Research Article

The Effect of Company Image and Service Quality on Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable
(Case Study on CV. Sahabat Bumi in Merangin Regency, Jambi Province)

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Abstract: This study is motivated by the fluctuating number of customers of CV. Sahabat Bumi, which operates in the palm oil trading sector in Merangin Regency, Jambi Province. The declining trend of customer loyalty highlights the need to examine the factors that influence it. The aim of this research is to analyze the effect of corporate image and service quality on customer loyalty with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable. This quantitative research involved 141 active customers who had made at least two transactions. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using structural equation modeling. The results show that corporate image has a positive effect on both customer loyalty and satisfaction, whereas service quality does not have a positive effect on either loyalty or satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is proven to mediate the relationship between corporate image and customer loyalty but does not mediate the relationship between service quality and loyalty. These findings indicate that customer loyalty at CV. Sahabat Bumi remains low, implying the need for the company to focus on improving service consistency, response speed, transparent communication, and corporate reputation to retain and enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty in the future. This research is expected to provide insights for management in formulating effective marketing strategies. Future research should consider adding other variables such as promotional mix or customer trust to produce more comprehensive results.

Keywords: Corporate Image, Customer Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction, Mediation, Service Quality

1. Introduction

The oil palm plantation sector is one of the most prominent crops in Indonesia, particularly in the province of Jambi. According to the results of the 2023 Agricultural Census (ST2023), oil palm is the most widely cultivated agricultural commodity in the province of Jambi, with 271,702 individual agricultural business units (UTP) engaged in oil palm cultivation. One of the palm oil-producing districts in Jambi Province is Merangin District, which has 24 sub-districts, one of which is Tabir Sub-district. In Tabir Sub-district, there is a village called Mampun, where the local community primarily works as palm oil farmers and employees of palm oil plantations.

CV. Sahabat Bumi is one of the marketing channels used by palm oil farmers and is one of the suppliers to the palm oil factory PT. Kurnia Palma Agung Lestari, Koto Rayo, Tabir District, Merangin Regency, Jambi Province. CV. Sahabat Bumi was established in 2017 in Mampun, Tabir District, Merangin Regency, Jambi Province, by Mr. Permana Agung. CV. Sahabat Bumi has been a supplier partner at PT. Kurnia Palma Agung Lestari for 8 years and continues to serve as a supplier partner at PT. Kurnia Palma Agung Lestari. To win in the competitive market, CV. Sahabat Bumi is required to have effective marketing strategies, such as building customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is essential for a company to survive and compete with other businesses. Loyal customers present an opportunity to attract new customers. Retaining existing customers is generally more profitable than replacing them, as the cost of

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acquiring new customers can be five times higher than the cost of retaining an existing customer (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

The number of customers at CV. Sahabat Bumi fluctuates every month. The number of customers experiences unstable increases and decreases. Over a period of one year, customer growth increased by 5.22% in April, with a total of 141 customers. In May, the increase was 41.84% with 200 customers, and in September, it was 18.95% with 182 customers. However, in November and December, there was a significant decrease of 0.68% with 146 customers and 3.42% with 141 customers. The decrease in the number of customers in the last month indicates a decline in customer loyalty. The results of the initial survey indicate that overall customer loyalty at CV. Sahabat Bumi achieved an average score of 3.25, with a response rate (TCR) of 64.95%. This indicates that customer loyalty at CV. Sahabat Bumi is categorized as low (Arikunto, 2019).

Customer loyalty, in this case, refers to customers who have a deep commitment to purchasing or supporting their favorite products or services in the future, even when faced with circumstances and marketing efforts that could potentially cause them to switch (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Another factor that can influence customer loyalty is service quality, which can increase satisfaction by serving consumers well in accordance with their needs. Another variable that can influence customer loyalty is customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is the feeling of happiness or disappointment that a person experiences as a result of comparing the perceived performance or product with the expected performance or product (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

This study modifies the research by Yuliana et al (2024), in which the independent variables are price and service quality, the mediating variable is satisfaction, and the dependent variable is loyalty. This study replaces the independent variable of price with corporate image, supported by the research of Pramono et al. (2019), which found that corporate image influences customer loyalty. The research subjects are active customers of CV. Sahabat Bumi residing in Tabir Subdistrict, Merangin Regency, Jambi Province. The sampling technique used in this study is probability sampling. According to Sugiono (2018), probability sampling is a technique that gives equal opportunity to every member of the population selected as a sample. In this study, the sample to be taken is all customers of CV. Sahabat Bumi who have made more than two transactions, totaling 141 customers. The sampling technique used is the census method. The census method is a technique for officially collecting data about a population.

The purpose of this study is to prove and analyze the influence of corporate image on customer loyalty at CV. Sahabat Bumi Kabupaten Merangin, to prove and analyze the influence of service quality on customer loyalty, to prove and analyze the influence of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty, to prove and analyze the influence of corporate image on customer satisfaction, to prove and analyze the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction, as well as to prove and analyze the role of customer satisfaction in mediating the influence of corporate image on customer loyalty and mediating the influence of service quality on customer loyalty at CV. Sahabat Bumi Kabupaten Merangin. Based on the aforementioned discussion, an empirical study will be conducted with the title "The Influence of Company Image and Service Quality on Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfactin as a Mediating Variable" (Case Study: CV Sahabat Bumi in Merangin District).

2. Literature Review
2.1. Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is defined as a customer's commitment to consistently purchasing or using products and services from a particular company. This loyalty is created when customers are satisfied with the value they receive from the product or service, which includes quality, price, and overall experience. Companies often strive to enhance customer loyalty through special programs, such as discounts, rewards, or superior customer service, with the aim of improving customer retention and reducing the cost of acquiring new customers (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

According to Tjiptono (2016), customer loyalty is consumer loyalty to a product or service, demonstrated through repeated purchasing behavior and consistent preference for a particular brand despite offers from competitors. Loyalty can also be defined based on

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purchasing behavior. Loyal consumers are those who regularly make repeat purchases of products or services, purchase across product or service lines, refer others, and demonstrate resistance to the pull of other companies (Evandinnartha et al., 2021).

From several definitions of customer loyalty put forward by experts, it can be concluded that customer loyalty is defined as consumer loyalty to the products or services used, making repeat purchases, and recommending those products or services to others.

High loyalty reflects a high level of consumer satisfaction when deciding to consume a product after trying it and then developing a liking for it (Tamonsang et al., 2022). According to Sudarsono (2020), there are three things that can indicate the tendency of loyal consumers, namely: 1) Consumers with high loyalty levels will tend to maintain and trust their choices. 2) Consumers with high loyalty levels will tend to feel more risk when making purchases. 3) Consumers with high loyalty levels will tend to be loyal to stores or companies. Passenger loyalty is measured using five statement items (Zhong & Moon, 2020): Using the service continuously, recommending it, saying positive things about it, not switching to another service, and feeling confident.

2.2. Customer Satisfaction

According to Kotler and Keller (2016), customer satisfaction is the feeling of pleasure or disappointment that a person feels after comparing expected performance with actual performance. If performance meets or exceeds expectations, customers will feel satisfied or very satisfied. Conversely, if performance falls short of expectations, customers will feel dissatisfied. Customer satisfaction is the result of an assessment of a product or service that fulfills the customer's desires. Once customers are satisfied, it will evoke a sense of joy and fulfillment of expectations (Vigaretha & Handayani, 2018). Satisfied customers will purchase other products sold by the company and also become effective marketers through word-of-mouth with positive impressions. Meanwhile, according to Tamonsang et al. (2022), customer satisfaction is the result felt by buyers from the company's performance that meets their expectations.

Several definitions provided by experts and authors in the above article can be summarized as follows: customer satisfaction can be defined as the customer's experience with a product or service in the form of feelings of satisfaction or disappointment with the perceived and expected quality.

According to Evandinnartha et al (2021), customer satisfaction is the level at which the perceived performance of a product meets the expectations of buyers. If the performance of a product is considered not to meet customer expectations, customers will be disappointed, and conversely, customer satisfaction can provide benefits, namely: 1) The relationship between the company and customers becomes good. 2) The company's reputation becomes good. 3) Increased profits. Passenger satisfaction is measured using five statement items (Indrasari, Nasruddin & Tjiptono, 2019), namely: Expectation alignment, willingness to revisit, product quality, delivery time, and safety.

2.3. Company Image

Corporate image is the perception and impression that individuals have of an entity. This image is formed from the beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of the company (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Three key elements in the formation of image are the object impression, the process of image formation, and reliable sources. The object includes both individuals and companies consisting of a group of people within them. Corporate image can be influenced by various internal and external elements, as well as how information is received by the public from various sources at a given time. A good image can increase customer trust and loyalty toward the company.

Image is related to the reputation of a company or brand, where a company's image is a person's response to the company, manifested in their ideas or beliefs about the products or services offered by that company (Pranoto & Mawardi, 2021). Loyalty is influenced by brand image, so it is better to maintain the superiority of a product's image to ensure its long-term sustainability. This involves maintaining brand quality, brand integrity, and prioritizing the benefits of the product to instill consumer confidence in purchasing it (Ahmad et al., 2020). Corporate image is defined as the perceptions and impressions individuals have of an entity, in this case a company (Nanda et al., 2024). This image is formed through interactions with

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the company and is influenced by various elements such as personality, reputation, values, and corporate identity. A positive corporate image can provide a competitive advantage for the company by increasing customer trust and influencing their decisions in choosing products or services.

Based on the understanding and definitions of experts and previous articles, it can be concluded that a company's image is influenced by several factors, including reputation, corporate identity, and customer experience.

Irawan (2019) states that there are four indicators for measuring corporate image, namely personality, reputation, value, and corporate identity.

2.4. Quality of Service

According to Parasuraman et al (1991), service quality can be defined as customers' assessment of how well the service they receive compares to their expectations. Meanwhile, according to Kotler and Keller (2016), service quality is a company's ability to meet or exceed customer expectations. This quality covers various aspects, such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and physical evidence of the service provided.

Service quality is the gap between consumers' perceptions of the services offered by a company and their expectations of those services (Nguyen et al., 2018). Service quality is the level of service that meets customer expectations (Tantono & Sudyasjayanti, 2021). Service quality is the effort to fulfill customer needs and desires, as well as the accuracy of delivery to balance customer expectations. Service quality is shaped by a company's ability to meet every expectation and desire of every customer need.

Service quality is measured overall by customers, so that service is considered to be of high quality if it consistently meets expectations. According to Syahfitri and Kusnanto (2022), in providing excellent service, service quality is an important component that must be considered. Service quality is largely determined by the comparison between what customers expect when using a company's goods or services and what they actually receive (Efendi et al., 2023). Service quality is central to a company because it influences customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction arises when service quality is delivered effectively. Service quality measurement can be assessed based on a particular service (Purba et al., 2023).

From several definitions from experts and previous studies, it can be concluded that service quality is an important factor in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty that can meet customer expectations.

Service quality can generally be measured using the Servqual method, which is a term for service quality developed by Parasuraman et al (1991). Servqual is based on a comparison of two main factors, namely customer perceptions of the actual service they receive from service providers. If the actual service exceeds customer expectations, the service can be considered high-quality, whereas if the actual service falls short of customer expectations, the service can be considered low-quality. Service quality focuses on efforts to meet 17 needs and desires, as well as the accuracy of their delivery, to align with customer expectations (Rusdarti, 2004). According to Armayanti (2019), Service Quality (service quality) is defined as customers' assessment of the excellence or uniqueness of a product or service as a whole.

Service quality variables are measured using 5 dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1991), namely: Tangibles, are factors that can be seen, heard, and touched. Tangibles also include the physical environment, facilities, and the appearance of personal contacts. Reliability, is the ability to demonstrate that the services provided are reliable and accurate. Responsive, is the willingness to help consumers and provide fast service. Assurance, includes the knowledge, ability, politeness, and trustworthiness of the staff, free from danger, risk, and doubt. Empathy is the care, individual attention that the company gives to its consumers.

3. Research Method

This research is a quantitative study designed to examine the effect of company image and service quality on customer loyalty with customer trust as a mediating variable. The population of this study were palm plantation owners, palm oil toke and palm oil collectors or all active customers of CV. Sahabat Bumi who have made transactions at least 2 times in the period from January to December, totaling 141 customers.

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Primary data in this study were collected through a questionnaire distributed to respondents. The questionnaire contains a series of statements designed to measure research variables related to customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, company image and service quality. The measurement scale in this research questionnaire uses a Likert scale, which is a closed measurement scale where respondents will be given answer options that have the following criteria: 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree), and 5 (Strongly Disagree) (Arikunto, 2019).

The data analysis technique in this study consists of several stages that support each other to answer the problem formulation. First, Measurement Model Assessment (MMA) is carried out which focuses on testing the relationship between latent variables and their statement indicators through convergent and discriminant validity tests. Convergent validity is evaluated by the criteria of outer loading above 0.7, Cronbach's alpha more than 0.7, composite reliability above 0.7, and average extracted variance (AVE) above 0.5. Meanwhile, discriminant validity is measured using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross loadings, and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Furthermore, descriptive analysis was conducted to describe the data as it is without generalization. The data were analyzed by calculating the total score of respondents' answers, then averaged to obtain the Respondent Achievement Rate (TCR) which is classified into five categories, ranging from very low to very high. To determine the magnitude of the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables, the R-Square (R^2) value was used, with strong, moderate, and weak categories. The predictive ability of the model was tested using Q-Square, whose value indicates how well the model predicts the data; the higher the value, the better the predictive ability. Furthermore, Structural Model Assessment (SMA) is conducted to test the causal relationships between latent variables through bootstrapping, by looking at the T-Statistics and P-Values to determine the significance of the influence between variables. Finally, this study also analyzes the types of mediation to see how mediating variables play a role in strengthening, weakening, or even negating the influence between the independent and dependent variables, with the categories of complementary mediation, competitive mediation, indirect-only mediation, direct-only mediation, and no-effect non-mediation. With this stage, it is expected that the results of the analysis can provide an in-depth and accurate picture of the relationship between variables in the study.

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis results begin with the response rate, followed by the respondent profile, measurement model assessment, descriptive analysis, R square, Q square and structural model assessment.

Table 1. *Respon Rate*

Description	Total
Questionnaires distributed	141
Questionnaires not returned	-
Questionnaires returned	141
Questionnaires not fully completed	-
Questionnaires fully completed and analyzed	141
Response rate (141/141) 100%	**100%**

Based on table 1. It can be seen that the number of questionnaires distributed is 141 customers where there are 141 questionnaires returned and filled in completely. Thus the number of questionnaires ready to be analyzed is 141 customers, so the response rate obtained is 100%.

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Table 2. Respondent Profile

Demographic	Category	Number of People	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	109	77.3
	Female	32	22.7
	Total	**141**	**100.0**
Age	21 – 31 years	69	48.9
	32 – 42 years	48	34.0
	43 – 53 years	22	15.6
	> 53 years	2	1.4
	Total	**141**	**100.0**
Education	Elementary School	1	0.7
	Senior High School	79	56.0
	Diploma	27	19.1
	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	33	23.4
	Master's Degree (S2)	1	0.7
	Total	**141**	**100.0**
Occupation	Student	3	2.1
	Civil Servant (PNS)	19	13.5
	Entrepreneur	79	56.0
	Private Employee	34	24.1
	Retired	6	4.3
	Total	**141**	**100.0**
Customer Duration	1 – 2 years	41	29.1
	2.1 – 3 years	61	43.3
	> 3 years	39	27.7
	Total	**141**	**100.0**

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the majority of respondents are male as many as 109 people (77.3%) and female 32 people (22.7%). Based on age, most are in the range of 21-31 years as many as 69 people (48.9%), age 32-42 years 48 people (34%), age 43-53 years 22 people (15.6%), and above 53 years 2 people (1.4%). Based on the latest education, most of the respondents had a high school education as many as 79 people (56%), Bachelor (S1) 33 people (23.4%), Diploma 27 people (19.1%), and elementary school and S2 each 1 person (0.7%). Based on occupation, the majority of respondents work as self-employed as many as 79 people (56%), private employees 34 people (24.1%), civil servants 19 people (13.5%), retirees 6 people (4.3%), and other private employees 3 people (2.1%). Meanwhile, judging from the length of time being a customer of CV. Sahabat Bumi, the most respondents were in the range of 2.1-3 years as many as 61 people (43.3%), followed by 1-2 years 41 people (29.1%), and more than 3 years as many as 39 people (27.7%).

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistic*

Item	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
L1	141	1	4	3.21	0.692
L2	141	2	4	2.98	0.626
L3	141	1	4	3.09	0.643
L4	141	1	4	3.16	0.693
L5	141	1	4	3.13	0.706
Customer Loyalty	141	1	4	15.57	2.729
Valid N (listwise)	141				

Based on Table 3. Descriptive statistics results, five indicators of customer loyalty (L1-L5) were filled in by 141 respondents with an average value ranging from 2.98 to 3.21 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. This shows that most respondents tend to give a positive assessment of each loyalty indicator. The indicator with the highest average value is L1 (3.21), while the lowest is L2 (2.98). The total customer loyalty score has a minimum value of 1, a maximum of 4, with an average of 15.57 and a standard deviation of 2.729.

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Table 4. *Descriptive Statistic*

Item	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
K1	141	1	4	2.69	0.599
K2	141	1	4	2.65	0.656
K3	141	1	4	2.54	0.638
K4	141	1	4	2.65	0.643
K5	141	1	4	2.47	0.592
Customer Satisfaction	141	6	19	12.99	2.395
Valid N (listwise)	141				

Based on Table 4. Descriptive statistical results, customer satisfaction variables are measured through five indicators (K1-K5) which were answered by 141 respondents. The average score of each indicator ranges from 2.47 to 2.69 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, which indicates that the level of customer satisfaction is in the moderate category. Indicator K1 has the highest average (2.69), while K5 has the lowest average (2.47). The standard deviation for each item ranges from 0.592 to 0.656, indicating a moderate variation in answers among respondents. The total customer satisfaction score has a minimum value of 6 and a maximum of 19, with a mean of 12.99 and a standard deviation of 2.395.

Table 5. *Descriptive Statistic*

Item	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
C1	141	1	4	2.82	0.762
C2	141	1	4	2.89	0.738
C3	141	1	4	2.81	0.792
C4	141	1	4	2.93	0.753
C5	141	1	4	2.82	0.768
C6	141	1	4	2.89	0.757
C7	141	1	4	2.81	0.792
Corporate Image	141	8	28	19.96	4.637
Valid N (listwise)	141				

Based on Table 5. The results of descriptive statistics show that company image is measured through seven indicators (C1-C7) with a total of 141 respondents. The average value of each indicator is in the range of 2.81 to 2.93 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. Indicator C4 has the highest average value of 2.93, while indicators C3 and C7 have the lowest average of 2.81. The standard deviation of each indicator ranges from 0.738 to 0.792, indicating a fairly even variation in answers. Overall, the total corporate image score has a minimum value of 8 and a maximum of 28, with an average of 19.96 and a standard deviation of 4.637.

Table 6. *Descriptive Statistic*

Item	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
KP1	141	1	4	3.25	0.688
KP2	141	2	4	3.22	0.666
KP3	141	2	4	3.32	0.647
KP4	141	2	4	3.23	0.669
KP5	141	2	4	3.23	0.680
KP6	141	1	4	3.18	0.723
KP7	141	2	4	3.20	0.668

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KP8	141	1	4	3.21	0.725
KP9	141	1	4	3.12	0.788
KP10	141	1	4	3.03	0.665
KP11	141	1	4	3.06	0.668
KP12	141	2	4	3.13	0.600
KP13	141	2	4	3.23	0.690
KP14	141	2	4	3.19	0.686
KP15	141	1	4	3.14	0.742
Service Quality	141	26	60	47.74	7.889
Valid N (listwise)	141				

Based on Table 6. Descriptive statistical results, the service quality variable is measured through 15 indicators (KP1-KP15) which were answered by 141 respondents. The average score of each indicator ranges from 3.03 to 3.32 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, which indicates that respondents tend to give a positive assessment of the quality of service received. The indicator with the highest average value is KP3 at 3.32, while the indicator with the lowest value is KP10 at 3.03. The standard deviation of each item ranges from 0.600 to 0.788, indicating a moderate variation in respondents' perceptions. Meanwhile, the total service quality score shows a minimum value of 26 and a maximum of 60, with a mean value of 47.74 and a standard deviation of 7.889. These findings indicate that service quality is generally considered good by respondents, but there are still differences in perceptions between individuals that can be used as input for more equitable service improvement.

The results showed that the company image of CV Sahabat Bumi was in the good enough category with an average score of 2.85 and TCR 57.0%, while customer loyalty was still relatively low with an average score of 3.11 and TCR 62.2%. Hypothesis testing proves that company image has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, while service quality, which is considered very good (average score 3.18; TCR 63.6%), does not have a significant effect on loyalty, due to several obstacles such as slow employee response and limited facilities. Customer satisfaction is also still low (average score 3.18; TCR 63.6%) but is proven to have a positive effect on customer loyalty, and mediates the relationship between corporate image and customer loyalty, but does not mediate the effect of service quality on loyalty. This finding shows that although the company's image is able to increase satisfaction and loyalty, good service quality does not automatically increase satisfaction or loyalty without being balanced with improvements in the supporting aspects of service, so companies need to strengthen reputation and responsiveness to maintain customer satisfaction and loyalty on an ongoing basis.

Customer satisfaction is not proven to mediate the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty at CV. Sahabat Bumi because service quality has a stronger direct influence on customer loyalty. Service quality has a significant direct influence on customer loyalty through factors such as fast response to complaints, ease of transactions, and accurate service (Rapita et al., 2024). The results of this study are supported by the findings of previous research (Sani et al., 2023; Rapita et al., 2024; Sutriani et al., 2024) which prove that customer satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty.

A decrease in perceptions of service quality will have a direct impact on customer loyalty. Customers who previously intended to use the service again could change their minds because

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they were influenced by negative opinions from the surrounding environment. They become reluctant to recommend services to others, and can even start looking for alternative service providers that are considered more credible by the community. In other words, loyalty that has been formed can be weakened if it is not balanced with good reputation management.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of research and discussion, it can be concluded that company image has a positive effect on customer loyalty and satisfaction, while service quality has no positive effect on either customer loyalty or satisfaction at CV. Sahabat Bumi. In addition, customer satisfaction is proven to mediate the relationship between company image and customer loyalty, but does not mediate the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. The implications of these findings indicate that CV. Sahabat Bumi's customer loyalty is still relatively low, so the company needs to improve service consistency, build transparent communication, maintain good relations with customers, and provide appreciation to strengthen customer emotional bonds. To increase customer satisfaction, companies must ensure services as promised, improve service quality, and maintain a sense of security in transactions. Efforts to strengthen the company's image can be done by providing clear information, building good relationships with customers, and maintaining service quality. Service quality also needs to be improved by increasing response speed, maintaining clean and professional facilities, and ensuring employees are ready to help customer needs. This study has limitations because it only uses three variables, so it is recommended that future researchers can add other variables such as service quality mix and promotion, and involve a larger number of respondents so that the research results are more comprehensive..

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