inadequate after-sales service, both directly impact consumer satisfaction. Therefore, high-quality products and comprehensive after-sales service are crucial. (Sunarya et al., 2022) Competitiveness, reputation, ethics, authenticity, and credibility show a significant positive correlation with customer satisfaction, suggesting that product quality serves as an indirect mediator in these relationships. Businesses can leverage these brand personality traits to market products and services more effectively, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction. (Mutsikiwa et al., 2024)

H2: Product quality positively affects customer experience.

H6: Product quality positively affects customer satisfaction.

Service Quality

In today's highly competitive business environment, organizations widely recognize high service quality as a crucial driver of competitive advantage. Superior service quality not only increases customer satisfaction but also strengthens customer loyalty (Pérez-Morón et al., 2022; Jimoh et al., 2020; Husna et al., 2020; Maisarah et al., 2020; Irfan & Kee, 2009; Irfan et al., 2012). Aspects of convenience store shopping, such as product assortment and service quality, together with innovative omnichannel features, can influence customer satisfaction and revisit intentions. These relationships can be understood through the lenses of hedonic and utilitarian shopping experiences (Gibson et al., 2022). The quality of service in a company can be evaluated through several factors, including reliability, empathy, and responsiveness. Customers assess their satisfaction based on personnel quality, information quality, order quality, and timeliness, with timeliness referring to employees completing orders within the required timeframe (Kee et al., 2022). Malaysian customers' satisfaction with Tesco Hypermarket is shaped by multiple service quality dimensions, such as tangibility. (Kee et al., 2021). Stores should provide consistent, high-quality service through well-trained, friendly, and attentive staff who are properly uniformed and visibly represent the brand (Ratasuk et al., 2022). Personnel play a key role in service quality, shaping store image in Malaysia's manned convenience stores like 7-Eleven (Teo et al., 2019). Recent studies also highlight the role of sustainability, corporate social responsibility, and service quality in influencing corporate brand reputation (Teoh et al., 2025), as well as the positive impact of service quality on customer satisfaction in ride-hailing and food/beverage services

(Tan et al., 2025; Pérez-Morón et al., 2022). Effective organizational and talent management practices can enhance operational efficiency and staff motivation across different service sectors. (Jimoh et al., 2020; Husna et al., 2020; Maisarah et al., 2020; Irfan & Kee, 2009).

H3: Service quality positively affects customer experience.

H7: Service quality positively affects customer satisfaction.

Convenience

Factors influencing purchase decisions at IKEA in Malaysia include pricing, convenience, consumer experience, and loyalty (Lew et al., 2025). Convenience features, such as online ordering with pick-up points and well-designed store layouts, help reduce consumer effort and save time. Perceived ease of use and perceived convenience significantly influence customer satisfaction with Shopee in Malaysia (Yo et al., 2021). Similarly, customer experience and satisfaction with Foodpanda are shaped by key factors, including perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust, risk, and convenience (Kee et al., 2025). Studies in retail settings also emphasize the importance of convenience in fostering customer satisfaction. For example, Aeon customers' satisfaction is significantly affected by the accessibility and ease of shopping within the store (Kee et al., 2022a). The adoption of digital payment methods during the COVID-19 pandemic further enhanced convenience for consumers, with e-wallet usage positively influencing transactional efficiency and overall satisfaction (Kee et al., 2022b). In e-commerce contexts, digital marketing strategies that reduce effort and streamline the shopping process play a critical role in building customer loyalty (Kee et al., 2025). New convenience store concepts emphasize self-service, e-payment, and unmanned operations, prompting traditional stores to explore human-less shopping experiences, such as Amazon Go and the Irispay E-concept (Teo et al., 2019). These innovations highlight that convenience, whether through technology or store design, remains a central determinant of consumer satisfaction and purchase intention in both physical and digital retail environments. Figure 1 presents our research model.

H4: Convenience positively affects customer experience.

H8: Convenience positively affects customer satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

The study framework model is depicted in Figure 1.

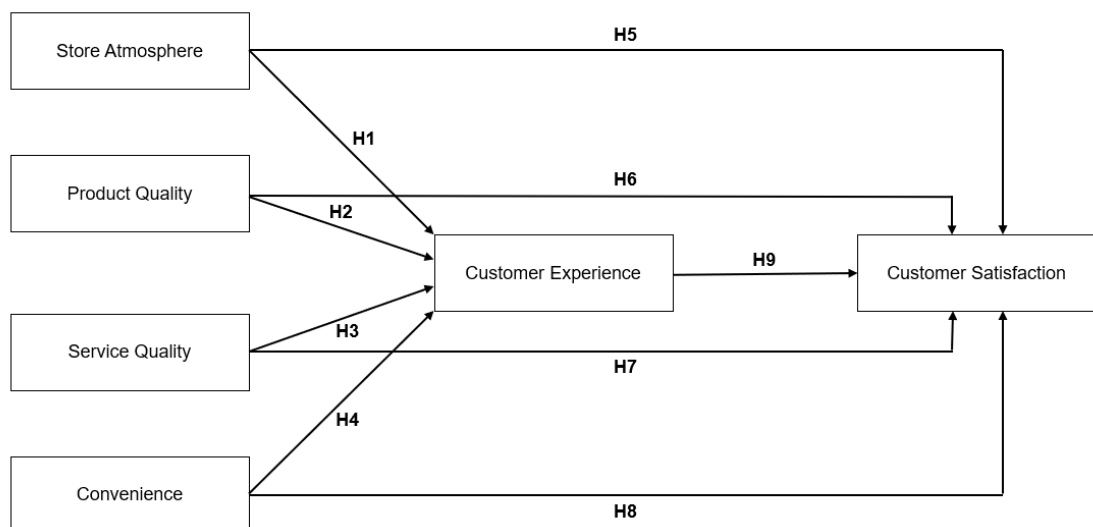


Figure 1. Research Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

Sample and Procedures

This study used a survey method to collect data from consumers at FamilyMart in Malaysia, aiming to explore how customer experience influences customer satisfaction. The survey was administered through Google Forms. A total of 152 participants completed the survey. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software.

Measures

All items in this study, customer experience and customer satisfaction, are measured using a multiple choice grid, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The items were self developed based on based on FamilyMart customer experiences and pre-tested to ensure clarity and relevance.

Store Atmosphere: Five items assessed how FamilyMart uses to improve customer experience. (e.g., "The lighting, temperature, and music in the store are comfortable"). Cronbach's alpha was .946, indicating strong internal consistency.

Product Quality: Five items measured customer confidence in FamilyMart products. (e.g., "FamilyMart offers high-quality products"). Cronbach's alpha was .945.

Service Quality: Five items assessed customers' perceptions of employee service attitudes when shopping at FamilyMart. (e.g., "Staff members are polite and friendly"). Reliability for this construct was high ($\alpha=.956$)

Convenience: Three items used to assess FamilyMart's convenience. (e.g., "FamilyMart stores are located in convenient areas"). Cronbach's alpha was .935.

Customer Experience: Four items were designed to assess customer experience in the FamilyMart. (e.g., "My experience with FamilyMart meets my expectations"). Cronbach's alpha was .946.

Customer Satisfaction: Three items were designed to assess customer satisfaction with the FamilyMart experience (e.g., "I prefer FamilyMart over other convenience stores", "I will continue to shop at FamilyMart in the future", and "I would recommend FamilyMart to my family and friends"). Cronbach's alpha for this construct was .896, indicating good reliability.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents involved in the study (N = 152). In terms of gender, the majority of respondents are female (N = 92, 60.5%), while male respondents account for a smaller proportion (N = 60, 39.5%). With regard to age, the majority of respondents fall within the 18-24 age group (N = 90, 59.2%). This is followed by those aged 25-34 years (N = 34, 22.4%). A smaller percentage consists of respondents aged 35-44 years (N = 12, 7.9%), 45 years and above (N = 10, 6.6%), and those below 18 years old (N = 6, 3.9%). In terms of racial composition, Chinese respondents form the largest group (N = 77, 50.7%), followed by Malay respondents (N = 43, 28.3%). Indian respondents make up the remaining 21.1% (N = 32), indicating a diverse representation across major ethnic groups. The current status of respondents shows that the majority are students (N = 88, 57.9%). Working adults comprise 19.7% (N = 30), while self-employed individuals represent 9.9% (N = 15). A smaller proportion of respondents (N = 19, 12.5%) reported being unemployed. Overall, the demographic data indicates that most respondents are young adults, predominantly female, mainly of Chinese ethnicity, and largely represented by students.

Table 1. Summary of Respondents' Demographic Information (N=152)

Response	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	92	60.5
	Male	60	39.5
Age	Below 18 years old	6	3.9
	18-24 years old	90	59.2
	25-34 years old	34	22.4
	35-44 years old	12	7.9
	45 years old and above	10	6.6
Race	Chinese	77	50.7
	Malay	43	28.3
	Indian	32	21.1
Current Status	Student	88	57.9
	Working adult	30	19.7
	Self-employed	15	9.9
	Unemployed	19	12.5

Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients, and zero-order correlations for the study variables. The correlation analysis shows that all variables are positively and significantly related, indicating coherent and theoretically consistent relationships across constructs. The Cronbach's alpha values, reported on the diagonal, range from 0.896 to 0.956, exceeding the recommended cutoff of 0.70 and confirming robust internal consistency for all constructs.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, and Zero-order Correlations for All Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Store	0.946					
Atmosphere						
Product Quality	0.869**	0.945				
Service Quality	0.887**	0.874**	0.956			
Convenience	0.865**	0.832**	0.904**	0.935		
Customer Experience	0.905**	0.850**	0.903**	0.907**	0.946	
Customer Satisfaction	0.828**	0.809**	0.870**	0.848**	0.862**	0.896
Number of items	5	5	5	3	4	3
Mean	4.24	4.20	4.25	4.26	4.29	4.20
Standard Deviation	0.84	0.83	0.82	0.86	0.81	0.84

Note: N=152; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. The bold diagonal entries represent Cronbach's coefficient alpha.

Table 3 presents the results of the regression analysis, showing that the model significantly explains customer experience at FamilyMart ($R^2 = 0.888$, $p < 0.001$). The results indicate that store atmosphere has a positive and significant effect on customer experience ($\beta = 0.362$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. Service quality is also positively associated with customer experience ($\beta = 0.211$, $p < 0.01$), providing evidence for H3. In addition, convenience demonstrates a significant positive impact on customer experience ($\beta = 0.361$, $p < 0.001$), confirming H4. In contrast, product quality does not show a significant effect ($\beta = 0.051$), leading to the rejection of H2. The model accounts

for a substantial proportion of variance in customer satisfaction, with an R^2 change of 0.795. Among the predictors, service quality significantly contributes to customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.351$, $p < 0.01$), supporting H7. Customer experience also has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.281$, $p < 0.05$), confirming H9 and indicating its mediating role in the model. On the other hand, store atmosphere ($\beta = 0.040$), product quality ($\beta = 0.091$), and convenience ($\beta = 0.167$) do not exert significant direct effects, resulting in the rejection of H5, H6, and H8. Overall, the findings suggest that service quality and customer experience are the key determinants of customer satisfaction at FamilyMart, while store atmosphere and convenience influence satisfaction indirectly through customer experience. Figure 2 presents an overview of the findings.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

Variable towards Customer Experience and Customer Satisfaction at FamilyMart	Customer Experience (Beta)	Customer Satisfaction (Beta)
Store Atmosphere	0.362***	0.040
Product Quality	0.051	0.091
Service Quality	0.211**	0.351**
Convenience	0.361***	0.167
Customer Experience		0.281*
R^2 Change	0.888	0.795

Note: N=152; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

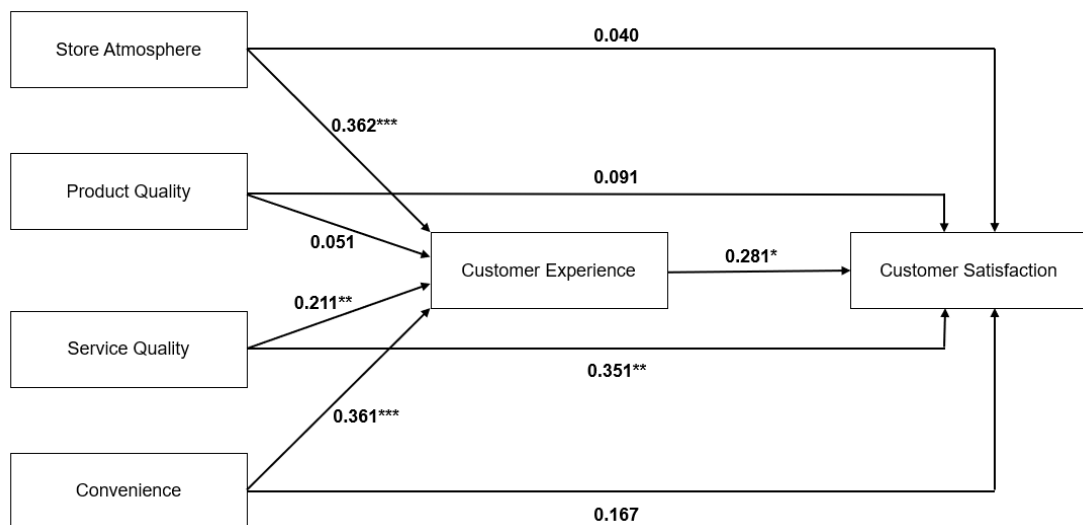


Figure 2. Overview Result

DISCUSSION

This study uses FamilyMart as a case study to explore how various dimensions of customer experience influence customer satisfaction in the Malaysian convenience retail industry. The results provide empirical evidence demonstrating the crucial role of experiential factors in customer satisfaction and enrich the literature in the retail and service sectors by offering a comprehensive perspective within the convenience store environment. Regression analysis shows that service quality and customer experience have a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction. In contrast, while store atmosphere, product quality, and convenience are positively correlated with customer

satisfaction, their effects are not statistically significant when considered in conjunction with other variables.

Store atmosphere on customer satisfaction

The results indicate that store atmosphere has a positive but insignificant effect on customer satisfaction. This finding aligns with prior research indicating that a well-designed store environment enhances customers' emotional responses and perceptual evaluations, thereby increasing satisfaction. Studies in various retail and service contexts have found that elements such as layout, design, and internal environment significantly influence customer satisfaction and shopping comfort (Moukrim et al., 2024). In addition, research suggests that a positive store atmosphere not only directly affects satisfaction but also indirectly shapes customer responses through perceived experiential value (Prastyo et al., 2025). In the context of FamilyMart, factors such as lighting, cleanliness, and organized layouts create a welcoming and comfortable environment that enhances customer perceptions and overall satisfaction. The findings show that window and mannequin displays, visual merchandising, and store design and atmosphere significantly influence shoppers' purchase decisions, while lighting and color, music, and signage have minimal impact. These results offer valuable managerial insights by highlighting key atmospheric elements that can enhance purchase intention, profitability, and sustainability. Future studies are encouraged to examine purchase intention factors in other geographical contexts. This study also provides a validated instrument to assess the relationship between store atmosphere and consumer purchasing behavior. (Khan et al., 2022)

Product quality on customer satisfaction

Product quality contributes positively to customer satisfaction, but the impact is insignificant. Product quality can significantly impact consumer satisfaction. (Cahaya et al., 2023) Customer satisfaction enhances the perceived value of services, which in turn increases customer loyalty. Moreover, customers' sharing of their experiences can extend a product's lifecycle. For example, sharing positive experiences can positively influence customer satisfaction. (Bhowmick et al., 2023) Product performance significantly impacts consumer satisfaction. A decline in customer loyalty could result from changes in product performance and satisfaction levels. Because product performance affects both consumer satisfaction and loyalty, management needs to adjust product standards based on customer needs. Changes in product quality directly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty. (Sambo et al., 2022) While product quality is positively correlated with satisfaction, its lack of significance in the regression analysis suggests that customers view FamilyMart's product quality as a basic expectation rather than a distinguishing feature. Recent findings indicate that customer satisfaction is primarily driven by perceived performance relative to expectations. Basic product quality that meets these expectations does not strongly differentiate satisfaction. Instead, experiential factors such as service interactions and the overall customer experience play a more critical role. This supports the view that once minimum quality standards are met, other factors become more influential in shaping satisfaction. (Schiebler et al., 2025)

Service quality on customer satisfaction

Service quality exerts a strong positive and statistically significant impact on customer satisfaction. A recent study highlights the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR), service quality, and perceived value on customer loyalty. The findings show that CSR has a positive effect on both customer satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover, service quality and perceived value are essential in building loyalty by enhancing customer satisfaction. When service standards and perceived worth are high, customer satisfaction increases, which in turn strengthens loyalty. These results underscore that customer satisfaction is a critical driver of loyalty, with satisfied customers being far more likely to stay committed

to the brand. (Chi et al., 2025) Customer support and its various dimensions significantly impact customer satisfaction among pension fund administrators in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. It is recommended that firms aiming to retain loyal customers and grow their customer base offer personalized services tailored to customer needs. (Usani et al., 2025)

Convenience on customer satisfaction

The findings also demonstrate that convenience has a positive but insignificant effect on customer satisfaction. Convenience not only reflects the reduction of time and effort for customers when using a service, but it is also commonly used as a default framework to explain consumer adoption of new technologies and channels. In the context of digital payment systems and platform design, the concept of convenience is repeatedly emphasized and reinforced, shaping how users perceive the technology itself and interpret their own behaviors. (Steinberg et al., 2025) Payment convenience has an impact on customer satisfaction, which in turn influences online shopping addiction in urban communities in South Sulawesi. (Fani et al., 2025) Service convenience and price fairness significantly influence customer satisfaction, which in turn drives customer loyalty and mediates their effect on loyalty. (Pinaraswati et al., 2024)

Customer experience on customer satisfaction

Customer experience has a positive and statistically significant impact on customer satisfaction. Customer experience strongly drives satisfaction, which in turn leads to customer loyalty, while no significant relationship is found between satisfaction or loyalty and eWOM. Among experience drivers, interactivity and technology have the strongest impact, followed by trust, security, privacy, and service quality, whereas usability, website design, and personalization play lesser roles and omnichannel integration shows no significant effect. (Pires et al., 2025) A reciprocal relationship exists between customer experience and customer engagement. Both constructs show positive and significant relationships with overall satisfaction and customer loyalty, while satisfaction further strengthens customer loyalty. In addition, customer engagement serves as a mediating variable between service experience and both satisfaction and customer loyalty. (Zaid et al., 2021)

Theoretical Implications

This study makes meaningful theoretical contributions to the literature on consumer satisfaction in convenience retail contexts by providing insights into how various dimensions of service experience affect satisfaction-related outcomes. The results indicate that service quality and overall experiential perception play a leading role in influencing satisfaction levels, highlighting the significance of interaction-based and experience-oriented factors in consumer evaluations. These results suggest that satisfaction is largely formed through ongoing service encounters and cumulative experiences rather than isolated functional attributes.

In contrast, store atmosphere, product quality, and convenience show positive but statistically insignificant relationships with customer satisfaction. This indicates that these factors may represent fundamental expectations that customers assume will be met in convenience store environments, rather than attributes that actively enhance satisfaction. In highly standardized retail formats, such as convenience stores, consistency in product offerings, store layout, and accessibility may reduce the differentiating power of these elements.

The lack of a significant relationship between product quality and customer satisfaction can be explained using expectancy-disconfirmation theory. When customers perceive that acceptable quality standards are consistently achieved, product-related attributes

become less influential in shaping satisfaction judgments. As a result, customers tend to place greater emphasis on service interactions and the overall experiential value provided by the retailer. Likewise, the non-significant effects of store atmosphere and convenience suggest that physical environment and operational efficiency may have limited influence when evaluated alongside strong service performance and positive customer experiences.

Overall, this study contributes to existing theory by demonstrating that customer satisfaction in convenience retail contexts is primarily driven by service-related and experiential factors rather than by product or environmental attributes alone. These findings reinforce the relevance of experience-focused theoretical frameworks and highlight the importance of incorporating holistic service and interactional dimensions into models of customer satisfaction in convenience retail research.

Practical Implications

The study provides practical guidance for FamilyMart to improve customer satisfaction in Malaysian convenience retail. Given that service quality and overall customer experience are significant drivers of satisfaction, FamilyMart should invest in staff training focused on responsiveness, friendliness, and problem-solving skills. Improving the overall shopping experience through efficient store processes, attentive service, and customer engagement initiatives can further strengthen satisfaction and loyalty. However, the company should be mindful that high employee turnover or insufficient training could undermine these efforts, reducing service consistency and potentially affecting customer perceptions. Service quality in retail stores plays a crucial role in driving customer satisfaction, fostering retention, and strengthening loyalty toward both the business and its offerings. Tangibility, reliability, and empathy have a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction, whereas responsiveness and assurance show no significant impact. (De Silva et al., 2022).

Although store atmosphere, product quality, and convenience show positive but insignificant effects, maintaining basic standards remains important. This includes keeping stores clean and organized, ensuring product reliability, and providing convenient store layouts and checkout processes. In retail settings, customers are influenced by the visual appeal, ambiance, and layout of a store. Specific atmospheric elements shape the overall shopping environment and encourage customers to choose certain outlets as their preferred shopping destinations. Therefore, retailers must create an enjoyable shopping experience. (Ndengane et al., 2021) At the same time, managers need to balance investment in these areas with cost efficiency, as over-investment may not yield significant improvements in satisfaction.

Managers should strategically allocate resources, prioritizing service quality and experience, as these factors have the most significant impact on customer satisfaction. Simultaneously, monitoring environmental and product factors is crucial to ensure basic standards are consistently maintained. Even with high service quality, failure to meet basic standards such as cleanliness, product reliability, and store layout will lead to customer dissatisfaction, as customers typically expect minimum quality in these areas. Therefore, effective resource allocation requires a balance between investing in factors that have the greatest impact on satisfaction and ensuring that necessary operational and environmental standards are not neglected. This approach helps maintain service consistency, preserve customer trust, and foster long-term customer loyalty.

Overall, by focusing on service quality and delivering a comprehensive customer experience, while simultaneously maintaining essential standards for products and store environment, FamilyMart can enhance customer satisfaction and foster long-term

loyalty. Ensuring that baseline expectations are consistently met helps prevent dissatisfaction, even when the primary focus is on experiential and service-related improvements. At the same time, careful attention to potential risks, such as employee turnover or inefficient resource allocation, is necessary, as these factors could compromise service consistency or operational effectiveness if left unaddressed. A balanced strategy that combines investment in staff performance and customer experience with monitoring of product and environmental standards is therefore critical to achieving sustainable satisfaction and enduring customer loyalty.

CONCLUSION

This research explored customer satisfaction at FamilyMart within Malaysia's convenience retail industry, with particular attention to service quality, customer experience, store atmosphere, product quality, and convenience. The results demonstrate that service quality and overall customer experience exert a dominant effect on customer satisfaction, while store atmosphere, product quality, and convenience, despite their positive associations, do not show significant effects. This indicates that customers tend to evaluate convenience stores primarily based on interpersonal interactions and the overall experience rather than physical or product-related attributes. In light of these findings, FamilyMart should focus on strengthening service performance through continuous employee training and effective service management, while also enhancing the overall shopping experience through streamlined processes and customer engagement efforts. Although environmental and product-related factors are less influential, maintaining acceptable standards in these areas remains necessary to meet basic customer expectations and prevent dissatisfaction. Consequently, managers should adopt a balanced resource allocation strategy that prioritizes service and experiential improvements while ensuring that product quality and store conditions are consistently maintained. Through this approach, FamilyMart can improve customer satisfaction, reinforce long-term loyalty, and remain competitive in Malaysia's dynamic convenience retail sector.

LIMITATION

While this study provides valuable insights into the determinants of customer satisfaction in Malaysia's convenience retail industry, with specific reference to FamilyMart, certain limitations must be recognized. First, the study is based on a sample of 152 respondents. Although this sample size is adequate for exploratory analysis, it may not sufficiently reflect the diversity of customer profiles across the broader Malaysian convenience retail market. As a result, the generalizability of the findings beyond the sampled population remains limited. Second, the study is grounded in self-reported questionnaire data, which may be influenced by response biases, including social desirability and memory-related inaccuracies. Participants may unintentionally inflate their evaluations of satisfaction or service quality, which could affect the robustness of the observed relationships among the study variables. Third, as the research adopts a cross-sectional design and captures data at a single time point, it is unable to account for potential variations in customer satisfaction or experience over time. Future research employing longitudinal or panel-based approaches would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of how customer perceptions and satisfaction develop through repeated service encounters. Furthermore, the scope of this study is confined to FamilyMart Malaysia, which restricts the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other convenience store chains or retail formats operating in different competitive, cultural, or regulatory contexts. The proposed framework focuses primarily on selected experiential and service-related determinants, while potentially influential factors such as brand image, pricing strategies, loyalty programs, or digital service offerings are not considered. In addition, variations in

customer demographics and shopping behaviors were not explicitly analyzed, which could have an impact on satisfaction outcomes. Finally, the analysis does not account for wider contextual influences such as macroeconomic conditions, technological advancements, or shifting consumer expectations, all of which may affect customer satisfaction within the convenience retail sector. Recognizing these limitations is crucial for the proper interpretation of the study's results and offers a basis for future research to enhance and expand the current model.

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The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the study, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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