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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AS A MEDIATOR OF PRICE AND SERVICE QUALITY IN SPA'S CUSTOMERS BRAND SWITCHING BEHAVIOR

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Abstract: This research aimed to identify the effects of customer satisfaction role as mediation of price and service quality to the brand switching on customers of Balqis Spa in Kediri. The research design was explanatory research. The total sample was about 130 respondents through the non-probability sampling method. The method of data collection was a questionnaire. In contrast, the data analysis methods in this research were descriptive analysis and inferential analysis through Partial Least Square (PLS) by exerting the Smart PLS 3.0 version, which aimed to examine the effects simultaneously and the partial effects among variables. The research findings show that the price directly affects the service quality and could directly and significantly affect brand switching. Customer satisfaction could fully mediate the relationship between price and brand switching. Moreover, customer satisfaction could partially mediate between the quality and brand switching for customers of Balqis Spa in Kediri. The results of this study are expected to provide implications in the form of insight and understanding for spa entrepreneurs, especially in the City of Kediri, as well as provide input for Balqis Spa in improving service quality and customer satisfaction so that customers do not transfer services to other spa places which are an important threat to Balqis spa. The future researcher can consider other variables outside the object in this study to increase the accuracy of the model that will be formed.

Keywords: Price, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Brand Switching

CITATION

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INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, the business in the service business sector is showing rapid development. One of the service business sectors that has developed recently is spa service. This statement is proven because of the easy access, and many spa businesses are found. The products offered in this sector vary and create a dynamic business competition. The business in this sector is always developing, so spa business people should focus on their products and services, which can affect completion or the lack of facilities in their beauty shop. Moreover, in Kediri, many spa shops have appeared recently, and even a quite popular spa franchise in Indonesia already exists in this city, which aims to fulfill the customer's expectations.

Balqis Spa has been one of the spa shops in Kediri since 2008. Balqis Spa is a pioneer of muslimah spa in Kediri. It offers not only a spa service by wearing hijab but also products used with halal labels from MUI. Next, Balqis Spa does not accept male customers or guests to keep the customers' convenience. According to one of the Balqis Spa's workers, before the appearance of some competitors, Balqis Spa was able to accept approximately ten to twenty customers during peak hours every day. The customers have valued that the plus point of Balqis Spa is the weak point. Since the customers are not allowed to come with the partners to have a spa or other kinds of treatment together. Balqis Spa has many offers of beauty treatment services. It is restricted to massage services, and hair and facial treatments are provided in this shop. However, Balqis Spa does not yet offer nail treatments and other trending treatments nowadays, such as eyelash extensions, manicures, pedicures, waxing, and other beauty treatments like the services provided by the competitors. Besides, the customers still lack the equipment, hygiene, technology, treatment room, and waiting room design in Balqis Spa compared to the other competitors. The customers of spas are offered many choices for their consumptive activities over a product or service with various superiorities. Customers demand a service with high quality that offers more convenience. Therefore, they tend to lack understanding of the products and be less loyal to a particular brand. They get information from the internet and other sources, so customers nowadays are smarter in product selection and more sensitive to price to

look for the value of a product or service. Shukla (2009) has said that the following criteria will be the basis of brand switching involvement: quality, price, variation and packaging, and dissatisfaction.

According to David (1996), the factor of brand switching has stated that intrinsic and extrinsic factors cause the behavior of brand switching. The intrinsic factor is a factor that comes from related individuals as the intention to try a new brand. Meanwhile, the extrinsic factor is a factor that comes externally as a discount or lower price. Sathish et al. (2011), Wibawanto and Susanto (2012), and Zhang (2012) have found that the price is influential for the decision of brand switching. The other findings from Srinuan et al. (2011) and Gerrard and Cunningham (2004) concluded that the price is not influential in the decision to switch brand products. The other factor of customer switching is service quality. Srivastava and Sharma (2013) have said that service quality is one of the customer's ways to differentiate and compare competitive and contributive services in the market share and customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, in the process of brand switching, Pransisya and Sudaryanto (2017) have found that service quality can affect negatively and significantly the customer decision to switch brands on their use of particular products. Moreover, brand switching performed by customers can happen because of the dissatisfaction received and felt by the customers after making a purchase. Rahayu et al. (2016), in their research, have stated that satisfaction has a negative and significant effect on switching behavior. Customers dissatisfied with a brand will seek information on the other product choices, and they may stop buying products or influence other people not to accept them (Kotler and Keller, 2008). On the relationship between service quality and satisfaction, Yazid (2013) has found that the product or service is valued as having quality when it can result in customer satisfaction when the product or service fits the customers' expectations. Ulfat (2013), in her research, has proposed that price is a significant factor in increasing customer satisfaction in the spa business because the price can build customer satisfaction.

Switching to a product, service, or brand is an unavoidable impact of competition in the market. Services are considered intangible, heterogeneous, and usually inseparable. Customers' proces-

ses to evaluate a service vary widely and cannot be easily identified. It has become an important factor for all businesses driven by the need to survive and remain competitive. The study of price and service quality on brand switching shows results that are not consistent or that there is a research gap. The existence of a research gap on price and service quality on brand switching creates an interesting opportunity for studies to fill in the research gaps by adding intervening or mediating variables, namely customer satisfaction.

Moreover, the development of the spa industry is growing rapidly in Kediri, but there is still a lack of findings related to spa consumer behavior in this city. As mentioned before, there are still differences in the results of several researches regarding the factors that influence brand switching, which differences in the location of the research object may cause. Therefore, by putting customer satisfaction as a mediating variabel, this research aims to identify the effects of customer satisfaction as mediation of price and service quality to the brand switching on customers of Balqis Spa in Kediri. This research is expected to contribute to spa business developers, especially in Kediri, so they can discover why many spa consumers in Kediri have moved to other spas. Based on phenomena and research gap, the researcher aims to examine "The Role of Customer Satisfaction as A Mediation of Price and Quality to the Brand Switching on Balqis Spa in Kediri".

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand switching is a purchase pattern indicated by a change or switch from one brand to another (Peter and Olson, 1996). According to Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2016), brand switching, caused by customer dissatisfaction, will cause the customers to stop buying a particular product brand and switch to other brands. Gerland in Clemes et al. (2005) have said that the switching behavior is when a customer leaves a service provider and switches to another service provider. Based on those definitions, it is concluded that the switching behavior is a condition that affects the customer to switch to the other product or service provider.

A price is a monetary unit, or other measurements (including other goods and services) exchanged to obtain ownership or use of a particular

product or service (Tjiptono, 2008). According to Kotler and Keller (2008), the price is the amount of money charged on goods or services or the amount of money exchanged by customers for the benefit of owning or using the products or services.

Quality is an aspect decided by the customers. It means that the quality is based on the customer's actual product or service experience, which is assessed by those statements. The service quality is a measurement of how good the service quality can be, following the customer's expectation to put in a conclusion.

Customer satisfaction is a level of individual feeling after comparing (performance or results) the received and expectations (Kotler and Keller, 2008). The customers can experience one of those three general satisfaction levels when the performance is under the expectation so that the customers will feel disappointed. Conversely, when the performance fits the customer's expectation, the customers will be satisfied, and when the performance is beyond the expectation, the customers will feel highly satisfied, happy, or excited.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Several factors can affect the brand-switching behavior of the customer. According to Sathish et al. (2011), from their research, several factors cause service switching behavior, one of them is the price (call rates). The study by Ernayanti (2006) stated that price changes affect brand shift decisions among Sunsilk shampoo consumers in Surabaya. The results shown by Napitupulu (2019) and Ulfat (2013) show that price is important in increasing customer satisfaction in the spa business because the price set can provide customer satisfaction. The research findings from Wathne et al. in Al-Kwafi et al. (2011) asserted that price affects more dominantly than the other factors in brand switching behavior. Moreover, in the process of brand switching, the research done by Malik et al. (2012) has found that the price affects the customer satisfaction. Based on this research finding, the researchers formulated the following research hypothesis:

H1: The price significantly affects the decision of brand switching.

H3: The price affects significantly to the customer satisfaction.

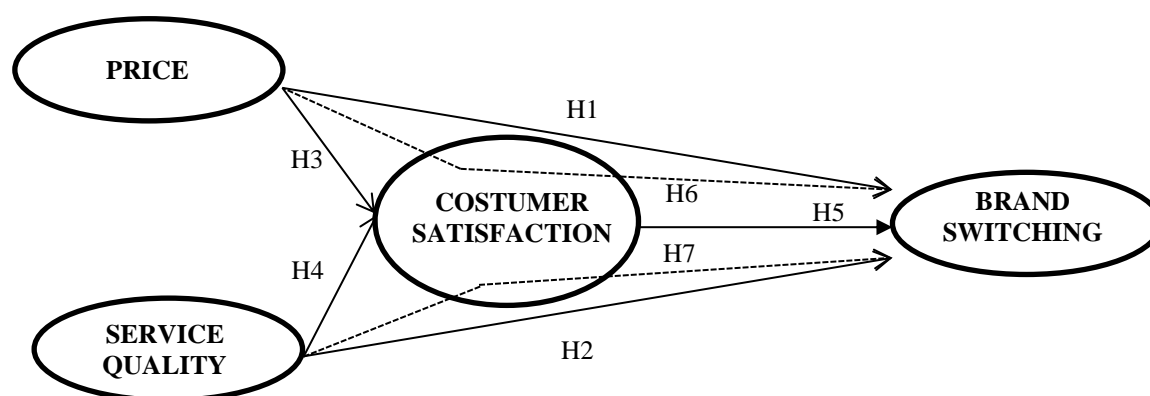


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

Moreover, in the process of brand switching, Wahab et al. (2010) in their study have stated that service quality has a strong negative correlation when the service quality is related to brand switching. Prastya and Sri (2013) have concluded that quality and satisfaction are interrelated. Particularly, customer satisfaction is highly dependent on the service quality offered. Based on this research finding, the researchers formulated the following research hypothesis:

H2: The service quality significantly affects the decision of brand switching.

H4: The service quality affects significantly and positively the customer satisfaction.

According to Srivastava and Sharma (2013), the quality of service and maintenance of service performance relationships depends on which service providers provide the best service, and service recipients have confidence in service providers so that there is no opportunity to move to other service providers. The customer dissatisfaction is the most probable factor that contributes to customer switching. Based on the research findings, the researchers have formulated the following research hypothesis:

H5: Customer satisfaction significantly affects the decision of brand switching.

In their research, Gerrard and Cunningham (2004) stated that if customers are dissatisfied because of more than one incident of dissatisfaction, they will have a strong desire to switch behavior even if it needs a higher cost. The research of Yulisetiarni (2019) concluded that price has a significant and positive effect on customer satisfaction. Based on this research finding, the researchers for-

mulated the following research hypothesis:

H6: Customer satisfaction mediates the effect of price on brand switching.

According to Tjiptono and Chandra (2011), the customer satisfaction mediates between quality and behavioral interest. It means that quality will affect customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction will affect customer behavior interest, such as purchase interest, repurchase interest, or brand shift. Service quality can be a good predictor of overall customer satisfaction, which means that customer satisfaction can prevent customers from moving to other brands (Umar, 2003). Based on this research finding, the researchers formulated the following research hypothesis:

H7: Customer satisfaction mediates the effect of service quality on brand switching.

METHOD

Number of Samples

Ferdinand (2014) describes some general guidelines that can be used to determine the number of samples to be taken in a study. One of them is that SEM analysis requires a sample of at least five times the number of parameter variables to be analyzed. Based on these guidelines, the number of samples in this study was determined by multiplying the number of parameter variables by 5. The number of parameter variables (question items) in this study was 26, so the number of sample members was determined to be 130.

Data Collection Method

There are 2 (two) methods used in collecting data in this study. Questionnaire. The distribu-

tion of the questionnaires in this study was carried out offline and online in November 2020. Offline questionnaires were distributed by distributing all questionnaires to spas in Kediri City, which were still open during the COVID-19 pandemic season and carried out while adhering to health protocols. Online questionnaires are carried out by distributing the questionnaire link through forums or chat groups on social media (Facebook and Instagram). Interview. Interviews were conducted with Balqis Spa employees and several ex-Balqis Spa respondents. Interviews were conducted with Balqis spa employees before the COVID-19 pandemic, and some Ex-Balqis spa respondents were still implementing health protocols.

Variable Measurement Techniques

A Likert scale assessed all research variables (Sugiyono, 2012). The score value is determined for each respondent's answer with the assessment category as listed in Table 1. This research exerted a quantitative method and explanatory approach design. The total sample was 130 respondents who no longer visited Balqis Spa in Kediri for the past year by using the non-probability sampling

method. The method used is from the non-probability sampling approach called judgmental sampling, in which the sample is selected based on a specific objective or case by setting criteria to obtain a more accurate information (Neuman, 2013). The methods of data collection were interviews and questionnaires. Next, the data analysis methods in this research were descriptive analysis and inferential analysis through Partial Least Square (PLS) by exerting Smart PLS 3.0 software, which aimed to identify the simultaneous effects and partial effects among variables examined in this research.

Table 1. Likert Scale

No	Explanation	Score
1	Strongly Agree (SS)	5
2	Agree (S)	4
3	Neutral (KS)	3
4	Disagree (TS)	2
5	Strongly Disagree (STS)	1

Source: Sugiyono (2012)

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics		Percentage (%)
Age	18-22	3
	23-34	42
	35-45	34
	>45	21
	Total	100
Job	Student	3
	Employee	52
	Entrepreneur	25
	House Wife	20
	Total	100
Education Background	SMA	16
	S1	54
	S2	30
	Total	100

Respondent Characteristics		Percentage (%)
Salary	< 1.000.000	3
	1.000.000-3.000.000	24
	3.000.000-4.500.000	45
	>4.500.000	28
	Total	100
New Spa Destination	Royal Family Spa	16
	Giovani Salon dan Spa	12
	Aisha Spa dan Salon	15
	Martha Tila'ar	57
	Total	100

Source: Data analysis (2020)

Table 3. Result of Direct Effect Testing

Relation	Path Coefficient	T-statistics	Decision
X1 (Price) → Y (Brand Switching)	-0.115	1.635	Insignificant
X2 (Service Quality) → Y (Brand Switching)	-0.189	2.074	Significant
X1 (Price) → Z (Customer Satisfaction)	0.216	2.842	Significant
X2 (Service Quality) → Z (Customer satisfaction)	0.616	9.034	Significant
Z (Customer Satisfaction) → Y (Brand Switching)	-0.506	5.620	Significant

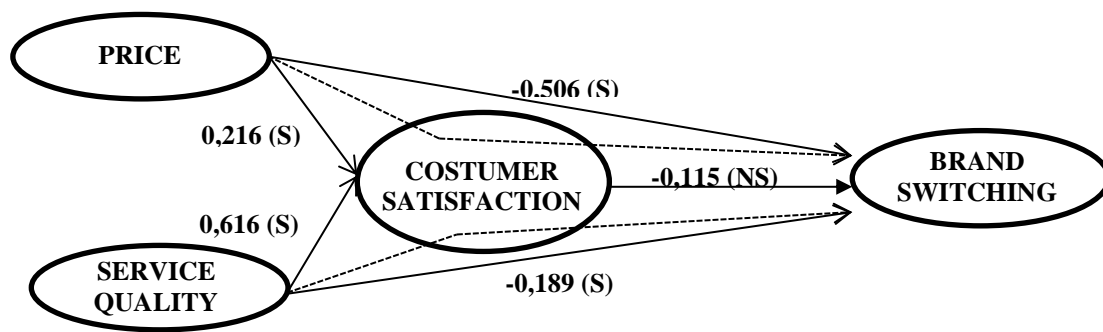
Source: Data analysis (2020)

RESULTS

Hypothesis Test on Direct Effects

The table 3 shows that the variable X1 (price) has a negative and insignificant effect on variable Y (brand switching), with a t-statistics value that was lower than critical value ($1.635 < 1.96$). The negative coefficient indicated that the increase of variable X1 (price) could decrease variable Y (brand switching), but not significantly. The variable X2 (service quality) has a negative and significant effect on variable Y (brand switching), with a t-statistics value that was greater than the critical value ($2.074 > 1.96$). The negative coefficient indicated that the increase of variable X2 (service quality) could significantly decrease variable Y (brand switching). The variable X1 (price) has a positive and significant effect on variable Z (customer satisfaction), with a t-statistics value that was greater than the critical value ($2.842 > 1.96$). The positive coefficient indicated that the increase of vari-

able X1 (price) could significantly develop variable Z (customer satisfaction). The variable X2 (service quality) has a positive and significant effect on variable Z (customer satisfaction), with a t-statistics value that was greater than the critical value ($9.034 > 1.96$). The positive coefficient indicated that the increase of variable X2 (service quality) could significantly develop variable Z (customer satisfaction). The variable Z (customer satisfaction) has a negative and significant effect on the variable Y (brand switching), with a t-statistics value that was greater than the critical value ($5.620 > 1.96$). The negative coefficient indicated that the increase of the variable Z (customer satisfaction) could decrease variable Y (brand switching) significantly. The path coefficients on the structural model and the value of the manifest variable factor on the measurement model can be illustrated in the following path diagram of the measurement model and structural model.



Description:

S: Significant; NS: Not Significant

Figure 2. Direct Effect Path of Structural Model

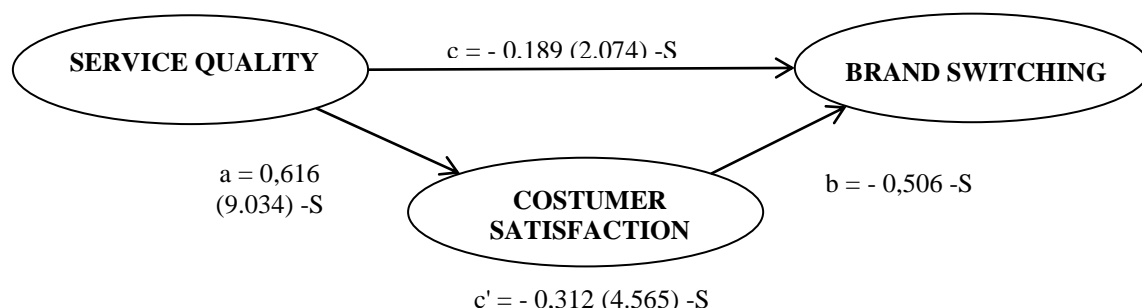
Hypothesis Test on Indirect Effects

Overall, the model in this research was divided into five direct effects and two indirect effects. The following table will present the testing result on the indirect effects. Figure 3 shows that service satisfaction has an indirect effect with a coefficient value of $c' = -0.312$ with a t-statistic of c' is 4.565. The value of the significant relationship between the service quality and customer satisfaction is $a = 0.616$ with a t-statistic of $9.034 > 1.96$. The value of the significant relationship between customer satisfaction and brand switching is $b = -0.506$ with a t-statistic of $5.620 > 1.96$. Still, the significant relationship value between service quality and brand

switching is $c = -0.189$ with t-statistic $2.074 > 1.96$, so it can be said as partial mediation. Figure 4 shows that service satisfaction has the coefficient value of $c' = -0.109$, which has a significant relationship with a statistical T value of $2.479 > 1.96$. The value of the significant relationship between price and customer satisfaction is $a = 0.216$ with a t-statistic of $2.842 > 1.96$. The value of the significant relationship between the customer satisfaction and brand switching $b = -0.506$ with t-statistic $5.620 > 1.96$, because the insignificant relationship value between price and brand switching $c = -0.115$ with t-statistic $1.635 < 1.96$ so that it can be said as full mediation.

Table 4. Result of Indirect Effects

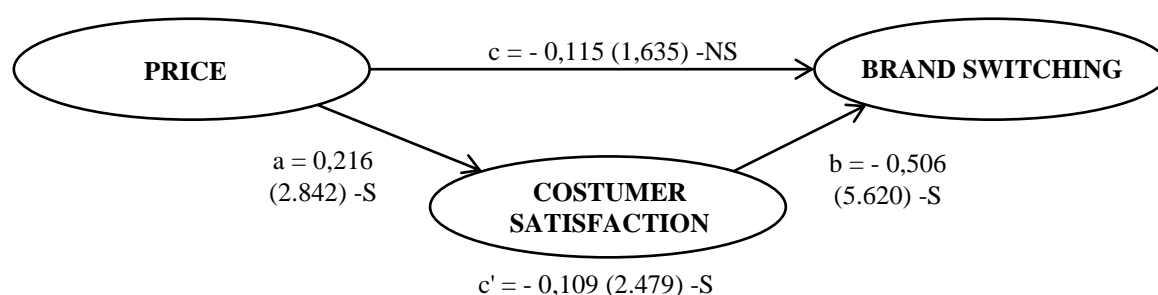
Relation	Path Coefficient	T-Statistics	P Values	Note
X1 (Price) \rightarrow Z (Customer Satisfaction) \rightarrow Y (Brand Switching)	-0.109	2.479	0.013	Significant
X2 (Service Quality) \rightarrow Z (Customer Satisfaction) \rightarrow Y (Brand Switching)	-0.312	4.565	0.000	Significant



Description:

S: Significant; NS: Not Significant

Figure 3. The Role of Customer Satisfaction as Mediation of Price on Brand Switching



Description:

S: Significant; NS: Not Significant

Figure 4. The Role of Customer Satisfaction as a Mediation of Service Quality on Brand Switching

DISCUSSION

Price and Brand Switching

The analysis result referred to the fact that the price did not directly affect an individual's decision to switch brands. This statement indicated that the lower or cheaper price offer than the competitors, discount, and price suitability with the quality are considered less capable of affecting the customers to decide the spa brand switching. The result contradicted the previous research by Sathish et al. (2011), which asserted that several factors affect the behavior of the service switching, for instance, price (call rates). The study's results support the research of Helichonia and Euis (2019), which states that price has a negative and insignificant effect. In other words, it does not influence the decision to switch brands from Blackberry to Samsung by the customers in Semarang. Meanwhile, another research from Srinuan et al. (2011) stated that the price did not affect brand switching because the customers of mobile cards preferred network quality over low price.

Service Quality and Brand Switching

The testing result showed that the higher the service quality would decrease the probability of customers switching the brand. This result was indicated by a situation in which the higher service quality given by the spa shop would build higher satisfaction in customers, so they would reconsider switching to another spa brand. This result was in line with the previous research by Fitriani (2019), which found that a similar effect of higher service quality would reduce the probability of the brand switching of Axioo brand laptops on the students at the State University of Padang.

Price and Customer Satisfaction

The testing result showed that the price significantly affects the customer satisfaction value. A piece of evidence indicated this result that good price determination could increase the value of the customer satisfaction. The price determination could be promo, discount, or other offers, so the product price determined and offered by the spa businessman could follow the customer's expectations. This research result supported the previous research done by Variano (2017), which said that the price was a presumption of the customer of whether the product rates were expensive or not, moreover, whether the rates were in accordance or not with the facility received by the customers. The research from Lumintang et al. (2018) has shown that the price could affect positively and significantly the customer satisfaction of Gojek users' students of FEB of Unsrat Manado.

Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

The research result found that service quality has a significant and positive effect on the change in customer satisfaction. This result indicated the change in service quality given to the customers would increase the satisfaction of customers. This result was in line with the previous research done by Singh and Arora (2011), which concluded that service quality was positively related to satisfaction. Han (2017) identified that service quality is an important factor that triggers the satisfaction, desire, and loyalty intentions of wellness spa tourists in Thailand.

Customer Satisfaction and Brand Switching

The research result represented that the cus-

customer satisfaction has a negative effect on the decision of spa brand switching. The higher level of the customer satisfaction would decrease the customer's intention to switch to the other spa brands. This result was in line with the previous research done by Yunita and Aslamnia (2016), which showed that respondent dissatisfaction was the main causal factor of brand switching from local to imported lipstick brands. The respondents were dissatisfied with the performance value, which did not fit their expectations, so they felt upset and decided to switch to the other lipstick brands, which were assumed to be able to meet the respondents' expectations.

The Mediation Role of Customer Satisfaction

According to the research by Yulisetiari (2019), price has a positive significant effect on the customer satisfaction. Yunita and Aslamnia (2016), from an analysis conducted on female students in the economic faculties of Sriwijaya University, found that the respondent's dissatisfaction factor was the main factor causing the switching of local lipstick brands to imports. The result of hypothesis testing found that customer satisfaction has fully mediated the relation between price and brand switching. The price variable directly has an insignificant effect on the decision of the brand switching, but when the customer satisfaction variable mediated it, the price showed a significant indirect impact. It referred to the fact that the price could affect brand switching if only the spa manager could build positive customer satisfaction initially. It can be said that when the customers are satisfied with the six indicators of customer satisfaction in this research, the price variable would have a significant effect on the customer's decision to switch the brand. Therefore, the affordable price was not the only criterion for customers to avoid brand switching. However, when a high level of customer satisfaction is balanced, it would increase the customers' probability of preventing switching behavior. This result was in line with the research done by the Gerrard and Cunningham (2004), which said that if customers were dissatisfied due to more than one dissatisfaction incident or reason, they would have a strong will to switch behavior, even if there were a high cost.

Based on the result of the mediation test and hypothesis test, the researcher concluded that cus-

tomers' satisfaction has partially mediated the relationship between service quality and brand switching. This study's results align with the results of research by Kasiri (2017), which states that service quality significantly affects the customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between service quality and switching behavior. It shows that customers of PT.BCA, Tbk. Are satisfied with the quality of service so that the customers will not move to another bank. The service quality was the main factor and could directly affect the brand-switching decision. It might result from the same effect when it was mediated by the variable of customer satisfaction. The partial mediation was referred to as the service quality could affect the brand switching. Still, the effect would be greater if the customer satisfaction could also increase the customer's decision to prevent brand switching. This research result was in line with the research done by Tjiptono and Chandra (2011), which asserted that the customer satisfaction was a mediator in the relationship between quality and interest behavior. This statement illustrated that quality would influence customer satisfaction, and then customer satisfaction would affect customer interest behavior, for example, purchase interest, repurchase intention, or brand switching.

IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications. This research has theoretical implications for developing a marketing concept related to the effect of Price, Service Quality, and Customer Satisfaction on Brand Switching. The results of this study indicate that price does not affect brand switching, which is supported by the research of Srinuan et al. (2011), Helichonia and Euis (2019), and Rahayu et al. (2016). An interesting finding from this study is that customer satisfaction can provide a full mediating role between the effects of price on brand switching for Balqis Spa customers. Customer satisfaction can also play a partial mediating role in the impact of service quality on brand switching.

Practical Implications. The results of this study are expected to provide implications in the form of insight and understanding for spa entrepreneurs, especially in the City of Kediri, as well as provide input for Balqis Spa in improving service quality and customer satisfaction so that customers do not transfer services to other spa places which

are an important threat to Balqis spa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The spa business. The promotion of a product or service in order to press the price should consider the factor of customer satisfaction, which is that customer satisfaction is a significant variable in relation to the price or promo offered, so during the promotion, the price will be worth it. It needs to optimize the convenience factor since it is a significant indicator to reflect the service quality variable. Customer satisfaction is important to keep improving, so it can decrease the probability of customer decision to do brand switching.

The next researchers. The next researchers should consider the objects with a broader scope, either for the service product or other product types. The next researchers should consider the other variables out of the objects examined in this recent research so that the next research can increase the level of model accuracy.

The limitations of this study are limited observations on Price, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, and Brand Switching. Future research is expected to study and expand the scope of research by considering the other factors outside of this research. This study also does not compare customer segmentation. It is hoped that further research will sort out customers based on several segments in moving spa places so that the strategy applied to spa entrepreneurs can be right on target.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study are expected to contribute in the form of insight and understanding for spa entrepreneurs, especially in the city of Kediri, and for the further research. An interesting finding from this study is that customer satisfaction can provide a full mediating role between the effects of price on brand shifting in Balqis Spa customers. The results are the customers who are dissatisfied with the brand or spa place, but the price is low, so the customer does not hesitate to move to another spa. Customer satisfaction can also play a partial mediating role in the influence of service quality on brand movement. It can increase brand change behavior in customers and provide input for Balqis Spa in improving service quality and customer satisfaction so that customers do not move to another spa, which is an important threat to the Balqis Spa.

Based on the data analysis and discussion that has been stated, it can be concluded that, the price couldn't directly affect the customers' decision of the brand switching. The service quality could significantly affect the customers' decision of brand switching. The price could directly affect to the customers' decision of customer satisfaction. The service quality could significantly affect the customers' decision of customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction could significantly affect to the customers' decision of brand switching. Customer satisfaction could play a role in the relation between price and the decision of brand switching as a full mediation. Customer satisfaction could play a role in the relationship between service quality and the decision of brand switching as a partial mediation.

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