

Behavior Analysis of Brand Loyalists and Brand Switcher in 5-Star Accommodation Services in Medan City

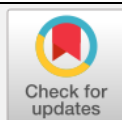
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ABSTRACT

A brand is a fundamental part of the marketing strategy in influencing purchase interest. A person's buying ability will influence a customer to choose the product they want. In addition, higher competitiveness among hotels will create more awareness to maintain customer satisfaction and turn it into customer loyalty as the main target of their marketing. In connection with achieving customer loyalty, hotels must study the factors influencing customers to become loyal or switch from the hotel brand. A brand can be measured through brand equity which consists of a set of assets and liabilities of the Brand associated with the name and symbol of the Brand that can be given to consumers. Important and measurable components in forming brand equity include brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. This study examines the variables that make the difference between loyalists and customers who switch hotel brands. The data used were taken from 42 respondents spread across the International Departure Terminal of Kualanamu Airport. The research method used is descriptive with a quantitative approach. The data were analyzed using the discriminant analysis method through the SPSS 12.0 program. And other limitations for this research are 5-Star Hotels and Chain International in Medan. Discriminant analysis shows that one factor requiring search variation distinguishes between brand loyalists and brand switchers. The Brand switching matrices show that all hotels serving consumers in Medan have low customer loyalty. The ratio between brand loyalists and brand switchers was 1:9, which means that only one person is loyal to one brand out of 10 consumers of accommodation services. The rest are types of consumers who like to switch to other brands.

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1. Introduction

“What’s in a name?” so does William Shakespeare’s famous passage to show that names are not everything. But Shakespeare was wrong. It turns out that the name determines many things, especially when it comes to trademarks. “A rose by any other name would **smell** as sweet”. William was wrong again. The rose would still smell good if the name were changed. However, what people are looking for are roses - not flowers that smell great, are beautifully colored, and have multi-layered petals. Rose has become a representation and association of fragrance and beauty itself. If the name is changed, rose lovers will refuse and turn away from it.

Branding is a fundamental part of a marketing strategy in influencing purchase interest (Hansopaheluwakan et al., 2020). Aaker stated that brand equity’s value could be measured through brand equity, consisting of a set of brand assets and liabilities related to the brand name and symbol that can be given to consumers (Aaker, as cited in Wijanarko, 2014). Since the late 1980s, experts such as Keller, Aaker, and others (Afifah et al., 2019).

Brand loyalty is one of the dimensions that most marketing policymakers pay attention to in brand development. Brand loyalty is the loyal behavior of consumers towards a brand of goods related to repeated purchases because the brand offers the most appropriate product features, images, and quality at the right price (Wong & Sidek, as cited in Ruixia & Chein, 2019). Brand loyalty is an important factor in increased uncertainty, reduced product differentiation, and competitive pressures (Mohamed et al., 2019).

This study is based on the brand loyalty concept, which is part of the customer life cycle concerning the brand shift behavior by customers in using star accommodation services. Especially 5-stars in Medan City. Brand switching is characterized by a significant difference between brands and consumer satisfaction (Budiasih & Aswin, 2012). In the concept of brand switching, there are 2 (two) types of consumer behavior, namely brand loyalists who are already firm and will not switch and brand switcher to other products/services (Sianipar & Liyushiana, 2019).

In accommodation services, especially star hotels, the brand guarantees consumers of the products and services offered. The large number of hotels that are growing becomes an opportunity for consumers to choose the best, and brands are one of the considerations to decide the best choice for consumers, where the facilities and service factors are considered the most influencing consumer interest in staying at 5-star hotels compared to other hotels (Njoto et al., 2019). However, no research describes how consumers switch from one hotel brand to a different brand. Brand switching is an interesting area for further investigation, as is the behavior of brand loyalists. Especially considering the same level of hotels, namely 5-star hotels that provide a variety of facilities and services with similar quality, brands are attractions for consumers to choose hotels. Therefore, how is the behavior of brand loyalists and brand switchers in the use of services and products offered by the 5-star accommodation industry in Medan.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Brand Switching

Brand Switching is a process of brand switching carried out by consumers from one product brand to another with the same category (Kumar & Chaarlas, 2011). This brand

switching occurs when consumers of a product use two or more brands when a brand cannot meet their satisfaction (Martin, 2008). The phenomenon of brand switching to consumers can occur both for different brands and for the same brand. The literature on brand switching behavior has two main characteristics. First, features that can strengthen the relationship between consumers and producers can hinder consumer switching (White & Yanamandram, 2007; Saeed et al., 2018). Second, identifying the motive for the transition (Saeed et al., 2018).

2.2. Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior is defined as activities directly involved in obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services, including the decision-making process that precedes and makes these actions successful (Souki & Filho, 2008). Consumer behavior can be assumed as an action that can be measured in plain view regarding the consumer's decision to consume a product. According to Murray & O'Driscoll, as cited in Wulandari (2002), consumer behavior can be interpreted as a collection of decision-making steps starting from introducing needs to the learning process involved when consuming a product or service.

Kotler emphasized that demographic factors such as gender, age, education, religion, number of families can significantly influence the purchasing process and consumer behavior (Kotler, as cited in Souki & Filho, 2008).

Consumer Behavior is a process that a person goes through in looking for, buying, using, evaluating, and acting after consuming service products and ideas expected to meet their needs (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004, p. 12).

According to Bowie & Francis (2004), it is stated that several things influence consumer behavior in making purchases, namely socio-culture, differences in individual characteristics, and habits as in Figure 1 as follows:

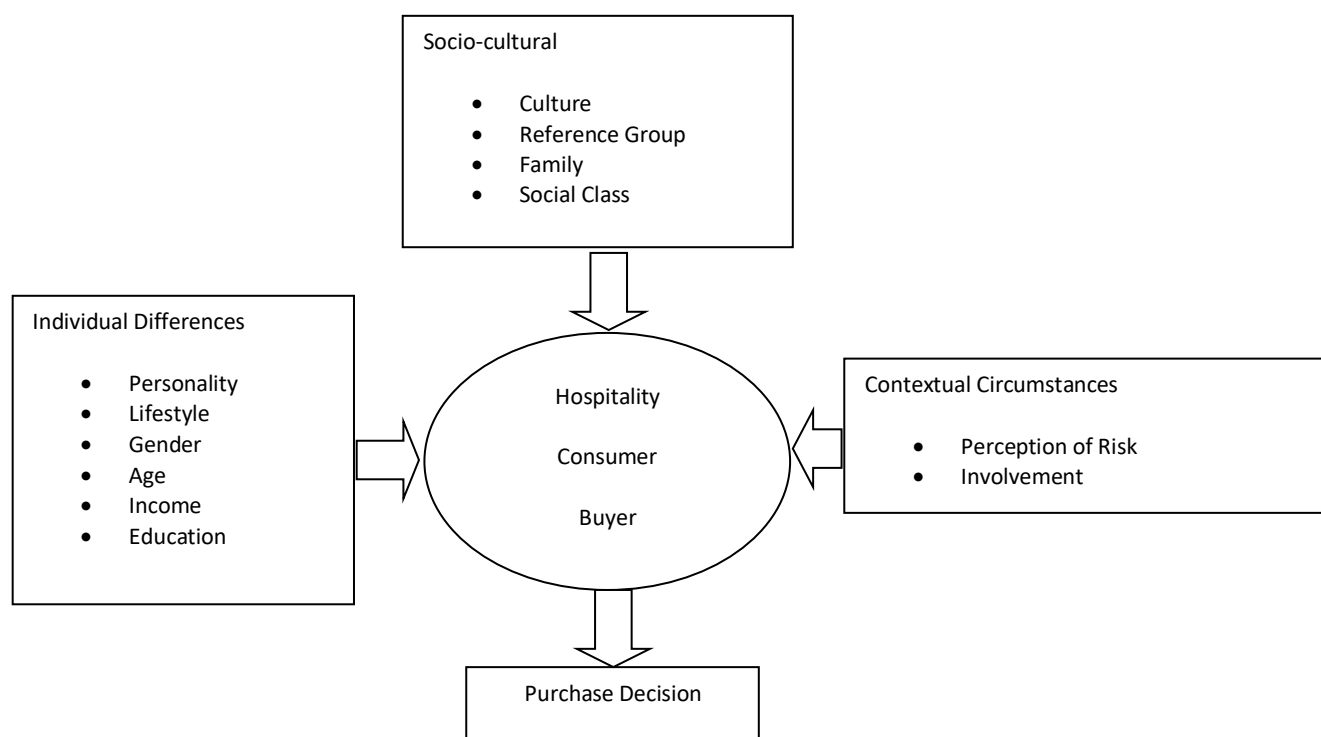


Figure 1. Several things that influence consumer behavior in making purchases

Source: Bowie & Butler (2004)

2.3. Brand Loyalty

The concept of brand loyalty was first defined by [Jacoby & Kyner \(1973\)](#) and supported by [Dick & Basu \(1994\)](#), where loyalty to a brand must refer to a positive attitude towards the brand and a pattern of good buying behavior ([Ali & Senin, 2020](#)). Brand loyalty is about building and maintaining customer relationships ([Chow & Holden, 1997](#)). When a product is in process, the focus should be on customer relationships ([Rust et al., 2000](#)). Modern branding focuses on creating brand loyalty while building long-term relationships ([Sornsaruht & Sawmong, 2017](#)).

[Awan & Rehman \(2014\)](#) see a unifying correlation between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. The more satisfied customers with the brands they use, the more likely they will develop positive feelings supporting their loyalty to the brand ([Hashem et al., 2020](#)).

The development of consumer behavior towards a brand will emerge by evaluating the advantages of the Brand and estimating how much this advantage is in the next purchase ([Holmes et al., 2020](#)). The more stable the positive consumer behavior, the more loyal to the favorite product. The stronger the positive behavior and a clear image of the Brand will lead to cognition and physical interaction ([Ganesh et al., 2000](#)).

3. Research Methodology

According to [Narbuko & Abu \(2004\)](#), the research methodology comes from the word "Method," which means the right way to do something, and "Logos," which means science or knowledge. The methodology in this study can be concluded as a science of methods and techniques that will be used to solve a problem that has been formulated.

The method used in this research is a descriptive method by utilizing discriminant analysis as the main assessment method. One of the advantages of discriminant analysis is its ability to group one characteristic based on existing data ([Supartini et al., 2017](#)). In this study, discriminant analysis was chosen because it will answer brand switchers and loyalists' most significantly different behaviors.

While the data used were taken from 42 respondents spread across the International Departure Terminal of Kualanamu Airport, and the data were analyzed using discriminant analysis methods through the SPSS 12.0 program.

Considering that this study emphasizes the effort to describe brand loyalist and brand switcher behaviors, the main data source used is the primary data source. However, to deepen the problem of the object under study, detailed secondary data are used as follows:

1) Primary Data

Primary data is collected directly from the results of data processing using a questionnaire instrument.

2) Secondary Data

Secondary data is data used to complement primary data obtained from respondents. Secondary data is obtained from several references such as books, regulations, research reports, documents, and archives related to research.

4. Results and Discussion

The mean comparison between the sub-questions was used to describe consumer behavior. After that, the predicate was given to the sub-variables by paying attention to the measurement dimension interval table as follows:

Table 1. Interval Dimension Measure

Measure Interval	Measure Dimensions
1.00-1.75	Negative-definite
1.76-2.50	Negative semi-definite
2.51-3.25	Positive semi-definite
3.26-4.00	Positive-definite

Source: Kusmayadi & Sugiarto (2000)

This measuring dimension interval is made by paying attention to the measured value of each answer to the core question using a Likert scale: 1) strongly disagree; 2) disagree; 3) agree, and 4) strongly agree.

The answer range is $4-1 = 3$. Then the length of the interval is determined, namely: $\frac{3}{4} = 0.75$, which results in the measurement dimension table above.

4.1. Engagement Variables

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Engagement Variables

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This hotel means so much to me compared to other hotels,	42	1	4	2,95	,582
When I decided to stay in this hotel, I have compared the quality of this hotel to other hotels	42	1	4	2,95	,764
I decided to stay in this hotel according to the preference of my colleague	42	1	4	3,24	,484
I prefer this hotel because I don't want to take a risk by trying other hotels	42	2	4	3,24	,576
I stay in this hotel because my office arranged it	42	3	4	3,21	,415
Valid N (listwise)	42				

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 descriptive method

From the table above, we can conclude that consumers of accommodation services pay attention to quality and choose the hotel to use after they believe in the quality of the hotel. It is evidenced by the mean value of these two statements, which is 3.24 and predicated to be perfectly positive – followed by the sub variable choosing a hotel that is commonly used to save time. This statement gets a mean value of 3.21. So the predicate is positive semi-definite. If we pay attention to this, there are no respondents who answered disagree and strongly disagreed. The majority answer is agreed. So we can conclude that consumers do not want to waste time in choosing a new hotel. From the perspective of impressions of hotels and buying room/service

vouchers based on their own decisions, the mean value is 2.95. This means that respondents consider that the impression and buying a room/service voucher based on their own decisions are important in choosing a hotel.

4.2. Variable Differences in Perception Between Brands

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics Variable Differences in Perception Between Brands

I am quite sure that:	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The quality of this hotel is different from other hotels	42	1	4	2,45	,739
The rate of this hotel is different from other hotels	42	1	4	2,55	,772
The hotel security in this hotel is different from other hotels	42	1	4	2,62	,764
The comfortableness that I get in this hotel is different to other hotel	42	1	4	2,64	,821
Valid N (listwise)	42				

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 descriptive method

The consumers of accommodation services believe that the level of security, comfort level, and quality varies between hotels. In addition, consumer prices state that the price difference between hotels is not too big. This is concluded from the predicate of this statement: 'negative is less than perfect with a mean value of 2.45. So for a loyalist, price is not a problem. The most sought-after hotel service is the level of safety and comfort.

4.3. Hedonic Characteristics Variables

Tabel 4. Hedonic Characteristics Frequency Distribution

I choose this hotel because	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Increase my prestige/dignity	42	1	4	2,50	,773
Nationality reason	42	1	4	2,52	,773
Comfortableness of facility reason	42	1	4	2,79	,782
The website much better	42	1	4	2,81	,740
Ease to reserve	42	2	4	2,83	,730
Valid N (listwise)	42				

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 descriptive method

The majority of accommodation consumers in Medan city agree to choose a hotel because of the level of security. This factor is considered more important than other factors, such as prestige and a sense of nationality. This shows that respondents appear to be fair in making choices. All respondents in this study came from various ethnic groups. Initially, it was

estimated that many respondents chose the point of nationality as an excuse because the rumours circulating were that almost everyone from the United States prefers JW Marriott. After all, its parent company comes from the same country. However, the results of this study show something different and more objective.

4.4. Variable Power Preferences

Table 5. Variable Frequency Distribution of Power Preference

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This hotel is much better than others in quality and brand	42	1	4	2,83	,730
Valid N (listwise)	42				

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 descriptive method

The variable that questions how the consumer's preference for hotels used previously is 2.83 with a positive semi-definite predicate. This means consumers claim that the hotel they have used last is better than other hotel brands.

4.5. Variable Needs To Find Variations

Table 6. Variable Frequency Distribution Needs To Find Variations

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I always choose the hotel that I already know	42	1	3	2,48	,740
I like staying at other hotels to try something to see	42	1	3	2,67	,650
I prefer to choose new hotel according to my need	42	1	4	2,86	,783
Valid N (listwise)	42				

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 descriptive method

Most consumers choose hotels according to their benefits. This statement received more positive answers than other statements. Consumers move brands because they feel that the old brand does not provide the benefits they expect.

4.6. Reference Group Influence Variables

Table 7. Variable Frequency Distribution of Reference Group Influence

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Choose a hotel which as suggested by family or friends	42	1	3	2,17	,581
Hotel which use favorite actor/actress as adv model is better	42	2	4	2,57	,737
Valid N (listwise)	42				

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 descriptive method

This variable states that the suggestion of family/friends/relations is considered in choosing a hotel. The mean value for this statement is 2.57, so that it gets a positive semi-definite predicate. While another statement, namely the belief that hotels that use favourite advertising models are good, is not approved by many consumers. The negative semi-definite predicate evidenced it.

4.7. Discriminant Analysis

Discriminant analysis is an analysis used to analyze two variables so that no group member is included in another variable. In the discriminant analysis, it can also be seen that the variable that most distinguishes the two groups.

Table 8. Analysis Case Processing Summary

Unweighted Cases		N	Percent
Valid		42	100,0
Excluded	Missing or out-of-range group codes	0	,0
	At least one missing discriminating variable	0	,0
	Both missing or out-of-range group codes and at least one missing discriminating variable	0	,0
	Total	0	,0
Total		42	42

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

The table above shows that the number of respondents in the study was 42 people, and no data was lost so that all data was valid for processing.

4.8. Group Statistic

Table 9. Group Statistic

Switcher or Loyalist	Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Valid N (listwise)	
				Unweighted	Weighted
Switcher	Involvement	3,0737	,33344	38	38,000
	The perception between Hotel's brand	3,0737	,33344	38	38,000
	Hedonic character	2,8447	,42534	38	38,000
	The power of preference	2,7105	,65380	38	38,000
	Variation need	2,9145	,36887	38	38,000
	Influence group	2,4079	,50478	38	38,000
Loyalist	Involvement	3,5500	,52599	4	4,000
	The perception between Hotel's brand	3,5500	,52599	4	4,000
	Hedonic character	2,8500	,36968	4	4,000
	The power of preference	4,0000	,00000	4	4,000
	Variation need	1,2500	,35355	4	4,000
	Influence group	2,0000	,40825	4	4,000
Total	Involvement	3,1190	,37497	42	42,000
	The perception between Hotel's brand	3,1190	,37497	42	42,000
	Hedonic character	2,8452	,41626	42	42,000
	The power of preference	2,8333	,72974	42	42,000
	Variation need	2,7560	,61359	42	42,000
	Influence group	2,3690	,50678	42	42,000

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

Brand loyalist on the involvement variable has an average of 3.55 where respondents who switch brands have an average coefficient of involvement of 3.07. This proves that consumers who like to switch brands have less involvement in buying products. This is contrary to brand loyalists who pay more attention to aspects of involvement, such as the importance of certain brand products for them, very concerned about quality, etc.

For the perception difference between brands, brand loyalists have an average coefficient of 3.55, and a brand switcher gets 3.07. This shows that brand switchers judge that their perception of one brand towards another brand is relatively greater than that of loyal consumers. This makes them more likely to move around, hoping to get something better by buying another brand. It is different from loyal consumers. They think that the hotel brand they have chosen has provided the desired benefits so that they do not want to risk buying other brands that they do not know the quality of.

A brand switcher gets 0.0005 higher than the average coefficient value of a brand loyalist in the hedonic characteristic variable. This means that their views regarding the considerations in choosing a hotel are relatively the same. However, switcher brands have a more positive attitude because they want even more diverse benefits.

If we pay attention to the variable of power preference, brand loyalist scores 2.71 and brand switchers score 2.83. This shows that the coefficients are not much different in their preference for the hotels they have used.

In the variable looking for variation needs, brand loyalist scores 2.91 while brand switchers get a significantly different value, namely 1.25. This shows a significant difference between the need to look for variations in hotel brands owned by brand loyalists and brand switchers. This means that the strongest reason consumers switch products is that they want to look for variety. Or, in other words, enrich their experiences with many hotel brands.

In the reference group influence variable, the average coefficient for brand loyalists is 2.40, while for brand switchers, it is 2.00. This means that reference groups more easily influence consumers who switch brands than brand loyalists.

4.9. Test of Equality of Group Means

The discriminant analysis divides respondents into two groups, namely loyalists and switchers, for each existing variable. This test will test whether there is a significant difference between groups for each existing independent variable.

Table 10. Tests of Equality of Group Means

	Wilks' Lambda	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Involvement	,858	6,643	1	40	,014
The perception between Hotel's brand	,858	6,643	1	40	,014
Hedonic character	1,000	,001	1	40	,981
The power of preference	,724	15,219	1	40	,000
Variation need	,350	74,139	1	40	,000
Influence group	,943	2,426	1	40	,127

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

There are four different variables of the six existing variables, which are significant for the two discriminant groups: involvement, perceptions between brands, the power of preferences, and variation need. This is due to the sig value. <0.05 as the significance level used.

4.10. Variables Entered/Removed

Table 11. Variables Entered/Removed (a,b,c,d)

Step	Entered	Wilks' Lambda							
		Statistic	df1	df2	df3	Exact F			
						Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1	Variation Need	,350	1	1	40,000	74,139	1	40,000	,000

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

At each step, the variable that minimizes the overall Wilks' Lambda is entered.

- The maximum number of steps is 12.
- The minimum partial F to enter is 3.84.
- The maximum partial F to remove is 2.71.

d. F level, tolerance, or VIN insufficient for further computation.

Based on the table above, it turns out that there is only one variable that is accepted for analysis of its significance in this discriminant analysis, variation need. Thus, the variables that provide the most significant value differentiate the behavior of brand loyalists and brand switchers. This variable has a significant value of 0.000 which is smaller than 0.05 (significant level).

4.11. Variables in the Analysis

Table 12. Variables in the Analysis

Step		Tolerance	F to Remove
1	Variation Need	1,000	74,139

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

The table above serves to reinforce the series of variables to be analyzed, namely variation need variable.

4.12. Variables Not in the Analysis

Table 13. Variables Not in the Analysis

Step		Tolerance	Min. Tolerance	F to Enter	Wilks' Lambda
0	Involvement	1,000	1,000	6,643	,858
	The perception between Hotel's brand	1,000	1,000	6,643	,858
	Hedonic character	1,000	1,000	,001	1,000
	The power of preference	1,000	1,000	15,219	,724
	Variation need	1,000	1,000	74,139	,350
	Influence group	1,000	1,000	2,426	,943
1	Involvement	,954	,954	,190	,349
	The perception between Hotel's brand	,954	,954	,190	,349
	Hedonic character	,974	,974	,660	,345
	The power of preference	,915	,915	,728	,344
	Variation need	,824	,824	1,753	,335

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

At step 0, all variables are still considered for inclusion in the discriminant model. It can be seen that the number in the variable needs to look for variations gets the greatest value in the F to Enter column, which is 74,139. This shows that it is this variable that deserves to be processed in the next step.

In step 1, all variables are entered to be tested whether they are feasible to be analyzed in the next step or not. It turns out that all significant values exceed 0.05. This means that no more variables meet the requirements to be included in the discriminant model.

4.13. Eigenvalues

Table 14. Eigenvalues

Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	1,853(a)	100,0	100,0	,806

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

In the eigenvalues table, it can be seen that the canonical number is 0.806, which, if squared, will be (0.806×0.806) to get a value of 0.65. This means that 65% of the variance of the moving variable can be explained by the discriminant model that is formed, namely the variation variable.

4.14. Wilk's Lambda

Table 15. Wilk's Lambda

Test of Function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	,350	41,417	1	,000

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

You can see that the Chi-Square number is 41.417 with the Sig. which is 0.00. This shows a significant difference between the loyalist group and the switcher group in the discriminant model. Thus, respondents who switch brands are significantly different from respondents who are loyal to only one hotel brand.

4.15. Structure Matrix

Table 16. Structure Matrix

	Function
	1
Variation need	1,000
Influence group(a)	,420
The power of preference(a)	-,291
Involvement(a)	-,215
The perception between Hotel's brand(a)	-,215
Hedonic character(a)	-,162

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions variables ordered by the absolute size of correlation within the function. (a) This variable not used in the analysis.

The largest order seen from the table shows that the variable needs to look for variations is indeed the most dominant in determining the real behavioral differences between brand loyalists and switchers. This is evident from its perfect value, which is one and is greater than the value of the other structure matrix variables. Therefore, the hotel management must be really serious in responding to this matter. The sign (a) indicates that the variable on the right indicates that the variable is not used (does not meet the requirements in the discriminant model).

4.16. Classification Result

Table 17. Classification Result (b,c)

		<i>Switcher or Loyalist</i>	<i>Predicted Group Membership</i>		<i>Total</i>
			Switcher	Loyalist	
Original	<i>Count</i>	<i>Switcher</i>	37	1	38
		<i>Loyalist</i>	0	4	4
	<i>%</i>	<i>Switcher</i>	97,4	2,6	100,0
		<i>Loyalist</i>	,0	100,0	100,0
Cross-validated(a)	<i>Count</i>	<i>Switcher</i>	37	1	38
		<i>Loyalist</i>	0	4	4
	<i>%</i>	<i>Switcher</i>	97,4	2,6	100,0
		<i>Loyalist</i>	,0	100,0	100,0

Source: results of data processing SPSS 12.0 discriminant analysis method

- Cross-validation is done only for those cases in the analysis. In cross-validation, each case is classified by the functions derived from all cases other than that case.
- 97,6% of original grouped cases correctly classified.
- 97,6% of cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified.

In the original part, it can be seen that those in the initial data are classified as loyal are four people. In the discriminant model, there are still four people. As for the brand switcher, it can be seen that the number remains the same in the original and cross-validated sections. Only one person has moved as a loyalist. Thus the prediction accuracy of this model is:

$$\frac{(37+4)}{42} = 97.62\%$$

The discriminant model above can be applied because the accuracy rate reaches a very high value (97.62). Or the interpretation of the various existing tables is valid for use. The use of the leave-one-out cross-validation method reduces the potential that may occur in the classification process above.

Based on the results obtained, it is known that accommodation and lodging services are competitive business fields. Including Medan city. Business actors are not only medium-sized businessmen, but hoteliers are big businesses and have international marketing reach. Therefore, measuring brand movement patterns and consumer loyalty is essential for all competing hotels. Therefore, this study was conducted to find the pattern of brand switching, consumer loyalty and the most dominant variables in distinguishing loyalists and switchers. All research instruments used in this study used all valid question items with a moderate level of reliability. Respondents who were the object of this study came from normal populations, as evidenced by the varied values between the answer choices.

- 1) There is a real difference in behavior between loyal (brand loyalist) and like to move (switcher) to 5-star hotel accommodation services in Medan city, especially for the dimensions of involvement and differences in perceptions between brands power of preferences, and variation need.
- 2) The preliminary discriminant analysis found that the variable that had the most influence in distinguishing loyalist and switcher groups was the variable seeking variation needs.

The existing discriminant model turned out to be valid and usable because the level of accuracy was very high, namely 97.62%.

Brand switching behavior in the hotel industry is quite high. This is influenced by the brand value of the products they usually use. A similar study was conducted in the same hotel industry by [Rahma \(2016\)](#), which states that loyal consumer behavior towards a hotel brand and the management of a particular hotel brand image impact service quality and customer satisfaction. Therefore, hotel managers who want to maintain customer loyalty while also increasing the competitiveness of their hotels should pay attention to the physical appearance, services, and continue to seek product innovation to improve the quality of services offered to customers.

From the discriminant analysis, it is known that there are four specific behaviors between brand loyalists and switchers, namely: (1) involvement, (2) differences in perceptions between brands, (3) the power of preferences, and (4) variation need where the last variable become the main variable that differentiates brand loyalist and brand switchers behavior. At the same time, the results of this study strengthen the results of previous studies that state that the need to look for variations has a positive and significant effect on the desire to switch brands ([Arianto, 2013](#)). The need to look for variations has indicators in boredom with previous brands, interest in trying other brands and a feeling of needing to look for other brands. This research also confirms that brand dissatisfaction causes consumers to consider looking for variations from the brands they are used to using. Research with similar results also confirms that variation need has a positive and significant effect on switching brands to use Samsung Galaxy in Malang city. Although the locations and products studied are different, both studies and the findings have the same common thread value. Consumers often express a desire to try new experiences with different features, which then have implications for switching brands that consumers usually use.

Other studies confirm that the need to look for variations moderates and weakens customer satisfaction for switching brands ([Dwinanto & Atmosphere, 2018](#)). Therefore, it needs to be aware that the desire to find new alternatives can make consumers risk leaving the brand that is used to try new things. For this reason, the value of innovation is an absolute price for each brand to retain consumers, especially to anticipate consumers' desire to 'experiment' with new things ([Liyushiana et al., 2020](#)).

5. Conclusion

The results of the research on the behavior of consumers of 5-star accommodation services in the city of Medan who are loyalists and consumers who make brand transfers show a significant difference between the behavior of brand loyalists and brand switchers. The variation needs variable has the greatest influence and is also the biggest differentiating variable between brand loyalists and brand switchers with a difference of 1,000. In the variable looking for variety needs, consumers expect the diversity of benefits offered by a product. This study shows that consumers do not only consume accommodation services because of 1 benefit. This is why many of them switch brands to try a new benefit.

In the analysis of product consumption patterns, it is known that consumers are more likely to prioritize comfort and safety, which are part of hotel quality indicators compared to hotel prices.

Based on the brand switching matrix design, all hotels with the object of research have a low loyalty value. This is evident from % unloyal, which is more than 50% for each hotel. And the loyalist group is only around 10% of the total respondents. Also, the other 90% admit that they are switchers and groups that can switch hotel brands.

The ratio between loyalist and switcher is 1: 9. So, out of 10 consumers of accommodation services, only one person is loyal to one brand. The rest are types of consumers who like to switch to other brands.

Based on the above conclusions, there are several suggestions based on the research that has been carried out, as follows:

- 1) Although star accommodation services consumers are less concerned with price than hotel security and quality, hotel companies should see this as a sales strategy. Promotional bids should be increased more frequently if necessary. Or use another alternative, which is to keep playing at normal prices, but promise and prove the added value consumers can get because the value for money they pay is also more. The added value can be in the form of friendly staff, ease of check-in process, even additional facilities such as membership.
- 2) The management of star hotels in Medan city should continue to develop existing product innovations. This is because competitors will always try to find loopholes to seize market share that has been formed apart from the fact that the thing that most influences consumers to become switchers is the need to look for variations. The thing that needs to be considered is that consumers have a life cycle stage towards the interest of a hotel brand. One day, consumers will become bored with a product. However, since lodging is a product that will continue to be used, product innovation can be formed by adding additional services. Such as travel souvenirs that are given free of charge.
- 3) Innovation from another perspective can also be related to parties other than consumers who help sales of hotels, namely travel agents. It must be remembered that travel agents play a significant role in the decision to purchase hotel service vouchers. Therefore, establishing a warm relationship with travel agents is something that all hotels must do. The hotel staff's a priori and demeaning attitude towards travel agent staff should be avoided. This is since 81% of consumers purchase room/service flight vouchers at travel agents.
- 4) Hotels are advised to treat consumers as friends to maintain continuity in product purchases, to achieve consumer loyalty. It is hoped that consumers will continue to buy products with familiar brands because this will reduce the risk of purchase failure.
- 5) Still, to maintain customer loyalty, hotels should use the below the line strategy, namely choosing to be friendly with other competitor hotels. Promotion here is intended only to

introduce product existence, besides, of course, to instil in the minds of consumers about the self-image of the hotel.

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