IDENTIFYING THE ANTECEDENTS FOR RELATIONSHIP QUALITY MODEL AND ITS OUTCOMES FOR PRIORITY BANKING CUSTOMERS IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian banks have started to focus on finding the right relationship quality model to be applied to their day-to-day operation, particularly for their priority banking customers (PBC) who contribute the most to their profitable growth. This study investigates firstly, whether positive emotional expression (PEE) acts as the antecedent to relationship quality (satisfaction and trust); and secondly, whether relationship quality (RQ) leads to word-of-mouth (WOM) and share-of-purchase (SOP) as its positive outcomes. Results from a survey carried out on 338 priority banking customers in Jakarta, Indonesia found that indeed PEE acts as the antecedent to RQ while RQ is positively linked to the WOM and SOP outcomes. These findings suggest that PEE, WOM, and SOP are variables that must be considered by Indonesian banks when they strategise to enhance the relationship quality of their priority banking customers.

Keywords: positive emotional expression, relationship quality, share-of-purchase, word-of-mouth, priority banking customers

INTRODUCTION

Banks in Indonesia have identified priority banking customers (PBC) as the segment that contributes the most to their profits and growth. However, maintaining long term and quality relationship with these customers can be difficult as banks must not only identify their needs and wants but must also know how to make these happen. In this instance, it is really crucial for banks to be able to identify a relationship quality (RQ) model that can work for their clients. Establishing what RQ is supposed to be is difficult; as there is little consensus on its definition or on possible theory underpinning it in the literature (Fincham & Beach, 2010). Although Jarvelin and Lehtinen's (1996) definition of RQ is one of the many accepted definitions today (it is defined as the extent to which the firm customer's relationship fulfills all of the customer's expectation, prediction, want or goal, and desire), which focused on firm-customer relationship, other definition has gone to the extent of referring to it as relationship happiness (Reynolds, Houlston, & Coleman, 2014). While definition and underlying theory of RQ debates continue, the literature still acknowledges the need to build a better understanding of causal relations between RQ and various variables that can act as the antecedents and outcomes to/for RQ (Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2002). To date, RQ is acknowledged as the predictor of relationship outcome (Al-Alak & Alnawas, 2010; Castellanos-Verdugo & Veerapermal, 2009; Chen, Shi, & Dong, 2008), Thus, this study attempts to investigate whether positive emotional expression (PEE) acts as the antecedent to RQ (satisfaction and trust); and whether RQ leads to word-of-mouth (WOM) and share-of-purchase (SOP) as its positive outcomes for PBC in Indonesia. The findings could provide retail banks in Indonesia with a better understanding of the importance of variables that have affected RQ between them and their PBC.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The ability to control emotional display is the basic requirement of any service work as the focus lies in the service providers expressing only positive emotions (and hiding the negative ones) in their encounters with customers who can sometimes be difficult. Smiling, using a soothing tone of voice, positive body language, and good, friendly facial expression shown during provider-customer's interaction, in addition to technical skills display, can maximise the customer's satisfaction and simultaneously prevent any negative emotional display (boredom and frustration) from being revealed. Thus, PEE refers to only when positive emotions are displayed while negative ones are suppressed (Lam, Huang, & Janssen, 2010),

such that it can be summarised as a "service with a smile" (Grandey, 2008). Over the years, researchers have acknowledged many PEE attributes and investigated them (William & DeSteno, 2008; Henning-Thurau et al., 2002; Lam et al., 2010; Pugh, 2001; Grandey, 2003; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Valdesolo & Graham, 2014) in attempts to enhance firm-customer's long-term relationship. However, these studies are limited in number, particularly those that link the variables to RQ and other outcomes. Individuals with high positive emotion for instance, socially value such emotions, and thus, they tend to experience elevated life satisfaction and well-being compared to others (Bastian, Kuppens, De Roover, & Diener, 2014).

Various definitions of PEE can be found in the literature. For example, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993, pp. 88–89) define it as "the act of expressing socially desired emotions during service transaction". Wharton and Erickson's (1993) definition concerns employee's behaviour, which according to Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) is displayed through a combination of facial expression, spoken words, tone of voice, smiling, and thanking. Friedman, Prince, Riggio, and Dimatteo (1980) further explain how an individual can express their emotions through verbal and non-verbal forms by combining facial expressions, voices, body movements, and gestures. An expressive person, for instance, uses non-verbal cues to motivate, captivate, move, and inspire other people, and this apparently has been found by Friedman et al. (1980) to be the characters of top Toyota salesman. According to Harker and Keltner (2001), individuals with positive emotion expressions and good eye contact are prone to create friendly, honest, and likeable person impression on others. Many studies find a positive link between service provider's PEE and customer's satisfaction (e.g., Oliver, 1997; Price & Arnould, 1999; Pugh, 2001; Grandey, 2003; Grandey, Mattila, Fisk, & Sideman, 2002). The affect as information model from social psychology for example, suggests that individuals rely on their mood as information cues to help them form an attitude, make judgment or evaluation, as well as form a productive social relationship (Schwartz & Clore, 1988; Kring, 2010; Keltner, Oately, & Jenkins, 2014) of the RQ from services they encounter like satisfaction, trust, and commitment.

In general, RQ is conceptualised in the literature as the quality of interaction between customers and service provider (Gummesson, 1987; Grandey, 2008). The interaction relates closely to a customer's belief that service providers have the ability and credibility in minimising the risk or uncertainty of a service that they purchase. In credence service like priority banking services, the risk and uncertainty of the service consumption will influence customers to not only feel satisfied but will further encourage them to develop trust with the service provider(s) in the relationship (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990; Grandey, 2008). Thus, in this study,

RQ is operationalised as a higher order construct with two components, namely, satisfaction and trust as seen in various research (Al-Alak & Alnawas, 2010; Castellanos-Verdugo & Veerapermal, 2009; Kim & Cha, 2002).

Satisfaction can be considered as an act that can be either developed via one transaction or cumulative reactions. According to Oliver (1997), cumulative satisfaction differs from satisfaction with a transaction (or a single encounter) as the latter involves post evaluation (or affective reaction) of the transaction in question. Satisfaction is a cumulative act when it is evaluated based on customer's total experiences of product or service consumption (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994). As for trust, the literature has slightly varied but generally similar in definitions over the years; for example as perceived confidence of one party on the reliability and integrity of the exchange partner (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Tung & Carlson, 2013); perceived credibility and benevolence of other party (Ganesan, 1994; Geyskens, Steenkamp, & Kumar, 1999); and belief that the words and promise of one party is reliable and as such will be fulfilled (Blau, 1964; Moorman, Deshpande, & Zaltman, 1993; Schurr & Ozanne, 1985). In other words, the development of trust is an interpersonal process rather than a personal characteristic of the trusted parties (Deshpande, Farley, & Webster, 1993). It is important to note that both satisfaction and trust as a component of RQ are crucial in influencing a firm's decision to move away from the conventional business practice (i.e., transactional exchanges) to the more relevant and sustainable practice (i.e., relational exchanges) to help them build not only a strong but a quality relationship.

A customer's positive affect experience of a service encounter(s) often lead to positive evaluation (like satisfaction and trust) when the customer's expectations of service(s) they are provided with are confirmed in the relationship encounter (Giardini & Frese, 2006). Previous research found that PEE can increase customer's satisfaction (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Wang, 2009; Redden, 2012; Pugh, 2001; Grandey, 2003; Grandey et al., 2002) as well as customer's trust (Ottati, Terkildsen, & Hubbard, 1997; Krull & Dill, 1998; Fischer, 2012; McAllister's, 1995).

The literature also reports positive links between RQ's components – satisfaction and trust and its outcomes. Customer's satisfaction for example has been found to lead to relationship outcomes like WOM, repeat purchase, frequent buy of product/ services, and buy more product variant/line (Wong, Hung, & Chow, 2008; Dong, Shi, & Chen, 2008; Crosby et al., 1990; Henning-Thurau et al., 2002; Chen et al., 2008). Over the years, the effect of customer's satisfaction on positive WOM is supported by many studies. For example, satisfied customers are found to convey their satisfying experiences to an average five others in comparison to nine for

dissatisfied customers and their dissatisfying experience (Knauer, 1992). Recent studies also confirm that satisfaction has a significant effect on positive WOM (Satta, Parola, Penco, & Persico, 2015; Su, Hsu, & Swanson, 2014). Customer's satisfaction significant effect on SOP (repurchase intention) are frequently reported too (Bowden-Everson, Dagger, & Elliott, 2013; Jang, Kim, & Lee, 2013; Aldas-Manzano, Ruiz-Mafe, Sanz-Blas, & Lassala- Navarré, 2011; Liu, Guo, & Lee, 2011; Lin & Ding, 2005; Caceres & Paparoidamis, 2007; Shamdasani & Balakrishnan, 2000; Rauyruen & Miller, 2007).

As for trust, the literature has also acknowledged it as a determinant of a RQ's outcome (Berry, 1995; Gummeson, 1998) like WOM (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Chen et al., 2008), or SOP (Guenzi & Georges, 2010; Chen et al., 2008). Baloglu, Zhong, and Tanford's (2014) study of a casino industry in Vegas for example found that trust has a significant effect on positive WOM. This is similar to Barreda, Bilgihan, and Kageyama's (2015) findings when customer's trust on social media is found to show significant effect on positive WOM as well as to Su et al. (2014) study that also uncover how customer's trust of the tourism destination significantly affects their positive WOM. It has been frequently reported that customer's trust has a significant effect on SOP (repurchase intention) and the examples include Guenzi and Georges (2010), Chen et al. (2008), Lin and Ding (2005), Shamdasani and Balakrishnan (2000), Azam (2015), Bowden-Everson et al. (2013), Butt and Aftab (2013), and Aldas-Manzano et al. (2011).

The reviews of the literature pertaining to these variables lead to the following hypotheses to be investigated:

    H1: Service provider's PEE links significantly to RQ's satisfaction

    H2: Service provider's PEE links significantly to RQ's trust

    H3: RQ's satisfaction links significantly with SOP

    H4: RQ's satisfaction links significantly with positive WOM

    H5: RQ's trust links significantly with positive SOP

    H6: RQ's trust links significantly with positive WOM

METHOD

The population of this study is PBC in Jakarta, Indonesia as the city is the capital of Indonesia as well as the business capital of the country. PBC from five top retail banks in Jakarta, Indonesia serves as samples for this study following judgmental

sampling technique. The benefit of applying judgmental sampling is that it can provide the researcher with specific and relevant information as required for the study (Sekaran, 2006). PBC is judged suitable for participation in line with the recommendation made by the five banks' relationship managers who are available in each bank's priority outlets within a specified time period. Only those PBC who had finished their encounter in the outlets were approached and invited to participate in the study; and only those who were willing to participate took part in the survey. This resulted in a total of 338 usable questionnaires obtained from the PBC and further analysed with structural equation modelling technique using Smart PLS 2.0.

Items for all constructs were adapted from previous studies. The four items used for PEE construct were adapted from Tomiuk (2000):

1. When the relationship manager is happy, s/he shows his/her feelings towards me.
2. Whenever the relationship manager feels positive emotions, I can easily see exactly what s/he is feeling.
3. The relationship manager laughs out loud when someone tells him/her jokes that they think are funny.
4. The body of the relationship manager reacts very strongly to positive emotional situations.

For the RQ constructs, two items for the satisfaction (STS) component were adopted from Al-Alak and Alnawas (2010):

1. I am satisfied with this bank's overall services.
2. I am pleased with relationship manager of this bank.

While another two STS components were taken from Smith and Barclay (1997):

1. I am satisfied with the relationship I have with this bank.
2. Comparatively, bank relationship here is quite good.

On the other hand, all five items for trust (TST) were adapted from Al-Alak and Alnawas (2010):

1. The relationship manager always keep his/her promises.
2. The relationship manager shows at all times that s/he is reliable in service delivery.

3. The relationship manager has been sincere in dealing with me.

4. The relationship manager is completely honest when dealing with me.

5. The relationship manager is always concerned in putting his/her customers' interests first.

For RQ's outcomes, the positive WOM was measured via two items (Al-Alak & Alnawas, 2010):

1. I want to recommend this bank to others.

2. I want to tell other persons about good things of this bank.

Another one, i.e., "I will encourage friends and relatives to do business with this bank" was adapted from Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996).

On the other hand, SOP was measured via two items from Kim and Cha (2002):

1. I have increased my bank usage frequency.

2. I use other bank new products/services such as mutual fund, retail bond, bank assurance, etc.

One item, i.e., "I will do more business with this bank in the next few years" was taken from Zeithaml et al. (1996), and another one, i.e., "I will invest more funds through this bank in the future" was from Eisingerich and Bell (2008). All the constructs in this study were measured using a 7-points Likert scale.

FINDINGS

Respondent's Profile

The study found that the respondents' possessed the following characteristics (Table 1). Gender wise, the respondents were quite equal: 171 (50.6%) of them were male population while the rest (167 people or 49.4%) were female. Of the 338 respondents, the majority were married (275 people or 81.4%), within the age range of 25–44 years old (149 people or 44.1%), held a first degree (S1) (182 people or 53.8%) and with a job description as an entrepreneur (169 respondents or 50%).

Table 1
Characteristics of respondents

	Characteristics			Unit	%
I	Gender	1	Male	171	50.6
		2	Female	167	49.4
			Total	338	100.0
II	Age	1	Under 25 years	27	8.0
		2	25–44 years	149	44.1
		3	45–64 years	146	43.2
		4	65 years and above	16	4.7
			Total	338	100.0
III	Marital status	1	Married	275	81.4
		2	Unmarried	63	18.6
			Total	338	100.0
IV	Job	1	Entrepreneur	173	51.2
		2	Professionals	51	15.1
		3	Private company employee	56	16.6
		4	State enterprise company's employee	15	4.4
		5	Lecturer/teacher	16	4.7
		6	Others (retiree/pensioner, public servant, police/army, housewife)	27	8
			Total	338	100.0

Measurement Model

The measurement model for this study includes examining individual loading, validity, and reliability tests. Both Cronbach alpha and composite reliability were used to assess the reliability of measure for the constructs. The evaluation of construct validity consists of convergent and discriminant validity test. Following Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt's (2011) suggestion, the values for Cronbach alpha and composite reliability value for this study were set at 0.7 or higher. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, both values for all constructs are above 0.7 (between 0.784 and 0.908; and 0.874 and 0.936 respectively), which indicate that adequate reliability has been achieved.

According to Hair et al. (2011), an item with the loading factor of less than 0.5 should be dropped from data analysis. However, in this study, the loading factor for all item constructs are found to be within an acceptable level: i.e., between

0.789 (TST5) and 0.902 (SOP3). The detail of the loading factor for all items in this study is shown in Figure 1. Convergent validity was used to assess the validity of constructs. As Hair et al. (2011) suggested, the value of the AVE must be 0.5 and above to ensure that a latent variable has a good convergent validity. The results in Table 2 show that all latent variables in this study have the AVE above 0.5 (0.656 to 0.784), indicating that good convergent validity has been achieved for all the variables investigated.

Table 2
Correlation matrix

Variable	AVE	R.Square	α	CR	PEE	SOP	STS	TST	WOM
PEE	0.771	0.000	0.901	0.931	**0.878**				
SOP	0.784	0.464	0.908	0.936	0.435	**0.885**			
STS	0.721	0.405	0.871	0.912	0.637	0.557	**0.849**		
TST	0.656	0.114	0.869	0.905	0.337	0.579	0.391	**0.810**	
WOM	0.698	0.411	0.784	0.874	0.498	0.497	0.628	0.363	**0.835**

Notes: α = Cronbach alpha; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted; PEE = positive emotional expression; SOP = share-of-purchase; STS = satisfaction; TST = trust; WOM = word-of-mouth. Diagonal value (bold number) is square root of average variance extracted; the numbers below diagonal value are correlation.

Forner and Larcker's criterion was further carried out to check the discriminant validity of the constructs (Hair et al., 2011). This was done by comparing the square root result of AVE for each construct to the correlation of all the other constructs in the model (Table 2). The correlation for each construct that exceeded the square root of their AVE indicated that they may not have sufficient discriminant validity. As shown in Table 2, all of the square roots of AVE (shown in boldface in the main diagonal of both matrices) were found to be higher than the absolute correlation between constructs. This indicates that the construct discriminant validity in this study was fulfilled.

Structural Model, Hypothesis Testing, and Results

The analysis made in the study was closely constructed according to Hair et al.'s (2011) five steps procedure to test the relationship among latent variables in the structural model. The first step was the assessment of collinearity among independent variables by using tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) score. The second step was an assessment of the coefficient of determination (R^2). The third step was an examination of the effect size (f^2). The fourth step was to test model predictive relevance (q^2). The final step was the assessment of the significance level of structural model path coefficient.

Collinearity test was carried out using SPSS 20.0 to obtain the level of tolerance and VIF score to avoid any collinearity problem among independent variables in the study as advised by Hair et al. (2011). According to Kline (1998), a collinearity problem in research model exists when the analysis result shows a score of tolerance below 0.1 and VIF score higher than 10.00. The collinearity check on this study's data found a level of tolerance at 0.851 which was more than 0.1 and the value of VIF at 1.176 which was lower than 10.00. Since the level of tolerance was higher than 0.2 and VIF score was lower than 10.00, the results indicated that there was no collinearity issue on the data used in this study.

The second step was intended to assess the coefficient of determination (R^2). The rule of thumb states that R^2 value 0.75, 0.5, and 0.25 indicate that the predictive accuracy of the research model is high, medium, and low consecutively (Hair et al., 2011; Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). This study found that R^2 for WOM and SOP were at 0.411 and 0.464 respectively. Since the scores of R^2 for WOM and SOP were close to 0.5, these indicated that the predictive accuracy of the research model in this study was moderate.

Both Hair et al. (2011) and Cohen (1998) state that the effect size (f^2) of an exogenous variable with scores at 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 should be concluded to be small, medium, and large consecutively. For this study, the score of f^2 for STS and TST to predict WOM were found to be 0.470 and 0.029 respectively. These results indicated that while the f^2 of STS to WOM was large, the f^2 of TST to WOM was considered small. Further analysis found that the score of f^2 for STS and TST to predict SOP were 0.241 and 0.222 respectively, indicating that the f^2 of STS and TST to SOP was medium.

The fourth step, namely the predictive relevance (q^2) of the study's model was assessed by using the blinfolding result. It was found that the value of the q^2 for this research model was 0.15. According to Hair et al. (2011), the score of q^2 at 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 are to be subsequently considered as small, medium, and large. Following Hair et al.'s (2011) advice, the q^2 of this research model was only moderate since the score of q^2 for this research was found to be at 0.15.

The last step requires the significance level of structural model path coefficient to be assessed. Thus, the significance level of the relationship among latent variables in this research model was assessed using t-value. The PLS-algorithm analysis was performed to get the beta value (path value coefficient) for the structural model (latent variable relationship). Bootstrapping analysis was then carried out to examine the significance level of the relationship among latent variables in the structural model. Table 3 illustrate the summarised results of hypotheses tested in the study.

Table 3
Summary of hypothesis and significance of structural path coefficient

		Research Hypothesis			
No	Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient (β)	t-value	Supported
1	H1	PEE → STS	0.637	12.564	Yes
2	H2	PEE → TST	0.337	5.240	Yes
5	H3	STS → SOP	0.390	6.334	Yes
6	H4	STS → WOM	0.574	10.315	Yes
7	H5	TST → SOP	0.426	7.384	Yes
8	H6	TST → WOM	0.139	2.298	Yes

The results in Table 2 show that R^2 value of satisfaction (STS) and trust (TST) are at 0.405 and 0.114 respectively. In other words, as much as 40.5% variance in satisfaction and 11.4% variance in trust are explained by PEE (see Figure 1). Further examinations on beta value for PEE-STS finds β = 0.637 (t = 12.564; $p < 0.001$; see Table 3) and on beta value for PEE-TST finds β = 0.337 (t = 5.240; $p < 0.01$; see Table 3). From these R^2 and β values, the study concludes that both H1 (PEE links positively to RQ's satisfaction) and H2 (PEE links positively to RQ's trust) are supported.
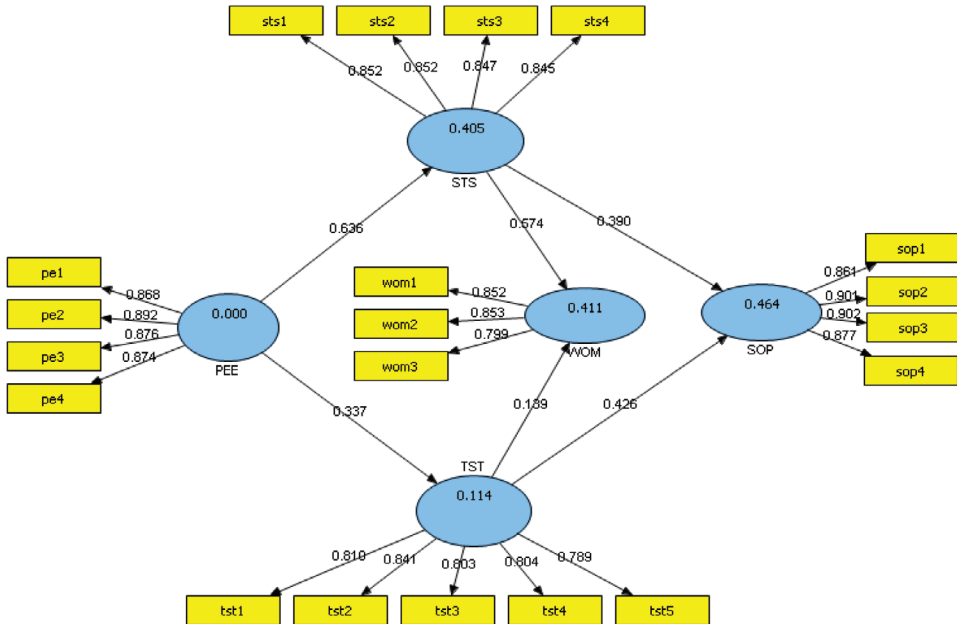

Figure 1. Research model

As for H3, H4, H5, and H6, Figure 1 and Table 2 show that R^2 value of SOP and WOM are at 0.464 and 0.411 respectively. This means that 46.4% variance in the SOP and 41.1% variance in positive WOM are explained by RQ's satisfaction and trust. Further investigation on the beta value for (STS-SOP) finds that $\beta = 0.390$ ($t = 6.334$; $p < 0.01$; see Table 3); beta value for (STS-WOM) finds that $\beta = 0.574$ ($t = 10.315$; $p < 0.001$; see Table 3); beta value for (TST-SOP) found that $\beta = 426$ ($t = 7.384$; $p < 0.001$; see Table 3); beta value for (TST-WOM) found that $\beta = 0.139$ ($t = 2.298$; $p < 0.001$; see Table 3). These results indicate that all hypotheses H3, H4, H5, and H6 are supported.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results for all hypotheses tested lead to several conclusions. First, the positive emotional expression has a significant effect on RQ in terms of satisfaction and trust. Second, both RQ components, i.e., satisfaction and trust, have significant influence over a SOP and positive WOM. These findings and conclusions are found to be in line with previous studies. For example, the positive link found between PEE and RQ's satisfaction is in line with various studies carried out over the years, for instance, by Pugh (2001), Grandey (2003), Brotheridge and Grandey (2002), Wang (2009), and Redden (2012). Similarly, the positive link between PEE and RQ's trust is in line with studies by Fischer (2012) and McAllister (1995). The positive link between RQ's satisfaction and trust with WOM are also in line with previous studies like Henning-Thurau et al. (2002), Chen et al. (2008), Satta et al. (2015), and Su et al. (2014) for satisfaction; while Guenzi and Georges (2010), Chen et al. (2008), Baloglu et al. (2014), and Su et al. (2014) for trust. In addition, the positive link between RQ's satisfaction and trust with SOP are also similar to Lin and Ding (2005), Caceres and Paparoidamis (2007), Shamdasani and Balakrishnan (2000), Rauyruen and Miller (2007), Chen et al. (2008), Lonial and Raju (2015), and Kim, Lee, and Suh (2015) for satisfaction; while Guenzi and Georges (2010), Chen et al. (2008), Lin and Ding (2005), Shamdasani and Balakrishnan (2000), Azam (2015), Bowden-Everson et al. (2013), Butt and Aftab (2013) and Aldas-Manzano et al. (2011) for trust.

These findings indicate the importance of PEE, WOM, and SOP to be considered as part of the banks' strategies to enhance their RQ with their priority banking customers. PBC, as a segment that contributes considerably to any bank's profits and growth, has every justification to be served and treated with care. Banks in Indonesia are currently appointing relationship managers to manage this important relationship. The study's findings have shown how PEE can lead to positive customer satisfaction as well as trust. This means that bank employees, particularly the

relationship manager, must continue to display only positive emotions during and in each of their interaction with PBC at all times. Banks are clearly characterised by credence service. Offering priority banking services only extend this credence further, coupled with a formidable interaction by the relationship managers during each encounter with the PBC. If the managers can keep their calm when dealing with PEE and behave as per expected by the PBC, banks can be assured that these will produce a positive experience for these customers, improve interaction, and induces customer's satisfaction and trust.

In this study, it is also found that customer's satisfaction and trust in the RQ both lead to positive WOM and SOP. These findings indicate that satisfied customers will have the intention to buy more of the bank's product and services, convey positive things about the bank and voluntarily promote the banks to others while dissatisfied one will express negative things as the marketing theory assumed. Similarly for trust, customer's trust in the RQ implies that the customers, i.e., the PBC, believe in the service provider's (in this case, the relationship manager) credibility and reliability to deliver products/services as promised. In addition, trust is also related to the customer's belief that the bank as the service provider has placed an interest in the customer's welfare and benevolence. Hence, when the customers trust the bank, the tendency is for them to buy more of the bank's products and services, and recommend the bank to their friends, relatives, and other people. This is important as positive information from existing customers particularly priority customers is more effective to entice potential customers to the banks. Interestingly, previous literature in priority/private banking is found to mention that referral from existing customers is an important source of new customers (Maude, 2006; McCarte, 2006; Wyman, 2008). In other words, satisfied customers and customers with trust will produce referral effect which in turn can establish a new relationship with the company apart from linking repeat purchase for themselves. Thus, it is safe to conclude that satisfied customers and customers with trust are very important for the bank's growth through a SOP by their existing customers and potential customers. Banks really need positive WOM to enhance their growth and increase survivability in the marketplace. Positive WOM (referral effect) in priority banking services is one of the important means to establish a new relationship with potential customers, thus creating another business opportunity to generate growth for the banks. For banks that cater important segments like PBC, the findings imply how crucial it is for them to improve the interaction quality of their employees when servicing customers at all times. As it is imperative for the service employees (e.g., relationship managers) to express positive emotions and avoid negative emotions in every service encounter, continuous training on relationship quality and services, and evaluating and monitoring that relationship quality through key performance indicators may be helpful to maintain or refining

the relationship between bank's employees as service providers and PBC so that the relationship will be astoundingly appreciated and valued.

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