DOI: 10.36555/almana.v5i2.1559



# SWITCHING BARRIER EFFECT ON MILLENNIAL CUSTOMER RETENTION THROUGH THE MEDIATION OF BRAND TRUST

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**Abstract:** The existence of a business phenomenon between companies in the modern herbal medicine industry related to the difference between switching barriers, brand trust, and customer retention. The purpose of this research was to examine the difference in the relationship between variables to this phenomenon. This study used a purposive sampling method with a total sample of 130 millennials in Surakarta who consumed herbal sachets at least in the last 3 months. The research method used in this study is a quantitative method using SEM analysis tools AMOS version 21.0. This study indicates that the switching barrier affects customer retention significantly both directly and when mediated by brand trust. So in the Modern Herbal Medicine Industry, the development of customer retention is very dependent on switching barriers and brand trust.

**Keywords:** Brand Trust; Customer Retention; Modern Herbal Medicine Industry; Switching Barriers

## INTRODUCTION

Relational marketing is an important concept of marketing in the modern era (Wiyadi et al., 2014). Relational marketing is an effort to build long-term relationships with customers to generate large sales so that it becomes a long-term profit that determines success for marketing and business (Assauri, 2012). This long-term relationship can be created through premium loyalty which is also called customer retention (Rimiyati & Widodo, 2014). Customer retention places more emphasis on marketing activities that are focused on retaining customers through marketing development that focuses on repurchasing behavior from both the marketer and the customer side (Prayoga et al., 2015). Customer retention is one of the strategies for market development (Minarti & Segoro, 2014). Market share interprets the strength of a brand in the market through actual purchases from the consumer's perspective and sales and revenues of a product from the company's perspective (Sari et al., 2010). Based on the annual report of PT Industri and Pharmacy Sido Muncul Tbk, sales of Tolak Angin for the last three years have continued to increase, starting from 1.69 trillion (2017), 1.84 trillion (2018), 2.06 trillion (2019). Meanwhile, from the annual report of PT Saratoga Investama Sedaya Tbk, which oversees PT Deltomed Laboratories for Antangin products, it is known that there has been a decrease in dividend income from 2 billion (2018) to 1 billion (2019).

Trust will produce a commitment that motivates customers to maintain a long-term relationship with a brand, resulting in a long-life relationship (Nora, 2019). On the other hand, building and maintaining trust is at the core of brand equity, because it is the key to creating successful long-term relationships for the company and customers in building customer retention (Margarena & Auliya, 2020). Trust will also generate repeat purchases interpreted as a key element in building customer retention (Ridwan, 2019). Top Brand Index (TBI) is a brand strength gauge based on consumer trust using indicators of mind share, market share, and commitment share (Sari et al., 2010). During the last five years, TBI Tolak Angin which reflects trust in brands has

DOI: 10.36555/almana.v5i2.1559



decreased. Meanwhile, TBI Antangin has fluctuated which tends to increase. This can be seen in table 1 below

**Table 1. Top Brand Index of Cold Medicine** 

Year	Tolak Angin Top Brand Index (%)	Antangin Top Brand Index (%)
2016	60.0	37.4
2017	58.9	37.6
2018	53.5	42.4
2019	53.1	38.9
2020	48.3	40.6

Source: Top Brand Index (2020)

Based on the sales phenomenon and the Top Brand Index (TBI), These problems make the company have to retain customers as a solution that must be done immediately. Because retaining existing customers can stimulate the positive influence of word-of-mouth as an effective and efficient way to influence new customers, which in turn will expand market share and company profits. To keep old customers, loyalty must be created. However, just being loyal is not enough to ensure the continuity of the company, but there must be real action from loyal and real customers for the company, namely the existence of customer retention (Nora, 2019).

The switching barrier has been regarded as an important factor contributing to customer retention. It is important to note that this strategy is a strategy used in locking up customers so that these customers do not switch to another brand (Kaur et al., 2012). Ghazali et al. (2016) explain the switching barrier at the level of factors that make it difficult for consumers to change brands and suggest three forms of switching barriers, namely, interpersonal relationships, switching costs, and attractiveness of available alternatives. Opinion Valenzuela (2015) reveals that the switching barrier includes time, money, and effort constraints.

In terms of consumer characteristics, millennials are generation Y, namely those born between 1980 until 2000. They are the largest consumer group besides Baby Boomers as well as generation X (Vuong & Nguyen, 2018), however, this generation is less brand loyal (Schroer, 2019). One of the factors behind one of them is price awareness (Klein & Sharma, 2018). Due to the relationship between price and quality, when consumers rely on price as an indicator of product quality; they'll believe the more expensive the better (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to answer the phenomenon in the modern herbal medicine industry, namely the increase in product sales but accompanied by a decrease in brand trust (Tolak Angin) and the decline in product sales increases brand trust (Antangin). The millennial sample is used because of the alleged lack of loyalty to the brand due to low switching barriers that affect customer retention of a product. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of long-term company relationships, especially in the herbal medicine industry in Indonesia.

Retaining customers means trying to maintain long-term relationships with customers for the survival of the company through profitability which is called customer retention (Lombard, 2011). Most companies suffer losses due to lost customers. Customer retention exists as an interpretation of the strategy to increase customer base value by reducing the rate of moving and retaining customers (Sacui & Dumitru, 2014). Customer retention is defined as the level of inclination of consumers to stick to a product in the future. Customer trust and switching barriers are variables that

DOI: 10.36555/almana.v5i2.1559



influence the level of customer retention (Danesh et al., 2012). There is a new concept formation in understanding the factors that impact the relative repurchase attitude and its consequences. From a new conceptual framework, it is developed that the relationship between the attitude of relative attachment and repurchase results in four types of loyalty, one of which is premium loyalty which is also known as customer retention (Setiawan et al., 2019).

Customer retention brings a profit impact for the company. First, marketing costs can be minimized, meaning that companies no longer need to spend extra financing to replace lost customers. Second, in line with the increase in customer retention, suppliers can better understand what products or services customers want so that the company can immediately provide products effectively and efficiently (Ngacha et al., 2017). Customer retention is a marketing activity that focuses on retaining customers so that the development and expansion of marketing activities have an impact on repurchasing behavior on the customer side (Tonder, 2017). According to Danesh et al. (2012), The measurement of customer retention is based on consumer endurance to survive in a company, product, or brand for a minimum period of 3 months, 6 months, or 1 year.

A switching barrier is a barrier to turning away from resources and opportunities. Bringing up a switching barrier is a strategy suitable for companies that are eager to protect their customers (Hardjanti & Amalia, 2014). Switching barriers are developed based on indicators that are constraints of time, money, and effort (Valenzuela, 2015)). The switching barrier is one of the factors that make it difficult for consumers to change products. The existence of barriers as well as the costs required to change this product can reduce the desire of consumers to leave the current product, which in turn makes consumers survive and reluctant to switch to other service providers. Three forms of switching barriers, namely, interpersonal relationships, switching costs, and attractiveness of available alternatives (Morgan et al., 2015). Research by Qadri & Khan (2014) and Hardjanti & Amalia (2014) shows if the switching barrier does have a significant effect on customer retention.

H1: Switching barrier has a significant effect on customer retention

Perceptions of uncertainty and consideration of adverse effects when deciding to buy other products or services often make consumers tend to stick with the products they are currently using (Liu & Guo, 2011). More specifically, the switching barrier is a factor that makes it difficult for consumers to change to a brand. Considering this switching barrier can be a barrier factor for consumers switching between brands (Yenny & Japarianto, 2014). When there are very many brands in the market, if the quality is low, customers who are not satisfied tend to switch to another brand, whereas if the quality provided is high, the customer tends to remain loyal. Customers are loyal to a brand if the customer feels they get much greater value from the brand than others (Quoquab et al., 2018). Research Dimyati (2015) and Padma et al. (2016) explained that the switching barrier does have a significant effect on brand trust.

H2: Switching Barrier has a significant effect on brand trust.

Consumer trust is the key to success in building company relationships with customers. Trust arises when one party has confidence in the integrity of the other party. Meanwhile, trust in this case is the willingness to convince other parties to believe. Trust is the basis of a partner strategy (Romadhoni et al., 2015). In terminology, a brand is part of a name, term, sign, symbol design, or a combination thereof that describes a product. Then this identification functions for the products of the company. The brand is also an interpretation of the promises made by the company to customers for the quality of the products it produces. Therefore we need

DOI: 10.36555/almana.v5i2.1559



customer trust in the brand to provide a competitive advantage over product performance (Wunu et al., 2018).

Identified brands can reduce the risk of using the product. Product consumption can be perceived as several types of risk, namely functional risk, physical risk, financial risk, social risk, psychological risk, and time risk (Rejeki, 2018). Three key things having an impact on brand trust, namely brand characteristics, company characteristics, and the suitability between the brand and customer personality. So that companies must build and patent the key to trust (Khoza, 2012). Increased trust is part of a valuable investment in developing long-term relationships with customers. If there is a high level of trust, it will prevent one of the parties from leaving the relationship (exit barrier). Conversely, if the high trust is not established, it will make one party leave the relationship (Devaraja, 2012). Research result Hardjanti & Amalia (2014), Danesh et al. (2012), Simarmata et al. (2016), Gulid (2014), Zulkifli (2012), Margarena & Auliya (2020) obtained if the brand trust does affect customer retention.

H2: Brand trust has a significant effect on customer retention.

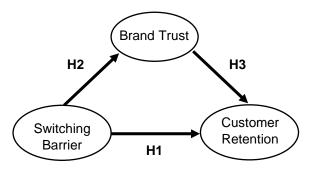


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Danesh et al. (2012) & Dimyati (2015)

#### **METHODS**

In terms of objectives, this study is classified as hypothesis-testing research and the approach used is descriptive quantitative. The population of this study was students in Surakarta who consumed the Tolak Angin or Antangin brands. Because there is no definite data stating the number of Tolak Angin or Antangin consumers in Surakarta, the population of this study is infinite, namely a population with unlimited members (Jaya, 2019). The number of samples suitable for SEM is in the range of 100-200 samples (Ferdinand, 2014). So according to the analytical tool used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), determining the appropriate total sample depends on the number of indicators multiplied by 10 (Ferdinand, 2014). So, the final sample for this study is 130 respondents.

In taking the research sample, this study uses nonprobability sampling, which is taking the sample without providing equal opportunities or opportunities for each member of the population to be sampled. While the sample determination is done through the purposive sampling method, which is the determination of the sample by involving certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2014). Danesh et al. (2012) reveal that in the retail business, the measurement of customer retention is also based on the endurance of customers in the company or product for a minimum period of 3 months. So this also applies to the measurement of customer retention in this study.

In the context of this research, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) data analysis techniques are used using the AMOS application program version 21.0. This is because SEM offers substantially more capabilities to be able to perform path analysis using mediating variables (Ghozali & Latan, 2015).

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By what is described by Sugiyono (2014) the variables used in this study are independent variables, dependent variables, and intervening variables. In this study, the independent variable is the switching barrier. Meanwhile, in this case, the dependent variable is represented by customer retention and the intervening variable in this study is brand trust.

**Table 2. Operational Definition of Variables** 

Operational definition	Indicator
The tendency that consumers continue to	1. Stop at 3 months of use
use a product in the future (Danesh et al.,	2. Stop at 6 months of use
2012)	3. Stop at 1 year of use
The willingness or desire of consumers,	Trust in the company
when faced with risks, is related to the	2. Company integrity
thought that the brand purchased will give	<ol><li>Brand reputation</li></ol>
positive results also brings profit (Khoza,	4. Brand reliability
2012)	5. Experience on brands
Factors that make it difficult for consumers	1. Time Barriers
to switch products (Margarena & Auliya,	Switching Cost
2020) as well as a barrier for consumers to	3. Business Barriers
switch current products through the	4. Interpersonal Relationship
imposition of both resource and opportunity	5. The attractiveness of
factors (Tung et al., 2011)	Available Alternative
	The tendency that consumers continue to use a product in the future (Danesh et al., 2012)  The willingness or desire of consumers, when faced with risks, is related to the thought that the brand purchased will give positive results also brings profit (Khoza, 2012)  Factors that make it difficult for consumers to switch products (Margarena & Auliya, 2020) as well as a barrier for consumers to switch current products through the imposition of both resource and opportunity

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2020)

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The descriptive data of the results of this study can be seen from the gender side of the jamu sachet consumption which is almost dominated by men, namely as many as 86 respondents or 66.2%. Based on the brand of jamu sachets consumed, it can be seen that the Tolak Angin brand dominates with 113 respondents or 86.9%, followed by Antangin, and others. Meanwhile, based on the length of consumption, the period of 1 year is in the top rank with 83 respondents or 63.8%. Furthermore, this can be described in table 3 below.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics** 

Descriptiv	e Statistics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	86	66.2
	Women	44	33.8
Brand	Tolak Angin	113	86.9
Consumed	Antangin	15	11.5
	Others	2	1.5
Long	3 months	23	17.7
Consuming	6 months	24	18.5
	1 year	83	63.8

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2020)

In terms of the quality test on the instrumental side of the study, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to validate the element indicator that represented the latent construct. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used to measure the extent to which these indicators can define what is calculated using validity and reliability tests (Ferdinand, 2014). Seen of all the instruments used in measuring these indicators, it can be seen that the validity value is between 0.765 to 0.946 so that the

DOI: 10.36555/almana.v5i2.1559



indicator is valid because it has met the factor weighting requirements above 0.5 which is the limitation for the value of convergent validity (Ghozali and Latan, 2015).

On the reliability side, it can be measured using standardized loading and measurement error. Standard loading is obtained through standardized loading on each indicator. And while  $\varepsilon_j$  is a measurement error obtained from 1-( $\sum$  standarized loading)<sup>2</sup> (Ghozali, 2014). From the test results, it can be seen that all variables have a reliability value above 0.70, namely customer retention of 0.972, brand trust 0.903, and switching barrier 0.901. Then it is by the threshold value that has been used in measuring the reliability level of 0.70 (Ghozali and Latan, 2015). This means that all variables can be said to be reliable so that they can be continued in the next test.

**Table 4. Instruments Test** 

Indicator	Validity	Reliability
SB1 → SB	0.829	
SB2 → SB	0.823	
SB3 → SB	0.810	0.901
SB4 → SB	0.794	
SB5 → SB	0.765	
$KM1 \rightarrow KM$	0.822	
KM2→ KM	0.792	
KM3→ KM	0.812	0.903
KM4→ KM	0.809	
KM5→ KM	0.798	
CR1 → CR	0.950	
CR2 → CR	0.985	0.972
CR3 → CR	0.946	

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2020)

**Table 5. Normality Test** 

Descriptive Statistics	Skewness	Critical ratio
SB1	-0.003	-0.012
SB2	0.144	0.668
SB3	0.267	1,244
SB4	0.441	2,054
SB5	0.457	2,127
KM1	-0.004	-0.021
KM2	0.135	0.629
KM3	0.212	0.987
KM4	0.268	1,248
KM5	0.276	1,284
CR1	-0.322	-1,501
CR2	-0.237	-1,102
CR3	-0.157	-0,732

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2020)

Evaluation on the normality side can be seen in the critical ratio skewness value which is  $\pm$  2.58. The data can be said to be normally distributed if the critical ratio skewness values are all below  $\pm$  2.58 (Ferdinand, 2014). And based on the test results for all indicators in this study it can be said that the data is normally distributed. Because it is seen from the value of the critical ratio skewness value, all of which are below the value of  $\pm$  2.58. So based on the results, data testing can be continued in the next test.

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In the test using SEM, it can be done in stages until the correct model is met according to what the cut-off value implies. The goodness of fit indices used is chi-square, significance, RMSEA, CFI, GFI, TLI, and CMIN / DF. From the test results, it can be seen that all the goodness of fit indices have met the criteria of the cut-off value with each Chi-square value of 78.247, Probability level 0.08, RMSEA 0.045, CFI 0.992, GFI 0.916, TLI 0.990, CMIN / DF 1,262. This is by the cut-off value of each criterion limit for the goodness of fit indices, namely chi-square is expected to be of small value, probability level ≥0.05, RMSEA ≤0.08, CFI ≥0.95, GFI ≥0.90, TLI ≥0.90, CMIN / DF <2.00. So this has shown if this model is feasible to continue in the next test.

**Table 6. Hypothesis Test** 

Variable Relationships	Estimate	CR	p-value	Great influence
Switching Barrier -> Brand Trust	1,348	11,598	0,000	1,080
Brand Trust -> Customer Retention	0.369	6,644	0,000	0.369
Switching Barrier -> Customer Retention	0.762	9,429	0,000	0.611

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2020)

Through hypothesis testing, it can be seen the relationship between variables. Whereas in this study, it is hoped that there will be a test for causality so that the relationship between switching barriers, brand trust, and customer retention can be found. Through the framework of H1, H2, and H3, it is suspected that there is a significant influence between the constructs that become the hypothesis. And the relationship between constructs can be assessed from the p-value  $\leq$  of 0.05 which indicates that there is a significant relationship between constructs as shown in table 6 above

The test results show that the switching barrier has a significant effect on customer retention so that H1 is accepted. This study shows that the switching barrier affects customer retention by 1.080 with a significance of 0.00 and this is by Qadri & Khan (2014), Hardjanti & Amalia (2014) which shows if the switching barrier does have a significant effect on customer retention. Therefore, it can be concluded that the switching barrier has a significant effect on customer retention. And it defines that the created switching barrier can build customer retention. The end is if the switching barrier is high, which in turn has an impact on increasing customer retention in consuming herbal sachets. In the relationship between the switching barrier and trust in the brand, it is significant so that H2 is accepted. In this study, the switching barrier affects brand trust by 0.611 with a significance of 0.00 so that it is following with what is in the study Dimyati (2015), Padma et al. (2016) which represents a switching barrier has a significant effect on brand trust. Therefore, it can be concluded that indeed the switching barrier has a significant effect on brand trust. And the causality test shows that brand trust has effects on customer retention so that H3 is accepted. In this study, it can be seen that brand trust only affects customer retention, namely 0.00 with a significance level of 0.369. So this is in line with research Hardjanti & Amalia (2014), Danesh et al. (2012), Simarmata et al. (2016), Gulid (2014), Zulkifli (2012) trust in brands affects customer retention.

Ferdinand (2014) explains if one of the ways in testing the intermediate hypothesis that has been developed is the Sobel test is to use the formula:

$$z = \frac{ab}{\sqrt{b^2 SE^2_a + a^2 SE^2_b}}.$$

As with other hypotheses, the hypothesis can be accepted if the value of  $z \ge 1.98$  at the significance level  $\le 0.05$ .

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## Table 7. Sobel Test

Variable Relationships	Z	Great Influence
Switching Barrier -> Brand Trust -> Customer Retention	3.14	0.39

Source: Data that has been processed by the author (2020)

Based on the table described above, it can be seen if the indirect role of switching barriers through brand trust in customer retention is 0.39 with a Z value of  $3.14 \le 1.98$ . So that the indirect role of the switching barrier on customer retention through brand trust is significant. However, it is still slightly lower than the direct effect between switching barriers on customer retention which is significant at a significance level of 0.00 with an effect of 0.611.

## CONCLUSION

The indirect relationship of switching barriers to customer retention through brand trust conceptualized in this study is significant but not higher than the direct relationship between switching barriers to customer retention. This study to increase customer retention through a marketing strategy based on building brand trust and switching barriers. Switching barriers and brand trust play important factors in influencing customer retention. So in this case it has implications for the modern herbal medicine industry to be able to strengthen the stimulus to increase the switching barrier and brand trust that has been built previously. The stimulus that can be given can be in the form of increased assurance on quality along with competitive prices to increase consumer perceptions of value. With a consumer desire-based understanding, hence the modern herbal medicine industry will find it easier to maintain the number of consumers now and expand market share.

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