The Model of Customer Misbehavior of Café Employees on Brand Commitment

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Abstract:

In the service industry, customer misbehavior is common. Disrespectful behavior in the workplace is common and employees often receive disrespectful treatment from customers. The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of bad behavior by customers on employee brand commitment. Mix Method (Quantitative and Qualitative) is used to maximize research results. The population that becomes the object of this study is cafe employees in Depok City. The number of samples used in this study was 237 respondents. Data was collected by distributing online and offline questionnaires and conducting in-depth interviews with 10 employees. SmartPLS and NVivo were used as software to analyze the data. The results showed that customer misbehavior has a significant negative effect on employee brand commitment. This shows that when the bad behavior from customers received by employees increases, employee brand commitment will decrease.

Keywords: *Customer misbehavior, brand commitment, café employees, mix method*

1.   Introduction

Delivering quality services to customers is critical to the success and effectiveness of organizations (Mohd-Shamsudin et al., 2024). In a customer-centric approach, serving customers and consumers effectively remains the cornerstone of successful business outcomes such as high firm performance, stronger brand value, and customer loyalty (Lages et al., 2023; Gupta & Ramachandran, 2021). The service industry will continue to develop where customers get more comfortable and safer experiences and services by buying services, so to achieve these conditions, it requires the role of both parties, namely the service provider who provides services to customers in a professional, patient and friendly manner, and customers who actively provide relevant information and share knowledge, work hard, and respect each other (X. H. Guan et al., 2018; Yi & Gong, 2013).

As a service industry with high contact, participation, and interaction, customer

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mistreatment behaviors are common, such as harsh words, ignoring explanations, threats of violence, etc., which seriously affect employees' physical and mental health (X. Guan et al., 2022). Serving uncivil, abusive, and aggressive customers leads to employees' absenteeism, dissatisfaction, turnover intentions, and exhaustion (Chaouali et al., 2022; Boukis et al., 2020; Cheng et al., 2020; Harris and Reynolds, 2003).

Disrespectful behavior in the workplace is rife and employees often receive disrespectful treatment from customers. Customer aggression continues to be widely reported internationally (Mortimer et al., 2023). In total, 98% of employees experience incivility with a growing number of news stories in the popular media about customer incivility in various service companies (Baker & Kim, 2020; Porath & Pearson, 2013; Wallace & Muntean, 2021). The survey of 1,160 retail and fast food workers found that 56% had experienced an increase in customer harassment. (Vromen et al., 2021).

In Indonesia itself, the author found several cases involving employees and customers. First, a case related to Esteh Indonesia employees who argued with customers due to communication errors and resulted in employees who handled complaints from customers poorly which led to a commotion on social media and resulted in the employe being fired from his job for not handling customer complaints properly (tribunnews, 2022). The last two cases involve one of the restaurants in Indonesia, Karen's Diner, where first, a customer made a scene with Karen's Diner employees in Bali which led to the assault of employees (detiknews, 2023). The second case is the Karen's Diner waiter who experienced body shaming from customers which made the waiter hurt and stressed (Suara.com, 2023).

With many cases of customer incivility in services, managers and companies need to understand employee reactions to customer incivility as it can have important practical implications (Baker & Kim, 2021; Balaji et al., 2020). Although employees have an important role in delivering services, there is still little research focusing on the employee perspective according to a 30-year bibliometric analysis (Ali et al., 2019). Therefore, customer-employee incivility research is an important area of study that contributes both theoretically and managerially (Baker & Kim, 2020). There have been several overseas researchers who have researched customer misbehavior but in Indonesia, it still receives less attention.

In previous research, it was found that bad behavior by visitors towards employees, on the one hand, has a direct negative impact on employees' service rule commitment and on the other hand, reduces employees' commitment to service rules by increasing individual ego (X. Guan et al., 2022). Customer aggression can take several forms; however, verbal aggression is most common in people-intensive service settings causing discomfort among employees and customers (Kashif et al., 2017; Li & Zhou, 2013). Research shows that aggressive customer behavior has an impact on the level of emotional exhaustion which ultimately reduces the level of job satisfaction and increases turnover intention among service managers (Kashif et al., 2017).

In interactions between customers and employees, some customers treat employees with unfriendly attitudes, verbal abuse or violence and intimidation, damage to facilities, noise, crowds, queues, and other actions (Wu, 2015). A customer at a restaurant in Indonesia made a scene with one of the waiters at the restaurant (Ramadhani, 2022). A restaurant in America was forced to close its business because its employees were mentally exhausted and this was one of the triggering factors because customers treated their employees rudely (Johanson, 2021). With this news, it is necessary to know how bad behavior is carried out by cafe customers and how it affects employee brand commitment.

2.   Theoretical Background

Customer Misbehavior
Customer misbehavior leads to customer activities that violate generally accepted norms or rules of behavior (Teng et al., 2023; Fullerton & Punj, 2004). Customer misbehavior is deviant customer behavior with low intensity associated with employees during service interactions (Vo-Thant et al., 2022; Walker et al., 2014; Sliter et al., 2010). Terms from several experts where the previously mentioned actions or behaviors are as deviant customer behavior, dysfunctional customers, problem customers, or annoying customers (Schaefers et al., 2016; Yi & Gong, 2013; Harris & Daunt, 2011; Bitner et al., 1994; Lovelock, 1994). According to some experts, Customer Bad Behavior has many forms such as theft and shoplifting, disrespect for employees or other customers, and vandalism (Srivastava et al., 2022; Jerger & Wirtz, 2017; Fullerton & Punj, 2004; Kallis & Vanier, 1985). Customer incivility is the behavior of customers who treat employees in a disrespectful manner such as being rude, disrespectful, or insulting (Baker & Kim, 2020). Bad behavior is abusive behavior that causes problems for service companies, employees, and other customers (Wu, 2015).

Brand Commitment
Brand commitment is basically a three-dimensional construct proposed from the three-component model of organizational commitment, namely affective, normative, and continuance (Dhiman & Arora, 2023; Allen & Meyer, 1990). The operational definition of brand commitment is when someone with strong affective commitment will continue to use a brand because of personal desire, those with strong continuance commitment because they need it, and those with high normative commitment because they have a feeling of having to remain committed to the brand (Singh et al., 2022). Brand Commitment is the level of employees' psychological attachment to a brand that affects their willingness to provide greater effort to achieve brand goals (Erkmen & Hancer, 2015; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005).

Affective Commitment is a person's strong emotional attachment to the brand. based on identification, desire, and pleasure in using the brand (Raju, 2017; Lariviere et al.,

2014; Jones et al., 2010; Bansal et al., 2004). Continuance Commitment occurs when a person feels compelled to maintain the relationship (Raju, 2017; Allen and Mayer, 1990). Normative Commitment is staying with the organization because of a sense of obligation, duty, or belief that it is the right thing to do or work toward achieving goals (Brooks et al., 2021; Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Customer Misbehavior and Brand Commitment

Customers' misbehaviors can have profound negative effects on fellow customers, frontline employees, and the organization (Chaouali et al., 2022; Alola et al., 2019; Madupalli & Poddar, 2014). Customer mistreatment behavior (customer misbehavior) has a direct effect on reducing employee commitment to company service rules (Guan et al., 2022). Rule violations committed by customers can affect frontline employee fatigue (Gillison et al., 2023). Customer fatigue can reduce employee organizational commitment and can increase employee intention to quit (Gillison et al., 2023). There is a significant interaction effect of the level of customer incivility that can cause a decrease in employee job performance (Baker & Kim, 2021). customer misbehavior or aggression was found to affect emotional exhaustion which in turn can reduce the level of job satisfaction and increase the intention to change organizations (Kashif et al., 2017).

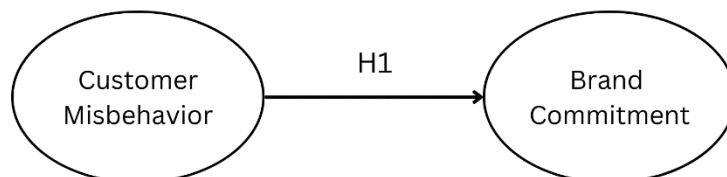*H1: Customer misbehavior has a negative and significant influence on brand commitment*

Figure 1. Illustrates the Framework and Linkages Between Customer Misbehavior and Brand Commitment

3. Methodology

This research uses a mixed-method model that combines qualitative and quantitative methods to overcome several limitations (Moura e Sá, 2023). The object of this research is employees who work in cafes in the city of Depok. The population in this study is the 2022 Depok City population data.

The sampling technique used in this study is the multistage sampling technique. Multistage sampling makes data collection more practical for large populations, especially if a complete list of population elements does not exist (Khan et al., 2023). In this study, the multi-stage sampling method used consists of cluster sampling, simple random sampling, and judgmental sampling.

First, cluster sampling is done by dividing the population into sub-populations in the

form of area samples consisting of geographic areas where the geography used is sub-districts. Second, samples were randomly selected from each sub-district based on observation using Google Maps to find the number of cafes in Depok City in each sub-district. Then, the researcher deliberately draws a sample from the population based on the judgment of the researcher which is taken into consideration and adjusted to the research needs (Malhotra et al., 2020). The requirements and considerations made by the researcher are as follows:

- Residents who work as employees in cafes
- The café where he works is located in Depok City, West Java
- The café where he works has a social media account that can be contacted
- Have interacted directly with customers

The data collection method was carried out by distributing questionnaires to employees directly both online and offline and in-depth interviews. This research uses Smart PLS and NVivo as analytical tools. Data analysis uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) because SEM is one of the analytical techniques that can be applied to test causal relationships by integrating path analysis and factor analysis (Hamid & Anwar, 2019). This study aims to test the predictive relationship between constructs, so the type of SEM that will be used is Partial Least Squares Path Modeling (PLS-SEM) (Hamid & Anwar, 2019). Matrix coding is used to make decisions and conclusions of data analysis with NVivo.

4. Empirical Findings/Result

Respondents
This study collected data from 237 respondents. Respondents were predominantly male (58.2%), with an average age of 20-29 years (74.7%), held barista positions (43%), worked for 1-2 years (38%), and had a high level of interaction with customers, i.e. more than 12 times a day (43.9%) (see Table 1).

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	138	58.2
	Female	99	41.8
Age (Years)	10 – 19	28	11.8
	20 – 29	177	74.7
	30 – 39	26	11
	40 – 49	6	2.5
Job Position	Barista	102	43
	Waiters	45	19
	Kitchen	45	19
	Cashier	21	8.9
	Others	24	10.1
Length of Work	< 3 months	33	13.9

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
	3 – 6 months	44	18.6
	7 – 11 months	31	13.1
	1 – 2 years	90	38
	> 2 years	39	16.5
Level of Interaction	Very rare	11	4.6
	Rare	14	5.9
	Standard	61	25.7
	Often	47	19.8
	Very Often	104	43.9

Source: Data processed in 2024

Model Fit Test

Before analyzing the validity of the study, the structural model fit test was conducted first. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value must be smaller than 0.05 to be considered a good fit and acceptable if the value is below 0.10 while the NFI statistical value ranges between 0 and 1 (Cruddas, 2013; Hooper et al., 2008; Schermelleh-engel et al, 2003). The results of the structural model fit test as shown in Table 2 show that the majority of test results fall into the fit category.

Table 2. Model Fit

Statistics	Values	Criteria	Description
SRMR	0,087	<0.05 = Good Fit <0.10 = Acceptable Fit	Acceptable Fit
NFI	0,705	0 – 1 = Acceptable Fit	Acceptable Fit

Source: Data processed in 2024

Convergent Validity Test Results

In measuring validity, the loading factor value must be higher than 0.70 and the average variance extracted value must be higher than 0.50 in accordance with the criteria for meeting convergent validity (Hamid & Anwar, 2019, p. 41). The results of the outer model measurement are presented in Table 3. Based on this table, the constructs achieve convergent validity with values ranging from 0.70-0.80. Instruments that have an outer loading below 0.70 will still be retained because the construct AVE value reaches the minimum limit of 0.50. This proves the validity of all instruments and all instruments can measure variable dimensions well.
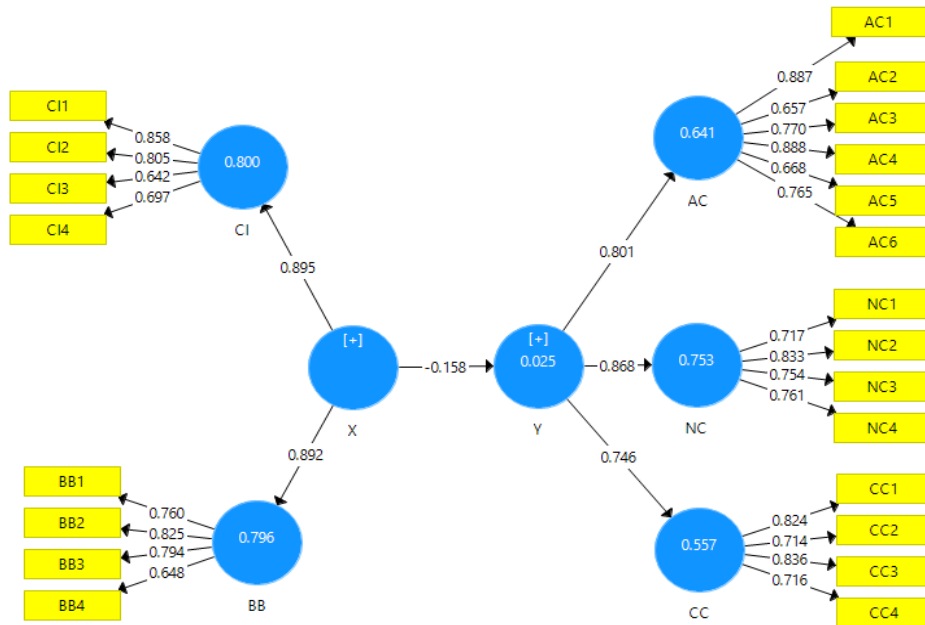
Figure 2. Display of PLS Algorithm Results
Source: Data processed in 2024

Table 3. Convergent Validity Test Results

Code	Measurement Items	Loading Factor
	Customer Misbehavior (X):	
	Customer Incivility (X.1) AVE = 0,571; CR = 0,840; α = 0,744	
CI1	The customer uses a negative tone to employees	0,858
CI2	The customer speaks aggressively to employees	0,805
CI3	The customer makes a kind statement to the employee	0,642
CI4	The customer makes short negative statements to the employee	0,697
	Bad Behavior (X.2) AVE = 0,577; CR = 0,844; α = 0,754	
BB1	Customers do not follow the rules	0,760
BB2	Customer damages facilities	0,825
BB3	The customer causes a crowd noise	0,794
BB4	The customer does not restore the condition as before	0,648
	Brand Commitment (Y):	
	Affective Commitment (Y.1) AVE = 0,605; CR = 0,901; α = 0,866	
AC1	Employees are very happy to spend the rest of their careers with the company	0,887
AC2	Employees are happy to promote the cafe to external parties	0,657
AC3	Employees feel that the cafe's problems are their problems too	0,770

Code	Measurement Items	Loading Factor
AC4	Employees feel part of the cafe	0,888
AC5	Employees feel emotionally attached to the cafe	0,668
AC6	The cafe has great meaning for employees	0,765
	Continuance Commitment (Y.2) AVE = 0,600; CR = 0,856; α = 0,780	
CC1	Employees are afraid of what will happen if they stop working at the Cafe	0,717
CC2	Employees find it difficult to leave the cafe even if they want to	0,833
CC3	Employees feel that staying at the cafe is a necessity and a desire	0,754
CC4	The reason employees are still staying is because leaving this cafe requires a big sacrifice.	0,761
	Normative Commitment (Y.3) AVE = 0,589; CR = 0,851; α = 0,767	
NC1	Employees feel that switching to another organization is unethical	0,824
NC2	The reason employees still work at this cafe is because they believe loyalty is important	0,714
NC3	Employees do not feel it is appropriate to leave the organization to accept a job offer elsewhere	0,836
NC4	Employees feel staying with one organization will make things better	0,716

Source: Data processed in 2024

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity can be considered good if the root of the AVE on the construct is higher than the correlation of the construct with other latent variables. The results of discriminant validity are shown in Table 3 where the Fornell-Larcker Criterion values of the Bad Behavior (X), Customer Incivility (X), Affective Commitment (Y), Continuance Commitment (Y), and Normative Commitment (Y) constructs are appropriate (Hamid & Anwar, 2019). This shows that the model has achieved good discriminant validity as seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Ratio)

	AC	BB	CC	CI	NC
Affective Commitment (AC)	0,778				
Bad Behavior (BB)	-0,113	0,760			
Continuance Commitment (CC)	0,293	0,020	0,774		
Customer Incivility (CI)	-0,256	0,597	-0,075	0,755	
Normative Commitment (NC)	0,501	-0,042	0,650	-0,154	0,767

Source: Data processed in 2024

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Below are the results of research hypothesis testing using SmartPLS second-order data

processing and bootstrap resampling techniques. At this stage, researchers use statistical analysis (t-test) (>1.97) and the probability (p-value) which must be smaller than 0.05.

Table 5. Path Coefficients

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Results
Customer Misbehavior -> Bad Behavior	0.892	0.894	0.015	61.008	0.000	Supported
Customer Misbehavior -> Customer Incivility	0.895	0.896	0.013	69.860	0.000	Supported
Customer Misbehavior -> Brand Commitment	-0.158	-0.156	0.068	2.324	0.021	Supported
Brand Commitment -> Affective Commitment	0.801	0.800	0.036	22.147	0.000	Supported
Brand Commitment -> Continuance Commitment	0.746	0.748	0.036	20.855	0.000	Supported
Brand Commitment -> Normative Commitment	0.868	0.869	0.019	45.372	0.000	Supported

Source: Data processed in 2024

Matrix Coding NVivo

In addition to quantitative research and data analysis, qualitative research was also conducted to support and strengthen the previous results. Based on the results of matrix coding with NVivo which comes from 10 interviewers who are also survey respondents, the results show that

Table 7. Matrix Coding

	Coding References	Coding Presence
Brand Commitment	23	Yes

Source: Data processed in 2024

5. Discussion

Table 5 above provides evidence for the research hypothesis regarding the influence

given by customer misbehavior on brand commitment can be accepted. This can be seen from the T-Statistic value of 2.324 which is greater than the t table value = 1.97, as well as a probability value of 0.021 which is less than the specified critical value limit, which is 0.05. Thus it is stated that customer misbehavior has a negative significant effect on brand commitment. The fatigue felt by employees when dealing with customers who behave badly can reduce employee organizational commitment and can increase employee intention to quit (Gillison et al., 2023).

The statistical hypothesis results and the previous paragraph statements are corroborated and supported by the results of in-depth interviews with 10 employees who are also survey respondents. Based on the results of the interviews conducted, it can be seen that 8 out of 10 cafes still find customers who behave badly. First, customer incivility, customers were found to be aggressive such as yelling at employees, angry by saying harsh words to employees because the food ordered took a long time to arrive or because of other complaints, and also fussy customers demanding service from employees. In addition, there are also customers who do not smile at all to employees, making employees a little scared. Then, there were also customers who were disrespectful, acted like they were patronizing or underestimating employees by giving payment in a bad way (thrown) and mocked the cafe that did not have the food stock they wanted. Finally, there were also customers who were fussy in demanding service from employees. Fussy customers are usually impatiently waiting for their order to arrive, do not accept that the payment method is not what they want, and also demand facilities that are not provided by the cafe.

Second, customers who behave badly are found such as customers who are still not aware of cleanliness (not cleaning up after their food and littering), and also damaging and not maintaining the facilities provided by the cafe properly (broken chairs and flush toilets). In addition, there were also customers who did not obey the rules imposed by the cafe (late from the reservation time and bringing food from outside). Then customers were also found to cause commotion such as excessive joking shouting and disturbing other customers. So, it can be concluded that there are still café customers in Depok City who behave badly.

Based on the interview results, it is known that café employees in Depok City have a strong emotional attachment to the respective cafes where they work. All employees who were interviewees in this study felt happy working at the café. One out of 10 interviewees mentioned that he likes to promote the cafe where he works to his relatives and invite them to come to the cafe. In addition, almost all employees feel that the problems that occur in the cafe are their problems too, which is indicated by employee initiatives to solve problems together with other employees. Thus, it can be interpreted that café employees in Depok City have a strong emotional attachment to the brand (the café where employees work). The sustainability commitment to maintain the relationship with the company (cafe) owned by cafe employees in Depok City is also high, it can be seen that employees still continue to work at the cafe

because they are afraid that something will happen if they stop working, such as difficulty finding an equivalent job. It was mentioned by several interviewees that they stayed to work at the cafe because of the comfortable work environment.

In addition, staying in this job because it is a necessity because they still need the job. So, it can be interpreted that café employees in Depok City feel compelled to stay in their jobs because of some of the things mentioned earlier. Café employees in Depok City feel compelled to stay because of a sense of obligation. Employees still think about social norms and moral responsibility in deciding whether to stay or change jobs. It is also known that some employees feel that they have a responsibility to continue working at the café out of loyalty. In addition, if they get a job offer elsewhere, employees feel the need to consider several things such as salary, job location, and work environment.

6. Conclusions

Theoretically, this study makes a significant contribution to understanding how customer misbehavior affects brand commitment, especially in the service industry. These theoretical implications can be used to develop better theories regarding the relationship between these two concepts in the same industry and other organizational contexts. The findings of this study also have the potential to provide valuable insights for management, especially service management in their efforts to maintain and increase employee brand commitment. The factors used in measuring customer misbehavior are good but it would be better if these factors were developed into several perspectives.

Further research with a more comprehensive design that considers the limitations contained in this study can provide deeper insights into this topic. Some of the limitations of this study include, among others, this study does not consider internal factors such as internal conflicts that can reduce employee organizational commitment. This research does not cover all factors that can affect customer misbehavior and employee brand commitment. Some of the factors studied only include customer disrespectful behavior, customer misbehavior, affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. Addressing these limitations in future research may result in a stronger understanding of the topic and its complexities.

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