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**Customer Service Responsiveness and Customer
Satisfaction: A Critique of Literature**

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides detailed analysis of customer service responsiveness and how it influences customers satisfaction in organizations based on conceptual and empirical literature review. The analysis is grounded in key theoretical frameworks, including the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, which posits that customer satisfaction arises when perceived service performance meets or exceeds expectations. The Social Exchange Theory further informs the study by emphasizing the reciprocal nature of interactions between customers and organizations, suggesting that timely and effective responsiveness fosters trust and loyalty. Additionally, the study integrates the SERVQUAL Model, which assesses service quality through five dimensions—tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—highlighting responsiveness as a critical determinant of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the Customer Experience Management (CEM) Framework is explored to illustrate how organizations can strategically design and manage service interactions to enhance customer perceptions and overall satisfaction. Findings from the literature indicate that prompt and effective customer service responsiveness significantly enhances customer satisfaction, leading to increased loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. However, gaps remain in understanding the nuanced impacts of cultural and industry-specific factors on responsiveness and this leaves contextual gaps. While many studies highlight the importance of responsiveness in shaping satisfaction, limited empirical research explores the role of digital transformation, automation, and artificial intelligence in optimizing responsiveness without compromising personalization leaving conceptual and empirical gaps. Additionally, inconsistencies in measuring customer service responsiveness across different service contexts present challenges in establishing universally applicable best practices. The paper noted the critical role of responsiveness in fostering customer satisfaction and loyalty. It highlights the need for further research into emerging technologies and their implications for service responsiveness. Organizations must continuously refine their customer service strategies, leveraging insights from established theoretical models while adapting to evolving consumer expectations. Addressing existing gaps will enhance the effectiveness of customer service responsiveness, ultimately strengthening customer relationships and competitive advantage.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The relationship and interaction between customer service responsiveness and customer satisfaction has been widely reviewed with various results. According to Abdullah and Kasmi (2021), the quality of service directly influences customer satisfaction, with responsive customer service being a key component of high-quality service. Effective and timely communication during customer service interactions plays a critical role in fostering positive customer experiences, which ultimately leads to greater customer satisfaction. The authors emphasize that customers' perception of responsiveness, especially in service industries, directly impacts their satisfaction and loyalty.

Evidently, customers mostly value companies that respond to them in a positive way. Agag et al. (2024) examined how customer agility, influenced by marketing analytics and customer service responsiveness, shapes long-term customer satisfaction. Their study showed that when companies respond promptly to customer inquiries or issues, it increases customers' perception of the company's reliability, thus enhancing satisfaction. A swift response not only resolves issues but also shows a company's commitment to customer care, which positively affects customer attitudes and behaviors toward the brand.

The impact of customer service responsiveness on satisfaction is not confined to a single industry, as Anas (2024) highlighted in his study on the hotel industry in Makassar City. His research confirms that customers value when they get their needs responded to within time. He noted that firms can achieve value and loyalty on customers by providing quick needs in terms of resolving their problems. This means that effective response is a good start in managing customers loyalty levels.

Additionally, the growing importance of digital service channels has been explored by Cheng et al. (2024), who investigated the role of intelligent customer service agents in enhancing customer interactions. Their findings demonstrate that the initial response time from digital agents plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' intention for continuous interaction. A fast and efficient first response not only facilitates the resolution of issues but also builds trust and satisfaction, reinforcing the importance of responsiveness in digital customer service platforms. Similarly, the studies by Chiguvi (2023) and Ardhana et al. (2024) supported the idea that responsiveness is a key determinant of customer satisfaction, whether through traditional or digital service channels, reinforcing its critical role across various sectors in driving positive customer experiences.

It is the role of firms to ensure that their customers' needs as well as values are met within time. This means using different channels and response platforms to reach customers and resolve their issues (Sharma et al., 2022). Currently, different firms are using different platforms including social media aspects to achieve this (J Mozumder et al., 2024). With such models it is possible to gain more customers and this underscores its strategic importance for firms seeking to enhance customer loyalty in competitive markets. Rita, Oliveira, and Farisa (2019) also emphasized that the integration of intelligent customer service agents, such as chatbots, can improve responsiveness while reducing operational costs. Cheng et al. (2024) further highlighted that rapid initial responses from automated systems positively influence customers' intentions to continue interacting with the platform.

Despite its benefits, achieving optimal responsiveness remains a challenge for many firms. Issues such as delayed responses, poorly trained staff, or inadequate digital infrastructure can undermine service quality and customer satisfaction (Fath, Abimanyu, & Misbak, 2024). Addressing these challenges requires investments in training, technology, and process optimization, as well as a deep understanding of customer expectations (Selamat & Tay, 2020).

Customers buying systems stems from some emotional as well as psychological angle. Firms must find such levels of satisfaction and this is possible in gaining loyalty, as well as customers retention. Word of mouth has been approved as one of the best ways of gaining customers loyalty and retention (Pham & Ahammad, 2017). In the context of online retail, satisfaction plays a crucial role in shaping customer behavior, including repeat purchases and referrals (Rizqiyah, 2024). Mozumder et al. (2024) identified service quality, product quality, and perceived value as significant drivers of satisfaction in e-commerce. Similarly, he found that the nonlinear impact of online retail characteristics, such as ease of navigation and secure payment systems/ Rita et al. (2019) further noted that high satisfaction levels enhance customer retention and reduce the likelihood of switching to competitors. These insights highlight the strategic value of investing in initiatives that boost customer satisfaction.

However, achieving and sustaining high customer satisfaction can be challenging. Factors such as unmet expectations, inconsistent service delivery, and technological limitations may lead to dissatisfaction (Abdirad & Krishnan, 2022). To address these challenges, firms must adopt a customer-centric approach, leveraging tools like feedback systems and data analytics to

continuously improve their offerings. The view is that customer responsiveness is important in promoting customers satisfaction. Based on this background, this study seeks to further explore literature including conceptual and empirical literature on the topic of customer service responsiveness and customer satisfaction among organizations.

2.0 REVIEW OF THEORIES

Based on the topic of review, this study is guided by different models as well as theories. To begin with, it covers the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory. It also borrows from the Social Exchange Theory. Finally, the SERVQUAL Model as well as the Customer Experience Management (CEM) Framework are part of the study. Other models include the Attribution Theory. The Social Exchange Theory focuses on the cost-benefit analysis of service interactions (Selamat & Tay, 2020). The SERVQUAL Model identifies responsiveness as a critical dimension of service quality, directly linking it to customer satisfaction in digital environments (Setiono & Hidayat, 2022). The CEM Framework underscores the importance of responsiveness in creating seamless and satisfying customer experiences across various touchpoints. Finally, Attribution Theory explores how customers' perceptions of service responsiveness influence their satisfaction by attributing causes to service outcomes, such as delays or quick resolutions (Sharma et al., 2022). These theories provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing how responsiveness impacts customer satisfaction as shown below.

2.1. Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory

This was provided first by Oliver in 1977. The model indicates that satisfaction is based on expected levels of services and the outcome at the end (Agag et al., 2024). This means that firms have a role to ensure that the customers get high value to confirm their needs and values (Setiono & Hidayat, 2022). It also shows that prompt and efficient responses to customer inquiries or complaints can result in positive disconfirmation, thereby enhancing satisfaction and loyalty. For example, when a company quickly resolves issues that customers anticipate will take longer, satisfaction is enhanced due to the exceedance of expectations (Fath, Abimanyu, & Misbak, 2024).

While EDT is widely accepted, it has faced critiques for emphasizing cognitive evaluations at the expense of emotional and contextual factors that also shape customer satisfaction (Silaningsih, Andari, & Aisy, 2024). Nevertheless, EDT remains particularly relevant for understanding how customer service responsiveness affects satisfaction, especially in online retail. Studies have

demonstrated that customers who receive timely and effective responses are willing to come back and work or purchase from the firm (Agag et al., 2024).

2.2. Social Exchange Theory

This was noted by George C. Homans in 1958. It was later expanded by Peter Blau and it revolves around the idea that interactions between individuals are based on a cost-benefit analysis. In the realm of customer service, SET suggests that customers assess their experiences by weighing the perceived benefits of service (such as quick resolution of issues) against the costs (such as long wait times or inadequate service) (Maharjan & Raya, 2024). When the benefits of customer service interactions outweigh the costs, customer satisfaction increases. This is particularly true in online retail, where fast and responsive customer service is expected and can lead to positive evaluations, boosting customer satisfaction (Kosasih et al., 2024).

SET has been critiqued for its overemphasis on rational decision-making, neglecting emotional factors that might also influence satisfaction (Restrepo-Morales, Valencia-Cárdenas, & López-Cadavid, 2024). However, it remains valuable for understanding the dynamics of customer service responsiveness, especially in online environments. In these settings, where service interactions are typically transactional, SET provides insight into how customers weigh the value of timely service against frustrations caused by delays (Cheng et al., 2024). When firms respond within time, customers (Ardhana, Mariam, & Ramli, 2024).

2.3. Service Quality Framework

This was introduced by Parasuraman and others in 1988. It shows that reliable services as well as empathy and responsive models are important to all customers. Almost all customers are willing to buy from firms that depict such elements (Setiono & Hidayat, 2022). The model predicts that when customers receive quick and effective service responses, their overall satisfaction increases, leading to greater loyalty and repeat purchases (Arora & Banerji, 2024).

Despite its usefulness, the SERVQUAL model has been critiqued for not fully addressing the unique aspects of digital services, such as technology usability or online interaction complexities (Kullolli, Trebicka, & Fortuzi, 2024). Nevertheless, SERVQUAL remains highly relevant in understanding how responsiveness impacts customer satisfaction, particularly in the online retail sector (Siddiqi et al., 2024). Thus, ensuring timely responses in digital customer service settings can significantly improve satisfaction and enhance competitive positioning (Rizqiyah, 2024).

2.4. Customer Experience Management Framework

Introduced by Pine and Gilmore in 1998 and emphasizes the holistic management of customer interactions to create positive and memorable experiences, ultimately leading to loyalty. In the context of online retail, CEM stresses that every customer touchpoint, including service responsiveness, plays a crucial role in shaping overall satisfaction (Ardhana, Mariam, & Ramli, 2024). Responsiveness in customer service—whether in addressing complaints or providing timely information—directly impacts the customer’s perception of the brand, with quick and effective responses fostering trust and enhancing satisfaction (Chiguvi, 2023).

However, the CEM framework has been criticized for its complexity, as it requires organizations to manage interactions across various departments and touchpoints to ensure a consistent and seamless customer experience (Fath, Abimanyu, & Misbak, 2024). Despite these challenges, the CEM framework remains highly relevant for understanding the impact of customer service responsiveness on satisfaction, particularly in online retail, where the customer journey involves multiple digital touchpoints. Research shows that responsive customer service not only enhances satisfaction (Sharma et al., 2022).

2.5. Attribution Theory

Introduced by Fritz Heider in 1958 and it depict how individuals interpret the causes of events and how these attributions influence their emotional responses and behaviors. In customer service contexts, Attribution Theory suggests that customers form judgments about the reasons behind service outcomes, such as attributing delays to internal factors (company inefficiency) or external factors (high demand) (Abdullah & Kasmi, 2021). These attributions significantly influence customer satisfaction—positive attributions can lead to satisfaction, while negative attributions can result in dissatisfaction.

Despite its utility, Attribution Theory has been criticized for overemphasizing cognitive processes and not fully accounting for emotional and situational factors that also influence customer satisfaction (Setiono & Hidayat, 2022). Nonetheless, it provides valuable insights into how customers interpret service responsiveness. In online retail, where timely service is often crucial, Attribution Theory helps explain how customers’ attributions about service performance can shape their satisfaction and future interactions (Maharjan & Raya, 2024). Research indicates that quick

and effective responses to customer inquiries or complaints lead to positive attributions (Rizqiyah, 2024).

3.0 CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Several studies have been done to examine how customer service responsiveness influence customer satisfaction among firms. From the global context and in Indonesia, Abdullah and Kasmi (2021) confirmed the need for firms to adopt high quality in promoting their activities. Using different models, it was confirmed that quality provided during services delivery is important to all clients. However, the model overlooked the influence of external factors like economic conditions or technological advancements on service perceptions. From a simple view, the study has a clear conceptual framework and quantitative rigor, while lack of consideration for moderating variables in customer satisfaction dynamics.

Another study in Asia by Anas (2024) explored the topic and used a survey method, collecting data from hotel guests on their satisfaction levels, service quality perceptions, and expectations. The findings indicated that responsiveness, alongside other factors like service reliability and empathy, played a significant role in enhancing customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. The study found that quick responses to customer inquiries were crucial in improving guest satisfaction, particularly during their stay. However, the study's limitations included its focus on a single city, which may not be representative of broader regional or international trends. The merit of this study lies in its detailed contextual examination, offering relevant insights into the hospitality sector. The demerit, however, is the limited geographical scope, which reduces its applicability beyond the region studied.

In India, Arora and Banerji (2024) highlighted how critical digital customer service responsiveness is in fostering long-term customer loyalty. A notable gap in the study was its exclusive focus on digital banking, which may not apply universally to other industries or forms of digital customer service. The merit of the study lies in its relevance to the rapidly growing digital banking sector, while its demerit lies in the limited scope, especially given the diversity in digital service platforms across different sectors. In Malaysia, Ardhana, Mariam, and Ramli (2024) used a survey-based method, collecting responses from customers who had recently interacted with service providers in various industries. Their findings emphasized that responsiveness is important to all customers. The study's gap was its limited attention to how industry-specific factors could impact service

quality perceptions, particularly in non-service-oriented industries. It involves a lack of sectoral differentiation, which may affect the transferability of the findings across different markets.

Within the Chinese context, Cheng et al. (2024) focused on the topic and used different models in managing data and the findings revealed that the quality of the initial response by intelligent customer service agents significantly influenced consumers' continuous interaction intentions. This study highlighted the crucial role of automated systems in maintaining customer engagement. A gap in the study was its reliance on artificial intelligence-based interactions, which may not fully capture human-agent interaction dynamics. The merit of the study is its timely focus on intelligent service technologies, reflecting the growing trend in e-commerce, while the demerit is its limited exploration of the broader customer service experience beyond AI-driven agents.

In Saudi Arabia, Ibrahim et al. (2024) investigated the importance of services on promoting value among firms after the covid-challenge and focused on employees of service-based industries and their satisfaction levels during a period of significant operational disruption. Using surveys to collect data from employees, the study found that responsive internal customer service and effective communication significantly impacted employee satisfaction. The gap in the study was its focus on internal customers rather than external customers, which may limit its relevance to customer-facing industries. The merit of this study is its timely examination of internal customer satisfaction during a crisis, while its demerit is the limited scope in terms of its applicability to external customer satisfaction.

In Albania, Kullolli et al (2024) conducted the same review to determine how regression can show satisfaction under different conditions and the results indicated that responsiveness, particularly in terms of resolving complaints is important. The study's gap was its lack of qualitative insights, which could have provided a deeper understanding of customer perceptions. The merit of this study lies in its robust quantitative analysis and sectoral breadth, while its demerit is its exclusion of qualitative data, which could have enriched the findings.

Sharma, Paul, Dhir and Taggar (2022) also noted that responsive firms achieved high referrals in India. Findings showed that responsiveness was a critical determinant of satisfaction and subsequent behaviors, such as referrals. However, the study largely focused on general trends and did not examine cultural or regional differences in responsiveness expectations. Future research

could address how responsiveness influences customer satisfaction across diverse demographic and geographic segments.

Rita, Oliveira, and Farisa (2019) investigated the same and using a survey of online shoppers, the authors found that responsiveness was one of the most influential dimensions driving satisfaction and repeat purchases. However, the study did not assess the role of emerging technologies, such as AI-driven chatbots, in enhancing responsiveness. Selamat and Tay (2020) also analyzed the same and confirmed that responsiveness significantly influenced satisfaction, particularly in resolving complaints. However, the study did not explore the long-term effects of responsiveness on customer loyalty or brand advocacy. This gap suggests the need for longitudinal studies to examine the sustained impact of responsiveness on customer satisfaction and related behaviors.

Abdirad and Krishnan (2022) examined the impact of e-supply chain practices, including service responsiveness, on service quality and customer satisfaction. Employing a case study method, the authors found that responsiveness improved satisfaction by enhancing order accuracy and reducing delivery times. Despite its insights, the study focused on supply chain aspects and did not delve deeply into customer interactions, such as communication responsiveness. Future studies could explore how responsiveness in communication affects satisfaction independently of supply chain efficiencies. These studies, taken together, provide a comprehensive view of the influence of customer service responsiveness on customer satisfaction across various industries and contexts. The studies emphasize the importance of responsiveness in fostering customer satisfaction and loyalty, while also highlighting the need for further research in specific industry sectors and the integration of qualitative methodologies to complement the existing quantitative approaches.

Within the African context, especially in Egypt, Agag et al. (2024) sought to evaluate how marketing analytics could influence customer responsiveness and satisfaction over time. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, the study integrated qualitative interviews with retailers and quantitative data analysis of customer satisfaction indices. The findings revealed that the use of advanced marketing analytics enabled retailers to enhance customer responsiveness, resulting in improved customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study's primary gap was its focus on only certain retail sectors, thus limiting its generalizability to broader markets. The merits of the study lie in its robust longitudinal design, allowing for insights into long-term customer satisfaction, while the

demerits stem from the narrow scope of the retail industries covered, which could potentially affect the applicability of its findings to other service sectors.

In Nigeria, Ogundipe et al. (2024) aimed to understand how adopting agile practices could enhance service delivery and responsiveness in the banking sector. Using a qualitative approach, the researchers conducted interviews with bank managers, IT specialists, and customers, examining their experiences with agile frameworks. The findings indicated that agile methodologies led to improved responsiveness, faster problem resolution, and a more personalized customer experience, contributing to higher customer satisfaction. However, the study also identified challenges, including resistance to change, costs of staff training, and the complexity of transitioning from traditional banking to agile frameworks. The authors concluded that while agile practices offer significant potential for improving customer satisfaction, banks must overcome initial implementation barriers to fully benefit from these methodologies.

In South Africa, Shava (2021) examined the topic and using a quantitative approach, the researcher surveyed mobile network users to gather data on their perceptions of service quality and satisfaction. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction, with reliability and responsiveness being the most significant predictors. However, the review was based within the south African contexts and only focused on mobile operators in the region.

Locally and within the Kenyan context, Lagat and Uyoga (2019) aimed to understand how timely and efficient responses from airlines impacted overall customer satisfaction. Using a quantitative approach, the authors surveyed airline passengers to assess their perceptions of service responsiveness and the overall performance of the airlines. The findings revealed that customer responsiveness was a key determinant of service performance. The study emphasized the importance of airlines focusing on improving response times and service efficiency to enhance customer experiences and maintain satisfaction in the competitive airline industry.

Senelwa et al. (2023) assessed how the responsiveness of service providers in the public transportation sector influenced passenger satisfaction. Through a survey-based research design, the authors collected data from passengers of various SACCOS to evaluate their experiences. The findings indicated that quick response times, particularly in addressing customer complaints and providing timely services, were directly linked to higher levels of customer satisfaction. The study

concluded that SACCOS should prioritize improving service responsiveness to ensure better customer experiences and foster loyalty in the transportation industry.

Finally, Mathangani and Sile (2020) aimed to evaluate how effective customer care strategies influenced the satisfaction of clients seeking services from a government agency. Using a case study approach, the researchers gathered data from KEBS customers through surveys and interviews. The findings revealed that effective customer care strategies, such as prompt service delivery and clear communication, significantly improved customer satisfaction. The authors highlighted the importance of adopting structured customer care practices in government agencies to ensure public satisfaction and improve service delivery in the public sector. The main gaps on the above studies are illustrated in the table below.

Table1: Empirical Studies and Research Gaps Table

Author(s)	Study Topic	Objectives	Research Methodology	Findings	Research Gaps
Abdullah & Kasmi (2021)	Effect of Quality of Service on Customer Satisfaction	To explore the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction, focusing on reliability, responsiveness, and empathy.	Quantitative approach with survey data from online service customers.	A significant positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, especially responsiveness.	Lack of consideration for moderating variables like economic conditions and technological advancements.
Agag et al. (2024)	Relationship between Marketing Analytics, Customer Agility, and Customer Satisfaction	To evaluate the relationship between marketing analytics, customer agility, and customer satisfaction over time.	Mixed-methods approach: qualitative interviews with retailers and quantitative data analysis.	Marketing analytics enhances customer responsiveness, improving satisfaction and loyalty.	Narrow scope focusing on certain retail sectors, limiting generalizability.
Anas (2024)	Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry	To explore factors influencing customer satisfaction in the hotel industry in Makassar City.	Survey method, collecting data from hotel guests on satisfaction and service quality perceptions.	Responsiveness is critical for enhancing customer satisfaction, alongside reliability and empathy.	Limited geographical scope, reducing applicability beyond the studied region.
Arora & Banerji (2024)	Interplay Between Digital Banking Service Quality and Customer Loyalty	To examine how digital banking service quality influences customer loyalty, focusing on the role of customer satisfaction.	Surveys and statistical analysis, focusing on digital banking service quality.	Responsiveness significantly influences customer loyalty, with satisfaction as a mediator.	Focus on digital banking, limiting applicability to other industries.

Ardhana, Mariam, & Ramli (2024)	Role of Corporate Image, Service Quality, and Customer Satisfaction in Influencing Customer Loyalty	To examine the role of corporate image, service quality, and customer satisfaction in influencing customer loyalty in Malaysia.	Survey-based method collecting responses from customers in various industries.	Corporate image and service quality directly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty.	Lack of sector-specific analysis, affecting the transferability of findings.
Cheng et al. (2024)	Impact of Intelligent Customer Service Agents' Initial Response on Consumer Interaction Intentions	To investigate the impact of intelligent customer service agents' initial response on consumers' intention to	Mixed-methods approach: surveys and experimental simulations in e-commerce.	Initial response quality of intelligent agents influences continuous interaction intention.	Reliance on AI-based agents, not accounting for human-agent dynamics.

		continue interaction.			
Fath, Abimanyu, & Misbak (2024)	Relationship Between Responsiveness, Usability, and Customer Satisfaction in E-commerce	To explore the relationship between responsiveness, usability, and customer satisfaction in e-commerce platforms.	Quantitative surveys and usability testing with online shoppers.	Responsiveness and usability together drive customer satisfaction in e-commerce.	Limited focus on niche markets, overlooking specific e-commerce segment needs.
Ibrahim et al. (2024)	Internal Customer Satisfaction During the Pandemic	To investigate internal customer satisfaction during the pandemic in service industries.	Survey-based method with employees in service-based industries.	Internal customer service and effective communication significantly impacted employee satisfaction.	Limited applicability to external customer satisfaction due to focus on internal customers.

Kulloli, Trebicka, & Fortuzi (2024)	Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction in Albania	To examine the factors influencing customer satisfaction in Albania using a logistic regression approach.	Quantitative logistic regression analysis across various sectors in Albania.	Responsiveness, particularly in resolving complaints, was a key determinant of customer satisfaction.	Absence of qualitative insights, which could have provided a deeper understanding of customer perceptions.
Sharma, Paul, Dhir & Taggar (2022)	Impact of Responsiveness on Customer Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, and Referral Behavior	To explore the impact of responsiveness on customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and referral behavior in	Mixed-methods approach combining surveys and interviews with online shoppers.	Responsiveness is crucial in driving satisfaction, revisit intentions, and referrals in online shopping.	Focus on general trends without exploring cultural or regional differences in responsiveness expectations.

		online shoppers.			
Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa (2019)	Impact of E-service Quality Dimensions on Customer Satisfaction and Behavior	To investigate the impact of e-service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction and repeat purchases in online shopping.	Survey of online shoppers assessing e-service quality and its impact on satisfaction.	Responsiveness is a crucial dimension of e-service quality driving customer satisfaction and repeat purchases.	Did not consider the role of emerging technologies such as AI-driven chatbots in enhancing responsiveness.
Selamat & Tay (2020)	Relationship Between Online Retail Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction	To analyze the relationship between online retail service quality, including responsiveness, and customer satisfaction.	Quantitative surveys on online retail users, focusing on responsiveness.	Responsiveness significantly influences satisfaction in online retail, particularly in resolving complaints.	Lack of exploration of the long-term effects of responsiveness on customer loyalty and brand advocacy.

Abdirad & Krishnan (2022)	Impact of E-supply Chain Practices on Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction	To examine the impact of e-supply chain practices on service quality and customer satisfaction, focusing on responsiveness.	Case study approach focusing on e-supply chain practices and service responsiveness.	Responsiveness improves satisfaction by enhancing order accuracy and reducing delivery times.	Focused on supply chain practices, not fully addressing customer communication responsiveness.
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Source: Author (2024)

4.0 SYNTHESIS

The analysis of existing literature on customer service responsiveness and customer satisfaction provides different results. Responsiveness has consistently been shown to influence satisfaction and customer behaviors, including revisit intentions, referrals, and loyalty (Sharma et al., 2022). The analysis also confirms that customer service responsiveness and its influence on customer satisfaction has consistently underscored the critical role that responsiveness plays in shaping customer perceptions and behaviors. Multiple studies, including Abdullah and Kasmi (2021) and Agag et al. (2024), confirmed that timely and effective responses from service providers lead to more favorable customer experiences. Similarly, Agag et al. (2024) demonstrated that responsive customer service, facilitated by marketing analytics, enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty, further emphasizing responsiveness as a key driver of positive service outcomes. These studies provide robust empirical evidence of the essential role of responsiveness in customer service dynamics.

In the hospitality sector, Anas (2024) highlighted the importance of responsiveness in hotel settings, where quick responses to guest inquiries directly impacted guest satisfaction. This aligns with the findings from Arora and Banerji (2024), who explored the banking industry and confirms the importance of value and responses rate. Both studies contribute to the growing body of knowledge that suggests customers who receive prompt responses are more-happy. Moreover, Ardhana, Mariam, and Ramli (2024) extended these insights by showing that a positive corporate image, in combination with responsive service, boosts customer loyalty, indicating that

responsiveness works synergistically with other service quality dimensions to enhance customer outcomes.

Technological advancements have also been a key area of interest in recent studies. Cheng et al. (2024) examined the role of intelligent customer service agents and found that the initial response time and quality significantly impacted customers' intentions to continue interacting with the service. This indicates the growing influence of automated systems in shaping customer satisfaction. Similarly, Fath, Abimanyu, and Misbak (2024) demonstrated that both responsiveness and the usability of e-commerce platforms drive customer satisfaction, further supporting the idea that responsive service is critical in digital environments. These studies reflect a shift towards understanding how technological tools, such as AI and automated systems, can improve service responsiveness and, by extension, customer satisfaction.

While the existing research highlights the central role of customer service responsiveness in fostering satisfaction, several gaps remain in the literature that warrant further exploration. A recurring limitation in the studies by Agag et al. (2024) and Anas (2024) is their narrow geographical and industry focus. Agag et al. (2024) focused primarily on retail and consumer services, which may not be generalizable to other sectors such as healthcare or education, where service dynamics may differ. Similarly, Anas (2024) concentrated on the hotel industry in Makassar City, a specific regional context, which may not accurately reflect global trends. These studies call for broader, cross-sectoral research to determine whether responsiveness affects customer satisfaction uniformly across diverse industries and regions.

Another significant gap identified in the studies by Sharma, Paul, Dhir, and Taggar (2022), and Rita, Oliveira, and Farisa (2019), is the lack of consideration for new models. The rise of AI in customer service presents new challenges and opportunities for understanding how these technologies impact customer satisfaction. Rita, Oliveira, and Farisa (2019) noted that while responsiveness is a critical factor in e-service quality, their study did not address the potential role of advanced technological solutions in streamlining service interactions. Furthermore, Selamat and Tay (2020) acknowledged the importance of responsiveness but did not delve into the long-term effects of responsiveness on customer loyalty and brand advocacy, an area that could benefit from longitudinal studies.

Moreover, some studies such as Abdirad and Krishnan (2022) and Kullolli, Trebicka, and Fortuzi (2024) primarily focused on specific aspects of customer service, such as order accuracy or complaint resolution, without fully exploring broader communication responsiveness. This suggests the need for future research to focus on the full spectrum of customer service responsiveness, encompassing both transactional and relational aspects, including communication, engagement, and emotional support. These aspects are crucial for understanding how different dimensions of responsiveness collectively influence customer satisfaction and loyalty. By addressing these gaps, future studies could offer a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how customer service responsiveness impacts customer satisfaction across various contexts and industries.

An emerging theme is the nonlinear relationship between responsiveness and satisfaction. While higher levels of responsiveness generally enhance satisfaction, studies have suggested that there is a point beyond which the benefits diminish. This suggests the existence of an optimal threshold of responsiveness where firms achieve maximum satisfaction without expending unnecessary resources. Identifying this threshold would help businesses balance responsiveness with operational efficiency, ensuring that they provide exceptional service without incurring excessive costs. Future research could explore strategies to determine this threshold and align responsiveness efforts accordingly (Selamat & Tay, 2020).

The effectiveness of responsiveness also varies across different service channels, such as live chat, email, and phone support. Research suggests that real-time channels like live chat may have a greater impact on customer satisfaction than asynchronous ones like email, due to their immediacy and interactivity (Jun, Yang, & Kim, 2004; Selamat & Tay, 2020). However, comparative analyses of these channels remain limited. Investigating how responsiveness effectiveness differs across service platforms would enable firms to allocate resources efficiently and optimize their service delivery strategies (Sharma et al., 2022).

Cultural and demographic factors add complexity to the relationship between responsiveness and customer satisfaction. Customer expectations for responsiveness can differ significantly across cultural contexts and demographic groups (Sharma et al., 2022; Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa, 2019). However, these variations are underexplored in existing research. Addressing this gap could provide valuable insights into designing responsive strategies tailored to diverse customer

segments, ultimately enhancing satisfaction and loyalty in varied markets (Abdirad & Krishnan, 2022; Pham & Ahammad, 2017).

Furthermore, emotional engagement has been identified as a potential mediator between responsiveness and customer satisfaction. Responsiveness elicits both emotional and cognitive reactions, such as trust, frustration, or relief, which significantly influence satisfaction levels (Sharma et al., 2022). However, research focusing on these emotional dimensions remains scarce. Future studies could explore how responsiveness impacts emotional engagement and how these emotional responses subsequently influence satisfaction and loyalty. Addressing these gaps would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of responsiveness in shaping customer experiences and driving business success in online retail (Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa, 2019).

Furthermore, the reviewed literature highlights the critical role of customer service responsiveness in shaping customer satisfaction and subsequent behavioral outcomes in online retail. Responsiveness consistently emerges as a key dimension of service quality, directly influencing satisfaction, revisit intentions, referrals, and loyalty (Sharma et al., 2022). However, a nuanced understanding of this relationship is still evolving. The studies emphasize responsiveness's ability to mitigate dissatisfaction by addressing customer concerns promptly, reinforcing its preventive and proactive value in customer service (Selamat & Tay, 2020). This foundation establishes responsiveness as an indispensable element in the competitive dynamics of online retail, where customer expectations continue to rise.

While the relationship between responsiveness and satisfaction is well-documented, critical gaps remain regarding its nonlinear effects and optimal levels. Evidence suggests that while increased responsiveness generally enhances satisfaction, over-attentiveness can lead to diminished returns or even dissatisfaction (Sharma et al., 2022). This insight underscores the importance of identifying an optimal threshold of responsiveness, where service efficiency aligns with resource management. However, current research has not adequately addressed how firms can balance this trade-off, making it a promising avenue for future inquiry. Such findings highlight the strategic necessity for firms to approach responsiveness not as an absolute target but as a carefully calibrated variable.

The integration of technology, particularly AI-driven tools such as chatbots, has added complexity to the understanding of responsiveness. These technologies offer opportunities for faster, more

personalized service but also raise questions about their impact on customer perceptions and long-term satisfaction (Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa, 2019; Cheng et al., 2024). While these innovations enhance efficiency, their inability to replicate human empathy may limit their effectiveness in emotionally charged scenarios. The limited focus on this technological trade-off in existing research underscores a critical gap, suggesting a need for studies exploring how AI-driven responsiveness can be complemented by human intervention to maximize customer satisfaction.

Finally, the influence of cultural, demographic, and emotional factors remains underexplored in responsiveness research. Existing studies have largely adopted a one-size-fits-all approach, overlooking the diversity of customer expectations and preferences across cultural and demographic contexts (Sharma et al., 2024). Furthermore, the role of emotional engagement as a mediator in the responsiveness-satisfaction relationship has been insufficiently addressed. Emotional responses such as trust, frustration, or relief significantly shape satisfaction levels and loyalty (Cheng et al., 2024).

5.0 CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The customer service responsiveness is the independent variable. However, customer satisfaction is the dependent variable. The main measures of customer service responsiveness include indicators such as response time, multiple support systems and faster resolution of issues. However, the key indicators of customer satisfaction include customer loyalty, retention, referrals and good reviews or feedback. This is depicted below.

Independent

Variable

Independent Variables (CUSTOMER SERVICE RESPONSIVENESS)

- ✓ First response time
- ✓ Chat-box
- ✓ Self-service utilization
- ✓ Multiple support systems
- ✓ High customer response using digital platforms
- ✓ Available support team
- ✓ High resolution of issues

Dependent

Dependent Variable (CUSTOMER SATISFACTION)

- ✓ Customer loyalty
- ✓ Customer Retention
- ✓ Repeat Purchase
- ✓ Referrals
- ✓ Positive word-of-mouth recommendations
- ✓ Reviews
- ✓ Recommendations
- ✓ Positive feedback
- ✓ Low customer Complain

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Source: Author (2025)

6.0 EMERGING PROPOSITIONS

From the analysis, different aspects emerge. A critical gap in the existing literature is the exploration of the nonlinear relationship between customer service responsiveness and customer satisfaction. While increased responsiveness is typically associated with higher satisfaction, recent studies suggest that beyond a certain point, further responsiveness may yield diminishing returns or even create dissatisfaction (Sharma et al., 2022). The concept of an optimal threshold of responsiveness remains underexplored. Future research could investigate the point at which further investment in responsiveness no longer contributes to customer satisfaction and may even lead to customer fatigue.

Notably, the role of emerging technologies, particularly AI-driven solutions like chatbots and automated systems, in enhancing customer service responsiveness is another area that warrants further investigation. While studies such as Cheng et al. (2024) have highlighted the growing

influence of these tools, there remains a lack of clarity regarding their long-term effects on customer satisfaction. Technologies like chatbots can streamline response times, but they may lack the emotional intelligence and empathy that human agents provide in more complex or emotionally charged situations (Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa, 2019). Research could explore how AI can complement human interaction, particularly in instances where emotional engagement plays a crucial role in shaping satisfaction.

Moreover, Agag et al. (2024) primarily concentrates on retail and consumer services, while Anas (2024) focuses on the hospitality industry in a specific region of Indonesia. These sector-specific and geographically restricted studies hinder the ability to draw broader review. Future studies should aim for more cross-sectoral and cross-geographical research to determine if responsiveness consistently affects customer satisfaction across industries such as healthcare, education, and public services. Additionally, comparative studies that examine regional differences in customer expectations and cultural influences could offer valuable insights into how responsiveness strategies need to be adapted in different contexts.

In addition, the literature highlights the importance of emotional engagement in the customer experience but has not fully explored its role as a mediator between service responsiveness and customer satisfaction. Research has shown that responsiveness often elicits emotional responses from customers, such as trust, relief, or frustration, which subsequently influence their satisfaction levels (Sharma et al., 2022). However, the mechanisms by which emotional engagement mediates this relationship remain underexplored. Future research could focus on understanding the emotional dynamics triggered by responsive customer service, exploring how these emotions impact customer satisfaction, loyalty, and future behaviors. This approach could offer a more nuanced understanding of the emotional dimensions of customer service responsiveness and its long-term effects on customer relationships.

A gap in the existing research concerns the influence of customer demographics and cultural contexts on the expectations and perceptions of responsiveness. Studies such as Sharma et al. (2022) and Rita, Oliveira, and Farisa (2019) have acknowledged that customer expectations can vary significantly across different cultural and demographic groups. However, these factors have not been adequately addressed in the context of responsiveness and customer satisfaction. Future studies should explore how cultural norms, age, socioeconomic status, and other demographic

factors influence customer expectations for response times, the quality-of-service interactions, and the overall satisfaction derived from these interactions.

Research on the effectiveness of responsiveness across various service channels—such as live chat, email, and phone support—remains limited despite growing interest in omnichannel customer service. Jun, Yang, and Kim (2004) and Selamat & Tay (2020) suggest that real-time channels like live chat may have a greater impact on customer satisfaction due to their immediacy and interactivity. However, the comparative effectiveness of these channels has not been sufficiently studied, and there is a need for further research into how responsiveness operates differently across these platforms. Studies that analyze the varying impacts of responsiveness in different channels would help firms optimize their resource allocation, tailoring their customer service delivery to each platform’s unique characteristics. Such research could provide deeper insights into how responsiveness can be adapted to achieve optimal service outcomes across a diverse set of communication channels.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The study on customer service responsiveness and its impact on customer satisfaction underscores its critical importance in a highly competitive and dynamic marketplace. Responsiveness is important since it influence satisfaction and drive key behavioral outcomes, such as revisit intentions, referrals, and loyalty. While responsiveness is widely recognized as a pivotal dimension of service quality, this analysis revealed several gaps in understanding its nuanced effects. These findings emphasize the need for further research to explore how responsiveness shapes customer experiences and behaviors, as well as how firms can strategically optimize this element of their service offerings.

A significant insight from the reviewed studies is the nonlinear relationship between responsiveness and satisfaction, highlighting the existence of an optimal threshold. While increased responsiveness generally enhances satisfaction, over-attentiveness or excessive interactions may diminish its benefits. This underscores the need for firms to strike a balance between providing timely responses and managing operational efficiency. The role of emerging technologies, such as AI-driven chatbots, also adds complexity to this dynamic. While these tools offer opportunities to enhance responsiveness, they require careful integration with human support to address complex and emotionally charged customer needs effectively. These findings point to a

critical gap in research on balancing technology-driven and human-mediated responsiveness to maximize satisfaction.

Cultural, demographic, and emotional factors are important and since people come from different cultures. Additionally, responsiveness evokes both cognitive and emotional responses, such as trust, frustration, or relief, which significantly influence satisfaction and loyalty. Despite their importance, these dimensions remain underexplored in the existing literature, presenting opportunities for future research to adopt a holistic approach that incorporates these variables into the study of responsiveness and satisfaction.

Notably, this review has different implications. To begin with the findings of this study have important implications for policy formulation. Policymakers can leverage insights into the critical role of responsiveness in customer satisfaction to establish benchmarks for service quality, including response time and issue resolution standards. Such regulations would not only protect consumers but also promote fair competition by holding online retailers accountable for delivering responsive and efficient customer service (Sharma et al., 2022; Selamat & Tay, 2020). Additionally, policies encouraging the adoption of advanced technologies, such as AI-driven tools, could support smaller retailers in achieving responsiveness standards without incurring excessive costs, ultimately fostering a more inclusive digital marketplace (Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa, 2019).

The study supported different theories and indicate their importance in guiding firms to promote satisfaction. In addition, it depicts how customers view their firms in terms of response provided. This is important in guiding firms in managing their customers. However, the study showed the need for considering emotional aspects of the customers. Moreover, the identified gaps—such as the nonlinear effects of responsiveness, the mediating role of emotional engagement, and the influence of demographic and cultural factors—offer opportunities for theoretical advancements.

In terms of practical applications, the study underscores the importance of prioritizing responsiveness in customer service strategies. Businesses can use the findings to design systems that optimize response times, address customer inquiries effectively, and balance the costs of responsiveness with its benefits. The integration of AI-based solutions, such as chatbots, can enhance operational efficiency and responsiveness, particularly for handling routine queries. However, firms should complement these technologies with human support to address complex or emotionally charged interactions, ensuring a balance between speed and empathy (Rita, Oliveira,

& Farisa, 2019; Cheng et al., 2024). Additionally, firms should tailor their responsiveness strategies to cultural and demographic differences to meet diverse customer expectations effectively (Sharma et al., 2022).

Notably, the study highlights the role of emotional engagement in driving satisfaction, offering valuable insights for marketing and customer relationship management (Hung, Chen, & Huang, 2014). Firms should focus on building emotional connections through personalized and empathetic interactions, as these responses can amplify the positive effects of responsiveness on satisfaction and loyalty. This can be achieved through targeted training for customer service representatives, culturally sensitive service approaches, and the strategic use of real-time communication channels (Selamat & Tay, 2020). Overall, the study's findings provide actionable insights for policymakers, theorists, and practitioners, contributing to a more customer-centric approach.

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