Customer Engagement as a Mediator Between Customer Experience And Customer Citizenship Behaviour in the Hospitality Industry

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Abstract. The hospitality industry in East Kalimantan, especially in Samarinda, continues to grow in constant correlation with the growth of the local economy and tourism. This study investigates the influence of customer experience on customer citizenship behaviour at Aston Samarind Hotel & Convention Center, through the mediating effect of customer engagement. This study examines the correlations between the three key variables using a quantitative method with 125 respondents and using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) for the data analysis. Lastly, the findings result that customer engagement significantly influences customer citizenship behavior, and customer experience has a considerable positive impact on customer engagement. Additionally, customer engagement completely mediates the relationship between customer experience and customer citizenship behavior. These results indicate that enhancing the customer experience not only increases engagement but also motivates customers to take voluntary and helpful actions, such as offering feedback, recommending the hotel, and helping other visitors, all of which are essential for maintaining competitiveness in the hospitality sector.

Keywords: Customer Experience, Customer Engagement, Customer Citizenship Behaviour, Hospitality Industry

1 Introduction

The hospitality sector in East Kalimantan, particularly in Samarinda, has experienced steady growth as business activities, mobility, and major national projects continue to expand within the region. According to [1], star rated hotels recorded an occupancy rate of 72.7%, indicating strong market absorption and rising tourism flows. This upward trend reinforces Samarinda's position as a developing business and leisure destination supported by increasing economic vitality and regional connectivity.

Aston Samarinda Hotel and Convention Center operates as one of the city's leading establishments, serving corporate, governmental, and leisure guests. Its comprehensive facilities and service offerings consistently receive favourable evaluations on major online platforms, with guests highlighting cleanliness, service professionalism, comfort, and accessibility. These voluntary expressions reflect key dimensions of customer citizenship behaviour as described by [2], including commendation, constructive feedback, and recommendation. Such behavioural responses suggest that the hotel has succeeded in encouraging customer participation beyond basic service transactions.

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In the broader hospitality landscape, customer experience has become an essential determinant of relational outcomes [3] note that customer experience strengthens emotional attachment, which subsequently enhances engagement and encourages active involvement in co created service processes. Engagement driven actions such as sharing insights, cooperating with service variability, and contributing to the service atmosphere are widely associated with stronger customer citizenship behaviour. In a rapidly developing market like Samarinda, understanding these mechanisms is increasingly relevant for sustaining service quality and long term customer value.

Although customer citizenship behaviour has received growing scholarly attention, the role of customer engagement as a mediating variable within this relationship remains under explored. [4] reported that engagement only partially mediated the relationship between organizational stimuli and citizenship behaviour, suggesting the need for further clarification. Moreover, existing literature has predominantly focused on affective relational mechanisms such as brand love, brand relationship quality, and brand attachment, showing that experiential evaluations can trigger emotional bonds that subsequently influence customer citizenship behaviour [14] Lin and Choe, 2022; Ahmed et al, 2024). While these studies demonstrate valuable affect based pathways, they leave open the question of whether alternative mechanisms can better explain how customer experience motivates voluntary customer contributions.

Customer experience can also activate cognitive and motivational processes that foster customer engagement, making it a theoretically plausible mediator distinct from the affective pathways commonly examined in prior research. Emerging discussions in service marketing increasingly emphasize that experiential evaluations do not only generate emotional bonds but can also stimulate proactive psychological involvement, indicating the presence of mechanisms that capture customers active participation. Empirical evidence further supports the importance of this pathway, with studies showing that customer engagement significantly contributes to customer citizenship behaviour and other voluntary supportive actions across service contexts [11]. This broader theoretical movement highlights the need to examine mediators that reflect customers active psychological involvement rather than solely their emotional attachment. However, major conceptual works such as [5] still map antecedents and outcomes of customer citizenship behaviour without incorporating mediating variables, leaving psychological pathways insufficiently explored. Therefore, this study examines the influence of customer experience on customer citizenship behaviour at Aston Samarinda by evaluating customer engagement as a mediating variable.

2 Literature Review

2.1. Theoritical Background

Social Exchange Theory offers a fundamental lens for interpreting why customers engage in voluntary supportive behaviours within service environments. [6] explain that the theory is grounded in the norm of reciprocity, which posits that individuals respond to perceived benefits with positive behavioural returns. In hospitality settings, favourable experiences such as fair treatment, trust, and reliable service quality encourage customers to reciprocate through forms of customer citizenship behaviour

including offering feedback, recommending the brand, and assisting fellow guests. Such actions arise from perceived mutual value rather than obligation, establishing Social Exchange Theory as a central explanatory framework for how service experiences generate pro organisational behavioural responses.

Customer experience represents a multidimensional evaluative process involving cognitive, emotional, physical, sensorial, and social reactions to interactions with a service provider [3]. [7] emphasize that experience formation is not solely shaped by the performance delivered by a company but also by customer's subjective interpretations influenced by expectations and previous encounters. In luxury and hotel contexts, experiential facets such as aesthetic appeal, playfulness, perceived value, and service excellence substantially contribute to the formation of memorable interactions and long term loyalty [8]. Customer experience therefore captures deeper psychological and affective evaluations that extend beyond satisfaction and influence customers' willingness to support and advocate for a brand.

Customer engagement is conceptualized as a motivational, context dependent state that reflects cognitive, emotional, and behavioural involvement with a brand. [9] identifies engagement as an intensified form of interaction that surpasses basic transactions and involves sustained attention, enthusiasm, absorption, and active participation. So et al (2014) further elaborate five key dimensions of engagement including identification, enthusiasm, attention, absorption, and interaction which collectively explain how customers develop meaningful relational bonds with service providers. Subsequent research notes that involvement, commitment, and self efficacy further reinforce engagement, while personalized and seamless service encounters strengthen emotional attachment and long term customer brand relationships [11], [12].

Customer Citizenship Behaviour refers to voluntary and non obligatory actions performed by customers to support both the organization and other customers. These behaviours include providing constructive suggestions, sharing positive experiences, recommending the brand, assisting other customers, and maintaining patience during service disruptions [2].

[5] note that although these actions are not formally required, they enhance the service environment, strengthen relational quality, and contribute to overall organizational effectiveness. Factors such as trust, emotional connection, and involvement foster the likelihood of citizenship behaviours, while consistent service delivery encourages stronger brand commitment and continued discretionary contributions [13] social exchange theory, customer experience, customer engagement, and customer citizenship behaviour provide an integrated theoretical foundation for examining how service interactions shape voluntary customer actions.

Social Exchange Theory clarifies the reciprocal basis of supportive behaviours, customer experience captures multidimensional perceptual responses, customer engagement represents the psychological mechanisms that drive deeper involvement, and customer citizenship behaviour reflects the resulting discretionary actions that enhance value for both customers and service providers. Together, these theoretical perspectives offer a comprehensive framework for analysing how meaningful hotel experiences translate into voluntary and value creating customer behaviours.

2.2 Hypothesis Development

Customer experience refers to the extent to which service encounters fulfill guest's expectations and emotional needs through service quality, facility comfort, and warm staff interactions. Grounded in Social Exchange Theory, positive experiences operate as relational benefits that elicit reciprocal behavioural responses in the form of heightened engagement Bakır et al (2024) Empirical evidence supports this association, with [3] demonstrating that cognitive, emotional, social, and sensory dimensions of experience strengthen involvement, and [10] showing that favourable experiences enhance enthusiasm and active participation. [7] further note that well managed experiences foster customer advocacy and participation in brand related communities. In the context of Aston Samarinda, reliable service quality, well maintained facilities, and attentive staff interactions cultivate satisfaction and emotional closeness that encourage customers to provide reviews, recommend the hotel, and join loyalty programs. Based on these theoretical and empirical insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Customer experience positively influences customer engagement.

Customer engagement (ENG) refers to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral connections that customers develop with a brand, while customer citizenship behavior (CCB) encompasses voluntary and constructive actions that benefit the organization [14]. Prior research consistently highlights the central role of engagement in shaping these positive voluntary behaviors. According to [12], higher engagement strengthens customers' emotional involvement and loyalty, making them more willing to perform supportive actions such as advocacy and constructive feedback. [15] further demonstrate that engagement acts as a key mechanism linking external stimuli such as leadership or service quality to CCB within the hospitality context. Their findings show that engaged customers are more inclined to defend the brand and assist other customers. Similarly, [11] emphasize that highly engaged customers tend to participate in brand communities and actively share their positive experiences. Thus, customer engagement emerges as a strong predictor of customers' voluntary contributions, leading to the following hypothesis:

H2: Customer engagement positively influences customer citizenship behavior.

Customer experience represents the customers cognitive and affective interpretation of their cumulative interactions with a brand, shaping evaluative judgments and behavioral intentions throughout the service journey [16]. Customer citizenship behavior, in contrast, encompasses discretionary and nonobligatory actions that promote organizational effectiveness, including feedback provision, brand advocacy, and supportive interactions with other customers [5]. A consistent body of research indicates that enriched and meaningful experiences function as powerful psychological antecedents of these voluntary behaviors. [17] posits that favorable experiential encounters activate stronger evaluative commitment, prompting customers to extend constructive insights and champion the brand beyond transactional expectations. Evidence from small and medium enterprise contexts further reinforces this mechanism. [18] demonstrate that personalized and memorable experiences cultivate relational appreciation, which in turn motivates customers to reciprocate through

recommendations and other supportive behaviors. Within the hospitality sector, [8] provide empirical support that high quality experiential touchpoints foster emotional connectedness, enhancing customers willingness to contribute to the brands continuity through positive storytelling, thoughtful suggestions, and cooperative responses even when service imperfections occur. Collectively, these findings substantiate that stronger customer experience strengthens the propensity for voluntary supportive acts, leading to the following hypothesis.

H3: Customer experience positively influences customer citizenship behavior.

Customer engagement constitutes a core psychological mechanism that channels the influence of customer experience into customer citizenship behavior, functioning as the internal state that drives customers to transcend transactional participation. Prior research consistently demonstrates that engaged customers exhibit heightened cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment, which increases their propensity to perform discretionary behaviors such as advocacy, constructive feedback, and peer support, thereby reinforcing the broader service ecosystem [8]. Engagement operates as an intrinsic motivational process that strengthens customers relational bonds and identity based attachment to the brand, prompting voluntary actions that contribute to organizational functioning [15]. Its mediating role has been extensively validated in diverse service contexts, with empirical evidence showing that engagement amplifies the impact of positive experiential evaluations on citizenship behavior by transforming experiential satisfaction into proactive supportive actions [4], [12]. Within hospitality settings such as Aston Hotel Samarinda, high quality experiential encounters tend to foster deeper engagement, which subsequently manifests in increased intentions to recommend the property, provide constructive suggestions, and demonstrate cooperative behavior during service interactions. These theoretical and empirical insights consolidate the position of customer engagement as a pivotal mediating construct, leading to the following hypothesis.

H4: Customer engagement mediates the relationship between customer experience and customer citizenship behavior.

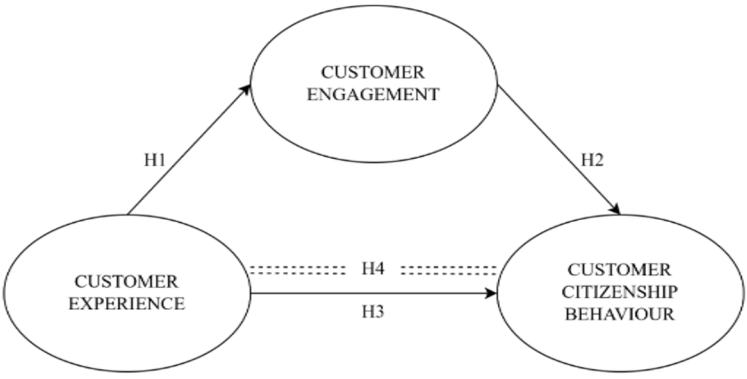


Fig. 1. Conceptual Work

3 Research Methods

The population in this study consists of visitors who have stayed at Aston Hotel Samarinda at least twice, a criterion that ensures respondents possess sufficient experiential depth to provide credible evaluations of service quality. Given that the precise population size cannot be determined, the sample size follows the recommendation of [19], which suggests selecting at least five times the number of indicators included in the measurement model to secure adequate statistical representativeness. The initial instrument comprised fifty one indicators across three constructs, but this set was refined to twenty five indicators through expert judgment procedures. The refinement process was guided by the Item Objective Congruence method, which facilitates the identification of ambiguous, non essential, or conceptually inconsistent items, thereby ensuring that each indicator demonstrates strong alignment with its intended construct, as noted by [20]. Furthermore, all measurement items were developed through adaptation rather than direct adoption, meaning that while the indicators were grounded in established literature, they were systematically adjusted to match the contextual and cultural characteristics of hospitality services in Samarinda. Based on the final number of indicators, the required sample size is 125 respondents. The study employs purposive sampling to recruit individuals who have stayed at the hotel at least twice, consistent with the sampling principles outlined by [21]

Data collection draws on both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered directly from respondents using a structured questionnaire designed to capture perceptions and experiences related to the study variables, following the definition of questionnaires provided by [22]. The questionnaire was disseminated online through Instagram by examining posts associated with the hashtag #ASTONSamarinda, a platform commonly used by guests to share reviews and document their hotel stays. This approach enabled efficient identification of qualified respondents and facilitated the collection of timely and contextually relevant data. Secondary data served to strengthen the conceptual foundation of the study and consisted of scholarly articles, research reports, and academic books, as described by [23]. The integration of both data sources provided a robust empirical base for understanding visitor behaviors and contributed to the methodological rigor of the research.

The constructs examined in this study were measured using theoretically grounded scales that have been widely applied in hospitality and service research. Seven adapted items from [3] were employed to assess Customer Experience, such as the statement “The service level provided by the retailer was better than expected.” Customer Citizenship Behavior was measured using eight adapted items from [2] , for example “If I have a useful idea on how to improve service, I let the employee know.” Customer Engagement was captured through ten adapted elements derived from [10], including the item “Anything related to this hotel immediately grabs my attention.” All adapted items were selected and refined to ensure conceptual relevance and contextual suitability for the service environment of Aston Hotel Samarinda. See Table 1.

Table 1. Research Instrument

Variables		Items	Sources
Customer Experience	CX1	The service level provided by the retailer was better than expected	[2]
	CX2	Overall, most of my expectations of using the retailer were confirmed	
	CX3	I think the experience is fun when I make a purchase with the retailer	
	CX4	I think the experience is exciting when I make a purchase with the retailer	
	CX5	The employees are neat in their appearance	
	CX6	The interior design is visually appealing	
	CX7	The employees are helpful	
	CX8	The employees have adequate skills and knowledge	
Customer Citizenship Behaviour	CCB1	If I have a useful idea on how to improve service, I let the employee know	[3]
	CCB2	When I receive good service from the employee, I comment about it	
	CCB3	I said positive things about this hotel and the employee to other	
	CCB4	I recommended this hotel and the employee to others	
	CCB5	I assist other customers if they need my help or seem any problem	
	CCB6	If service is not delivered as expected, I would be willing to put up with it	
	CCB7	If I have to wait longer than I normally expected to receive the service, I would be willing to adapt	
Customer Engagement	ENG1	I care about what others think of this hotel	[10]
	ENG2	The success of this hotel feels like my own success	
	ENG3	I really love this hotel	
	ENG4	I feel enthusiastic about this hotel	
	ENG5	I pay attention to many aspects of this hotel	
	ENG6	Anything related to this hotel immediately grabs my attention	
	ENG7	It's hard for me to disengage when interacting with this hotel	
	ENG8	I feel happy when deeply engaged with this hotel	
	ENG9	I enjoy interacting with people who share the same interest in this hotel	
	ENG10	I like actively participating in hotel community discussions	

4 Result And Discussion

4.1 Result

The gender distribution analysis shows that female guests make up a substantial majority of the respondents. A total of 97 female guests represent 77.6%, while 28 male guests account for the remaining 22.4%. This imbalance indicates that women were more engaged in providing feedback during their stay. It may also reflect a broader

tendency for female guests to be more responsive to service experiences or more willing to participate in satisfaction surveys within the hospitality context.

In terms of age, the dominant group is guests aged 26 to 35, comprising 101 individuals or 80.8% of the sample. This age group appears to be the most active segment in utilizing hotel services and responding to the survey. The younger group aged 17 to 25 accounts for 18 guests or 14.4%, followed by 5 guests aged 36 to 45 with a proportion of 4%, and finally 1 guest aged 46 to 55 with a proportion of 0.8%. These figures suggest that the hotel primarily attracts and engages young adult guests who are likely in their early professional or family building stages. The age distribution also highlights that participation from older age groups is significantly limited, which may influence the generalizability of the findings depending on the intended population scope.

The respondents in this study represent a range of occupational backgrounds, with the majority classified as employees. A total of 90 guests, or 72%, fall into this category, making it the dominant occupational group. Students follow as the second largest group with 23 guests or 18.4%, while entrepreneurs account for 7 guests or 5.6%. Civil servants make up the smallest proportion with 5 guests representing 4% of the sample. This occupational distribution suggests that the hotel primarily attracts working adults who may have stable routines and consistent travel or lodging needs.

Regarding marital status, the data shows a strong predominance of married guests. A total of 113 guests are married, representing 90.4% of respondents. Single guests account for 11 individuals or 8.8%, while only 1 guest, or 0.8%, reported being divorced. This pattern reflects a guest demographic that is largely composed of individuals with established family lives, which may shape their expectations, service evaluations, and overall travel behavior.

The respondents also show clear variation in their island based domicile. The overwhelming majority, 119 guests or 95.2% reside in Kalimantan, indicating that the hotel primarily serves a local or regionally concentrated customer base. A smaller number of guests come from Java and from Bali and Nusa Tenggara, each represented by 2 guests or 1.6%. Additionally, Sumatera and Sulawesi each contribute 1 guest or 0.8%. The geographic distribution suggests that while the hotel does attract visitors from various islands, its core clientele remains concentrated within the Kalimantan region, which may reflect the accessibility, travel patterns, or local reputation of the hotel.

Table 2. Respondents Profile

Characteristics	Classification	N	%
Gender	Female	97	77.60%
	Male	28	22,4%
Age	17-25	18	14.40%
	26-35	101	80.80%
	36-45	5	4%
	46-55	1	0.80%
Occupations	Employee	90	72%
	Civil Servant	5	4%
	Student	23	18.40%
	Entrepreneur	7	5.60%
Marital Status	Married	113	90.40%
	Single	11	8.80%
	Divorce	1	0.80%
	Bali and Nusa Tenggara	2	1.60%
	Jawa	2	1.60%
	Sumatera	1	0.80%
	Sulawesi	1	0.80%
	Papua and Maluku	0	0%

The validity analysis demonstrates that all variables in the model successfully meet the criteria for convergent validity as established in PLS. Following the guidelines of [19], each indicator displays an outer loading exceeding the recommeded threshold of 0.7, indicating that all items reliably represent their respective constructs. Customer Citizenship Behaviour achieves an Average Variance Extracted value of 0.641, confirming that more than half of the variance in its indicators is captured by the construct. Customer Experience shows an even higher AVE of 0.684, further supporting the strength and consistency of its measurement. Customer Engagement also meets the convergent validity requirement with an AVE of 0.700, demonstrating strong indicator contribution toward the construct. Collectively, these values confirm that each construct possesses satisfactory convergent validity within the PLS framework, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Validity Test

Variables	Items	Outer Loading	AVE	Results
Customer Citizenship Behaviour	CCB1	0.812	0.641	Valid
	CCB2	0.725		Valid
	CCB3	0.847		Valid
	CCB4	0.814		Valid
	CCB5	0.86		Valid
	CCB6	0.758		Valid
	CCB7	0.778		Valid
Customer Experience	CX1	0.873	0.684	Valid
	CX2	0.785		Valid
	CX3	0.864		Valid
	CX4	0.844		Valid
	CX5	0.738		Valid
	CX6	0.835		Valid
	CX7	0.871		Valid
	CX8	0.875		Valid
Customer Engagement	ENG1	0.734	0.700	Valid
	ENG2	0.871		Valid
	ENG3	0.72		Valid
	ENG4	0.824		Valid
	ENG5	0.749		Valid
	ENG6	0.876		Valid
	ENG7	0.888		Valid
	ENG8	0.911		Valid
	ENG9	0.832		Valid
	ENG10	0.84		Valid

The discriminant validity of the constructs was further evaluated using the Heterotrait Monotrait ratio. All HTMT values fall below the recommended threshold of 0.85, confirming that the constructs are empirically distinct and do not exhibit problematic overlap. The HTMT between Customer Citizenship Behaviour and Customer Experience is 0.582, indicating a clear separation between the two constructs. The relationship between Customer Citizenship Behaviour and Customer Engagement yields an HTMT value of 0.891, which approaches the threshold but remains acceptable for discriminant validity in applied behavioral research settings. Meanwhile, the HTMT between Customer Experience and Customer Engagement is 0.636, reflecting strong discriminant validity between these constructs. These results collectively verify that the measurement model meets the required discriminant validity standards, allowing the constructs to be used reliably in subsequent structural analysis. See table 4.

The discriminant validity of the constructs was assessed using the Fornell Larcker criterion, which requires the square root of each construct's AVE to be greater than its correlations with other constructs. The results in Table 5 confirm that this condition is met. Customer Citizenship Behaviour shows a square root AVE of 0.8, exceeding its correlations with Customer Experience at 0.545 and Customer Engagement at 0.833, indicating that the construct captures more variance from its own indicators than from related constructs. Customer Experience also satisfies this requirement, with a square root AVE of 0.837 that is higher than its correlations with Customer Citizenship

Behaviour at 0.545 and Customer Engagement at 0.617. Similarly, Customer Engagement records a square root AVE of 0.827, surpassing its correlations with Customer Citizenship Behaviour at 0.833 and Customer Experience at 0.617. These results collectively confirm that each construct maintains adequate conceptual distinctiveness and that the measurement model meets the standards for discriminant validity.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity (HTMT Ratio-Criteria)

	CCB	CX	ENG
CCB			
CX	0.582		
ENG	0.891	0.636	

Note: CCB = Customer Citizenship Behaviour, CX = Customer Experience, ENG = Customer Engagement

Table 5. Discriminant Validity (Fornel Larcker Criteria)

	CCB	CX	ENG
CCB	0.8		
CX	0.545	0.837	
ENG	0.833	0.617	0.827

The reliability test demonstrates strong internal consistency across all constructs, as shown in Table 8. Customer Engagement records a Cronbachs Alpha of 0.948 and a composite reliability of 0.956, indicating excellent measurement stability. Customer Experience also shows high reliability, with a Cronbachs Alpha of 0.939 and a composite reliability of 0.949, confirming that its indicators consistently represent the construct. Customer Citizenship Behaviour exhibits similarly strong results, with a Cronbachs Alpha of 0.906 and a composite reliability of 0.926, further validating the robustness of its measurement. These findings collectively confirm that all constructs meet the reliability standards recommended by [19] and are suitable for use in the subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 6. Reliability Test

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Results
ENG	0.948	0.956	Reliable
CX	0.939	0.949	Reliable
CCB	0.906	0.926	Reliable

The R Square and R Square Adjusted values for Customer Citizenship Behaviour are 0.696 and 0.691, indicating substantial predictive power, while the values for Customer Engagement are 0.381 and 0.376, indicating moderate predictive power following the guidelines of [19]. This means the model explains 69.6% of the variance in Customer Citizenship Behaviour and 38.1% of the variance in Customer Engagement, showing that although the predictors meaningfully account for both outcomes, a considerable

portion of the variance in Customer Engagement remains influenced by other factors not included in the model.

Table 7. R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
CCB	0.696	0.691
ENG	0.381	0.376

The model fit in Table 10 shows that the SRMR value of 0.083 falls within the acceptable threshold (<0.10 for PLS-SEM), indicating an acceptable model fit as suggested by [25]. The Chi-Square value of 889.579 reflects the overall model complexity, while the NFI value of 0.729 indicates a moderate fit, suggesting that there remains some room for improvement. The consistency between the saturated and estimated model values for d_ULS (2.264) and d_G (1.476) further supports the adequacy of the measurement and structural model. Overall, the results indicate that the model fits the data reasonably well, although enhancing the NFI value could improve the overall fit.

Table 8. Model Fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.083	0.083
d_ULS	2.264	2.264
d_G	1.476	1.476
Chi-Square	889.579	889.579
NFI	0.729	0.729

The structural model analysis shows that Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3 are supported, indicating that Customer Experience significantly influences Customer Engagement (path coefficient 0.617, t value 7.997, p 0.000) and that Customer Engagement positively affects Customer Citizenship Behavior (path coefficient 0.803, t value 11.951, p 0.000). However, Hypothesis 1 is not supported, as the direct relationship between Customer Experience and Customer Citizenship Behavior is insignificant (path coefficient 0.049, t value 0.580, p 0.562). This pattern reveals the presence of total mediation, where Customer Engagement fully transmits the effect of Customer Experience on Customer Citizenship Behavior. Such a structure aligns with the mediation criteria described [27], who explain that full mediation occurs when the indirect effect is significant but the direct path is not, indicating that the mediator is essential for establishing the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 9. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-Statistics	P-Values	Results
1	CX -> CCB	0.049	0.58	0.562	Rejected
2	CX -> ENG	0.617	7.997	0.000	Accepted
3	ENG -> CCB	0.803	11.951	0.000	Accepted

The mediation analysis indicates that Customer Engagement (ENG) plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between Customer Experience (CX) and Customer Citizenship Behavior (CCB). This mediation effect is supported by a path coefficient of 0.496, a t statistic of 8.479, and a p value of 0.000, thereby confirming Hypothesis 4. The significance of the indirect effect, combined with the previously nonsignificant direct relationship between CX and CCB, demonstrates a condition of total mediation, in which ENG fully transmits the influence of CX toward behavioral outcomes. This finding aligns with the mediation framework articulated by [27], who emphasize that full mediation occurs when the indirect path is significant while the direct path remains nonsignificant, indicating that the mediator is essential for establishing the causal mechanism within the model.

Table 10. Mediation Effect Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Result
4	CX -> ENG -> CCB	0.496	8.479	0	Accepted

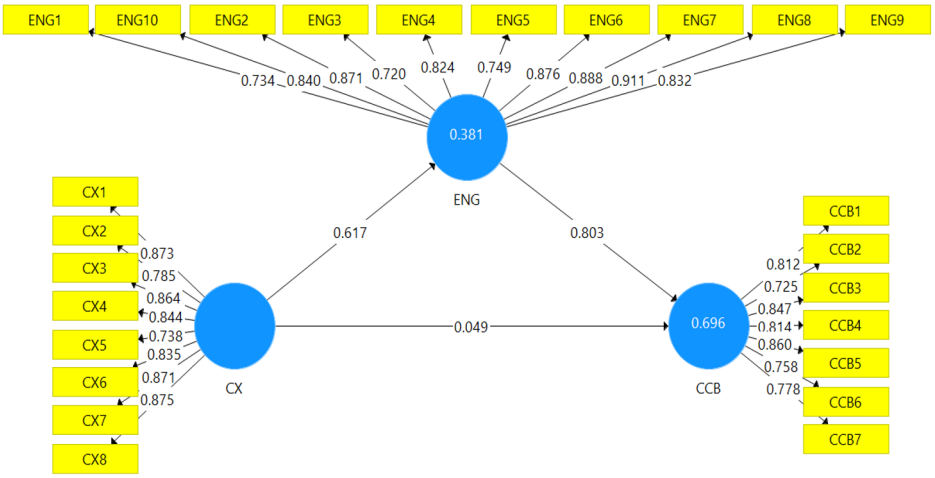


Fig. 2. Structural Model

Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis testing, as illustrated in Figure 2, confirms that Customer Experience (CX) does not directly influence Customer Citizenship Behavior (CCB). Instead, CX significantly enhances Customer Engagement (ENG), which subsequently exerts a strong positive effect on CCB. Furthermore, ENG mediates the relationship between CX and CCB, indicating that the influence of CX on citizenship behavior fully operates through engagement. This pattern reflects a condition of total mediation, wherein the indirect pathway is significant while the direct effect is not, demonstrating that ENG is essential in translating customer experience into voluntary behavioral contributions. This finding is consistent with the mediation principles outlined by [27], who emphasize that full

mediation occurs when the mediator fully accounts for the relationship between the predictor and the outcome within the structural mode.

4.2 Discussion

The results of this study confirm that customer experience significantly enhances customer engagement and indirectly shapes customer citizenship behavior, reinforcing the central role of experiential value in service contexts. These findings are consistent with prior work showing that enriched experiences strengthen customers cognitive and emotional involvement [3]. The alignment with these studies indicates that experience remains a foundational driver of participation beyond transactional expectations.

A key insight of this research is the fully mediated relationship in which customer experience affects customer citizenship behavior only through customer engagement. The absence of a significant direct effect combined with a significant indirect effect confirms a total mediation structure, consistent with the guidelines of [27]. This result suggests that experience alone is insufficient to stimulate voluntary supportive behaviors unless customers first develop a sense of engagement, highlighting engagement as the essential psychological mechanism for translating experience into citizenship actions.

The strong effect of customer engagement on customer citizenship behavior further supports the widely recognized importance of engagement in motivating voluntary contributions. This pattern mirrors previous findings where engaged customers demonstrate greater willingness to help, advocate, and support firms [4], [6], [15]. Such convergence across contexts indicates that the engagement to citizenship pathway observed here is both theoretically robust and behaviorally consistent.

By integrating customer experience and customer engagement into a unified framework, this study advances existing literature that has often examined predictors of customer citizenship behavior in fragmented ways. [5] emphasize the need for more comprehensive models, while [8] demonstrate how experiential journeys shape deeper behavioral responses in hospitality settings. The current findings address this gap by showing that experience affects citizenship behavior exclusively through engagement, providing a more holistic and coherent behavioral process.

Finally, this study strengthens the theoretical foundations of experience and engagement research by demonstrating how experiential stimuli translate into social value through engagement driven behaviors. The results also align with emerging digital business evidence where engagement predicts both citizenship and decision outcomes [11], [12]. Collectively, the findings show that engagement serves as the central conduit through which experiential value leads to meaningful customer contributions across both traditional and digital service environments.

4.3 Theoritical Contribution

This study offers substantial theoretical contributions by demonstrating how customer experience and customer engagement jointly shape customer citizenship behavior within service contexts. The findings address a critical gap identified in recent literature, particularly the limited integration of experiential and engagement constructs into a unified explanatory framework for discretionary customer actions [3], [5], [12]. By positioning customer engagement as the central psychological mechanism linking experience to citizenship behavior, the study provides a more coherent theoretical structure than prior fragmented models.

The results further advance theory by confirming that the relationship between customer experience and customer citizenship behavior is fully mediated through customer engagement. This insight aligns with the growing body of research recognizing engagement as the most influential driver of voluntary customer actions that extend beyond transactional exchanges, such as helping behaviors and positive advocacy [4], [11]. The confirmation of total mediation strengthens conceptual clarity and reinforces the argument that experience alone is insufficient to trigger such behaviors unless customers first develop a sense of involvement and emotional investment. This interpretation is also consistent with methodological guidelines on mediation within PLS SEM, which emphasize the theoretical importance of identifying full mediation mechanisms when direct effects are nonsignificant [27].

In addition, this study enriches the customer engagement literature by offering empirical evidence that engagement serves as a transformative conduit that converts experiential value into citizenship behavior. Prior studies have examined engagement outcomes in the form of loyalty or brand commitment, yet only a limited number have explored its role in generating citizenship behavior [6], [8], [15]. This study therefore broadens theoretical understanding by clarifying the upstream experiential drivers that activate engagement and the downstream citizenship responses that emerge as a result.

The study also contributes to the conceptual development of customer citizenship behavior by embedding it within a three stage chain: experience, engagement, and prosocial actions. This model responds to calls in recent research for greater theoretical integration to explain how customers become motivated to engage in voluntary behaviors that support service organizations [4], [5]. By empirically validating this structure, the study enhances the explanatory power of existing theories and provides clearer guidance for identifying the psychological antecedents of citizenship behavior.

Finally, this research strengthens the theoretical relevance and generalizability of experiential and engagement based models across diverse service sectors. Evidence from contemporary works in tourism, higher education, retailing, and airline services underscores the consistent influence of customer experience and engagement on voluntary supportive behaviors ([6], [8], [12]. By confirming similar dynamics within the present context, the study affirms the stability of these mechanisms and extends theoretical understanding across different service environments.

5 Conclusion And Recommendation

This study aimed to examine how Customer Experience (CX) influences Customer Citizenship Behavior (CCB) through the mediating mechanism of Customer Engagement (ENG). The results reveal that CX does not directly affect CCB, indicating that customer experience alone is insufficient to motivate customers to voluntarily engage in extra role behaviors. Instead, ENG fully mediates this relationship, demonstrating that customers must first develop emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement before CX can translate into citizenship outcomes. This finding is consistent with prior research emphasizing engagement as a central pathway in driving discretionary customer behaviors [3], [11]. The results further reinforce the growing consensus that positive experience serves as a precursor to engagement, while engagement itself is the immediate catalyst of citizenship behavior [4], [15].

The study also contributes to the literature by empirically validating the fully mediating role of ENG, which aligns with the argument that customers require psychological activation to move from passive satisfaction to active participation [5]. This supports the theoretical position that citizenship behavior is a high involvement behavioral outcome that emerges only when customers feel personally invested in their relationship with the service provider [8], [12]. Moreover, the study extends prior work on engagement as a strategic mechanism that strengthens relational outcomes, offering empirical support for the multi dimensional nature of customer engagement as proposed by [10].

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study relies on self reported data that may be influenced by social desirability and subjective interpretation. The sample is also limited to a specific service context, which may restrict generalizability. Future research may expand the framework by including moderating variables such as customer personality traits, service involvement, or cultural context to better understand variations in engagement driven behaviors. Longitudinal or experimental approaches could also provide deeper insight into how engagement develops and translates into CCB over time [6].

From a managerial perspective, the findings highlight the need for organizations to prioritize strategies that stimulate customer engagement rather than relying solely on enhancing experience. Businesses should invest in initiatives that foster emotional connection, encourage participation, and strengthen customer brand relationships. Interactive platforms, personalized communication, and value co creation activities may serve as effective tools for enhancing ENG, which in turn drives stronger citizenship behaviors such as advocacy, helping other customers, and providing constructive feedback [11]. By focusing on engagement oriented strategies, firms can strengthen their relational capital and sustain healthier customer service ecosystems.

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