



**A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF CUSTOMER
LOYALTY TO SUPERMARKETS - A CASE STUDY OF DENNIS
SUPERMARKET**

**ZHAO JINGJING
6617195030**

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
SIAM UNIVERSITY
2024**



**A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY TO
SUPERMARKETS - A CASE STUDY OF DENNIS SUPERMARKET**

Jingjing Zhao

This Independent Study has been approved as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

Advisor: _____

Chiu Qiu

(Dr. Qiu Chao)

Date: _____

7 / 1 / 2024

(Associate Professor Dr. Jomphong Mongkhonvanit)

Dean, Graduate School of Business

Date: _____

6 / 3 / 2025

Siam University ,Bangkok ,Thailand

Title: A Study of the Influencing Factors of Customer Loyalty to Supermarkets - A
Case Study of Dennis Supermarket

By: Zhao Jingjing

Degree: Master of Business Administration

Major: International Business Management

Advisor:

Chao Qiu

(Dr. Qiu Chao)

7 / 11 / 2021

ABSTRACT

The retail industry plays a crucial role in the global economic system, with its output making a significant contribution to a country's GDP. However, in recent years, the retail industry has faced some challenges. This study is based on the consumer behavior theory and the S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) theory, proposing the following research objectives: 1) To explore the factors influencing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket; 2) To suggest strategies for enhancing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.

This study used the quantitative research methodology. Utilizing the consumer behavior theory and the S-O-R theory as the theoretical foundation, this study took Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou as the research subject and conducted a questionnaire survey with customers of physical stores. A research model on the factors affecting customer loyalty was established, and 380 questionnaires were distributed. This study employed SPSS to conduct descriptive statistical analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis on the data to validate the research hypotheses.

The following conclusions were drawn: 1) Corporate image, service quality, and switching costs all have a significant positive impact on customer loyalty to supermarkets; 2) To enhance supermarket customer loyalty, it is essential to prioritize service quality, update facilities to meet customer needs, strengthen staff service awareness, and provide personalized services. At the same time, improving the corporate image, demonstrating leadership, and increasing brand recognition are important. Increasing customer switching costs, implementing customized strategies, and loyalty programs are also crucial for solidifying customer relationships. Therefore, enhancing corporate image, service quality, and managing switching costs are effective

strategies for boosting customer loyalty.

Keywords: customer loyalty, supermarkets, consumer behavior theory, S-O-R theory



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Two years of graduate school are coming to an end. I have benefited a lot from this period of learning experience, not only learning professional knowledge and broadening the horizons, but also for the future work to provide a broader thinking.

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Mrs. Zhu, who is rigorous, knowledgeable and kind, and who has been able to answer my questions, guide my study and care for my work in a timely manner even in her busy schedule. From the process of independent study selection, writing to repeated revision and improvement, she has given me patient and meticulous guidance and help, and provided me with guiding opinions and directions for my independent study. I would like to express my deep respect and heartfelt gratitude to Mrs. Zhu.

Secondly, I would like to thank the teachers of Siam University who taught me. Their profound knowledge and tireless attitude have enhanced my academic level, and with their help, this independent study could be successfully completed.

Once again, I would like to thank my classmates who have accompanied me during these two years. We struggled and progressed together, and you all gave me great help in learning and writing, which made my postgraduate life rich and colorful.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and colleagues. It is difficult to balance work, life and study, but it is your understanding and help, companionship and encouragement that made me choose to persist in the late night when I wanted to give up for countless times, and finally successfully completed my graduate study and independent study writing.

There are many other people who have helped me in the process of MBA study, I can't count them all, so I would like to express my gratitude to all of you. This period of time has brought together a lot of sweet and sour, I will be grateful and cherish it!

Zhao Jingjing
September 1, 2024

DECLARATION

I, Jingjing Zhao , hereby certify that the work embodied in this independent study entitled “A Study of the Influencing Factors of Customer Loyalty to Supermarket - A Case Study of Dennis Supermarkets” is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

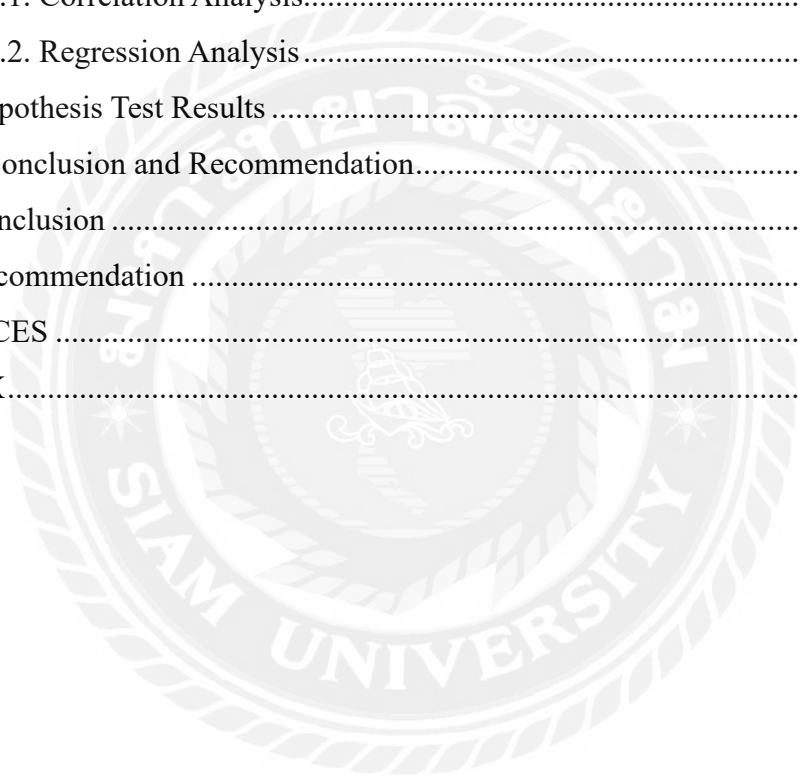
(Jingjing Zhao)
September 1, 2024



CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	III
DECLARATION	IV
CONTENTS.....	V
LIST OF TABLES	VII
LIST OF FIGURES	VIII
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1. Background of the Study	1
1.2. Questions of the Study	2
1.3. Objectives of the Study	3
1.4. Significance of the Study	3
1.5. Scope of the Study	4
1.6. Contribution of the Study.....	4
1.7. Limitations of the Study.....	5
Chapter 2 Literature Review	7
2.1. Related Concepts	7
2.1.1. Customer Loyalty.....	7
2.1.2. Large Supermarkets	7
2.2. Research on Customer Loyalty	9
2.3. Measurement of Customer Loyalty	10
2.4. Theoretical Basis.....	11
2.4.1. Consumer Behavior Theory	11
2.4.2. S-O-R Theory.....	11
2.5. Theory Review	12
2.5.1. Corporate Image.....	12
2.5.2. Service Quality.....	13
2.5.3. Switching Costs	14
2.6. Dennis Supermarket.....	15
2.7. Conceptual Framework.....	15
Chapter 3 Research Methodology.....	17
3.1. Research Design.....	17

3.2. Questionnaire Design.....	17
3.3. Research Hypothesis.....	19
3.4. Data Collection	19
3.5. Reliability Analysis.....	19
3.6. Validity Analysis	20
3.7. Data Analysis	20
Chapter 4 Findings.....	22
4.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Sample	22
4.2. Hypothesis Testing.....	24
4.2.1. Correlation Analysis.....	24
4.2.2. Regression Analysis.....	24
4.3. Hypothesis Test Results	25
Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation.....	27
5.1. Conclusion	27
5.2. Recommendation	28
REFERENCES	32
APPENDIX.....	37



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Questionnaire Items	18
Table 2	Reliability Analysis Result.....	20
Table 3	KMO and Bartlett's Test.....	20
Table 4	Descriptive Statistical Analysis.....	22
Table 5	Correlation Analysis.....	24
Table 6	Regression Analysis	25
Table 7	Hypothesis Test Results	25



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Conceptual Framework	16
----------	----------------------------	----



Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

The retail industry plays an extremely important role in the global economic system, with its output value occupying a significant position in a country's GDP. Additionally, the retail sector is a crucial link in the three driving forces of economic growth (Zhang, 2022). However, in recent years, the retail industry has faced several challenges. From the perspective of the industry, the rapid rise of e-commerce platforms has had a tremendous impact on the operations of large physical supermarkets. According to the Statistical Report on the Development of Internet in China, as of December 2022, the number of internet users in China reached 1.067 billion, with an internet penetration rate of 75.6%. The number of online shopping users was 845 million, and online payment users reached 911 million, with a usage rate of 79.2% (Jiang, 2023). At the same time, as costs such as rent, labor, and utilities continue to rise, along with the uncertainty of consumption prospects under economic internal circulation, and the impact of new retail formats such as e-commerce and live streaming sales, large supermarkets must deeply cultivate the market under the stimulation of multiple factors. From the consumer's perspective, it is essential to break existing settings and reconstruct scenarios and services, focusing on eye-catching consumption and experience economy concepts. This involves everything from supermarket interior design, color coordination, lighting and sound effects, and layout planning, to the behavior and mannerisms of staff, as well as humidity and temperature control in operating spaces. By employing a new marketing strategy that emphasizes experience before purchase, supermarkets can solidify their existing customer base, expand potential customers, enhance customer loyalty, and cultivate a sustainable consumer group.

From the perspective of consumer loyalty, as the consumption level of residents in our country continues to rise and information acquisition channels become more diverse, the consumption structure is quietly changing. Customers are no longer confined to a single store shopping method; instead, a diversified lifestyle is beginning to occupy consumers' minds, and personalized consumption is gradually becoming a popular trend. Research institutions comparing the consumption situation of the first half of 2023 with that of 2022 and 2019 show that the new middle class, such as office workers, places greater emphasis on the quality of consumption. Their consumption decisions are more rational, with a heightened focus on cost-effectiveness, careful consideration of needs and matches before consumption, and elevated demands for products, prices, and services. Additionally, there is a greater sensitivity to time and an increased demand

for shorter feedback cycles (Wei, 2023). This presents new development opportunities for large supermarkets to enhance customer loyalty through innovative marketing strategies. However, in terms of overall consumer performance, the customer loyalty of physical large supermarkets has been declining year by year due to changes in the consumption structure. Therefore, it is crucial to address how large supermarkets can adapt to socio-economic changes and maintain customer loyalty to enhance market competitiveness.

To comprehensively and systematically study the enhancement of customer loyalty to large supermarkets, this study connects theory with practice. Therefore, this study took the customers of Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou City as the research subject, and a research model examining the factors affecting customer loyalty was constructed, followed by empirical analysis to propose strategies and recommendations for enhancing customer loyalty to large supermarkets.

1.2. Questions of the Study

Due to the increasing labor costs in recent years, the entry of major domestic and international chain supermarkets such as Walmart, Carrefour, Metro, CR Vanguard, and Century Lianhua, as well as the rapid development of competitors, Dennis Supermarket is facing numerous challenges including pressure from external competition, lack of advantages, and customer loss. The primary issues for Dennis Supermarket's development are its unclear corporate image, inconsistent service quality, and low customer switching costs. Insufficient brand image and inadequate handling of negative public opinion have led to low customer recognition, making it difficult to attract customer attention in market competition. The uneven service levels and staff quality, the need for improvements in product display and shopping environment, as well as deficiencies in employee service attitude and professional knowledge, along with after-sales service issues, have all contributed to decreased customer satisfaction. Additionally, the low switching costs for customers, lack of effective customer relationship management, poor integration of online and offline services, and an incomplete membership system make it easy for customers to shift to other shopping venues (Yang, 2015). Therefore, Dennis Supermarket needs to strengthen brand building, enhance service levels, and improve the membership system to boost customer loyalty and support the company's sustainable development. The research questions are as follows:

- (1) What are the factors influencing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket?
- (2) What are the strategies to enhance customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Analyzing the competitive landscape of large supermarkets in China from the perspective of customer loyalty can provide deep insights into the current operational status and health levels of large supermarkets like Daxin, thereby offering guidance for formulating effective business strategies, enhancing market competitiveness, and improving operational performance for large supermarket enterprises.

The main objective of this research was to construct a set of customer loyalty measurement scales and analysis models suitable for large supermarkets using Zhengzhou's large supermarkets as a framework. The constructed scales and models were applied to conduct empirical research on the customer loyalty status of Dennis Supermarket, thereby understanding the competitive landscape of large supermarkets and promoting the development of China's retail industry.

- (1) To explore the factors influencing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket;
- (2) To propose strategies to enhance customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.

1.4. Significance of the Study

(1) Theoretical Significance

Firstly, this study focuses on Dennis Supermarket and analyzes the supermarket industry using relevant theories of customer loyalty, which not only enriches the research direction of customer loyalty but also provides references for subsequent academic studies. Secondly, based on a review of the existing literature on customer loyalty, this study constructs a customer loyalty measurement index system more suited to Dennis Supermarket by referencing established customer loyalty evaluation metrics and considering the unique characteristics of the supermarket. This also offers some theoretical references for measuring customer satisfaction in similar supermarkets.

(2) Practical Significance

Large supermarkets essentially operate on customer flow, making it crucial to retain both new and existing customers as part of their daily management. Implementing a "customer-centric, consumption experience first" business philosophy is of significant practical importance for enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty in large supermarkets. However, the rising popularity of diverse channels like online shopping, food delivery services, and in-store experiences has seriously weakened customer loyalty in large supermarkets. The traditional management models employed by large supermarkets can no longer meet the evolving needs of consumers who seek

novelty and change. Based on this, this study analyzes the issues faced in the development of large supermarkets and the factors influencing loyalty, using Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou as the research subject. It aims to propose solutions for enhancing customer loyalty, thereby fostering positive interactions between large supermarkets and their customers. Additionally, this study seeks to provide new insights for future research on improving customer loyalty in large supermarkets and offers useful references for similar large supermarkets.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study started with the collection and analysis of literature, combined scholars' research findings to formulate a survey questionnaire, and conducted investigations. By utilizing the collected questionnaire data, statistical analysis methods were employed to analyze, alongside relevant theoretical foundations, in order to explore the factors influencing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket. Subsequently, strategies to enhance customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket were proposed, thereby achieving the goals of improving the company's competitiveness and economic benefits. The specific process of this study is as follows.

Study One: Analysis of Factors Influencing Customer Loyalty at Dennis Supermarket

Based on scholars' research findings and relevant theories, this study analyzed the factors influencing customer loyalty. By utilizing a survey questionnaire related to the factors affecting customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket and employing statistical analysis methods, the factors impacting customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket were identified. Corresponding enhancement strategies were then proposed for these influencing factors.

Study Two: Strategies for Enhancing Customer Loyalty to Dennis Supermarket

By analyzing the factors influencing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket, this study proposed corresponding strategies for enhancing loyalty based on those influencing factors. Additionally, measures were suggested to ensure that the strategies for improving customer loyalty are better implemented.

1.6. Contribution of the Study

This study combines the achievements of previous scholars to propose influencing factors from the perspective of consumer behavior theory, established a model,

conducted empirical research, and ultimately present recommendations. The innovations of this study are as follows:

(1) Innovative research perspective. With the changes in the supply and demand relationship in the retail market, customers have become the dominant force. Customer experience management has emerged in recent years as a new customer management approach. Researching customer loyalty from the perspective of consumer behavior theory is relatively rare in the domestic context. This study adopts consumer behavior theory to study customer loyalty, distinguishing it from other studies and offering a unique and novel perspective.

(2) Innovative strategies and recommendations. This study demonstrates the level of customer loyalty at supermarkets and analyzes its influencing factors, providing targeted improvement suggestions in light of the current market changes. This research possesses significant theoretical and practical value, capable of generating certain social and economic benefits.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

Due to limitations in both subjective and objective conditions, this study's investigation and evaluation inevitably contain several shortcomings, which can be summarized as follows:

Firstly, the depth of the research is insufficient. A review of the literature indicates that there have not yet been systematic theoretical contributions regarding the enhancement of customer loyalty in large supermarkets. Given the lack of relevant materials, the investigation and analysis in this study can only serve as a preliminary exploration, with hopes for more in-depth research that can form a more complete theoretical framework.

Secondly, the breadth of the survey is limited. This study designed a questionnaire based on three dimensions: corporate image, service quality, and switching costs, and collected data for empirical analysis. However, due to constraints on research resources and conditions, the researcher focused the survey on one large supermarket and planned to distribute 380 questionnaires, which clearly cannot encompass or address the varied realities of all large supermarkets.

Thirdly, and most importantly, due to personal limitations in knowledge, the

proposed theoretical framework is only a preliminary structure and has not yet developed into a systematic theoretical paradigm. The summarization and expression of the three influencing factors on customer loyalty in large supermarkets are still open to discussion. Furthermore, the articulation of strategies for enhancing customer loyalty in large supermarkets is not sufficiently concise, and some expressions tend to be formulaic, requiring refinement in further research.



Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1. Related Concepts

2.1.1. Customer Loyalty

The term "loyalty" is defined in the Xinhua Dictionary as "referring to genuine and dedicated commitment to the country, the people, the cause, superiors, friends, etc., without any dual intentions (Jin & Dong, 2004). To this day, customer loyalty has been embraced by experts and scholars both domestically and internationally as a hot topic in the business and academic realms. This is because it has been observed that loyal customers often share certain common characteristics, such as: loyal customers make repeat purchases, with increasing frequency; they may even overlook competitors and show little interest in the prices of competing products; they actively promote the company's products to those around them; they provide constructive suggestions and feedback to the company, including complaints. Thus, loyal customers not only drive revenue growth and generate positive word-of-mouth for the company but can also lead to reduced costs and even strengthen competitive advantages.

Lu (2005) first discussed the concept of service loyalty, followed by discussions on repurchase intentions and loyalty. Wu & Shi (2010), basing their work on the consumer perspective within the context of the experience economy and focusing on department stores, constructed a customer loyalty driving model. They argued that customer loyalty is not determined by specific individual factors but rather depends on all of the consumer's experiences throughout the entire shopping process. Yang (2022) posited that customer loyalty is based on the trust and emotional connection customers have with a company's brand. Customers are inclined to choose that company's products, are interested in trying new products from the company, and recommend the company's brand to those around them. In return, the company provides relatively lower prices and high-quality after-sales service to loyal customers.

2.1.2. Large Supermarkets

According to the new standards for "Classification of Retail Formats" issued by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (2004), the retail industry is divided into seventeen formats, including convenience stores, specialty stores, department stores, supermarkets, large supermarkets, and warehouse membership stores, among others. Each format is required to meet specific criteria. Among these, large supermarkets must meet the following six conditions:

Site Selection: The location of a large supermarket must be convenient for transportation and situated in areas with high foot traffic, such as major thoroughfares, business centers in cities or districts, and residential areas.

Service Radius: The service area of a large supermarket should extend at least 2 kilometers in radius to meet the needs of residents and mobile customers.

Operational Area: The actual operating area of a large supermarket must exceed 6,000 square meters.

Product Composition: A large supermarket must offer various products that meet consumers' daily living and working needs.

Operating Method: The supermarket should have separate entrance and exit points, allow for self-service sales, and utilize a unified checkout system.

Parking Area: Given that a large supermarket's service radius is at least 2 kilometers, it is crucial to consider the size of the parking lot during the site selection process, which should be no less than 2/5 of the supermarket's operational area.

Therefore, this study defines a large supermarket as a comprehensive retail format that primarily sells popular products through self-selection and a unified checkout method, with a complete range of items capable of meeting consumers' one-stop shopping needs.

From the above definition, large supermarkets possess the following three characteristics:

(1) **High Site Selection Requirements and Large Operational Area:** Large supermarkets must be located in areas with high foot traffic near residential zones, requiring an operating area of over 6,000 square meters to accommodate a diversified product range.

(2) **Product Variety and Differential Pricing:** Large supermarkets need to satisfy the personalized demands of different consumers; thus, pricing should consider various customer groups and implement appropriate pricing strategies. The product variety must be concentrated to overall meet consumers' one-stop shopping needs while effectively controlling the breadth and depth of product categories to achieve bulk sales of a few varieties.

(3) **Three Sources of Profit:** Large supermarkets achieve sales growth by meeting consumer demand with high-quality products at low prices; they establish a second source of profit through diverse operations, such as private labels and deep processing of goods; by integrating upstream and downstream supply chains, they form unique advantages to expand economic benefits.

2.2. Research on Customer Loyalty

Research on relationship marketing by foreign scholars began in the mid-1990s, recognizing that relational factors such as trust and commitment significantly impact customer loyalty.

Morgan & Hunt (1994) proposed and tested the "Commitment-Trust" theory. Oliver (1999) used the "Cognitive-Emotional-Behavioral" theory to reveal how consumers transform cognitive experiences during the consumption process into positive emotional responses, which subsequently trigger purchasing behavior, thereby demonstrating that experiential behavior positively affects customer loyalty. Aika (1996) & Berry (2000) found that whether service quality meets consumer needs directly impacts brand loyalty. Samoz & Achito (2000) further validated the relationship between relational commitment and customer loyalty using the insurance industry as a research sample. Moorman (2001) studied the relationship between trust developed during the shopping process and loyalty in the high-tech industry based on empirical research, concluding that there is a positive correlation between the two. Joseph (2000) evaluated multiple enterprises and identified that factors directly influencing customer loyalty include perceived customer value, perceived service quality, and consumer satisfaction. Ribbink (2004) suggested that in today's rapidly developing online environment, customer loyalty holds a crucial position for companies. The premise for customer loyalty is a high level of satisfaction with the services provided by the company, with both customer satisfaction and trust having a certain impact on loyalty; thus, companies need to enhance service quality from the perspectives of usability, responsiveness, and customization to improve customer satisfaction and, in turn, loyalty. Hsin & Su (2009) argued that factors related to the layout and usability of online interfaces provided by e-commerce platforms can create a sense of security for consumers, positively influencing customer loyalty.

In the domestic academic community, there has also been extensive research on the factors influencing customer loyalty. Wang (2002) stated that besides market monopoly, customer satisfaction and perceived value are crucial for guiding repeat purchases and are key elements affecting customer loyalty. Ma (2003) believed that customer loyalty lies in the ability to resist the temptation of other products or services, coupled with a unique emotional preference and dependency on a specific brand or service. Jin et al. (2004) found through empirical research on experiential marketing that enhancing interaction and emotional connection with consumers, rather than merely providing sensory stimulation, can strengthen customer loyalty. Ma (2004) posited that both behavioral and emotional dimensions directly influence the formation and consolidation of customer loyalty. Yan (2005) constructed a complex multi-factor

driving model to explore customer loyalty issues in the mobile telecommunications market. Xu (2016) summarized five key factors influencing customer loyalty: customer satisfaction, brand image, product and service quality, customer trust, and switching costs.

Lin & Yu (2019) attempted to analyze the connections among online psychological experiences, consumer matching levels, and customer loyalty based on the context of online shopping. Wen (2019) identified factors affecting consumers' behaviors and psychology as customer loyalty influenced by customer value, customer satisfaction, switching costs, and customer experiences. Tang & Dai (2022) studied consumer loyalty by examining two competing companies offering brand trade-in services, establishing a Hotelling model to compare discounts offered through different trade-in services. They found that when the market partly covered the trade-in market, neither method significantly influenced customer loyalty; however, when the market fully covered the trade-in market, loyalty exhibited a negative relationship with trade-in discounts. Wang (2019) recommended that platform companies pay attention to merchant service quality while improving service levels. Li (2017) found through empirical research that the diversity of perceived service quality in the restaurant industry affects customer perceptions, with responsiveness and assurance having a greater impact. Yan (2019) analyzed data from 261 questionnaires collected from 12 hotels, concluding that hotel image positively influences customer loyalty.

In summary, the degree of customer loyalty is the result of a combination of various factors. A positive consumption experience can deepen impressions and understanding, stimulate the willingness to repurchase, and the defensive mechanism of customer loyalty can automatically filter out negative experiences.

2.3. Measurement of Customer Loyalty

Currently, there are three main types of indicators used domestically and internationally to measure customer loyalty. (1) Attitudinal Measurement: This primarily assesses the psychological expressions of customers, using indicators such as repurchase intention, price sensitivity, word-of-mouth communication, and emotional identification as measurement standards (Wang, 2021). (2) Behavioral Measurement: This focuses on typical behaviors and orientations of customers during consumption, with key indicators involving purchase frequency, quantity, and amount spent (Xu, 2022). (3) Combined Measurement: This merges the previous two measurement types, comprehensively monitoring customer loyalty through factors such as shopping

frequency, brand preference, and switching costs (Shi, 2013).

Among these three measurement methods, attitudinal measurement only studies the tendencies of attitudes and psychology, making it difficult to form robust quantitative metrics; behavioral measurement emphasizes purchasing behavior while neglecting the influence of changes in consumer psychology on customer loyalty, leading to an incomplete construction of measurement indicators. Conversely, combined measurement not only focuses on measuring customers' repeat purchases but also considers their cognitive loyalty, ensuring the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of customer loyalty measurement from both behavioral and emotional perspectives. This method can more accurately and objectively reflect the true state of customers, making its conclusions more convincing. Therefore, this study will adopt the combined measurement method.

2.4. Theoretical Basis

2.4.1. Consumer Behavior Theory

The consumer behavior originates from classical economics and draws upon theories from economics, behavioral science, psychology, and management, having developed over the past hundred years. This theory primarily explores how consumers acquire, consume, and dispose of products and services. The American Marketing Association defines consumer behavior as a dynamic interaction process influenced by factors such as perception, cognition, behavior, and environment (Zheng, 2020). Consumer purchasing behavior is a concentrated manifestation of consumers' psychological activities, with key aspects revolving around purchasing strategy.

From the 1950s to the 1960s, Barry (1956) explored consumer behavior from a cognitive perspective, indicating that the level of consumer awareness of products and services has a certain impact on purchasing behavior. He subsequently integrated consumer behavior studies with psychology to propose consumer motivation theory (Wang, 2023). With the improvement of living standards, consumption habits have changed accordingly, leading to an increase in service-related consumption. Research by Zhang & Wang (2015) indicates that service quality and the environment increasingly influence consumer behavior.

2.4.2. S-O-R Theory

The S-O-R theory, or "Stimulus-Organism-Response" model, evolved from the

"Input-Output" model and was later expanded upon by Tolman (1951) through the addition of organism factors. However, this model overlooked the internal conscious state of the stimulus receiver, making the connection between the two overly direct and somewhat limited. To address this gap, the S-O-R theory proposes that organism factors act as mediators between external stimuli and individual responses, where external environments can exert a certain degree of stimuli on people's psychological states, prompting corresponding psychological or behavioral responses.

Based on the S-O-R theory model, Chen (2022) established a satisfaction model for mobile phone users regarding mobile app interface design, finding that the design style of the interface can influence users' continuous usage behavior through customer satisfaction. In research on consumer behavior within the retail industry, factors such as product price and store environment are often studied as stimuli. Organism factors primarily include personal emotions and perceived risks, with final response factors reflecting intrinsic or behavioral reactions. Intrinsic responses manifest as consumers' attitudes and willingness, while behavioral responses are represented by consumers' reactions to positive and negative stimuli. In retail studies, scholars often consider consumers' purchase intentions and purchase volumes as response factors for related research.

2.5. Theory Review

2.5.1. Corporate Image

Corporate image refers to the overall impression and evaluation that the public and consumers have of a company; it is a comprehensive reflection of the company's performance and characteristics in the public's mind. Corporate image encompasses various aspects including product quality, service level, brand image, and sense of social responsibility. A positive and proactive corporate image can instill strong confidence in customers regarding the company's products or services, leading them to expect higher returns and fostering sufficient loyalty towards the company. Moreover, corporate image directly influences consumers' perceptions of product or service quality. When consumers are satisfied with a company's corporate image, they are likely to have higher expectations regarding the quality of that brand's products or services. This enhancement of quality perception encourages consumers to be more inclined to purchase that brand's offerings, thereby increasing customer loyalty. Corporate image not only affects consumers' initial purchase decisions but also influences their future buying behavior. A company with a good corporate image is capable of consistently providing high-quality products and services to meet consumer needs and expectations. This long-term, stable relationship with customers is an important guarantee for the ongoing development of the enterprise.

Zhou & Shen (2010) pointed out that a company's overall performance shapes its brand image, and a positive brand image can earn user trust and enhance loyalty. Zhu (2015) argued that image is a primary manifestation of a brand and plays a significant role in influencing consumers' purchasing intentions and promoting brand interaction, ultimately affecting user loyalty. Zhang (2012), in a study of Starbucks, found that the corporate image formed by factors such as store atmosphere, brand, logo, products, services, promotions, and management style can influence customer loyalty. Zhao (2012), through literature review, asserted that corporate image is a major factor affecting customer loyalty, and suggested that companies can enhance customer loyalty by increasing awareness of integrity, improving product quality, enhancing employee service, and setting reasonable prices. Chen & Han (2020) stated that good company image, high service quality, and perceived value significantly promote customer satisfaction and loyalty. Hu & Zhang (2021) noted that in the e-commerce environment, brand image and customer trust affect customer loyalty, and that merchants can enhance customer loyalty to some extent by improving brand image and customer trust. Yan (2023) pointed out that corporate image can directly and significantly impact customer loyalty. Specifically, a good corporate image can enhance customers' trust and affinity toward the company, subsequently improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2.5.2. Service Quality

Service quality primarily refers to the comparison results between customers' perceptions and expectations regarding the services provided by the service provider during the service delivery process. It encompasses various aspects of service, such as timeliness, accuracy, professionalism, friendliness, and overall service experience. The level of service quality directly reflects a company's ability and effectiveness in meeting customer needs and is one of the key standards by which customers evaluate service providers. Service quality is a direct factor influencing customer satisfaction. When the services offered by a company meet or even exceed customers' expectations, customers feel satisfied, and this satisfaction is the foundation for building customer loyalty. High-quality service not only enhances customer satisfaction but also stimulates positive word-of-mouth communication. Satisfied customers are more likely to recommend the company's products or services to friends and family, and this positive word-of-mouth helps the company attract more potential customers and further enhances the loyalty of existing customers. Service quality affects not only the current loyalty of customers but also has a profound impact on their future loyalty. Quality service can establish long-term relationships between customers and the enterprise, enabling customers to maintain loyalty to the company over time. In contrast, poor service may lead to rapid customer attrition and diminish the sustainability of customer loyalty.

Regarding the definition of service quality, Gi (2009) argued that customers are the ones who evaluate service quality, often assessing not only the business but also the service process itself. Customers determine service quality based on the differences

between their expectations prior to receiving service and their actual experiences afterward; that is, the difference perceived by customers represents the service quality. Ma (2012), through the analysis of the characteristics and advantages of mobile commerce combined with customer consumption behavior, proposed that a secure shopping environment, user-friendly interface, pricing, and personalized service influence customer loyalty from the perspective of service quality. Vinita (2015) validated that service quality, perceived price fairness, and usability significantly affect user loyalty. Sun (2017), from the perspective of relationship marketing theory, indicated that service quality, relational trust, and customer satisfaction positively impact user loyalty.

2.5.3. Switching Costs

Switching costs refer to the transaction costs incurred by customers when changing suppliers. Switching costs can be divided into three types: first, economic costs, which represent the monetary costs incurred during transactions; second, learning costs, which refer to the costs of relearning and adapting for customers when choosing to shop on a different fresh e-commerce platform to achieve the same level of convenience as with the original; and third, switching losses, which denote losses incurred from abandoning accumulated rewards or discounts on the original platform when a switch occurs. These costs are not limited to direct monetary expenditures but also include intangible costs arising from changing habits, relearning the use of new products or services, establishing new trust relationships, potential loss of existing benefits or rewards, and possible service interruptions or quality uncertainties encountered due to the switch. When customers face high switching costs, they must weigh the numerous inconveniences and risks associated with abandoning their current products or services, which naturally enhances their willingness to continue the relationship and promotes customer loyalty. From the company's perspective, skillfully leveraging switching costs as a market barrier can effectively fend off competitors' incursions and protect the existing customer base from erosion. By designing personalized membership systems, offering rich reward points, and deepening brand loyalty programs, companies can not only increase customers' switching costs but also strengthen emotional connections and establish long-term, stable customer relationships.

Szymanski et al. (2001) empirically demonstrated that customer satisfaction is not the sole determinant of customer loyalty; switching costs also play an important role. Kim et al. (2004) considered switching costs to be direct driving factors influencing user loyalty. Scholars such as Jones et al. (2002) posited that switching costs represent consumers' perceptions of the economic, time, and psychological costs involved when choosing substitutes for existing products. When consumers perceive that switching to an alternative platform incurs substantial costs, they are more likely to continue using their familiar current platform. Research by Lee, Sohn (2004), Yang & Peterson (2004) both indicate that switching costs impact user loyalty. Sanghui (2007) found in

empirical research that online customers' switching costs significantly affect loyalty. Cui (2014) argued that switching costs include foregone benefits and losses incurred after switching, both of which can positively influence user loyalty. Zhu & Xu (2015) noted that when customers switch to support a new brand or product, they incur certain switching costs, and the higher these costs, the less likely customers are to switch to another brand or product, with service quality playing a significant advantage in this process. Liu (2019) suggested that measuring switching costs can help analyze the level of customer loyalty; the higher the switching costs, the less willing customers are to abandon loyalty to the original brand. Shi (2022) stated that switching costs, service content and quality, credibility, and cost-effectiveness all have significant positive impacts. Meng & Meng (2020) concluded from their research on cultural and creative products that customer database management needs to be strengthened to understand customer needs adequately, thereby enhancing customer loyalty; they also recommended that online experience services be introduced to increase customer participation, further cultivating loyalty and reducing switching costs..

2.6. Dennis Supermarket

Zhengzhou Dennis Supermarket was officially established in 1995 and is part of the Dongyu Group, which encompasses a retail enterprise that integrates department stores, hypermarkets, convenience stores, and logistics centers. It is also one of the two pilot projects for Taiwanese business department store retail selected by the State Council nationwide. With the strong support of leaders from various levels of the Henan Provincial Government and Zhengzhou Municipal Government, the first Dennis Supermarket in Henan was opened in Zhengzhou on November 16, 1997. Over the past 20 years, Dennis has continuously improved its business operations and expanded its chain scale, with Zhengzhou as its core, radiating throughout Henan Province, making positive contributions to the improvement of living standards for the people in Central China and the development of commerce, while also achieving good economic and social benefits.

Dennis Supermarket is able to provide a shopping space that is affordable yet high-quality and comfortable for unemployed workers, receiving praise from the citizens of Zhengzhou and recognition from provincial and municipal leaders after its opening. Despite being in a period of commercial recession, Dennis Supermarket plans to open new stores, which will inject fresh energy into the commercial atmosphere of Zhengzhou and create re-employment opportunities for unemployed workers.

2.7. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework diagram for this paper is shown as follows.

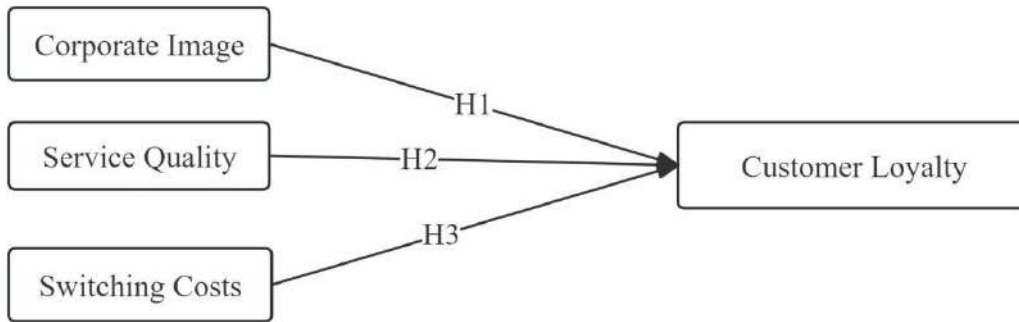


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework



Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employed the quantitative analysis method. Using a literature review approach and advanced online search systems, the study closely revolved around key concepts, namely, customer loyalty, corporate image, service quality, and switching costs. The researcher extensively engaged with and thoroughly studied authoritative books and cutting-edge literature in related fields. Simultaneously, it strictly adhered to the scientific methodology of quantitative research and the principles of rigorous questionnaire design to create the "Survey Questionnaire on the Overall Situation of Customer Loyalty to Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou," accurately capturing the voices of the respondents. Upon collecting the questionnaires, invalid responses were eliminated, retaining only genuine and valid questionnaires for subsequent empirical analysis. Utilizing SPSS data analysis software, the study conducted a comprehensive, multi-dimensional in-depth analysis of the collected data, ranging from descriptive statistical analysis that outlines the data profile to reliability and validity analysis ensuring the robustness and reliability of the data, followed by correlation and regression analysis that explored the relationships and impact levels among variables. This successfully validated the research hypotheses proposed in this study and extracted research conclusions with profound practical guidance. On this basis, targeted recommendations and strategies were further put forth, aiming to provide valuable references for enhancing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou and the entire industry.

3.2. Questionnaire Design

The overall sample for this study consisted of 380 customers of Dennis Supermarket. A random sampling method was employed for the sample selection process. Random sampling means that each part of the total number surveyed has an opportunity to be selected, aligning with the principle of uniform distribution of sampling opportunities, also known as "equiprobable" events, which is a commonly used method in sampling surveys. According to the principles of random sampling, every participant in the overall population has a known, non-zero probability of becoming a research subject, ensuring the representativeness and generalizability of the sample as much as possible. This study used Yamane's (1967) sampling table, primarily conducting the sampling at a 95% confidence interval.

The main purposes are: first, to investigate the demographic characteristics of

Dennis Supermarket's customers for a preliminary understanding of the supermarket's customer base and to categorize the types of customers; and second, to explore the influencing factors of customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket to gather data for proposing strategies to enhance customer loyalty. Therefore, the questionnaire is divided into two modules.

First module: demographics of Dennis Supermarket's customers. This module collects information on respondents' gender, age, marital status, occupation, educational level, and monthly disposable personal income, to allow for targeted analysis of Dennis Supermarket's customer characteristics. The questions are multiple-choice.

Second module: Influencing Factors of Customer Loyalty to Dennis Supermarket. This module applies the comprehensive measurement methods described in Chapter Two, measuring customer loyalty through three dimensions: corporate image, service quality, and switching costs. The questions utilize a five-point Likert scale for statistical analysis, with scores corresponding to attitudes ranging from 1 to 5, with specific details provided in the appendix questionnaire.

Table 1 Questionnaire Items

Factor	Questions
Corporate Image	1. If I shop at other department stores, I believe the new retailers cannot provide equivalent service.
	2. If I shop at other department stores, I will need to spend a lot of time re-establishing relationships with the sales staff.
	3. If I shop at other department stores, I will need to spend a lot of time readjusting to the services offered by the new retailer.
	4. If I shop at other department stores, I will no longer enjoy the same discounts provided by the previous department store.
	5. I am accustomed to the service style of this department store's employees, so I do not want to shop elsewhere.
Service Quality	6. The department store provides delivery or modification services for products.
	7. The service staff at the department store know the customers' needs.
	8. The department store offers personalized services to customers.
	9. I appreciate that the department store prioritizes the interests of customers.
Switching Costs	10. The department store has long operating hours and is convenient for shopping.
	11. The corporate identity of the department store is distinctive and easily recognizable.
	12. The department store has high brand recognition.
	13. The department store holds a leading market position.

	14. The department store holds a significant position in my mind.
	15. Under the same level of service, even if the department store is more expensive than other retailers, I am still willing to continue shopping at the department store.
Customer Loyalty	16. Even if the department store reasonably raises its prices, I am still willing to shop there.
	17. Even if I find out the price is relatively expensive after purchase, I still believe it is worth it.

3.3. Research Hypothesis

The research hypotheses of this study are proposed as follows:

H1: There is a significant correlation between corporate image and customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.

H2: There is a significant correlation between service quality and customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.

H3: There is a significant correlation between switching costs and customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.

3.4. Data Collection

A total of 380 electronic questionnaires were distributed to the customers of Dennis Supermarket in this survey. After removing 13 invalid questionnaires due to incomplete responses and multiple selections, 367 valid questionnaires were actually collected, resulting in an effective response rate of 96.58%. These valid responses were utilized for data analysis to verify the hypothesized causal relationships among the various variables.

3.5. Reliability Analysis

A reliability analysis of the survey questionnaire can determine whether the questionnaire data is reliable and stable. If there are biases during the data collection process, it will not pass the reliability test. Generally, reliability is assessed based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient standard; when the Cronbach's alpha value of the questionnaire data is above 0.7, it passes the reliability test. Therefore, a reliability analysis was conducted on the customer loyalty survey questionnaire for Dennis Supermarket, yielding the results shown in the table below.

According to the results of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient indicators in Table 2,

it can be observed that the Cronbach's Alpha values corresponding to various variables in the scale are all above 0.75, passing the reliability test; thus, other analyses can proceed.

Table 2 Reliability Analysis Result

	Cronbach Alpha	Terms
Corporate Image	0.839	5
Service Quality	0.838	5
Switching Costs	0.817	4
Customer Loyalty	0.767	3
Population	0.899	17

3.6. Validity Analysis

In scientific research, exploratory factor analysis is typically used to validate the effectiveness of questionnaire data results, and it is required that the questionnaire first undergo the KMO and Bartlett tests before proceeding with exploratory factor analysis. Generally speaking, when the KMO value exceeds 0.7, it is considered suitable for factor analysis.

From Table 3, it can be noted that the KMO value for the customer loyalty survey questionnaire at Dennis Supermarket is 0.917, greater than 0.7, with a corresponding p-value significance of 0.000, indicating that the scale is appropriate for factor analysis.

Table 3 KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO Number of Sampling Suitability Measures.		0.917
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approximate cardinality	2525.866
	Degrees of freedom	136
	Significance	0

3.7. Data Analysis

The main statistical methods used in this study are described as follows:

Descriptive Statistical Analysis: By calculating the percentages and frequencies of the basic information section of the questionnaire, an overall understanding of the respondents, that is, customers of Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou, was obtained.

Analyzing the proportion of measurement items allows for deriving the statistical characteristics of each manifest variable and latent variable, as well as users' shopping habits, which aids in analyzing market-related situations through demographic characteristics.

Reliability and Validity Analysis: Reliability analysis assesses the reliability of the questionnaire, primarily determining the stability of the questionnaire and sample data based on repeated measurement results. Typically, Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate the level of reliability. Validity analysis, on the other hand, examines the authenticity and effectiveness of the questionnaire, primarily evaluating whether the questionnaire and sample data can accurately reflect the issues being studied.

Correlation Analysis: Correlation analysis was used to determine whether there is a relationship between two or more quantitative data, whether the relationship is positive or negative, and the degree of closeness. This analysis method does not differentiate between independent variables and dependent variables, and it cannot represent causal relationships. Correlation analysis must precede regression analysis; only when the variables are highly correlated does regression analysis become meaningful.

Regression Analysis: Regression analysis is a statistical method used for quantitatively researching the relationships between multiple variables and determining the causal relationships among them. Based on the related research models and hypotheses organized above, this study analyzed the significant regression relationships and their significance through linear regression and ridge regression analysis.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Sample

This study was based on data from a customer loyalty survey conducted at Dennis Supermarket, focusing on analyzing customers' basic information, including gender, age, marital status, occupation, educational level, and monthly disposable personal income. Through detailed analysis of data, this study aimed to reveal the basic characteristics of the customers base at Dennis Supermarket, providing data support for further improving services and enhancing customer loyalty.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Variables	Options	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	247	67.30%
	Female	120	32.70%
Age	Under 18 years old	14	3.80%
	18-30 years old	169	46.00%
	31-40 years old	109	29.70%
	41-50 years old	60	16.30%
	Above 51 years old	15	4.10%
Marital status	Unmarried	92	25.10%
	Married	275	74.90%
Occupation	Students	40	10.90%
	Enterprise personnel	180	49.00%
	Institution personnel	93	25.30%
	Self-employed/freelancers	38	10.40%
	Others	16	4.40%
Educational level	College and below	173	47.10%
	Undergraduate	143	39.00%
	Graduate students	36	9.80%
	Graduate students and above	15	4.10%
Monthly disposable personal income	Less than 1500 yuan	48	13.10%
	1500-3000 yuan	54	14.70%
	3001-6000 yuan	139	37.90%
	6001-8000 yuan	84	22.90%
	Above 8001	42	11.40%

The survey results show that the customer base at Dennis Supermarket has a higher proportion of male customers, reaching 67.3%, while female customers account for 32.7%. This data indicates that Dennis Supermarket performs well in attracting male customers, but it should also pay attention to the needs of female customers to further balance the gender ratio of its clientele.

In terms of age distribution, customers aged 18-30 make up the highest proportion at 46.0%, followed by those aged 31-40, who account for 29.7%. This reflects Dennis Supermarket's significant market influence among the younger population. At the same time, customers under 18 and over 51 account for a lower proportion, so the supermarket might consider optimizing its product structure and service quality to attract more customers from different age groups.

In terms of marital status, the highest percentage of people are married, with 74.90% married and 25.10% unmarried.

Regarding occupation distribution, employees in enterprises make up the largest share at 49.0%, followed by those in public institutions and students, accounting for 25.3% and 10.9% respectively. Additionally, self-employed individuals/freelancers and those in other occupations also comprise a certain proportion. This indicates that the customer base at Dennis Supermarket has a diverse range of occupational backgrounds, and the supermarket should provide more targeted products and services based on the needs of customers from different professions.

In terms of educational level, customers with a bachelor's degree or higher account for 48.8% (39.0% with a bachelor's degree and 9.8% with a graduate degree), indicating that Dennis Supermarket's customer base has a relatively high level of education. This requires the supermarket to maintain high standards in product selection, marketing strategies, and service quality to meet the needs of highly educated customers.

Regarding disposable personal income, customers from different income levels are represented. Among them, those earning less than 1,500 yuan and those earning between 1,500-3,000 yuan represent a lower proportion, while customers earning between 3,001-6,000 yuan account for the highest percentage at 37.90%. The supermarket can develop reasonable pricing strategies based on customers' income levels to attract more customers from various income tiers.

In summary, the customer base at Dennis Supermarket exhibits diverse characteristics in terms of gender, age, marital status, occupation, educational level, and

monthly disposable personal income.

4.2. Hypothesis Testing

4.2.1. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was used to examine whether there is a relationship between two or more quantitative data sets. In research, the Pearson correlation coefficient is commonly used to measure the strength of this association. If the results are significant ($p < 0.05$), the degree of correlation can be assessed based on the size of the correlation coefficient. Generally, a Pearson coefficient above 0.7 indicates a very strong relationship; a coefficient between 0.4 and 0.7 indicates a strong relationship; and a coefficient between 0.2 and 0.4 indicates a moderate correlation. The research results of the model in this study are shown in the table, and the visualization of the Pearson correlation coefficients is shown in Table 5, providing a more intuitive representation of the correlation relationships among the variables.

Table 5 Correlation Analysis

		Switching Costs	Service Quality	Corporate Image	Customer Loyalty
Switching Costs	Pearson's correlation	1			
Service Quality	Pearson's correlation	.431**	1		
Corporate Image	Pearson's correlation	.456**	.464**	1	
Customer Loyalty	Pearson's correlation	.447**	.544**	.507**	1

** Significant correlation at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

It can be seen that there is a significant positive correlation between switching costs, service quality, corporate image, and customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket customers, with correlation coefficients of 0.447, 0.544, and 0.507 respectively. This indicates that hypotheses H3, H2, and H1 can undergo regression analysis.

4.2.2. Regression Analysis

Correlation analysis does not differentiate between independent and dependent variables, therefore it cannot determine the direction of causal relationships between variables. This study further employed regression analysis to verify the direction and extent of the influence among the various variables. Regression analysis is a statistical

method used to determine the degree of interdependence among two or more quantitative variables, mainly including linear regression, nonlinear regression, and logistic regression, along with their corresponding SPSS processing procedures. Based on the previous correlation analysis, we can conclude that switching costs, service quality, corporate image, and customer loyalty are correlated, allowing us to proceed with the regression analysis.

Table 6 Regression Analysis

	B	SE	Beta	T	P
(Constant)	1.485	0.549		2.705	0.007
Switching Costs	0.117	0.031	0.178	3.748	0.000
Service Quality	0.226	0.031	0.343	7.193	0.000
Corporate Image	0.208	0.038	0.266	5.498	0.000
R ²			0.401		
Adjusted R ²			0.396		
F			81.093		

a Dependent variable: Customer Loyalty

According to the regression analysis results in the above table, the coefficient of determination (R^2) for the regression model of switching costs, service quality, corporate image, and customer loyalty is 0.401, while the adjusted (R^2) is 0.396. This means that the model explains 39% of the variability in customer loyalty. With ($F = 81.093$) and ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$), it indicates that the model passes the F-test, meaning the regression is significant. The regression coefficients for switching costs, service quality, and corporate image are all below 0.000, indicating a significant positive impact on customer loyalty.

In summary, switching costs, service quality, corporate image have a positive effect on customer loyalty, supporting the validity of hypotheses H1, H2, and H3.

4.3. Hypothesis Test Results

The following research hypothesis test results are obtained:

Table 7 Hypothesis Test Results

Theoretical hypothesis	Research findings
H1: There is a significant correlation between corporate image and customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.	Established

H2: There is a significant correlation between service quality and customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.	Established
H3: There is a significant correlation between switching costs and customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket.	Established



Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1. Conclusion

This study focused on Dennis Supermarket and identified several major issues currently faced by Dennis Supermarket and similar hypermarkets during their development, including homogeneous competition, insufficient standardization, low switching costs, and low user loyalty. Based on a review of the theories related to customer loyalty and combined with the industry characteristics of hypermarkets, this research further defined relevant concepts based on existing studies by scholars, thereby constructing a theoretical model of the influencing factors of customer loyalty to hypermarkets and formulating research hypotheses. It also designed measurement indicators and survey items, creating a questionnaire to investigate customers with shopping experiences at Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou. A total of 367 valid questionnaires were collected, allowing for an analysis of the basic characteristics of the consumer sample. Additionally, through empirical research using SPSS 25 for correlation analysis, regression analysis, and other methods, it was found that the main factors influencing customer loyalty to Dennis Supermarket include corporate image, service quality, and switching costs. The main conclusions are as follows:

Corporate image has a positive impact on customer loyalty to hypermarkets. Regression analysis verifies that the positive impact of corporate image on customer loyalty is significant, with a regression coefficient of 0.000, indicating that the better the corporate image, the higher the customer loyalty. A positive corporate image helps foster subjective trust in the company among users, making it easier to cultivate customer loyalty. Additionally, a positive corporate image can guide customers in forming positive values and emotional judgments, promoting the occurrence of a ripple effect that turns customers into advocates for the supermarket, thereby enhancing customer loyalty.

Service quality has a positive impact on customer loyalty to hypermarkets. Regression analysis shows that the regression coefficient for service quality regarding customer loyalty to hypermarkets is 0.000; thus, the higher the service quality, the higher the customer loyalty. As the quality of services provided by the hypermarket shopping platform increases, customer loyalty correspondingly improves. This is because high-quality service can meet or exceed customer expectations, enhancing customer trust and reliance on the brand, which in turn promotes repeat purchases and recommendations to others.

Switching costs have a positive impact on customer loyalty to hypermarkets. Regression analysis indicates that the regression coefficient for switching costs concerning customer loyalty is 0.000; therefore, the higher the switching costs, the higher the customer loyalty. When customers perceive that switching to an alternative platform incurs greater costs, they are more likely to continue using their familiar current platform. There are certain differences in product category differentiation and information presentation among different hypermarket shopping platforms, which means that users not only need to obtain product information during their shopping experience but also gradually become familiar with the credibility, service quality, and personalized recommendations of the hypermarket shopping platform based on their shopping experiences. In marketing activities, if hypermarket shopping platforms can enhance the benefits of remaining on the current platform, they are more likely to retain existing users. Managing and reducing losses incurred from switching can ensure that users of other platforms expend fewer resource costs during the transition process.

5.2. Recommendation

(1) Improve Service Quality

Service quality is an important factor affecting customer loyalty. Therefore, enhancing service quality is a task that every manager and employee in a large supermarket must prioritize highly.

First of all, as managers, it is essential to promptly track new trends, technologies, and equipment in the industry to ensure that service facilities meet the changing needs of consumers. To this end, regular market research and competitive product analysis are crucial. This not only helps identify consumer expectations but also allows managers to seize opportunities in competition. Additionally, updating service venues and equipment can provide customers with a more comfortable shopping experience, thereby improving overall satisfaction.

At the same time, strengthening institutional development is also an important measure to enhance service quality. Large supermarkets should establish a scientific management system to ensure that all employees understand and comply with it, thereby creating an efficient service system. In terms of regulations, adhering strictly to rules and imposing penalties for violations, with a clear distinction between rewards and punishments, can not only enhance employees' awareness of service but also strengthen team cohesion and execution. A clear reward and punishment mechanism can motivate employees to actively provide quality service in their daily work while

appropriately punishing infractions to maintain discipline within the entire team.

Secondly, for employees of large supermarkets, establishing a customer-centered service concept is especially important. This concept should be ingrained deeply, serving as the behavioral guideline for every employee in their daily work. Employees must internalize the service concept and embody it in their actions, ensuring that every interaction with customers reflects the value placed on them. For example, when serving customers, employees should show enthusiasm and professionalism, actively listen to customer needs, and continuously improve services based on customer feedback. In this context, cultivating employees' professional and ethical qualities becomes crucial. Supermarkets should provide systematic training and development opportunities for employees to help them improve skills such as communication, problem-solving, and emotional management.

Finally, in meeting the diverse needs of both new and existing customers, supermarkets should flexibly respond to changes in the market environment. By regularly collecting customer feedback, supermarkets can obtain direct information about service quality, allowing for continual adjustment and optimization of service strategies. For instance, using customer satisfaction surveys and online review monitoring can help promptly grasp customers' opinions and expectations regarding service. Building a membership system can also allow supermarkets to offer personalized services and discounts periodically, enhancing customers' sense of belonging and loyalty.

(2) Enhance Corporate Image

Enhancing the corporate image is an important way to increase customer loyalty. Research shows that the more positive the corporate image, the higher the loyalty of customers towards the business. Thus, companies must consider various dimensions when shaping their image to ensure that it is authentic, distinctive, and attractive.

Firstly, the role of corporate leaders cannot be overlooked. To enhance the corporate image, leaders must possess good management skills and moral integrity. They should not only focus on performance but also on the dissemination and implementation of corporate culture, making employees aware of the close connection between corporate image and personal career development. Leaders should serve as examples through their actions in daily work, encouraging employees to face customers with a positive attitude, provide quality service, and enhance customers' shopping experiences. Moreover, companies can use regular training and team-building activities to strengthen employees' identification with corporate culture and mission, thereby

better reflecting the company's positive image.

Secondly, brand development is crucial for enhancing corporate image. Supermarkets can create unique and appealing brand stories to strengthen customers' emotional connection to the brand. For instance, by sharing the brand's history, corporate social responsibility, and contributions to the community in marketing campaigns, customers can develop trust and loyalty towards the brand. Additionally, companies should continuously optimize product and service quality to further elevate their brand image. The product quality and service experience felt by customers during shopping are important components of brand image.

Furthermore, improving corporate image cannot be done without effective marketing communication. Appropriately using modern media channels can convey brand information to a wider audience. By collaborating with well-known celebrities or social media influencers, supermarkets can rapidly increase brand exposure and recognition. When selecting endorsers, companies should ensure that the endorser's image aligns with the brand image to avoid negative impacts stemming from a mismatch. Additionally, employing a combination of online and offline advertising strategies can maximize brand influence across different platforms. For example, organizing activities and interactions on popular social media platforms can attract younger customer demographics and stimulate their engagement and sharing.

(3) Increase Customer Switching Costs

In today's highly competitive market environment, increasing customer switching costs has become one of the key strategies for large supermarkets to maintain customer loyalty. Supermarkets should establish long-term developmental goals and view every customer as a long-term client. Adhering to the marketing concept of "retaining an old customer is like acquiring a new one" can effectively enhance customers' emotional attachment to the brand, reducing the likelihood of them switching supermarkets easily.

Firstly, offering customized services and personalized products can effectively increase customer loyalty. For example, supermarkets can implement membership card systems to provide members with unique discounts and exclusive products, thereby enhancing the shopping experience. Members not only enjoy lower prices but also have opportunities to acquire limited-edition products or priority access to new arrivals. This exclusive treatment makes customers feel valued and respected, leading them to prefer shopping at the supermarket.

Moreover, to increase customers' sense of belonging, supermarkets should utilize

data analysis technologies to track customers' shopping preferences and historical behaviors, offering personalized recommendations and special discounts. When customers feel that their needs are understood and met, the cost of switching to other brands increases accordingly. More importantly, for members' birthdays and significant holidays, supermarkets can express care and greetings through messages, emails, or directly sending greeting cards. Such details add a sense of ceremony, allowing customers to feel warmth and further strengthen their emotional connection with the supermarket.

For customers, in addition to economic considerations regarding switching costs, emotional factors and a sense of identity also play a role. Supermarkets can design highly interactive activities, such as hosting member days to invite customers to participate in exclusive shopping events or raffles. Not only does this enhance interaction between customers and the supermarket, but it also increases customers' sense of engagement and belonging. A variety of events allows customers to feel like they are part of the supermarket, thereby further increasing their switching costs.

Finally, large supermarkets can enhance customers' switching costs by establishing comprehensive loyalty reward programs that encourage repeat purchases. For instance, customers earn points for every certain amount of spending, which can be exchanged for shopping vouchers or tangible gifts. In this way, even when customers encounter price offers from competitors, the potential points reward makes them more inclined to continue shopping at the supermarket.

REFERENCES

- Aleksander, L., Paweł, A. K., Małgorzata, A. L., & Longwic, R. (2018). Using neural networks in modeling customer loyalty in passenger cars maintenance and repair services. *Applied Sciences*, 8(5).
- Anonymous. (2010). Research and markets: Trust agents: Using the web to build influence, improve reputation, and earn trust explores how business people can use the web's new social software tools. *M2 Presswire*.
- Chen, F., & Han, L. (2020). Discussion on the formation path of customer loyalty. *China Price*, (12), 37-39.
- Chen, X. M. (2022). *A study on the impact of multi-channel retail service quality on customer loyalty in host countries*. (Master's Degree). Inner Mongolia University of Finance and Economics.
- Cui, M., Hu, H., & Chen, J. X. (2014). Research on e-commerce platform user loyalty under the new perspective of conversion cos. *Management Modernization* *Management Modernization*, (01), 30-32.
- Gill, T., & Lei, J. (2009). Convergence in the high-technology consumer markets: Not all brands gain equally from adding new functionalities to products. *Marketing Letters*, 20(1), 91-103.
- Gruen, T. W., & Summers, J. O. (2010). Relationship marketing activities, commitment and membership behaviors in professional associations. *Journal of Marketing*, 64(3), 34-49
- Gui, Y. J. (2023). *Research on the impact of commercial bank service quality on customer loyalty in the context of digitalization*. (Master's Degree). Southwestern University of Finance and Economics.
- Hsin, H. C., & Su, W. C. (2009). Consumer perception of interface quality, security, and loyalty in electronic commerce. *Information & Management*, 46(7), 411-417.
- Hu, Z. G., & Zhang, L. L. (2021). E-commerce platform brand image, product involvement and customer loyalty. *Research on Business Economy*, (10), 87-90.
- Huo, J. J. (2008). *An empirical study on the influence of retail environment on customers' perception and shopping behavior in hypermarkets*. (Master Degree). Zhejiang University.
- Jiang, C. J. (2023). *A study on enterprise value assessment of e-commerce platform based on improved CVBC Model*. (Master's Degree). Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics.

- Jigar, A., Doshi, Darshak, A., & Desai. (2016). Role of production part approval process in continuous quality improvement and customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Engineering Research in Africa*, 4385(22), 174-183.
- Jin, Y. F., & Dong, D. H. (2004). An empirical study of factors influencing consumer trust. *Management World*, (7).
- Jones, M. A., Mothersbaugh, D. L., & Beatty, S. E. (2002). Why customers stay: Measuring the underlying dimensions of services switching costs and managing their differential strategic outcomes. *Journal of business research*, 55(6), 441-450.
- Joseph, C., Michael, K. B., & Tomas, M. H. (2000). Assessing the effects of quality, value, and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service environments. *Journal of Retailing*.
- Kim, M. K., Park, M. C., & Jeong, D. H. (2004). The effects of customer satisfaction and switching barrier on customer loyalty in Korean mobile telecommunication services. *Telecommunications policy*, 82(2).
- Lau, G. T., & Lee, S. H. (1999). Consumers' trust in a brand and the link to brand loyalty. *Journal of Market Focused Management*, 4(4), 341-370
- Lee, D. I., & Sohn, C. (2004). Trust and switching cost as a way to build e-loyalty in internet markets. *International Journal of Internet and Enterprise Management*, 2(3), 209-220.
- Li, H. (2017). An empirical study on the relationship between customer perceived service quality and customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the restaurant industry. *Journal of Pu'er College*, 33(01), 39-42.
- Lin, Y., & Yu, S. S. (2019). Online Heart flow Experience, Customer Fit and Brand Loyalty-Based on Online Shopping VR Perspective. *Economy and Management*, 33(06), 44-49.
- Liu, Y. N. (2019). Analysis of factors affecting customer loyalty. *Bohai Economic Hope*, (06), 160
- Lu, J. (2005). Research on the drivers of service loyalty: A review and conceptualization. *Economic Science*, (03), 108-119
- Ma, L. X., & Jiang, F. (2004). Influencing factors of customer loyalty and their interaction. *Business Research*, (15), 36-37
- Ma, Q. (2012). The impact of mobile commerce value on customer loyalty. *Value Engineering*, 31(33), 123-124.
- Meng, N., & Meng, X. Z. (2020). Exploring the marketing strategy of cultural and creative products of peasant painting. *Culture Industry*, (09), 27-28.
- Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (2014). The commitment-trust theory of relationship. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(1), 20-38

- Oliver, R. (1997). *Satisfaction: A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer*: Irwin/McGraw-Hill.
- Ribbink, D., & Van, R. A. C. R. (2014). Comfort your online customer: Quality, trust, and loyalty on the internet. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, 14(6), 446-456
- Saleem, U., Yi, S., Bilal, M., Topor, D. I., & Căpușneanu, S. (2022). The impact of website quality on customer satisfaction and eWOM in online purchase intention: The moderating role of gender in risk-taking. *Frontiers in Psychology*.
- Sang, H. (2007). An empirical study on the factors influencing the switching costs of online customers and their results. *Nankai Management Review*, 10(6), 33-39
- Shi, L. (2013). Research on customer loyalty measurement of service enterprises. *Value Engineering*, 32(3), 125-126.
- Shi, W. H. (2022). Research on brand loyalty enhancement of online consumers in the new era. *China Management Informatization*, 25(20), 98-100.
- Shirshendu, G., & Roy, S. K. (2011). Generic technology-based service quality dimensions in banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 29(2), 168-189.
- Sun, J. H., & Zhang, T. T. (2017). Discussion on the influencing factors and management countermeasures of customer loyalty in the context of relationship marketing. *Contemporary Economy*, (24), 116-118.
- Szymanski, D. M., & Henard, D. H. (2001). Customer satisfaction: A meta-analysis of the empirical evidence. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 29(1), 16-35.
- Tang, F., Dai, Y., & Ma, Z. (2023). Competitive firms' trade-in strategies considering customer loyalty. *China Management Science*, 1-14
- Vinita, K., Durga, P., & Sourabh, S. (2015). Service quality, service convenience, price and fairness, customer loyalty, and the mediating role of customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 34(4).
- Wang, B. C., Zhao, J. Y., & Yang, Z. H. (2023). A study on consumer identification path in the context of social new retail business model. *Management Review*, (08), 198-208.
- Wang, L. X. (2019). Empirical evidence of customer satisfaction in platform enterprises based on improved structural equation modeling. *Statistics and Decision Making*, 35(09), 174-177.
- Wang, S. C. (2021). Research on brand equity value co-creation mechanism of social e-commerce based on user-generated content. *Science and Science and Technology Management*, 42(07), 35-52.

- Wei, Q. (2023). *Research on marketing strategy of JIA culture and media company*. (Master's Degree). Jilin University.
- Wen, M. C. (2019). The value of customer interface on customer loyalty from service quality. *Modern Management Science*, (12), 84-86.
- Wu, S., & Shi, L. (2010). Customer loyalty modeling in department stores under the experience economy model. *Contemporary Finance*, (07), 63-70.
- Xu, J. H. (2022). Research on the influence of customer satisfaction on loyalty--Based on the research and analysis of electric power high-tech enterprises. *Modern Marketing (Early Edition)*, (08), 158-162.
- Xu, X. H. (2016). Analysis and strategy of factors affecting customer loyalty. *Economic and Trade Practice*, (06), 82.
- Yan, H. R. (2005). *Influencing factors of customer loyalty and its mechanism*. (Master Degree). Zhejiang University.
- Yan, J. (2023). *Analysis of factors influencing customer loyalty in express delivery industry under green background*. (Master Degree). Henan University of Finance and Economics and Law.
- Yan, S. (2013). *Empirical research on the influence of hotel image on customer loyalty*. (Master's Degree). Hunan University.
- Yang, H. R. (2022). Research on the impact of experience marketing on customer loyalty in e-commerce environment. *Mall Presentation*, 977(20), 13-15.
- Yang, J. L. (2015). Exploring the problems and strategies of customer loyalty management in Jumei Youpin. *Industry and Technology Forum*, (20), 212-214.
- Yang, Z., & Peterson, R. T. (2004). Customer perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty: The role of switching costs. *Psychology & Marketing*, 21(10), 799-822.
- Zhang, D. C. (2022). *Research on the Influencing Factors of Customer Satisfaction in Taicang D Supermarket*. (Master's Degree). Northeast Agricultural University.
- Zhang, Y. C. (2014). *Research on customer loyalty*. China Social Science Press.
- Zhang, Z. Z. (2012). Analysis of the impact of corporate image on customer loyalty--Taking starbucks China as an example. *Neijiang Normal College Journal*, 27(02), 57-60
- Zhao, L., & Xiang, Y. J. (2012). A study on customer loyalty enhancement based on corporate image perspective. *China Business and Trade*, (09), 33-34
- Zheng, P. Y. (2020). A review of domestic and international consumer behavior research. *Value Engineering*, (16), 253-257.
- Zhou, W. Z., & Shen, J. (2010). Research on the relationship between brand image, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty--Taking Jinan Ginza supermarket chain as an example. *Journal of Lanzhou Business School*, 26(03), 58-62.

- Zhu, J. H. (2015). The influence mechanism of clothing brand image on brand loyalty. *Textile Journal*, 36(04), 146-152
- Zhu, Y., & Xu, C. Y. E. A. (2015). A two-period pricing competition model based on customer loyalty. *Journal of Systems Engineering*, 30(1), 44-54



APPENDIX

Dear Survey Participant:

Hello! To further understand the overall customer loyalty situation at Dennis Supermarket in Zhengzhou City, we have designed this survey questionnaire and hope for your cooperation. The questions you answer will be used solely for academic research purposes and will not involve any personal privacy. They will never be used for purposes outside the study, and we will strictly keep the results of each questionnaire confidential. Thank you again for your cooperation.

This questionnaire consists of multiple-choice questions, and I sincerely appreciate your cooperation and assistance.

Part 1 Basic information

1. Your gender is ()
A. Male B. Female
2. Your age is ()
A. Under 18 B. 18-30 C. 31-40 D. 41-50 E. Over 51
3. Are you married? ()
A. Unmarried B. Married
4. Your occupation is ()
A. Student B. Employee in an enterprise C. Employee in a public institution D. Self-employed/Freelancer E. Other
5. Your education level is ()
A. College degree or below B. Bachelor's degree C. Graduate degree D. Above graduate degree
6. Your monthly disposable income is ()
A. Below 1,500 yuan B. 1,500–3,000 yuan C. 3,001–6,000 yuan
D. 6,001–8,000 yuan E. Above 8,001 yuan

II. Investigation of Factors Influencing Customer Loyalty

Note: Please make sure that your colleagues are clear about the meaning of each number

before choosing, and thank you for your cooperation!

1 stands "Strongly disagree" 2 stands "Somewhat disagree" 3 stands "Uncertain" 4 stands "Somewhat agree" 5 stands "Strongly agree".

Corporate Image	5	4	3	2	1
1. If I shop at other department stores, I believe the new retailers cannot provide equivalent service.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. If I shop at other department stores, I will need to spend a lot of time re-establishing relationships with the sales staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. If I shop at other department stores, I will need to spend a lot of time readjusting to the services offered by the new retailer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. If I shop at other department stores, I will no longer enjoy the same discounts provided by the previous department store.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I am accustomed to the service style of this department store's employees, so I do not want to shop elsewhere.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Service Quality	5	4	3	2	1
1. The department store provides delivery or modification services for products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The service staff at the department store know the customers' needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The department store offers personalized services to customers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I appreciate that the department store prioritizes the interests of customers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The department store has long operating hours and is convenient for shopping.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Switching Costs	5	4	3	2	1
1. The corporate identity of the department store is distinctive and easily recognizable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The department store has high brand recognition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The department store holds a leading market position.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The department store holds a significant position in my mind.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Customer Loyalty	5	4	3	2	1
1. Under the same level of service, even if the department store is more expensive than other retailers, I am still willing to continue shopping at the department store.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Even if the department store reasonably raises its prices, I am still willing to shop there.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Even if I find out the price is relatively expensive after purchase, I still believe it is worth it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you very much for your participation!

