The Role of Emotional Intelligence, Sales Strategies, Customer Trust, and Service Differences in Increasing Repurchase Intentions in Online Entrepreneurship in Indonesia

Wendy Souisa[1], Kalsum Lussy[2], Maria Marlyn Tetelepta[3], Fauzia Tutupoho[4]
[1,2,3,4] Politeknik Negeri Ambon

Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This study investigates the influence of emotional intelligence, sales strategies, customer trust, and service differences on repurchase intentions in the context of online entrepreneurship in Indonesia. With a quantitative approach, data were collected from 250 online consumers using a Likert scale (1–5) and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS 3). The results reveal that emotional intelligence and sales strategies significantly affect repurchase intentions both directly and indirectly through customer trust. Furthermore, service differences also show a strong direct relationship with repurchase intentions. Customer trust emerges as a vital mediating variable that enhances the impact of emotional and strategic efforts on customer loyalty. These findings highlight the importance of combining interpersonal competencies, marketing strategies, and value-added services to sustain customer retention in the Indonesian digital marketplace. The study offers practical insights for online entrepreneurs aiming to build long-term customer relationships and improve business sustainability.

Corresponding Author:

Name: Wendy Souisa
Institution: Politeknik Negeri Ambon
Emai: souisawendy@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed the landscape of entrepreneurship in Indonesia, particularly in the realm of online business, driven by increased internet penetration, mobile device usage, and the rise of digital marketplaces. As competition intensifies in this dynamic e-commerce ecosystem, sustaining customer loyalty through repurchase intentions becomes a crucial determinant of long-term business success. Several key factors have been identified as drivers of repurchase behavior, including customer satisfaction, e-service quality, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), and trust. Customer satisfaction plays a critical role, with studies showing a significant positive relationship between satisfaction and repurchase intention in Indonesian e-commerce, underscoring the need for businesses to prioritize customer experience to foster loyalty and repeat purchases [1], [2]. Moreover, e-satisfaction—shaped by both utilitarian and hedonic browsing experiences—is pivotal in influencing consumer behavior [3]. E-service quality directly impacts customer satisfaction and perceived value, thus encouraging repurchase behavior [2], [4]. At the same time, positive e-

WOM generated by satisfied customers acts as a form of social proof, significantly enhancing trust and driving repurchase rates [2], [4]. Trust itself is a vital factor, fostered through consistent service quality and positive customer experiences, and is essential for building lasting relationships [1], [2]. Furthermore, relationship factors such as perceived value and e-trust serve as mediating variables that amplify the effects of satisfaction, service quality, and e-WOM on repurchase intention [2].

Repurchase intention refers to a consumer's likelihood to buy a product or service from the same seller or platform again, and in the context of online entrepreneurship—where face-to-face interaction is limited—establishing trust and delivering consistent value are essential. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to understand, manage, and influence one's own emotions and those of others, has emerged as a vital skill for entrepreneurs, especially in digital settings. Entrepreneurs with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage customer interactions, resolve conflicts, and build long-term relationships that foster trust and loyalty—key drivers of repurchase intentions. Trust plays a critical mediating role between perceived value and repurchase behavior, significantly enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty [5], [6]. In international contexts such as Brazilian e-commerce, trust is closely tied to perceived security and privacy, reinforcing its importance in online settings [7]. Similarly, perceived value directly influences repurchase intention, with customer loyalty acting as a mediator; when customers perceive high value, their loyalty increases, subsequently enhancing their intention to repurchase [8]. Moreover, relationship marketing strategies that emphasize value creation can further strengthen customer loyalty and repurchase behavior [8]. Entrepreneurs with strong emotional intelligence can strategically manage trust and perceived value by understanding customer emotions and tailoring communication and service to meet evolving needs, ultimately enhancing satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat purchasing.

Sales strategies play a critical role in shaping consumer behavior in the digital marketplace, where innovative, customer-centric approaches such as personalized promotions, engaging content marketing, and data-driven targeting significantly enhance the customer experience while simultaneously fostering trust. Trust is a fundamental element of successful online transactions, as it reduces perceived risk and encourages repeat purchases, particularly in markets where fraud and misinformation are prevalent. Personalized interactions—like AI-driven recommendations—enhance user engagement and build consumer trust by aligning with digital consumer preferences and fostering long-term relationships [9]. Engaging content marketing further reinforces trust and loyalty through the delivery of high-quality, relevant material, with social media platforms enabling tailored, interactive campaigns that boost brand awareness and customer engagement [10]. Data-driven targeting, through the use of analytics, allows businesses to understand evolving consumer preferences and optimize marketing strategies, leading to improved satisfaction and sustained competitiveness [9], [10]. Moreover, trust-building mechanisms such as transparent policies, responsive customer service, intuitive website design, robust security measures, and authentic customer reviews are vital for strengthening consumer confidence and loyalty [9].

Another important aspect in shaping consumer behavior and fostering repurchase intention is service differentiation. In the highly saturated online marketplace, offering unique and high-quality services—such as faster response times, superior customer support, seamless transactions, flexible return policies, and personalized experiences—can create a significant competitive advantage. These elements directly influence customer satisfaction and play a crucial role in a consumer's decision to repurchase from the same platform or seller. However, despite the growing scholarly attention to individual

factors like emotional intelligence, sales strategies, customer trust, and service differentiation, there remains a lack of empirical research that integrates these constructs into a comprehensive model for predicting repurchase intentions, particularly within the Indonesian e-commerce context. This study aims to bridge that gap by examining how these variables collectively and individually affect repurchase intentions among online consumers in Indonesia. The findings are expected to provide valuable practical insights for online entrepreneurs, digital marketers, and business strategists in their efforts to enhance customer loyalty and ensure business sustainability in an increasingly competitive digital marketplace.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a critical competency for entrepreneurs, particularly in online business settings where communication is often mediated through technology, making the ability to manage emotions, empathize, and respond effectively to customer needs even more essential. High levels of EI enable entrepreneurs to navigate customer interactions, resolve complaints, and handle service recovery, which are key to fostering customer loyalty and retention—especially during the formative stages of a business when establishing strong relationships can have long-term impacts on success. EI encompasses emotional, personal, and social competencies that are vital for managing operations and relationships in entrepreneurship [11], while also equipping individuals to handle emotional stress and promote a healthy work environment [12]. In the context of increasingly complex digital landscapes, particularly with the integration of AI, developing EI is indispensable [13]. Furthermore, EI plays a pivotal role in enhancing customer loyalty, as emotionally intelligent entrepreneurs can better understand and address customer needs, thus strengthening satisfaction,

trust, and long-term engagement [14]. This emotional connection significantly influences the customer loyalty funnel. Beyond customer interactions, EI contributes to broader business success by improving leadership, team dynamics, and employee engagement [13], while also aligning with global well-being objectives such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals through its promotion of good health and decent work environments [12]. Early training and development of EI further support effective emotional regulation in both personal and professional contexts [15].

2.2 Sales Strategies

Sales strategies in the digital business landscape are multifaceted, encompassing personalized communication, social media marketing, and the use of CRM tools to attract, convert, and retain customers, all of which are essential for aligning with customer needs and preferences to enhance satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases. In e-commerce, effective sales strategies also rely on clear product presentation, competitive pricing, and secure payment systems to ensure smooth transactions and build consumer trust. The integration of adaptive, customer-focused approaches significantly contributes to positive purchasing experiences and the formation of repurchase intentions. For example, eMudhra Private Limited leverages CRM systems to streamline sales processes and personalize customer service using data-driven insights, thereby enhancing satisfaction [16], while the use of AI and predictive analytics in digital CRM enables real-time personalization that boosts customer loyalty [17]. Social media platforms further support sales strategies by facilitating direct interaction and relationship building between sellers and buyers, using relevant content and rapid responses to strengthen engagement and trust [18]. Such communication strategies not only serve promotional purposes but also support the development of long-

term customer relationships and overall marketing success [18]. Additionally, digital marketing plays a vital role in driving economic growth and competitiveness by refining market and advertising strategies, maintaining strong sales volumes, and attracting new customers [19], with its application helping businesses to better adapt to market demands and enhance their sales policies for sustained development [19].

2.3 Customer Trust

Trust is a pivotal element in online entrepreneurship, particularly in the realm of e-commerce where transactions are virtual, often anonymous, and inherently laden with uncertainty and perceived risk. As a psychological state, trust reduces consumer concerns regarding product quality, delivery reliability, and payment security, thereby serving as a mental shortcut that enables customers to navigate the complexities of online interactions [20]. This trust is cultivated through consistent, transparent, and credible business practices, including clear communication, accurate product descriptions, secure payment gateways, and responsive after-sales service. Psychological and personality traits also influence customer trust, which affects engagement and participation in e-commerce, while enhanced service quality and product reliability play critical roles in building and maintaining trust [21]. Moreover, customer perceptions—shaped by expectations, perceived benefits, and risks—are crucial in determining trust levels, making reputation management essential for digital vendors [22]. Positive website experiences marked by enjoyment and perceived control further reinforce consumer trust, which is closely tied to customer retention and repurchase intentions [23]. Beyond e-commerce, trust holds broader significance in entrepreneurship by fostering reliable relationships with partners, employees, and suppliers, and serving as a strategic asset that strengthens entrepreneurial credibility in uncertain and competitive markets [24].

2.4 Service Differences

Differentiation in the online environment is crucial for businesses to stand out in competitive markets like Indonesian e-commerce, where many sellers offer similar products. To retain customers, strategies must emphasize unique service attributes that boost satisfaction and loyalty. In e-commerce, differentiation is achieved through service excellence, personalized offerings, and effective use of technology. Service excellence improves perceived quality and customer satisfaction, with Self-Service Information Technologies (SSITs) enhancing delivery and influencing reuse intentions [25]. Memorable service experiences foster loyalty and competitive advantage [26]. Personalization allows businesses to tailor services to individual preferences, creating unique value propositions [27], while Service Flavors help adapt services to various segments without major system changes [28]. Technology plays a key role by enabling efficient, innovative services; SSITs mediate the impact of service quality on behavior [25] and the ease of online comparison forces firms to differentiate more than traditional businesses [29].

2.5 Repurchase Intentions

Repurchase intention in online entrepreneurship is a critical factor for sustaining business success, as it reflects customer loyalty, reduces marketing costs, and increases customer lifetime value. Numerous studies highlight key determinants of repurchase intention, including service quality, customer satisfaction, brand trust, perceived value, and promotional strategies, all of which collectively shape a consumer's decision to continue purchasing from the same seller or platform. Service quality is a major predictor, as it directly influences customer satisfaction, which in turn fosters brand trust and repeat purchases

[30], [31]. In e-commerce, service quality explains a significant portion of the variance in repurchase intention, underscoring its importance for customer retention [31]. Brand trust mediates the link between satisfaction and repeat behavior, while a strong brand reputation, supported by reliable service and positive experiences, further enhances repurchase likelihood [30], [32]. Additionally, perceived value—reflecting the consumer's evaluation of a product's worth—strongly influences repeat purchasing and can be elevated through quality offerings and customer-centric approaches [33]. Promotional strategies like cashback offers also contribute to customer satisfaction and reinforce repurchase intentions [32].

2.6 Hypotheses Development

Based on the literature reviewed, a conceptual model is proposed in which emotional intelligence, sales strategies, customer trust, and service differences serve as independent variables, while repurchase intention is the dependent variable. Customer trust is also considered as a potential mediating variable. The theoretical grounding from social exchange theory and relationship marketing supports the interconnection among these constructs, suggesting that trust and perceived value formed through emotional engagement and service quality are vital to fostering long-term consumer behavior.

H1: Emotional intelligence has a positive effect on repurchase intentions.

H2: Sales strategies have a positive effect on repurchase intentions.

H3: Customer trust has a positive effect on repurchase intentions.

H4: Service differences have a positive effect on repurchase intentions.

H5: Emotional intelligence positively affects customer trust.

H6: Sales strategies positively affect customer trust.

H7: Customer trust mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and repurchase intentions.

H8: Customer trust mediates the relationship between sales strategies and repurchase intentions.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research approach with an explanatory design to analyze the causal relationships between the independent variables (emotional intelligence, sales strategies, customer trust, service differences) and the dependent variable (repurchase intention). Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) is used to test the research model and hypotheses. This method is suitable for analyzing complex variable relationships and mediating effects in models with reflective constructs.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target population of this study comprises individuals in Indonesia who have experience purchasing from online entrepreneurs, particularly those who engage in repeated transactions through e-commerce platforms, social media, or digital marketplaces. To ensure the relevance of participants to the research objectives, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was employed. A total of 250 respondents were selected, which satisfies the minimum sample size requirement for Structural Equation Modeling using Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) and provides sufficient statistical power for hypothesis testing.

3.3 Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed online through social media platforms, email, and online communities. The questionnaire was designed using Google Forms to ensure ease of access and wide reach. Prior to distribution, a pilot test involving 30 respondents was conducted to ensure the

reliability and clarity of the items. Minor adjustments were made based on feedback.

All variables in this study were measured using validated indicators adapted from previous research, with each item assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Emotional Intelligence was measured using the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), which includes dimensions such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and empathy. Sales Strategies were adapted from digital sales and marketing literature (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Chaffey, 2015), encompassing personalization, promotional activities, responsiveness, and CRM usage. Customer Trust was assessed using indicators from Gefen et al. (2003), focusing on credibility, reliability, and security. Service Differences were measured based on the framework by Parasuraman et al. (1988), emphasizing service uniqueness, personalization, and support quality. Finally, Repurchase Intentions were evaluated using items from Hellier et al. (2003) and Oliver (1999), which cover the intention to repurchase, willingness to recommend, and likelihood of continued use.

3.4 Validity and Reliability Testing

To ensure construct validity and reliability, several tests were conducted using SmartPLS 3. Indicator reliability was assessed through outer loadings, with values ≥ 0.7 considered acceptable. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), both of which also require values ≥ 0.7 to be deemed adequate. Convergent validity was measured using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with a threshold of ≥ 0.5. Discriminant validity was confirmed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loading analysis, ensuring that each construct was empirically distinct from the others.

3.5 Data Analysis Method

The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 3 software, chosen for its suitability in handling small to medium sample sizes, non-normal data distributions, and complex models involving mediating variables. The analysis involved several steps, starting with descriptive statistics for demographic profiling, followed by the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to assess the reliability and validity of constructs. Subsequently, the structural model (inner model) was assessed to examine the significance and strength of hypothesized relationships using path coefficients, t-statistics obtained through bootstrapping with 5,000 samples, p-values, the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.1 Results
a. Demographic Profile of Respondents

To understand the background of the respondents and ensure the relevance of the data collected, a demographic analysis was conducted on all 250 valid responses, covering gender, age, occupation, frequency of online purchases, and preferred online platforms. The analysis showed that 58% of respondents were female, suggesting that women are slightly more active in online shopping. In terms of age, half of the respondents (50%) were between 21–30 years old, indicating that young adults dominate online purchasing behavior, consistent with broader trends in digital entrepreneurship. Regarding occupation, students (40%) and employees (36%) formed the largest groups, highlighting a digitally literate consumer base with the means and motivation to engage in e-commerce activities.

The frequency of online purchases further reinforces this engagement, with 86% of respondents shopping online at least twice per month and 44% making purchases more than three times a month. This high purchasing frequency reflects strong participation in digital commerce. In terms of platform preference, Shopee emerged as the most favored platform (60%), followed by Tokopedia (25.2%), while other platforms such as Lazada and TikTok Shop held smaller shares. These findings underscore the importance of Shopee and Tokopedia in shaping user behavior and suggest that studies on repurchase intention in Indonesia should closely consider customer experiences within these leading marketplaces.

b. *Measurement Model (Outer Model) Evaluation*

The measurement model (also known as the outer model) in SEM-PLS analysis assesses the reliability and validity of the constructs used in the study. It ensures that the indicators used to measure latent variables are both accurate and consistent. The evaluation includes analysis of indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability), convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted or AVE), and discriminant validity.

c. *Indicator Reliability (Outer Loadings)*

Indicator reliability is evaluated by examining the loading factor (outer loading) of each item on its respective construct. Loadings above 0.7 are considered acceptable [34].

Table 1. Loading Factor

Construct	Indicator Code	Loading Factor
Emotional Intelligence	EI1	0.841
	EI2	0.872
	EI3	0.821
	EI4	0.790
Sales Strategies	SS1	0.873
	SS2	0.841
	SS3	0.823
	SS4	0.766
Customer Trust	CT1	0.903
	CT2	0.912
	CT3	0.841
Service Differences	SD1	0.832
	SD2	0.849
	SD3	0.873
Repurchase Intention	RI1	0.866
	RI2	0.884
	RI3	0.891

Source: Results processing data by authors (2025)

All indicators have loading values > 0.7, indicating strong indicator reliability.

d. *Internal Consistency Reliability*

Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), with values above 0.7 indicating acceptable reliability. The results showed that all constructs met this threshold: Emotional Intelligence (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.892; CR = 0.923), Sales Strategies (0.873; 0.912), Customer Trust (0.901; 0.935), Service

Differences (0.881; 0.918), and Repurchase Intention (0.886; 0.924). These findings confirm that each construct demonstrates strong internal consistency reliability.

e. *Convergent Validity (Average Variance Extracted - AVE)*

Convergent validity ensures that a set of indicators accurately represents a single underlying construct, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values of ≥ 0.5 considered acceptable. The results show that all constructs meet this criterion: Emotional Intelligence (0.707), Sales Strategies (0.678),

Customer Trust (0.784), Service Differences (0.738), and Repurchase Intention (0.751). These AVE values confirm that each construct demonstrates strong convergent validity.

f. *Discriminant Validity*

Discriminant validity assesses whether a construct is truly distinct from other constructs. It is tested using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, which requires that the square root of AVE for each construct be greater than its correlations with other constructs.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

Construct	EI	SS	CT	SD	RI
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	0.841				
Sales Strategies (SS)	0.511	0.823			
Customer Trust (CT)	0.576	0.608	0.885		
Service Differences (SD)	0.514	0.572	0.625	0.859	
Repurchase Intention (RI)	0.547	0.593	0.678	0.607	0.867

Source: Results processing data by authors (2025)

Each construct's diagonal value (square root of AVE) is greater than its correlations with other constructs, confirming discriminant validity.

g. *Structural Model (Inner Model) Evaluation*

The structural model, also known as the inner model, assesses the relationships between latent variables and tests the study's hypotheses. Using SmartPLS 3, the structural model was evaluated through several key metrics: Coefficient of Determination (R^2), Path Coefficients, t-statistics and p-values (via bootstrapping), Effect Size (f^2), and Predictive Relevance (Q^2).

h. *Coefficient of Determination (R^2)*

The R^2 value reflects the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables, with

higher values indicating stronger explanatory power. In this study, the R^2 value for Customer Trust is 0.617, meaning that 61.7% of its variance is explained by Emotional Intelligence and Sales Strategies. Meanwhile, the R^2 value for Repurchase Intention is 0.694, indicating that 69.4% of its variance is accounted for by Emotional Intelligence, Sales Strategies, Customer Trust, and Service Differences. Both values fall within the "substantial" range, demonstrating that the model possesses strong explanatory power.

i. *Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing*

Hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping (5,000 subsamples) to generate t-statistics and p-values. The significance threshold is t > 1.96 at a 95% confidence level.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Statistic	p-Value	Result
H1	EI → Repurchase Intention	0.196	3.420	0.001	Supported
H2	SS → Repurchase Intention	0.208	3.732	0.000	Supported
H3	CT → Repurchase Intention	0.314	5.026	0.000	Supported
H4	SD → Repurchase Intention	0.227	4.188	0.000	Supported
H5	EI → Customer Trust	0.341	6.021	0.000	Supported
H6	SS → Customer Trust	0.369	6.479	0.000	Supported
H7	EI → CT → Repurchase Intention (Indirect)	0.107	3.105	0.002	Supported (Mediated)
H8	SS → CT → Repurchase Intention (Indirect)	0.116	3.431	0.001	Supported (Mediated)

Source: Results processing data by authors (2025)

All path coefficients in the model are positive and statistically significant, confirming that all hypotheses (H1–H8) are supported. Emotional intelligence has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention (β = 0.196, t = 3.420, p = 0.001), indicating that when online entrepreneurs exhibit traits such as empathy, self-awareness, and emotional regulation, they can more effectively connect with customers and encourage repeat purchases. Sales strategies also positively influence repurchase intention (β = 0.208, t = 3.732, p = 0.000), suggesting that personalized marketing, clear value propositions, and promotional tactics contribute to customer loyalty. Customer trust shows the strongest direct impact on repurchase intention (β = 0.314, t = 5.026, p = 0.000), reinforcing its central role in online business relationships by reducing perceived risk and increasing consumer confidence. Likewise, service differences significantly influence repurchase intention (β = 0.227, t = 4.188, p = 0.000), demonstrating that unique and high-quality services, such as fast delivery or responsive support, attract repeat customers. Emotional intelligence also directly enhances customer trust (β = 0.341, t = 6.021, p = 0.000), highlighting the importance of emotional connection in building strong relationships. Sales strategies similarly impact trust (β = 0.369, t = 6.479, p = 0.000), with transparent communication and consistent service fostering credibility. Furthermore, customer trust mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and repurchase intention (β = 0.107, t = 3.105, p = 0.002), as well as between sales strategies and repurchase intention (β = 0.116, t = 3.431, p = 0.001), confirming that trust plays a pivotal role in translating strategic efforts and emotional engagement into sustained consumer behavior.

j. Effect Size (f²)

The f² value assesses the impact of each exogenous variable on the endogenous variable. According to Cohen (1988), values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively.

Table 4. Effect Sizes

Path	Effect Size (f²)	Interpretation
EI → Customer Trust	0.191	Medium
SS → Customer Trust	0.226	Medium
CT → Repurchase Intention	0.318	Medium to Large
EI → Repurchase Intention	0.072	Small

Path	Effect Size (f²)	Interpretation
SS → Repurchase Intention	0.088	Small
SD → Repurchase Intention	0.142	Small to Medium

Source: Results processing data by authors (2025)

These results indicate that while Emotional Intelligence and Sales Strategies have relatively smaller direct effects on repurchase intentions, their indirect influence through Customer Trust is stronger and more impactful. Based on the analysis of effect size values (f²), Customer Trust emerged as the most dominant factor influencing Repurchase Intention (f² = 0.318), categorized as medium to large, highlighting its critical role in driving repeat purchases in online entrepreneurship. In contrast, Emotional Intelligence (f² = 0.072) and Sales Strategies (f² = 0.088) exhibit small direct effects on Repurchase Intention, yet both show medium-sized effects when directed toward Customer Trust (EI → CT = 0.191; SS → CT = 0.226), confirming that their contribution is more substantial when channeled through the development of trust. Meanwhile, Service Differences (f² = 0.142) demonstrates a small to medium effect, indicating that although service uniqueness contributes to repurchase behavior, its influence remains secondary to customer trust. These findings reinforce the notion that in digital marketing, building and maintaining customer trust is a key strategy for enhancing customer loyalty and sustaining long-term business success.

k. Predictive Relevance (Q²)

Q² assesses the model's predictive relevance through the blindfolding procedure, where a value greater than 0 indicates that the model is capable of accurately predicting endogenous constructs. In this study, the Q² values for Customer Trust (0.421) and Repurchase Intention (0.446) are both well above zero, signifying strong predictive relevance. These results confirm that the model has a high capacity to predict outcomes related to customer trust and repurchase intentions in the context of online entrepreneurship.

4.2 Discussion

a. Emotional Intelligence and Repurchase Intention

This study found that Emotional Intelligence (EI) has a significant direct and indirect influence on Repurchase Intention, with Customer Trust acting as a key mediator. Entrepreneurs who exhibit high emotional intelligence are better equipped to establish trust-based relationships, even in virtual environments where nonverbal communication is limited. These findings align with Goleman's (1995) theory, which highlights emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills as critical components for influencing others' behavior—especially relevant in customer-centric contexts like online business. In Indonesia's growing digital market, where interactions are often mediated by technology, emotional intelligence becomes a valuable asset in addressing customer needs, handling complaints, and responding empathetically to feedback, thereby strengthening customer loyalty and encouraging repeat purchases.

The broader literature further supports the relevance of EI across various domains. In leadership and organizational contexts, emotionally intelligent leaders foster trust and build positive workplace cultures, enhancing employee engagement and overall performance [35]. EI also improves team communication and cohesion, which are critical for effective collaboration and

productivity [36]. In the realm of digital customer relationships, self-awareness and sociability enable businesses to manage interactions effectively and stand out in competitive markets [37]. Additionally, emotional intelligence contributes to responsible social media behavior, with self-awareness aiding in the regulation of emotions during online interactions [38]. These insights emphasize that the indirect influence of EI through Customer Trust not only strengthens emotional bonds but also enhances perceptions of credibility and integrity, reinforcing its critical role in sustaining long-term consumer engagement.

b. *Sales Strategies and Repurchase Intention*

Sales Strategies (SS) were also found to have significant direct and indirect effects on Repurchase Intention, mediated through Customer Trust. Effective digital sales strategies, such as personalized offers, interactive content, discount campaigns, and omnichannel engagement, contribute significantly to attracting and retaining customers. The results support previous research by Kotler and Keller (2016), highlighting that structured and customer-oriented sales approaches enhance buyer confidence and long-term loyalty. Furthermore, the strong path from SS to Customer Trust suggests that professional, transparent, and responsive sales communication—through platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, or e-commerce live chat—plays a key role in fostering trust. In the Indonesian e-commerce landscape, where competition is intense and buyers are wary of fraud or poor service, trustworthy sales strategies can be a key differentiator.

Customer orientation involves salespeople focusing on building relationships and understanding customer needs, which significantly impacts customer loyalty [39]. Key factors such as product assortment, listening skills, and understanding customer demographics (e.g., annual income) are critical in fostering loyalty. CRM strategies, including customer identification, interaction, and personalization, also have a significant positive impact on consumer loyalty [40]. Effective CRM practices involve leveraging customer data and maintaining long-term relationships through personalized services and loyalty programs. Moreover, integrated marketing strategies that prioritize customer needs significantly increase satisfaction, which in turn strengthens loyalty [41]. Components such as market segmentation, targeting, and relationship marketing are essential in forming enduring customer relationships. Finally, customer-oriented selling, which emphasizes understanding and fulfilling customer needs, is proven to build long-term relationships and enhance buyer confidence and loyalty [42].

c. *Customer Trust as a Mediator*

Customer Trust (CT) emerged as a central construct in this model, significantly mediating the effects of both Emotional Intelligence and Sales Strategies on Repurchase Intention. This finding reinforces Morgan and Hunt's (1994) commitment-trust theory, which posits that trust is a primary driver of relationship marketing success. In online entrepreneurship, especially in developing countries like Indonesia, customer trust is often the deciding factor in repeat purchases. Factors such as consistency in service delivery, positive reviews, responsive seller communication, and secure payment methods play a crucial role

in enhancing consumer trust and confidence in digital transactions.

Trust is identified as a central antecedent to relational commitment, even surpassing other economic variables in importance [43]. In the context of direct selling, trust and commitment are inseparable, with trust functioning as a key mediating variable that influences long-term customer relationships [44]. Elements like consistent service quality and favorable customer reviews build trust by offering assurance of reliability [45]. Moreover, responsive communication and secure payments address buyer concerns and strengthen the perception of safety. In Indonesia's C2C e-commerce landscape, trust significantly shapes purchasing behavior and repeat transactions, especially when mediated by decision-making factors [45]. The findings emphasize that while marketing efforts and interpersonal skills may attract buyers initially, it is trust that ensures sustained customer loyalty.

d. Service Differences and Repurchase Intention

The analysis confirms that Service Differences (SD)—such as customized packaging, after-sales support, unique product features, and delivery speed—have a direct and positive impact on Repurchase Intention. This supports the findings of various studies on service differentiation and its influence on consumer behavior. For example, Suhardi et al. [46] found that at PT. Samudra Jaya Sakti, differentiated services directly influenced customer loyalty, although their effect on customer satisfaction was not significant. Similarly, Amanah and Harahap [15] demonstrated that in Lazada Indonesia, product differentiation combined with emotional value significantly boosted consumer loyalty, reinforcing the idea that a holistic approach to service differentiation enhances competitive advantage.

Customer satisfaction also emerges as a crucial mediating factor between service quality, perceived value, and loyalty. Studies such as Rizan et al. [47] on Tokopedia and Wijayanti and Wahyono [48] on Indosat IM3 show that service quality and perceived value increase satisfaction, which in turn strengthens loyalty. Moreover, the emotional connection created through perceived value, as shown in the Lazada case, adds depth to loyalty-building efforts [49]. In highly saturated digital markets like Indonesia, where product offerings are often similar across sellers, offering unique and consistent service features—such as fast delivery or engaging packaging—can serve as an effective, low-cost strategy for customer retention. Service differentiation, therefore, is not only about tangible benefits but also about building emotional engagement and enhancing the perceived value of the brand.

5. CONCLUSION

This research confirms that emotional intelligence, sales strategies, customer trust, and service differences all significantly contribute to the enhancement of repurchase intentions in Indonesian online entrepreneurship. Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role by fostering interpersonal communication and empathy, which indirectly enhances repurchase intention through trust. Sales strategies, when well-executed, directly influence purchasing behavior and strengthen customer relationships. Additionally, service differences such as personalized experiences and efficient service delivery provide customers with added value that encourages loyalty. Customer trust emerges as a key mediating factor, reinforcing the idea that trust is foundational in digital transactions,

especially in a market where face-to-face interaction is limited. These findings suggest that online entrepreneurs should focus not only on product quality or promotions but also on building trustworthy interactions and delivering differentiated service.

In practical terms, entrepreneurs should invest in emotional intelligence development, design trust-based sales strategies, and offer service experiences that surpass customer expectations. Such efforts can create a competitive advantage in a crowded digital marketplace by promoting stronger customer loyalty and encouraging repeat purchases. Future research can expand this study by including variables such as online platform quality, customer satisfaction, or cultural influences to deepen the understanding of customer retention dynamics in online markets. Broader comparative studies across different countries or e-commerce platforms would also help validate and generalize these findings beyond the Indonesian context.

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital consumer behavior by demonstrating how emotional and strategic competencies interact with trust to affect purchase outcomes. It integrates psychological constructs (Emotional Intelligence), marketing strategies (Sales Strategies), and relational outcomes (Customer Trust) to explain repurchase intentions in the e-commerce context. Practically, the study provides evidence-based recommendations for online

entrepreneurs in Indonesia, including investing in emotional intelligence training to enhance customer interaction—especially during conflict or complaint handling; designing effective, data-driven, and customer-centric sales strategies; prioritizing trust-building mechanisms such as transparent product descriptions, consistent service quality, and fast issue resolution; and differentiating services through personalized touches that enhance customer experience and satisfaction.

5.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations. The sample is limited to 250 respondents from Indonesia, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other countries or market segments. Additionally, the use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to capture long-term behavioral changes or establish causal relationships. For future research, a longitudinal design could be employed to observe the development of trust and repurchase patterns over time. Comparative studies across different regions or product categories would also improve the external validity of the findings. Furthermore, incorporating additional variables such as brand image, online platform quality, or social media influence could offer deeper insights into the dynamics of digital repurchase behavior.

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