

## Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction: A Case Study of Perodua

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### ABSTRACT

Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua Sdn Bhd or Perodua was founded in 1993. It is Malaysia's largest and first Energy-Efficient Vehicle (EEV) manufacturer. The company aims to provide Malaysians with full mobility through high-quality, useful products and services. The recent Daihatsu testing scandal raised concerns among Perodua customers, as it seemed to implicate Perodua vehicles. Although Malaysia's Road Transport Department has cleared Perodua of any involvement in the scandal it remains essential to assess customer satisfaction with Perodua vehicles in light of this incident or other similar incidents in the future. Thus, this study attempts to explore the factors that affect customer satisfaction with emphasis on trust, brand image, perceived price fairness, and customer service as the factors. 150 Perodua customers participated, completing the quantitative research through a self-administered questionnaire. The collected data was analysed using SPSS software based on multiple regression analysis. The results showed that trust, brand image, and perceived price fairness greatly influence Perodua's customer satisfaction. With the ultimate goal of increasing customer satisfaction and competitive advantage in the automotive industry.

**Keywords:** Automotive Industry; Brand Image; Customer satisfaction; Customer service; Malaysia; Perceived price fairness; Perodua; Trust.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Perodua, founded after Proton, has become the leading car manufacturer in Malaysia, surpassing Proton in both market share and customer preference. In 2022, Perodua captured 39.1% of the Malaysian automotive market compared to Proton's 22.9%, reflecting a significant shift in consumer preference (The Edge Malaysia, 2022). This achievement highlights Perodua's strategic focus on factors that drive customer satisfaction, including trust, customer service, perceived price fairness, and brand image.

Customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in the automotive industry, both globally and locally. Research shows a strong link between customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and long-term competitiveness (J.D. Power, 2024). In Malaysia, where automakers compete to serve a diverse market, meeting consumer demands for affordability, reliability, and safety is essential. Perodua's success in adapting to global trends, such as digital transformation and sustainability, emphasizes the importance of focusing on customer satisfaction in this dynamic landscape.

Perodua has adopted strategies aligned with global trends like digital transformation and sustainability to remain competitive. Its "Smart Build" strategy under the Transformation 3.0 plan, launched in 2021, focuses on enhancing product quality, cost efficiency, and delivery through stakeholder collaboration (Paul Tan, 2021). Models like the Myvi and Axia, recognized for their affordability, fuel efficiency, and advanced safety features, reflect Perodua's commitment to meeting customer expectations (Paul Tan, 2021). Additionally, Perodua's partnership with Daihatsu has strengthened its technological capabilities, enabling the production of high-quality vehicles.

In addition to product innovation, Perodua employs a feedback-driven strategy that collects valuable insights through customer surveys, social media, and direct engagement. Feedback has led to safety and fuel efficiency upgrades for models like the Axia and Myvi, reflecting consumer preferences for affordability, performance, and safety (Zigwheels, 2024). The importance of such feedback loops in the automotive industry is well-documented, with studies showing they boost customer satisfaction. Demirova (2024) emphasizes that addressing customer needs promptly provides a competitive advantage and improves retention, while the 2024 American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) reports a 1% increase in industry-wide satisfaction, demonstrating the effectiveness of integrating customer feedback (American Customer Satisfaction Index, 2024). Perodua continuously utilizes these insights to enhance customer satisfaction, solidifying its position as a trusted, competitive automotive brand.

The recent Daihatsu testing scandal concerned Perodua customers because it seemed to involve Perodua vehicles. Although Malaysia's Road Transport Department has dismissed Perodua any involvement in the scandal, it is still important to explore customer satisfaction with Perodua vehicles regard to this incident and similar ones in the future. This study examines the factors influencing Perodua's customer satisfaction in Malaysia, focusing on independent variables which are trust, brand image, perceived price fairness, and customer service. By analyzing these variables, the study aims to understand how Perodua's strategies can align with customer expectations and improve to contribute to overall satisfaction.

In conclusion, Perodua's focus trust, brand image, perceived price fairness, and customer service underscores its commitment to customer satisfaction. These strategies are critical for sustaining its competitiveness in the Malaysian automotive market. As the industry evolves with trends like electric vehicles and sustainability, Perodua's emphasis on technology and innovation positions it well for long-term success (KPMG, 2020).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Trust**

Morgan & Hunt (1994) defined trust as a belief in a brand or service provider's reliability, integrity, and competence. In the context of the automotive industry, trust is important because it affects how customers perceive product quality, service reliability, and overall brand reputation. According to Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001), a high level of trust will increase customer satisfaction, thereby influencing brand loyalty. This relationship is particularly relevant for Perodua, wherein customer trust is primarily needed for the company to have a competitive advantage in the Malaysian market.

In a study of Malaysian automotive brands, the researchers stated that trust influences customers' expectations of product performance and after-sales service. When Perodua customers are confident in the reliability and service quality of the brand, their overall satisfaction would be increased significantly. Furthermore, a study by Alqasa et al. (2017) showed that trust is a strong factor that determines the experiences of customers during the purchasing process. In return, the research has proved that customers believe in this brand more when they feel that Perodua is transparent with the pricing and assurance of quality. Their increasing trust further develops satisfaction with the purchase experience, thus encouraging them to return for more.

Additionally, Perodua is also dedicated to raising service quality and engaging customers to increase customer trust. For instance, the company has started a "Voice of Customer" program that is actively trying to connect with the customers about their experiences with the products and services. Indeed, such programs demonstrate that Perodua listens to its customers, whereby it instills confidence by appreciating their feedback (Galvao et al., 2018). Besides that, Perodua managed to obtain an impressive 40% market share in Malaysia by 2019, partly supported by strong brand trust among its customers (Jannah et al., 2023). The company's consequent shows that through such delivery of reliable automobiles at reasonable prices, they have managed to create a loyal set of customers who can rely on brands to produce quality products. This trust translates into high levels of customer satisfaction regarding vehicle performance and after-sales support. According to Zakaria et al. (2023), a comparison study between Perodua and Proton added that customers who claimed higher levels of trust in Perodua were also satisfied with the vehicles and services. This finding of the study highlights the importance of establishing a trust-based relationship with customers that will form the foundation for high customer satisfaction.

Using Equity Theory, trust is linked to perceived fairness, where customers feel satisfied when the perceived quality of vehicles matches or exceeds the financial and emotional investment they make (Davlembayeva & Alamanos, 2023). Perodua achieves this balance by delivering consistent product quality and transparent communication, ensuring a positive customer experience and fostering loyalty.

H1: Trust has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

### **Brand Image**

According to Keller (1993), brand image refers to how the consumer perceives and relates to a brand based on their experiences, marketing communications, and general reputation. A strong brand image can increase customer satisfaction through trust and loyalty. Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) indicate that consumers will be satisfied with their purchases if they perceive the brand positively. In Malaysia's competitive automotive market, where Perodua operates, a positive brand image is crucial for attracting and retaining customers.

Perodua has positioned itself to be an affordable and family-friendly brand. This can be seen in the company's efforts to market its products and provide services. According to Yeoh (2010), Perodua's continued production of quality vehicles at reasonable prices contributes significantly to customer satisfaction. The perception of affordability and reliability sits well with Malaysian consumers, especially for families that are seeking affordable transportation options. Customers express a higher level of satisfaction when they perceive Perodua's brand positively, defined by its affordability, quality, and after-sales service. This relationship is important in Malaysia's automotive sector since customers frequently consider price and quality while making purchasing decisions.

In addition, the marketing strategies adopted by Perodua show how brand image influences consumer behavior. The launch of the Perodua Axia has been critical in ensuring that the brand image is a good option for budget-conscious families. According to Mokha et al. (2017), the advantages of the Axia, including fuel efficiency and low maintenance costs, have influenced consumer purchase decisions. It also found that those consumers who considered Axia as good were more likely to express satisfaction with the purchase. Moreover, a recent incident with customer complaints about vehicle problems demonstrated the importance of maintaining a positive brand image. There is some negative feedback on social media about an issue with Perodua Bezza, the company was questioned about its commitment to customer service (Marcus, 2023). This situation has proved that brand image can be fragile, hence maintaining trust through responsive customer service is essential for sustaining customer satisfaction.

In short, the relationship between a strong brand image and customer satisfaction is positive. According to Saleem and Raja (2014), satisfied customers would recommend brands to others, which would subsequently provide positive feedback and recommendations that increase loyalty for brands. In Malaysia's automotive market, which has strong competition between national brands like Perodua and Proton, a positive brand image becomes essential for retaining customers. Expectation Confirmation Theory explains this relationship, suggesting that satisfaction arises when customers' expectations of affordability, practicality, and reliability are met or exceeded (Shukla, Mishra, & Dwivedi, 2024).

H2: A positive brand image has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

### **Perceived Price Fairness**

Perceived price fairness is customers' evaluations of whether the price of a product is reasonable compared to its perceived value and the prices of similar products (Xia et al., 2004). As a consequence, pricing fairness is important to customers in the automotive sector who are making financial investments. According to Kumar & Steenkamp (2007), if the customers feel that the prices of goods are fair, they will be more satisfied with the brand, thus resulting in higher loyalty and repeat purchases.

In Malaysia, Perodua has been one of the successful companies in positioning itself as an affordable option for customers who prefer reliable vehicles. Rahman et al. (2021) conducted a study on the automotive industry which revealed that customers' perceived price fairness strongly associated with their satisfaction. The quality and features that Perodua offers will make the customer express satisfaction with their purchases who perceive the price of the product is fair. Additionally, Perodua's strategy of pricing is to provide value for money while being affordable. For instance, models such as Perodua Myvi and Axia are priced affordably compared to competitors such as Proton and Honda. According to a recent survey conducted by a local research firm, the results of the survey

show that respondents believe Perodua vehicles provide good value for money (Ho, 2019).

Pricing strategies play an important role in customer choice when comparing Perodua with competitors such as Proton. Both brands offer affordable options (Khajehzadeh, 2023), although Perodua is usually perceived as being the better option because of its lower maintenance costs and higher resale values. The study also found that customers view the pricing of Proton as less favorable when they consider long-term ownership costs. Furthermore, customer feedback highlights a consistent theme in terms of perceived price fairness. According to Mokha et al, (2017), Proton vehicles are said to have many appealing features, but they often do not always give a justification about the price difference when compared to similar models from Perodua.

In conclusion, perceived price fairness has an effect on customer satisfaction in the Malaysian automotive sector, especially with Perodua. The results indicate that customer satisfaction will increase when they perceive Perodua's pricing as fair relative to the quality and features offered. Perodua has to continue maintaining the transparency of pricing as well as offering competitive rates to ensure satisfied customers in a competitive market. Equity Theory supports this finding, suggesting that customers are more satisfied when the perceived benefits outweigh the financial costs (Davlembayeva & Alamanos, 2023). Perodua's ability to deliver high-quality vehicles at reasonable prices ensures fairness, enhancing its market reputation and maintaining its competitive edge in Malaysia's automotive sector.

H3: Perceived price fairness has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

### **Customer Service**

Customer service is the part of support that customers receive before, during, and after the purchase of a product. According to Witama & Keni (2020), high-quality customer service is important because it has a direct impact on customers' perception of the brand to enhance their satisfaction. Perodua is known for providing reliable vehicles at competitive prices. However, customer service quality, specifically after-sales service, affects customer satisfaction. Wan Abdul Rahman et al. (2016) showed that those who received after-sales service from satisfactory service levels reported a higher level of overall satisfaction with their vehicles. Thus, this correlation supports that maintaining a positive relationship with customers relies on those satisfied with the customer service.

After-sales service of Perodua includes regular maintenance, warranty coverage, and responsive handling of customer complaints. For example, Perodua is currently carrying out a program called "Voice of Customer" in order to understand the customer perception of its products and services (Galvao et al., 2018). This has shown that the company is committed to listening to its customers and gaining trust by showing that the company values their opinions. A recent survey revealed that most Perodua customers felt satisfied with the after-sales service they received (Suffian et al., 2016). The company's approach to proactively dealing with customer concerns and support in a timely manner is attributed to this high satisfaction level.

The perceptions of service quality have to be understood through customer feedback. A case is reported by Marketing Interactive about a dissatisfied customer who waited too long to see the end of her vehicle issue. The issue has been widely circulated on social media, causing Perodua to become more proactive when dealing with its customers (Marcus, 2023). This incident highlights the importance of effective customer service in maintaining brand reputation and customer satisfaction. In addition, research conducted by Saidin et al. (2018) found that customers who perceived high quality of after-sales



services continued to avail themselves of the Perodua service rather than those who did not receive adequate after-sales service.

There is an outstanding difference between Proton and Honda compared to Perodua when customers are looking at its after-sales support. A study by Khajehzadeh (2023) shows that while both brands have almost the same price competitiveness, Perodua's willingness to nurture their customers through service centres enhances consumers' perception of value. According to customers, they had higher satisfaction with Perodua's after-sales service compared to Proton. To conclude, the service given to customers by Perodua is shown to greatly affect customer satisfaction in the Malaysian automotive industry. The evidence presented shows that the provision of effective after-sales service improves the customer perception of value and appropriate customer retention. Perodua has effectively built its strong reputation for quality service by actively seeking customer feedback and concerns and promptly addressing their issues. The automotive market is becoming increasingly competitive, and Perodua must keep up with high standards of customer service to retain its market position and ensure customer satisfaction in the long run.

Expectation Confirmation Theory explains how satisfaction arises when Perodua consistently exceeds customer service expectations (Shukla et al., 2024). By prioritizing customer-centric services, Perodua creates positive experiences that encourage repeat purchases and advocacy.

H4: Customer service has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

### **Customer Satisfaction**

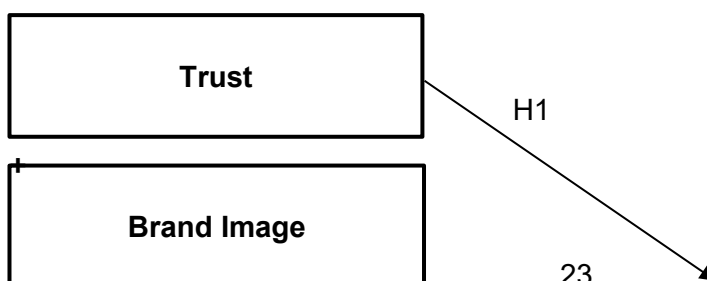
Customer satisfaction is the outcome of meeting or exceeding expectations across various factors, including product quality, pricing, and service. Noranee et al. (2021) emphasized that satisfaction directly influences loyalty and repeat purchases. Perodua achieves high satisfaction levels through consistent delivery of reliable vehicles, transparent pricing policies, and strong after-sales support, fostering long-term customer loyalty.

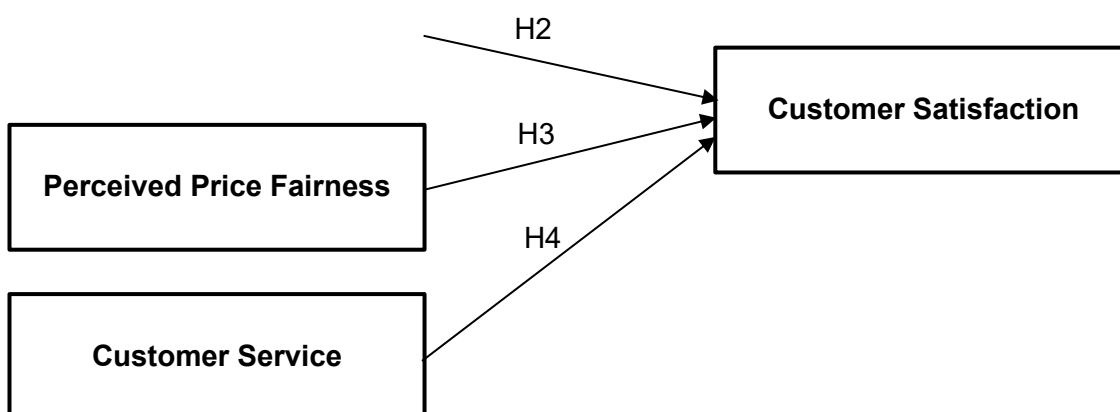
Survey findings revealed that 68 respondents (45.3%) rated overall satisfaction as "6", and 27 (18%) rated it as "7", reaffirming Perodua's strong market position. For fulfilling customer needs, 58 respondents (38.7%) rated it as "6", and 33 (22%) rated it as "7", further indicating high satisfaction. A 2024 automotive loyalty report highlighted Perodua's leadership in customer retention due to its affordable pricing, reliable vehicles, and superior after-sales support (Zakaria et al., 2023).

Integrating Expectation Confirmation Theory and Equity Theory, Perodua ensures customer satisfaction by consistently meeting expectations and delivering perceived fairness. For example, its transparent pricing policies and reliable post-sale services reinforce satisfaction, enhancing brand loyalty.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

**Figure 1: Research Framework**





### Research design

This study uses a quantitative research methodology to explore the factors affecting consumer satisfaction with Perodua vehicles in Malaysia. We analyze the numerical data collected through quantitative methodologies, focusing on the factors that affect customer satisfaction. The quantitative method is useful in determining the relationship between the independent and dependent variable factors influencing Perodua customer satisfaction. Regression analysis tools were used to identify the key variables that affected consumer satisfaction by using independent variables such as customer service, perceived price fairness, brand image, trust, and dependent variable which is customer satisfaction.

### Sampling methods

Participants were selected using nonprobability sampling techniques including purposive sampling methods and convenience sampling methods. Using purposive sampling they are primary criteria selection which is criteria is those familiar with Perodua and not for the entire population to ensure the responses relevant to research objectives. An example of the question is "Do you own or have experience with Perodua products?". At the same time, the convenience sampling methods engage in directly reaching participants by using internet service. The survey was distributed via Google Forms, and promoted on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook, targeting a diverse demographic. WhatsApp is a popular communication app among demographics in Malaysia while Instagram may skew toward a younger audience demographic which could be a limitation of the sample. Although Instagram has a younger user base, including Facebook, it helps ensure a more balanced sample across different age groups. The Perodua sample contained both first-time and repeat customers providing several different results for brand experience. A sample will be determined based on the survey responses.

### Data collection methods

Data was collected using survey questionnaires and featuring close-ended questions for statistical analysis. Closed-ended questions enable respondents to choose answers from several options and it is easier for simplifying data coding and maintaining the consistency of responses. 150 valid responses are sufficient to do basic data analysis, such as descriptive statistics and regression analysis (Jannah et al., 2023). Based on this study, the number of responses is similar to our research study and all data analysis outcomes are acceptable. Social media platforms including WhatsApp and Instagram were used to promote this survey while Google Forms makes it easier to collect structured data from Perodua's customers. Personal reminders were sent to social media platforms to increase the response rate. When a reminder message is delivered often, it

can significantly boost the response rate and have a better outcome for the research. The total response rate for this study is sufficient for conducting data analysis.

### **Ethical considerations**

The rights of participants and all information were given priority, and all informed consent was collected before the data collection. For example, specifically clarify the research purpose, how the data will be used, and that participation is voluntary and not forced. The data has been private promising that all identifiable information has been deleted to protect the security of all participants' information.

### **Questionnaire Design and Variable Measurement**

There are six parts of this survey which include demographic information, measuring customer satisfaction (dependent variable), and independent factors such as trust, brand image, perceived price fairness, and customer service. Reasons for using a 7-point Likert scale in this study, instead of a 5-point Likert scale to capture the more nuanced range of responses, and improve the accuracy and reliability of data (Kusmaryono et al., 2022). For example, the scale ranged from 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 7 representing "strongly agree". Next, the neutral point allows respondents to choose between slightly agree and slightly disagree making the results more accurate compared to a 5-point Likert scale. Trust, brand image, perceived price fairness, and customer service are the independent variables that influence customer satisfaction of Perodua in this study. All independent variables are a major factor in Perodua's affordability making it a popular brand choice among Malaysians. In the 'customer service' variable, elements of measurement include assurance and reliability. Questions might focus on service quality and customer service experience interactions. For section 2, the customer service variable was chosen comprising eight items adapted from (Saidin et.al, 2022). This study shows how quality service in automotive encourages customer satisfaction. The 'trust' variable measures the level of trust the customer has towards the brand. The question focused on promise and commitment. In section 3, the trust variable was selected consisting of four items adapted from (Uzir et al., 2021). 'perceived price fairness' focuses more on customer perceptions of the price of Perodua. Questions might evaluate the fairness and reasonable pricing of using Perodua. For section 4, four items were adapted from (Bernarto et al., 2022) to measure the perceived price fairness variable. The study highlights that Perodua is the largest automotive industry in Malaysia, and maintaining fair prices is a crucial part because it affects the emotions and perceptions of customers. For 'brand image' it's considered about perception and attitude of customers of Perodua. Questions consist of confidence towards customers of using Perodua from reliability and brand quality. Section 5 discusses the brand image and comprises nine items adapted from (Kristien et al., 2024). Based on the study, brand image is important for customers to make decisions and drive sales of the company. For Perodua, it is good to create a good brand image for the future and increase more market share. The 'customer satisfaction' variable measures the level of satisfaction experienced by customers who have used Perodua products or services. Questions may ask about the overall experience of using Perodua and the decision to use Perodua. Section 6 discusses customer satisfaction adapted five items from (Ahmed et al., 2022). A total of 150 responses is suited to conduct a basic descriptive regression analysis in this study.

### **Data analysis**

Data were analyzed using SPSS 27, with descriptive statistics used to summarize the data and regression analysis employed to determine the relationships between independent variables and customer satisfaction. Frequencies and percentages are used in descriptive statistics to explain the demographics of the responses. Regression analysis involved instrument tests such as simple linear regression and multiple linear



regression and allowed researchers to estimate how changes in independent variables impacted customer satisfaction (independent variables). In this case, multiple linear regression is used for either simple linear regression because this study's objective is to evaluate the factors influencing customer satisfaction of Perodua consisting of trust, brand image, perceived price fairness, and customer service for independent variables and customer satisfaction for dependent variables. Data for multiple linear regression is more accurate for analysis compared to simple linear regression and multiple linear regression is used to control the variables that affect the results. Prior analysis the dataset was cleaned and missing values were imputed using mean imputation to reduce bias and increase statistical power.

## RESULTS

**Table 1.** Respondents' Profile Summary (N=150)

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	80	53.3
Male	70	46.7
<b>Age Group</b>		
18 - 24	65	43.3
25 - 34	34	22.7
35 - 44	27	18.0
45 - above	24	16.0
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Primary School	7	4.7
Secondary School	16	10.7
Diploma	24	16.0
Bachelor's Degree	83	55.3
Master's Degree	10	6.7
Doctorate Degree	6	4.0
Professional Qualification	4	2.7
<b>Occupation</b>		
Government Sector	20	13.3
Private Sector	25	16.7
Self-employed	30	20.0

Unemployed	6	4.0
Student	69	46.0
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
RM4,850 or below	79	52.7
RM4,851 to RM10,960	49	32.7
RM10,960 or above	22	14.7

Table 1 shows that 53.3% (N=80) of the respondents are females, while 46.7% (N=70) are males. The majority of respondents (N=65, 43.3%) fall within the age group of 18–24 years, followed by 25–34 years (N=34, 22.7%), 35–44 years (N=27, 18.0%), and 45 years and above (N=24, 16.0%). In terms of educational level, most respondents hold a bachelor's degree (N=83, 55.3%), while others have a diploma (N=24, 16.0%), secondary school education (N=16, 10.7%), or a master's degree (N=10, 6.7%). A smaller proportion of respondents have a primary school education (N=7, 4.7%), a doctorate degree (N=6, 4.0%), or professional qualifications (N=4, 2.7%). Regarding occupation, the largest group of respondents are students (N=69, 46.0%), followed by self-employed individuals (N=30, 20.0%), private sector employees (N=25, 16.7%), government sector employees (N=20, 13.3%), and unemployed respondents (N=6, 4.0%). Finally, when analyzing monthly income, the majority fall within the RM4,850 or below category (N=79, 52.7%), while others fall within the RM4,851 to RM10,960 range (N=49, 32.7%) or RM10,960 and above (N=22, 14.7%). These demographics suggest that the sample population consists predominantly of young individuals pursuing higher education, likely influencing their income and employment status distributions.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Coefficients Alpha, and Zero-order Correlations for all study variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Trust	0.830				
2. Brand Image	0.800**	0.898			
3. Perceived Price Fairness	0.660**	0.690**	0.763		
4. Customer Service	0.798**	0.753**	0.661**	0.890	
5. Customer Satisfaction	0.764**	0.818**	0.703**	0.698**	0.870
Number of items	4	9	4	8	5
Mean	5.3517	5.2615	5.6250	5.2433	5.3920
Standard Deviation	1.23025	1.08882	1.03291	1.10632	1.18715

**Note:** N = 150; \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001. The diagonal entries represent Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics, reliability measures, and zero-order correlations for all study variables. All tested variables demonstrate high levels of reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.763 to 0.898.

**Table 3.** Regression analysis

Variables	Customer Satisfaction
1. Trust	0.232*
2. Brand Image	0.475***
3. Perceived price fairness	0.212**
4. Customer service	0.015
R <sup>2</sup>	0.725
F value	95.698
Durbin-Watson Statistic	1.901

**Note:** N=150; \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

Table 3 represents the result of the regression analysis which tests the relationship between customer satisfaction and independent variables which are trust, perceived price fairness, brand image, and customer service. Based on the table the value of R<sup>2</sup> is 0.725 indicating that 72.5% of the variation in consumer satisfaction can be explained by trust, perceived price fairness, and brand image. Trust, perceived price fairness, and brand image were positively correlated to customer satisfaction with beta values of 0.232, 0.212, and 0.475. The findings showed that hypotheses H1, hypotheses H2 and hypotheses H3 are supported, indicating positive relationships with the dependent variable, customer satisfaction. The customer service variable (0.015) did not significantly influence customer satisfaction with Perodua in Malaysia. Thus, there is no support for hypotheses H4, leading to the rejection of hypotheses H4.

Results findings represent that trust, perceived price fairness, and brand image were three important aspects determining satisfaction for Perodua in Malaysia. We can conclude that brand image is the most important factor affecting customer satisfaction, with the largest beta value (0.475), followed by trust (0.232) and perceived price fairness (0.212).

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide critical insights into factors influencing customer satisfaction with Perodua in Malaysia. The analysis in this study revealed a number of important factors that influenced customer satisfaction with impacts for both researchers and practitioners. From this study, young people between the ages of 18 and 24 made up the majority of the respondents' demographic composition (43.3%). This indicates that this study is limited to a larger younger generation. The majority of the respondents (55.3%) have at least a bachelor's degree indicating that most of the respondents are well-educated and who likely value affordability and quality. Demographic segmentation is a particularly effective tool for marketers looking to identify and connect with specific consumer segments. Marketers can better match their content and product offerings to the needs and preferences of particular consumer groups by segmenting their customer base according to demographic factors like age, gender, income, and educational attainment. For instance, budget-friendly brands might attract price-conscious customers with little purchasing power, whereas luxury brands may target wealthy consumers with higher income levels. (Kumo, 2023)

Based on the findings of regression analysis, this study revealed that brand image is the most important factor influencing customer satisfaction with the highest beta value of 0.475. This research emphasises the importance of keeping a strong and positive brand image because it improves customer perceptions and increases their satisfaction. The term "brand image" describes the ways customers view a brand. It indicates how customers feel and the ways they perceive a particular product. (Pandey et al., 2021). It is the degree to which the business fulfills the needs, wants, and expectations of its

customers.(Perreault, Cannon, & McCarthy, 2019). As a company's brand itself reflects its performance, it is the most valuable asset. Perodua has made a significant contribution to Malaysia's automotive sector with its brand. Perodua headed one step further in 1997 with the introduction of energy-efficient vehicles, or EEVs. The goal is to manufacture cars with as little of an environmental impact as possible. Malaysian drivers frequently choose Perodua because of their reputation for building reliable and reasonably priced vehicles. Perodua's recent exhibit at the Malaysia Autoshow underscores its dedication to innovation. Based on the popular Myvi model, the company introduced the emo-1, a concept electric vehicle. Perodua manages to meet the high demand for its' vehicles because of their commitment to continually increasing production efficiency. (Visshan, 2024). As a result, this study supported that a positive brand image has a positive effect on customer satisfaction. This finding aligns with research conducted by (Pandey et al., 2021); (Hezwono Putra, & Idris, 2020); (Bernarto, Purwanto, & Maman, 2022); (Witama & Keni, 2020) and (Raras Handayani, Widowati PA, & Nuryakin, 2021).

In addition, important factors are perceived price fairness ( $\beta = 0.212$ ) and trust ( $\beta = 0.232$ ), highlighting the necessity for Perodua to place transparency and value in their product's top priority. The results of this study proved that customer satisfaction is positively influenced by perceived price fairness and trust. A person who has trust is ready to be responsive to the behaviour of others because they expect others to act in a certain way towards those who have believed in them, despite their capacity to track and regulate them. Once people have confidence in a product, trust develops and ultimately leads to brand loyalty. (Handayani et al., 2021) An essential element of success in any field is trust, which develops through real-life interactions with others. (Uzir et al., 2021). Trust represents a fundamental concept in all business relationships because it establishes the accountability of both parties in a business transaction. (Corbitt et al., 2003). According to research studies by (Handayani et al., 2021), customer satisfaction is positively and significantly impacted by trust. The higher the trust, the higher the customer satisfaction. Price or procedure comparisons based on standards, references, or norms are part of perceived price fairness. The customer's assessment of perceived price fairness is based on perceptions and decides whether a difference (or none at all) between the prices of two sellers is reasonable, acceptable, or justified. It has been demonstrated the level of equity prices perceived to have influenced customer satisfaction and trust in a variety of industries. In Malaysia's automotive industry, our results support this hypothesis. Numerous studies that studied the relationship between customer satisfaction and perceived price fairness discovered that they were positively correlated (Bernarto et al., 2022).

In contrast, customer service did not significantly influence customer satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.015$ ). This research implies that although customer service is still crucial, it might not have as much of an effect on Perodua's customer satisfaction as trust, perceived price fairness, or brand image. This study does not support Hypothesis 4, which states that customer service has a positive effect on customer satisfaction. This outcome might present a chance for Perodua to improve and innovate its service approaches to better meet the demands and expectations of its customers. However, other studies emphasise that good customer service can boost loyalty by attending to customers' needs. Employee attitudes and willingness to interact with customers at service centers are referred to as customer service. The staff's attitudes and commitment that impressed customers, to go above and beyond expectations, has led them to come again to the service center. It helps to increase customer satisfaction, attract new customers, and to maintain existing ones. (Afezah Wan Abdul Rahman & Hanim Saidin, 2021). The small sample size in this study could be the reason that customer service in Malaysia has little impact on consumers' satisfaction with Perodua. With regard to this, customer service is

still important for overall customer satisfaction even though it may not be the primary influencing factor in this study.

In summary, the findings of this study indicate that brand image, trust, and perceived price fairness of Perodua significantly influence customer satisfaction. From the results of this study, we found that customer service has not significantly influenced customer satisfaction towards Perodua in Malaysia. In this study, hypothesis 1, hypothesis 2, and hypothesis 3 are supported, but hypothesis 4 is not. As shown by Cronbach's alpha values (which range from 0.763 to 0.898), the robustness of the measurement tools is confirmed by the high-reliability scores for every construct. This consistency highlights the study's methodological rigour and guarantees the reliability of the results.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study has shown only three variables that had a positive impact on the use of products and services from the Perodua company. Trust, perceived price fairness, and brand image were positively correlated to customer satisfaction compared to customer service. The customer service variables did not significantly influence customer satisfaction with Perodua in Malaysia. Besides, this study shows that all the respondents fall into the category of customers who own and have experience purchasing Perodua products. In addition, most respondents indicated that they agree Perodua is a trustworthy company and find the products reasonably priced, which is one of the main reasons they choose Perodua. Likewise, Perodua always provides the best service and ensures that customers are informed in advance about the schedule and process of the service that will be carried out. Through this study, customer satisfaction with Perodua products plays an important role in assessing the quality of products and services offered by the company to retain existing customers and new customers.

The results of this study will have implications for Perodua's management by offering deeper insights into customer perceptions of this brand. Managers are encouraged to focus on enhancing trust and perceived price fairness to improve customer satisfaction. For example, open communication about pricing and the provision of consistent, affordable, reliable vehicles would strengthen customers' belief in value. Additionally, improved marketing strategies by focusing on the fact that the company is affordable, reliable, and innovative will help increase the level of customer satisfaction. To improve customer service, managers are also encouraged to examine specific aspects, including service delays and responsiveness to customers' complaints. Also, maintaining regular reviews of customers' trends and expectations to be up to date with the market changes will help Perodua be better in the competitive market in the Malaysian automotive sector.

Furthermore, the results of this study serve as a valuable reference for companies to understand customer and organizational behavior to increase customer satisfaction with this brand. This study also shows the views of various categories of customers when using Perodua brand products. However, we faced obstacles when conducting this study. First, time constraints restrict the scope of data collection. As a result, the study relied on a small number of respondents, with data primarily collected through Google Forms. Second, the research was focused on customers in Malaysia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other markets or regions. Future studies should consider larger, more diverse sample sizes and explore customer satisfaction across different geographical areas to provide a broader perspective. Despite these challenges, the study offers meaningful insights into the factors influencing customer satisfaction.

Overall, the results of this study can be a useful guide because we can understand the factors that influence customer satisfaction more deeply. In addition, customer



experiences in using Perodua products also provide suggestions that existing products need to be improved in terms of quality and service in order to build stronger trust and loyalty among their customers. This will not only boost customer satisfaction but also help solidify Perodua's reputation as a leading automotive brand. In this study, we can also see various alternatives that Perodua uses to increase customer satisfaction and provide the best service to customers. Lastly, this study serves as a foundation for future research on customer satisfaction with Perodua's products and services. It provides a clearer understanding of what matters most to customers and offers practical suggestions for ongoing improvements that can benefit both the company and its customers.

### **LIMITATION**

There are various limitations to this research. First, the findings were mainly made up of young respondents with similar backgrounds causing the findings' generalisability to be limited by the small sample size. Future research should aim for a more diversified sample that represents a range of demographic groups. Second, biases could be met due to the use of self-reported data from online surveys. Third, time constraints limited the ability to collect a larger sample size, which might have affected the findings' accuracy. Furthermore, as this study was carried out in Malaysia, it lacks more comprehensive insights that require cross-cultural research. Future research could improve the comprehension of the factors affecting Perodua customers' satisfaction by addressing these limitations.

Note: This case has been written based on both published sources and primary data collected through surveys. Consequently, the interpretation and perspectives presented in this case were not necessarily those of Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua Sdn Bhd or Perodua or any of its employees.

### **DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTEREST**

The authors disclosed that there are no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Trust**

1. I feel comfortable when using Perodua's products.
2. I feel Perodua's products are safe.
3. Perodua always delivers what is promised.
4. I always trust on Perodua.

### **Brand Image**

1. Perodua is advanced.
2. Perodua is broadly distributed.
3. Perodua is possessing good value.
4. Perodua is safe to use.
5. Perodua is trustworthy.
6. Perodua is modern.
7. Perodua is interesting.
8. Perodua is prestigious.
9. Perodua is responsive.



**Perceived Price Fairness**

1. The overall pricing strategy of Perodua is reasonable.
2. The cost of owning a Perodua reflects the benefits I experience.
3. The value for money of Perodua cars corresponds with the quality.
4. In my opinion, the Perodua pricing is acceptable.

**Customer Service**

1. Perodua's service provider provides prompt service.
2. Perodua's service provider shows willingness to help the customer.
3. Perodua's service provider is respectful and polite.
4. Perodua's service provider never looked too busy to respond to my request.
5. The service was delivered and completed within the certain time frame as promised.
6. The required service was performed as promised.
7. Perodua's service provider keeps me informed on when the service will be performed.
8. Perodua's service provider provides accurate information.

**Customer Satisfaction**

1. I think I did the right thing when using Perodua.
2. I believe that using Perodua is usually a satisfying experience.
3. My choice to use Perodua has been a wise one.
4. I am very satisfied with the decision to use Perodua.
5. Perodua does a good job of satisfying my needs.

Note: Responses to each of the items are based on the Likert Scale with a scale of 1 to 7 where (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Slightly Disagree, (4) Neutral, (5) Slightly Agree, (6) Agree, (7) Strongly Agree.