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Trust, Information Sharing,  
Switching Barrier and Relationship  
Bond on Customer Loyalty of  
Professional Services Company:  
Empirical Study on Independent  
Survivor Services Industry in**



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Indonesia**

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**Abstract**

The competition of independent surveyor services industry in Indonesia in the future is very challenging. This service industry still protected by the government to impose restrictions on the activities of foreign independent surveyor services companies to operate in Indonesia. Developing of customer loyalty will ensure a long-term relationship between service providers and customers. This study aimed to develop a relationship of customer satisfaction, trust, information sharing, switching barriers and relationship bond to customer loyalty in the professional services of coal independent surveyors companies in Indonesia using Relationship Marketing perspective. Testing the hypothesis made on the relationship between 5 variables to customer loyalty. Data compiled from 200 questionnaires completed by corporate decision-makers from 51 exporters and coal trading company in Indonesia and analyzed using the Structural Equation Model (SEM). The results of the study show that the customer loyalty of coal independent surveyor influenced by satisfaction, trust, information sharing, switching barrier and relationship bond. Customer Satisfaction and Information Sharing also affects customer loyalty through trust. All variables has significant effect on customer loyalty with the greatest influence on the relationship bond.

**Key words:** Customer loyalty, Customer satisfaction, Trust, information sharing, Switching barriers and relationship bonds.

## **1. Introduction**

Until now, the government has not opened the permit for the operation of foreign service companies, especially for inspection activities, as listed in the *Negative Investment List* for foreign companies in Indonesia. However, the government will open the widest market for foreign surveyor companies to operate in Indonesia in the near future, so that inspection services be open to foreigners. Of course, this makes the competition of independent surveyor services market in Indonesia will be increased, including coal commodities inspection services.

Indonesian coal exports in 2011 increased by 28.98 % compared to the 2010, from U.S. \$ 157.98 billion to U.S. \$ 203.6 billion . The increase in exports was highest in the mining sector, which increased by 29.72 % . Value of mining exports amounted to U.S. \$ 34.7 billion, comes from coal commodities U.S. \$ 27.44 billion (Performance Report of the Minister of Trade of Indonesia, 2011). Indonesian coal production in the future is expected to continue to rise until 2025, the use of coal up to 33 % of total energy sources (Tekmira, 2006). Accordingly, the independent surveyor services for coal export commodities will increased. It is very important to understand the view point of customer in order to maintain relationships with independent surveyor company. Kilpady (2005 ) stated that the adoption of the marketing strategy of relationship marketing (RM) can play a role for the success of the business in the future. The main problem as a basis for setting the objective of this study is related the increasing of competition in the service industry and customer demands of independent surveyor of the higher professional services. Maintaining long-term relationships with customers in the professional services is very difficult. In line with previous studies on maintaining relationships with customers in the B2B context, professional services industry has complex problems related to the relationship between service providers and their clients (service provider - client relationship) in order to build long-term relationships. According to Brito ( 2011), outcomes of relationship marketing are customer loyalty, lifetime value and customer portfolio. This study will be focused on Customer Loyalty . This study aims to :

1. To identify and examine the relationship of customer satisfaction, trust, information sharing, switching barrier, and relationship bonds on customer loyalty of professional service company.
2. To make a recommendations of Relationship Marketing strategy in the long term of the professional services industry, especially independent surveyor services industry in Indonesia .

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. The Concept of Relationship Marketing (RM)**

Zeithaml *et al.* (2009) in *his* book 'Service Marketing: Integrating Customer Focus Across the Firm', states that relationship marketing basically is a marketing paradigm shift from a focus on the acquisition/transaction to focus on the retention/relationship. Relationship Marketing makes customers as partners and the company must make a long-term commitment to maintain customers with quality, service and innovation. Relationship marketing philosophy is to do business and strategic orientation focusing maintain and improve relationships with existing customers rather than acquiring new customers. This philosophy assumes that a lot of customers and business customers choose the continuity of relationship with an organization on the move constantly providers to find the value. Based on this thinking, less expensive than retaining existing customers and attracting new customers is a successful marketer who works with an effective strategy to maintain customers.

Many companies understand that long-term competitiveness is highly depend on the condition of customer retention. In order to achieve this condition, we need a way how to change the perception of the customer to implement bilateral communication with the customer to win the trust of customers by treating customers as partners who can contribute to the creation of value. Marketing should also be involved in company-wide pre-occupation rather than isolating a specific department. Relationship Marketing will become the dominant paradigm and Transaction Marketing will be abandoned (Grönroos, 2004). Guonaris (2005), states that when entering into a professional services marketing and especially in the B2B market, still very little empirical documentation.

Relationship Marketing and sellers-buyers relationship in B2B Professional services industry, dominated by the magnitude of the rapid increase in knowledge representation and economic sectors. The scope of professional services have the resources to focus on a narrow area of expertise (expertise), gained experience through the wide range of innovative clients and in the process

engagement. Based on this reason, that knowledge and relationships become a great resource of sustainable competitiveness, professional service providers and clients in need of power continuously to develop the relationship. Knowledge-based relationship can be deepened through mutual trust (Bagdoniene and Jakstaite, 2009). Professional services as services with knowledge intensive business (Doloreux and Muller, 2007) is designed for institutional clients, most businesses but also for non-profit institutions. Jaakkola and Halinen (2006) highlighted the characteristics of professional services is to have special knowledge/expert (specialist), having autonomy in decision-making, altruism, has its own settings and have the participation of the client and with a high degree of customization. As can be seen, the main features of professional services is identified and the workings of individual workers by 'outlined traits'. Talking about the process of services, it should be noted that for the provision of services, the learning process with service providers and clients that have emerged, existing knowledge and new knowledge combined, formed and dissemination of this knowledge. Loyalty in B2B Services Industry described as repeat purchases, in which it is in the literature called as the behavioral type of loyalty. Loyalty based on this behavior has been dominated until the 1970s. However, different approaches is the concept of loyalty by attitude (attitudinal loyalty) that reflects the concept of loyalty is actually a true loyalty. Palmatier *et al.* (2006) find and support Reichheld (2003) that the Word of Mouth (WOM) in fact is the best thing that indicates intense loyalty. Rationally, that only customers who have a strong relationship with the seller willing to his own reputation risk to provide a referral (Palmatier *et al.*, 2006). In the concept of contemporary research, psychological factors/attitude is emphasized. It is assumed that the emotional aspect is only important to the seller as the behavior. Attitudinal loyalty represents a higher-order, long-term commitment from the customer to the organization that can not be met simply by customer repeat purchase and this may indicate the use of services in the future or the willingness to recommend the company to others (Reichheld, 2003). However, attitudinal loyalty is not a result of purchasing behavior. Day (1969), was the first to propose the concept of composite loyalty, where loyalty does not only look at the behavioral aspects, but also the attitude dimension. The main argument is that behavioral loyalty is itself not only to be followed by the actual loyalty (Rauyruen and Miller, 2007). For example, a customer would buy not because he's constantly loyal to the service providers but because there is no other service provider, in other words, the customer has been in a state of 'locked-in'. Meanwhile cognitive loyalty, the same is not inconsistent because the customer does not consider that others may be due to nothing else. While attitudinal loyalty is used to identify the customers who buy repeatedly because of his commitment to the service provider is not because of a lack of alternatives, but because of the long-term contract (Lee and Bellman, 2008). Based on the above reference, this study used a combination of behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty (or called composite of loyalty concept, so if customers are loyal and committed to the behavior of service providers, it becomes natural to think that the service provider will be selected (not preferentially) during supported by attitude. This research approach combined loyalty in B2B service business context and commitment is part of attitude loyalty. The main purpose of an organization is to make the customer enters into a loyal customer (Ndubisi and Chan, 2005). Ndubisi (2007), concluded that loyal customers can be created, strengthened and maintained through the marketing plan with the goal of building trust, demonstrating a commitment to service, communicating with customers at the appointed time, demonstrate a proactive and responsible action as well as efficient in handling conflicts or problems that occur. Interest in the topic of loyalty increase gradually, but the investigation on the antecedents of customer loyalty in the context of B2B professional services industry is still limited. Therefore, the complex relationship between the construct (loyalty and its antecedent) is still not widely understood in the B2B relationship (Lam *et al.*, 2004).

## 2.2. Hypothesis Development

Conceptual Model Company-Customer Relationship are proposed in this study was built primarily by the development of the concept of trust in relationship marketing (Berry, 1983). The formulation of conceptual framework is relations on influencing factors of customer loyalty on B2B Services Industry, especially professional services providers are as follows :

## 2.3. Customer Satisfaction

Retention strategy will not be successful for the long term if the company does not have a strong base of customer satisfaction and customer satisfaction will build by the quality of services. All retention strategy is built on the assumption of quality competitiveness and the value it proposes. Thus

it is clear that companies need to start the process of developing relationships with presenting a good core service delivery, the minimum can meet customer expectations (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2009). Zeithaml *et al.* (2009) hereinafter called the third is satisfaction, perceived service quality and perceived value as a Core Service Provision which is a key factor in building strong customer relationships or customer loyalty. Rauyrueen *et al.* (2007), states that customer loyalty is not only a commitment, but it is also influenced by the quality of service, satisfaction and trust and he describes as the quality of the relationship (relationship quality). Hsu (2010) and Casalo *et al.* (2011) in their respective research proves that in the service industry, trust is influenced by customer satisfaction. Gounaris (2005), proves that trust is affected by the quality of the services. Based on the above reference, the hypothesis arranged as follows:

H1 : Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Customer Loyalty

H2 : Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Trust

#### **2.4. Trust**

Confidence (confidence) in the form of the exchange partner's reliability, credibility, integrity and benevolence, generating trust (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Trust is the foundation of business relationships (business relationship), it is positive and has the power to stimulate the channel relationships; indicated by the increase in long-term orientation (long-term orientation) and affect relationship commitment (Ganesan, 1994; Ryua *et al.*, 2007). Several empirical studies have found a positive relationship between trust and commitment that has been measured with a global construct (Moorman *et al.*, 1992; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Goodnan and Dion, 2001; Perry *et al.*, 2002; Friman *et al.*, 2002; Rodriguez and Dion, 2002; Tellefsen and Thomas, 2005). Given the number of conceptual dimensions of commitment, then in the context of marketing research has proven that the affective dimension of commitment is influenced by beliefs. Confidence determines the company's focus on positive motivation to persist in feeling connected conjunction because (feeling of connectedness). Under the terms above, the next hypothesis is formulated for the relationship between trust and loyalty as follows:

H3: Trust has a positive effect on Customer Loyalty

#### **2.5. Information Sharing**

The exchange of information is a form of communication between the service provider and its customers that the exchange process (sharing) of information that is useful at a particular time is done either formally or informally between sellers and buyers. Ndubisi (2007) stated that the communication in the relationship marketing refers to the maintenance of contact with customers, setting up reliable information at a specific time and proactively communicate in the event of problems. Morgant and Hunt (1994) proved that affect of communication on confidence (trust). Empirically, communication is a determinant of relationship marketing output and focus of relationship marketing is customer loyalty. The more extensive and in between the seller and the buyer establish communication, the stronger the relationship occurs. Sohail (2012) in placing his framework of conceptual communication affects loyalty. Based on the above matters, then compiled the following hypothesis:

H4 : Information Sharing positive effect on Trust

H5 : Information Sharing positive effect on Customer Loyalty

#### **2.6. Switching Barriers**

When considering switching service providers, customers are dealing with a number of barriers that make it difficult to leave the service provider to use and start a relationship with any other provider. The literature suggests that inhibitors to switch (switching barriers) influence customer decisions to get out of the relationship with the company and therefore help facilitate customer retention and influence customer loyalty (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2009). Based on the above reference, the hypothesis arranged as follows:

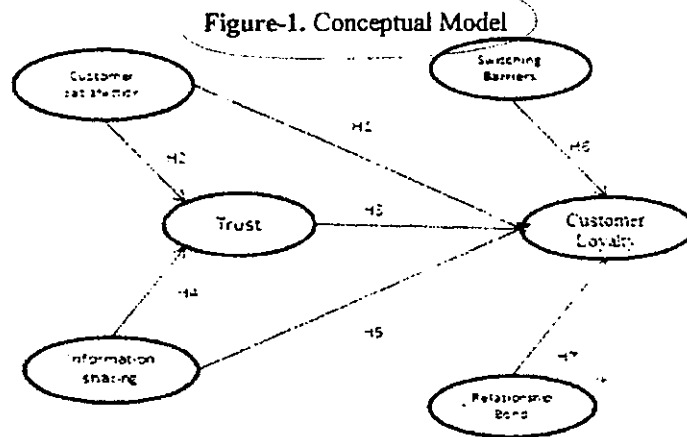
H6 : Switching Barriers positive effect on Customer Loyalty

**2.7. Relationship Bonds**

Before the trust is developed, there must be some assurance. The efficient techniques to build trust is to reduce the uncertainty of the output over a relationship, because it is a process through which the purchaser (buyer) and service providers to build relationships for the benefit of both parties (Cross and Smith, 1996). Writers in the field of relationship bonds distinguish between two broad categorization of bond that is structural bonding and social bonding (Wilson and Mummalaneni, 1986). Structural bonding describes the relationship at the level of the firm, if it breaks down, they are large enough to pay for the responsible party (Moller and Wilson, 1995). Social bonding, on the other hand are inevitable by-products on any exchange business (Wilson, 1995). Social bonding including the feeling of likeness, acceptance, friendship, social activities, and others. Structural and social bonds based on empirical studies have demonstrated the success of a relationship (Wilson et al. 1995). Based on the above reference, the next hypothesis arranged as follows:

H7 : Relationship Bonds positive effect on Customer Loyalty

The conceptual framework for this study are as follow on Figure 1.



**3. Methods**

**3.1. Location and Time of Research**

The research was conducted on exporting companies/coal mining and coal trading companies (traders) as an independent quality and quantity surveyor users in Indonesia. The collection of data from respondents conducted in April until August 2013.

**3.2. Data Collection Method**

This study categorized as quantitative research conducted by a review of the literature and used the concept of empirical research. Work plan and process research compiled systematically, starting from literature and industry review, interviews of respondent and ends with the formulation of the research results.

**3.3. Methods of Sampling**

Total Population and Sample of the population in this study is a coal mining company as well as producers-exporters who are members of the Indonesian Coal Mining Association (ICMA) and non ICMA-member (exporters and nationally or internationally traders). The unit of analysis is each of the selected companies and the measurement is represented by the use of decision makers in the company. Sample of respondents interviewed are any companies from 51 companies. Criteria of respondent is head of the company and/or the management-level or person in charge of influence the purchase decision to use independent surveyor in each company.

### 3.4. Sampling Techniques and Methods of Measurement

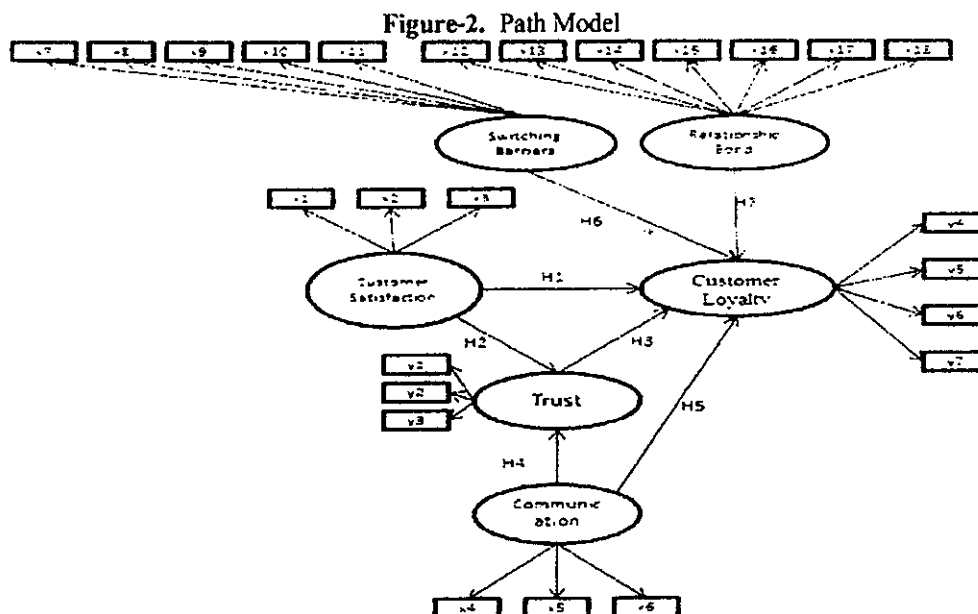
Sampling was conducted using purposive sampling. This technique is chosen according to the purpose of the study that the respondents requiring a decision makers on a particular company that represents a group of coal companies service user survey. Data were collected through questionnaires to the respondents predetermined targets.

### 3.5. Processing Data and Data Analysis

The analysis methods used include Descriptive Statistics and modeling with the Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis to validate the model has been develop. SEM analysis aims to test the statistical model and in the form of causal models. SEM analysis is an analysis based on Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The software used in the SEM analysis is LISREL 8.5.1

### 3.6. Type and Interpersonal Variables

Variable type is composed of the independent variable is the variable that explains or influences other variables (exogenous variables with the indicator 'x') and the dependent variable, ie the variable that explained or influenced by the independent variable, but it can also be variables that affect (independent) in equation another (also called endogenous variables with the indicators 'y'). These variables, either exogenous or endogenous latent variables measured by the number of questions in which each question is made in accordance with the indicators given the response by using a Likert scale between 1 to 5 scale, where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. Diagram of a cross and the hypothesis to be tested that describes the relationship between these variables is as Figure 2.



## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Profile of Respondents

The study involved 93 respondents representing 51 companies (user of independent surveyor services company which each respondent to fill 1 to 3 questionnaire according to the number of independent surveyors (providers) who used the companies. In total number of questionnaires filled out a questionnaire respondents was 200. These companies are all companies that use the services of an independent surveyor for coal export consists of 43 companies (88.2 %) exporter producer (as well as miners and exporters) and 8 companies (11.8%) of traders (coal buyers and at the same as exporters). The 42 companies are exporters-producers, tend to experience an increase in production from year to year. Proportion of exports in 2010 was 84.57% while 15.43% for domestic market, then in 2011 the proportion of exports was 78.83% and 21.17% for domestic market, whereas in 2012 the proportion of exports amounted to 73.10% and 26.99 % domestic market. It shows the export market



continues to have a large portion of that is in the top 70 % and so require the services of a surveyor for export .

#### 4.2. Market Structure of Coal Independent Surveyor Industry

The market structure is characteristic organization of market of coal independent surveyor services industry in Indonesia which affect the nature of competition and the selection of an independent surveyor services company by its service users. The appointment of surveyors must be based on the performance of services of independent surveyor services company consisting of a variety of factors. Table 1 shows the independent surveyor service company used by the exporter-producers company (miner and exporter) and exporter-traders company (buyers and exporters) based on data from 200 questionnaires filled represent the 51 companies.

Table-1. List of Surveyors used by the Respondent

Surveyor Independen	Eksportir Produsen		Eksportir Trader		Total	
	Jumlah	%	Jumlah	%	Jumlah	%
Sucofindo	81	48.50	11	33.33	92	46.00
Geoservices	53	31.74	8	24.24	61	30.50
Carsurin	17	10.18	0	-	17	8.50
IOL Indonesia	16	9.58	9	27.27	25	12.50
SCCI	0	-	1	3.03	1	0.50
CCIC	0	-	2	6.06	2	1.00
SGS	0	-	1	3.03	1	0.50
Cotecna	0	-	1	3.03	1	0.50
Total	167	100.00	33	100.00	200	100.00

Services of an independent surveyor considered by users there are 4 independent surveyor services company that became the main option used by exporters and traders of coal that is Sucofindo (46 %), Geoservices (30.50 %), IOL Indonesia (12.50 %) and Carsurin (8.50 %) or the percentage of surveyors to 4 is 97.50%. Based on the results of the identification by the market of independent surveyor services industry, shows that market competition of the independent surveyor services company is perfectly competitive market (monopsoni market approach) to characterize the number of independent surveyor services company in the field of inspection and testing of coal where the user are free to choose the surveying services company which are used. All the independent surveyor services companies compete for market share in perfectly in the coal independent surveyor service industry in Indonesian.

#### 4.3. Data Analysis Research

Based on the research stage, initial stage is to conduct an analysis of each sub-model of Relationship Marketing (Latent Variable Modeling) to test the reliability of the measurement model in order to know the capabilities of each indicator in explaining the latent variable (Latent Variable). Latent variable is a variable that can not be measured directly (unobservable). Measurement of reliability and validity of construct in this case is used to determine whether a set of indicators can explain the latent variable. Hair et al. (2006) found that a construct is said to reliably when the value of the construct reliability (Construct Reliability, CR) is not less than 0.7, or the value of the construct validity (Construct Validity, CV) not less than 0.5. Meanwhile, Joreskog and Sorborn (1996), more simply gives the requirement that the value of the indicator variable coefficient ( $\lambda$ ) standardized the minimum value is 0.5. Lisrel software can help explain the results of testing the reliability and validity construct for each sub-model of Relationship Marketing in this study as Table 2.

reference

Table-2. Latent Variables, Indicator Variables and Results of Test Reliability and Validity

No.	Latent Variables	Indicator Variabel	Code	Lambda	Error	T	CR	VE	Reference
1.	Customer Satisfaction	Service Features	y4	0,78	0,39	0	0,77	0,52	Zeithaml et al. (2009)
		Customer Emotion	y5	0,68	0,54	0			
		Perception of Equity	y6	0,71	0,50	0			
2.	Trust	Credibility	y7	0,72	0,49	10,53	0,83	0,46	Wong & Sohal (2002); Morgan & Hunt (1994); Moorman et al. (1992)
		Integrity	y8	0,74	0,46				
		Benevolence	y9	0,66	0,56				
3.	Information Sharing	Informal sharing	x18	0,50	0,75	11,28	0,26	0,12	Morgan & Hunt (1994); Palmatier et al. (2006); Sohal (2012)
		Meaningful Information	x19	1,00	0,01	10,85			
		Timely Information	x20	0,51	0,74	10,85			
4.	Switching Barrier	Switching Cost	x21	0,28	0,92	5,69	0,66	0,31	Gronroos (2000); Zeithaml et al. (2009)
		Legal Bond	x22	0,66	0,57	9,26			
		Technological Bond	x23	0,86	0,26	9,84			
		Geographical Bond	x24	0,37	0,87	12,49			
		Time Bond	x25	0,45	0,87	9,48			
	5. Relationship Bond	Legal Bond	x22	0,66	0,57	9,26	0,23	0,23	Berry (1995); Gronroos (2000); Zeithaml et al. (2009)
		Technological Bond	x23	0,86	0,26	9,84			
		Geographical Bond	x24	0,37	0,87	12,49			
		Time Bond	x25	0,45	0,87	9,48			
		Economic/Financial Bond	x26	0,30	0,91	0,47			
6.	Customer Loyalty	Recomendation	y10	1,20	0,43	0,30	0,70	0,43	Sharma & Patterson (1999); Palaima & Auruskeviciene (2007)
		Partnership	y11	0,64	0,59	0,30			
		Client	y12	0,52	0,73	0,30			
		shopper	y13	0,15	0,98	0,14			

The results of the analysis of the measurement model to construct six latent variables indicate that the statements that describe the indicators of the latent variables can explain. The results of this analysis demonstrate that all are important as a base to see the picture of the latent variable coefficient magnitude different.

#### 4.4. Structural Model of Relationship Marketing

Based on the structural models that have been proposed in the framework to determine the value of the coefficients of the model or the contribution of each exogenous latent variables on endogenous latent variables, coefficient estimation is done by using rule Unweighted Least Square (ULS). The results of the test along with the coefficient estimates can be seen in Figure 3. This hypothesis was tested using two test statistic (Jofeskog, 1998), the Chi-square statistic (X2) and RMSEA. Ho is

accepted if the P-Value (x2 test) greater than 0.05 or RMSEA value of less than 0.08. The test results in this study resulted in the value of P-Value=0.00575 and RMSEA=0.051, which means the overall empirical model can be accepted even if P-Value <0.05 was yet RMSEA value < 0.08. Meanwhile, to show the significance of the relationship between latent variables. T-Value as shown in Figure 4 .

Figure-3. Structural Equation Model of Relationship Marketing

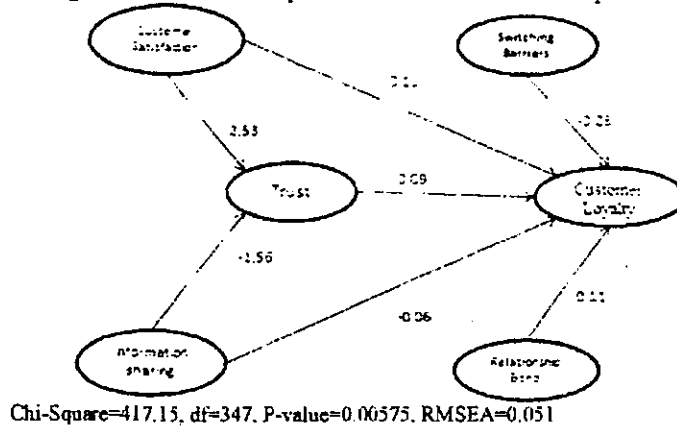
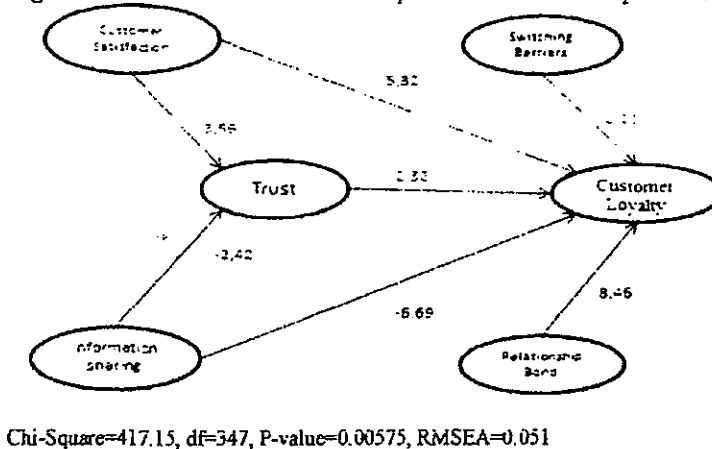


Figure- 4. T – Value of Structural Equation of Relationship Marketing



Based on the results of SEM analysis as illustrated in Figure 3 and 4 above, can be explained as follows:

1. Customer Loyalty sequentially influenced by customer satisfaction and relationship bond with the same effect, and then trust, information sharing and switching barrier. Customer satisfaction in this case is the preparation of service features, service types and attributes are provided by the independent surveyor company considering customer satisfaction surveyor used the services on the terms of the measured overall customer perception of the service. Based on this research, sharing information is often key customers and service providers to exchange useful information (meaningful information), the time needed (timely information) and informally, in addition to the formal (informal sharing). While switching barriers in this case is bonding technology available and meet customer requirements (technological bond) and the fulfillment of the legal aspects (legal aspect), such as the absence of a clear contract between the company and its customer survey services (legal bond) .
2. Creation of structural bonding (structural bond) consistently by providing systems that make it easier for customers to get in touch, either for basic services crate quality inspection and testing activities as well as ancillary services such as consulting, ease of access to surveyors and training for customers. In addition to structural bonding, bonding is also necessary economic (financial bond)' especially for the aspect of coal surveyor service user like time

saving when compared with purely business considerations or special pricing given. So the bonding that occurs between the customer and the service provider is able to strengthen the relationship between customer and surveyor service companies. Preferred customer relationship is a relationship that is based on knowledge and experience possessed by the firm of surveyors (Knowledge Bond).

3. Customer Satisfaction and Information Sharing also affect the customer loyalty through the trust. Customer Trust in this study is the confidence of customers towards independence surveyor in providing services correctly (Integrity).

## 5. Conclusion

Customer Satisfaction, Trust, Information Sharing, Switching Barrier and Relationship Bond influence the Customer Loyalty on the professional services of independent surveyors. Customer Satisfaction and Information Sharing also affects customer loyalty through the trust. All variables has significant effect on customer loyalty with the greatest influence on the relationship bond.

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