

ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRODUCT QUALITY PERCEPTION AND CALL CENTER SERVICE ON CUSTOMER RECOMMENDATION INTENTION IN THE TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Digital transformation has driven fundamental changes in Indonesia's telecommunications industry, where perceived product quality and the effectiveness of customer service are key factors in sustaining customer loyalty and advocacy. This study analyzes the relationship between perceptions of product quality and Call Center service on customers' recommendation intention using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. The literature search strategy employed combinations of Boolean keywords across Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar for the 2020–2025 period, yielding 19 articles that met the inclusion criteria. The analysis shows that perceived product quality and service quality are primary determinants influencing satisfaction, trust, and loyalty, which in turn lead to recommendation intention. The reliability, responsiveness, and assurance dimensions of call center services strengthen customers' perceptions of the company's professionalism and empathy, while high perceived product quality increases customers' willingness to recommend the service to others. The study affirms that the synergy between product excellence (network stability and the reliability of product services) and customer service interactions (Call Center) plays a significant role in shaping a holistic customer experience. Practically, these findings offer strategic implications for telecommunication industry practitioner to enhance the integration of product and service quality to build sustainable customer advocacy in the digital era. Future research is recommended to develop an integrative model that examines the simultaneous influence of product quality and Call Center service quality on customers' recommendation intention by incorporating satisfaction, trust, and emotional experience as mediating variables within the context of converged digital services.

Keywords: *Perceived Product Quality; Service Quality; Call Center; Recommendation Intention; Telecommunication Industry.*

INTRODUCTION (TNR, 12 BOLD)

The rapid advancement of digital transformation has profoundly reshaped patterns of telecommunication service consumption in Indonesia. Customers today evaluate services not only based on connection speed or stability but also on their perceived quality, encompassing reliability, security, and ease of use (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Kotler & Keller, 2021). Furthermore, the quality of interactions with customer service centers, such as call centers, plays a crucial role in shaping a sustainable user experience, particularly in situations involving service disruptions or technical complaints (Rahmawati, 2022). Within this context, IndiHome, as Telkom Indonesia's fixed broadband provider, and Telkomsel, as the leading mobile operator, face significant challenges in maintaining customer loyalty amid the increasingly competitive landscape of digital convergence services (Putra & Nugroho, 2023).

Perceived product quality has long been recognized as a key determinant influencing customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, including the intention to recommend a product to others (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996; Tjiptono, 2020). Recent studies affirm that customers who perceive a product as high-quality are more likely to act as brand advocates through both digital and direct word-of-mouth (WOM) mechanisms (Han & Hyun, 2018). In the context of telecommunication services, a positive perception of quality not only enhances satisfaction but also strengthens brand trust, an essential factor for customer retention in industries characterized by high switching rates (Kim, Lee, & Kim, 2020). Therefore, understanding the relationship between perceived product quality and recommendation intention is a strategic aspect of enhancing customer value within the

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telecommunication industry. Meanwhile, the Call Center service dimension serves as a critical determinant in maintaining both emotional and functional relationships between customers and the company. A responsive, empathetic, and professional Call Center can significantly strengthen customers' perceptions of overall service quality (Hapsari, Clemes, & Dean, 2017). Previous studies have demonstrated that direct interactions with service representatives have a substantial impact on perceptions of reliability and trust, which ultimately influence customers' willingness to recommend the service (Lee & Moghavvemi, 2015). Within the telecommunication industry, the Call Center functions as a primary touchpoint for resolving technical issues and addressing product inquiries; therefore, customers' perceptions of its service quality can meaningfully contribute to customer loyalty and advocacy. However, prior research has shown inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between perceived quality and recommendation intention. Several studies have found a strong positive correlation between product quality and word-of-mouth intention (Wijayanti & Andriani, 2022), while other research suggests that this relationship is mediated by customer satisfaction and trust (Nasution, 2021). On the other hand, studies focusing on call center services within Indonesia's telecommunications sector remain relatively limited and have primarily emphasized service satisfaction rather than recommendation intention.

This situation indicates a research gap in understanding how the quality of digital frontline services, such as call centers, contributes to customers' intention to recommend these services to others. To address this research gap, a more systematic and integrative approach is required through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). This method enables researchers to comprehensively map empirical evidence on the relationship between perceived product quality, Call Center service quality, and customer recommendation intention within the telecommunications sector (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). By synthesizing selected literature, this study aims to identify relationship patterns, relevant mediating or moderating variables, and the most consistent directions of influence. Furthermore, the SLR facilitates an in-depth elaboration of foundational theories explaining customer recommendation behavior, such as the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) and the Service Quality Model (SERVQUAL), within the context of the modern telecommunications industry (Oliver, 1997; Parasuraman et al., 1988). The objective of this study is to analyze the relationship between perceived product quality and Call Center service quality on customers' recommendation intention within the telecommunications industry through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). This research also aims to identify the dominant determinants influencing recommendation intention and to formulate strategic directions for enhancing sustainable customer experience. The findings are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of service quality loyalty relationship models, as well as a practical contribution for Telkom Group, Indonesia's largest telecommunications company, in designing an integrated, customer-centric service quality improvement strategy.

METHOD

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to identify, evaluate, and synthesize various models of integrated service delivery that have been implemented globally within the context of maternal and child health. This approach was selected for its capacity to provide an in-depth understanding of the diversity of concepts, implementation strategies, and effectiveness of integrated service models across different countries and health systems. The literature search strategy was conducted through leading academic databases, including PubMed, Scopus, Google Scholar, and ScienceDirect, using Boolean keyword combinations. This systematic and comprehensive search ensured the inclusion of relevant studies that met predetermined criteria, thereby enhancing the rigor and reliability of the synthesis process.

("perceived product quality" OR "service quality" OR "customer service" OR "call center") AND ("recommendation intention" OR "word of mouth" OR "customer advocacy" OR "loyalty intention") AND ("telecommunication industry" OR "telecom service" OR "internet service provider" OR "broadband service") AND ("customer perception" OR "customer satisfaction" OR "customer experience")

The inclusion criteria presented in the PRISMA diagram encompass journal articles published between 2020 and 2025, written in English, and explicitly addressing integrated service models. A total of 19 articles that met these inclusion criteria were subsequently analyzed using thematic analysis techniques.

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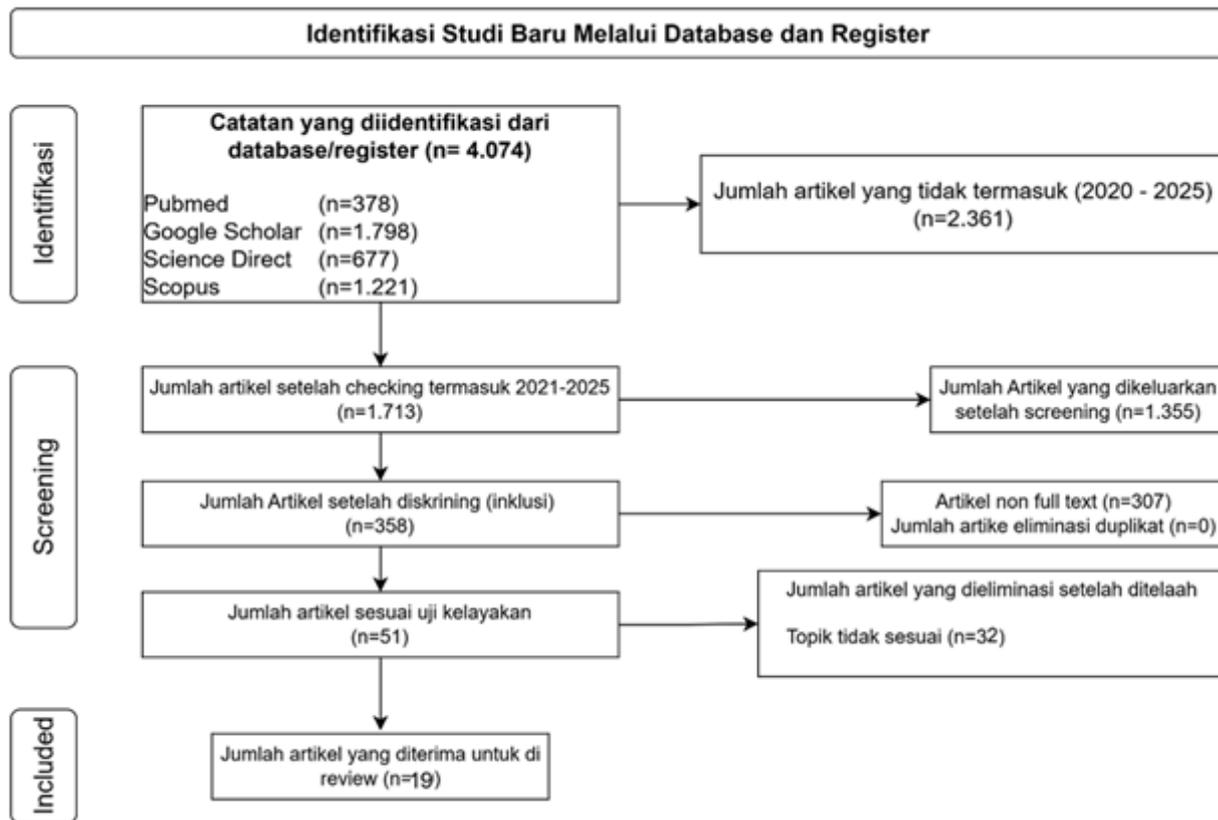


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Based on the review of 19 research articles analyzed systematically, the relationship between service quality perception, product quality, and customers’ recommendation intention within the telecommunication industry exhibits a consistent pattern, albeit with contextual variations. Most studies emphasize that perceived quality, whether in the form of service quality, e-service quality, or perceived product quality, serves as a primary determinant in shaping customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty, which ultimately drive the intention to recommend the service.

Table 1. Source of Article Databases

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Scopus	11	55,00%
Google Scholar	7	40,00%
ScienceDirect	1	5,00%
PubMed	0	0,00%
Total	19	100%

The majority of the articles were indexed in Scopus (55%), indicating a strong tendency toward publication in journals or proceedings that typically undergo rigorous curation and peer-review processes. Google Scholar (40%) contributed to broader coverage, encompassing a more diverse range of publications, including local or emerging sources. ScienceDirect (5%) appeared only marginally, primarily representing Data in Brief articles. No articles were sourced from PubMed.

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Table 2. Types of Research

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Empirical Research	18	90,00%
Conceptual Research	1	5,00%
Total	19	100%

The composition is predominantly empirical research (90%), primarily employing surveys with PLS/SEM analysis, indicating a strong emphasis on testing inter-variable relationships such as service quality, perceived value, loyalty, and e-WOM. Conceptual studies (5%) and literature reviews (5%) serve to complement the theoretical foundation and synthesize findings but remain relatively minor in proportion. This gap presents an opportunity for more conceptual inquiries to refine causal mechanisms and develop integrative models within the telecommunications context.

Table 3. Year of Publication

Year	Frequency	Percentage
2024	4	20,00%
2023	8	40,00%
2021	1	5,00%
2020	6	35,00%
Total	19	100%

Publications were concentrated in 2023 (40%) and 2020 (35%), indicating two waves of research productivity, pre- and post-pandemic, closely aligned with the dynamics of digital service innovation and customer behavior. The 2024 contributions (20%) reflect the continuity of contemporary themes such as brand image, perceived quality, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), while publications in 2021 (5%) were relatively limited. Overall, this temporal distribution provides a strong foundation for interpreting post-pandemic trends in service quality strategies and customer loyalty within the telecommunications industry.

Table 4. Summary of Variables from the Reviewed Articles

No	Author (Year)	Topic	Description	Country
1	Danendra et al. (2024)	Relationship Quality and Positive WOM	Examines the effect of customer relationship quality on positive word-of-mouth (both electronic and face-to-face), moderated by positive emotional experience, using SmartPLS 4.	Indonesia
2	Abd-Elrahman (2023)	Service Quality and Customer Loyalty	Investigates the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction and loyalty during the COVID-19 pandemic, with satisfaction as a mediating variable.	Egypt
3	Sinha et al. (2020)	Online Review Analysis and Quality Improvement	Utilizes customer and employee review analysis to enhance telecommunication service quality through the DMAIC Lean Six Sigma framework.	United States
4	Ramadiantio et al. (2020)	e-Service Quality and e-WOM	Analyzes the influence of electronic service quality on trust and positive e-WOM intention among Generation Y consumers.	Indonesia
5	Conde & Wangbenmad (2024)	CSR and Brand Image	Examines the impact of customer service, network quality, promotion, and corporate social responsibility on telecommunication brand image.	Guinea
6	Chee & Husin (2020)	Service Quality and Customer Retention	Analyzes the relationship between service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty toward customer retention in the telecommunication industry.	Malaysia
7	Karim (2020)	e-Service Quality and Word of Mouth	Identifies electronic service quality dimensions influencing satisfaction and positive word of mouth in digital application services.	Bangladesh

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8	Nadjwa et al. (2024)	Brand Awareness and Customer Loyalty	Investigates the relationship between brand awareness, brand image, and perceived quality on Telkomsel customer loyalty.	Indonesia
9	Iqbal & Indradewa (2023)	Service Quality and Purchasing Decision	Explores the influence of customer value and service quality on satisfaction and purchasing decisions for Telkomsel prepaid cards.	Indonesia
10	Widodo & Jauhari (2023)	Service Quality and Loyalty Behavior	Analyzes the effect of service quality dimensions on attitudinal and behavioral loyalty among IndiHome customers, moderated by switching costs.	Indonesia
11	Malek & Dave (2023)	Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty Review	Provides a comprehensive global literature review on the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty in the telecommunication industry.	Multinational
12	Rahardjo & Ariadi (2023)	SERVQUAL and Relationship Marketing	Examines the relationship between order fulfillment, service assurance, and service recovery on customer loyalty in Telkom Indonesia.	Indonesia
13	Saputra & Yulfiswandi (2023)	Trust and Customer Loyalty	Analyzes the influence of brand experience, service quality, satisfaction, and trust on customer loyalty in Batam.	Indonesia
14	Nikhashemi et al. (2021)	Brand Equity and WOM Chain	Develops a relational model linking value → trust → brand → price tolerance → word of mouth in telecommunication services.	France & Malaysia
15	Hassim & Shamsudin (2023)	Determinants of Customer Loyalty	Examines the role of service quality, price, customer service, and innovation in driving customer loyalty in the telecommunication sector.	Malaysia
16	Ibrahim & Abubakar (2023)	Brand Loyalty and Service Quality	Analyzes the moderating effect of brand loyalty on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the telecommunication industry.	Nigeria
17	Alrwashdeh et al. (2020)	Perceived Value and e-WOM	Tests the relationship between perceived telecommunication service quality, user value, and satisfaction toward electronic word-of-mouth behavior.	Northern Cyprus
18	Jhamb et al. (2020)	Perceived Service Quality and Behavioral Intention	Identifies the gap between customer expectations and perceptions and its effect on behavioral intentions in India's telecommunication sector.	India
19	Conde & Wangbenmad (2024)	Network Quality and Brand Image	Highlights the importance of network quality and CSR in strengthening brand image and competitive advantage in telecommunication firms.	Guinea

Abd-Elrahman (2023), Chee and Husin (2020), and Iqbal and Indradewa (2023) demonstrated that service quality has a direct and significant effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty, with satisfaction often serving as a mediating variable influencing recommendation behavior. Widodo and Jauhari (2023) extended these findings within the Indonesian context, revealing that in the case of IndiHome services, the dimensions of network quality, security, and customer support make substantial contributions to user loyalty. These results are further reinforced by Danendra et al. (2024) and Ramadiantio et al. (2020), who found that relationship quality and positive emotional experiences can stimulate positive word-of-mouth both directly and through electronic media. This indicates that perceived quality functions not merely as a cognitive evaluation by customers but also evokes affective responses that ultimately lead to brand advocacy.

Moreover, the literature highlights the significant role of customer touchpoints, including call centers, in strengthening customers' perceptions of a company's reliability and empathy (Rahardjo & Ariadi, 2023; Saputra & Yulfiswandi, 2023). Responsive customer service capable of effectively resolving issues has been proven to enhance satisfaction and reinforce customers' intention to recommend the company. However, several studies, such as those by Ibrahim and Abubakar (2023) and Saputra and Yulfiswandi (2023), point out that customer trust does not always play a direct role in fostering loyalty. This suggests that experiential dimensions and perceived product quality may exert a stronger influence than trust alone. On the other hand, Nikhashemi et al. (2021) and Malek and Dave (2023)

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emphasize the importance of brand value and trust in reinforcing price tolerance and word-of-mouth behavior, indicating that customers are more likely to become brand advocates when the services they receive align with their personal values and expectations.

Perceived Product Quality as a Key Determinant of Recommendation Intention

Perceived product quality serves as a fundamental factor in shaping customers' evaluations of a brand or service. In the context of telecommunication services, perceived quality extends beyond technical aspects such as network speed and stability to include functional value, reliability, and ease of access as experienced by users. A study by Nadjwa et al. (2024) examining Telkomsel users in Indonesia revealed that perceived quality exerts the most dominant influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty compared to other factors such as brand image and brand awareness. This finding aligns with Abd-Elrahman's (2023) research in Egypt, which emphasized that service quality dimensions, particularly reliability, privacy, and convenience have a significant impact on loyalty, with satisfaction serving as a full mediator. Consequently, enhancing perceived product quality has been proven to be a key driver of recommendation intention, primarily through the mediating mechanisms of customer satisfaction and trust. Furthermore, perceived product quality generates a psychological effect that reinforces customers' tendency to engage in positive word-of-mouth (WOM) behavior. Danendra et al. (2024) demonstrated that service providers capable of delivering positive experiences through well-designed product value and reliable information tend to foster emotional bonds that ultimately lead to customer advocacy. This finding indicates that perceived product quality functions not only as a cognitive evaluation but also as an affective trigger that strengthens the emotional attachment between customers and the brand. Customers assess product quality not merely based on internet speed, but on the stability and consistency of their connection experience, factors that are directly associated with their intention to recommend the service to others.

Several studies highlight that product quality can also serve as a strategic differentiator in highly competitive markets. Widodo and Jauhari (2023) demonstrated that despite the growing number of IndiHome users, the company experienced a decline in market share due to customers' deteriorating perceptions of network quality and service security. This finding reinforces the view that customer loyalty in the telecommunications industry is heavily dependent on their perceptions of the core service quality offered. Similarly, Iqbal and Indradewa (2023) found that for Telkomsel users, service quality directly influences customer satisfaction, which subsequently affects repurchase decisions. These findings indicate a sequential relationship between perceived product quality, customer satisfaction, and customer recommendation behavior. Furthermore, the literature indicates that perceived quality also influences brand trust and brand advocacy. Nikhashemi et al. (2021) developed a value trust brand price WOM relationship chain model, emphasizing that perceived value and brand trust are dominant factors enhancing price tolerance and positive word of mouth (WOM) in the telecommunications industry. In this context, improvements in network quality and the innovation of convergent services can strengthen overall brand equity, motivating customers to become active brand advocates.

The Role of Call Center Service Quality in Enhancing Customer Experience and Loyalty

Call centers represent one of the most critical customer touchpoints in shaping the overall customer experience, particularly within the public service and telecommunications sectors. Effective interactions with call center agents often serve as pivotal moments that influence customers' perceptions of a company's reliability and empathy (Hapsari, Clemes, & Dean, 2017). In the telecommunications industry, the call center functions as the primary communication channel for resolving complaints and providing technical support. A review of the literature indicates that the dimensions of responsiveness, empathy, and assurance within the SERVQUAL model significantly contribute to improving customer satisfaction. Rahardjo and Ariadi's (2023) study on PT Telkom Indonesia's clients found that service recovery and order fulfillment have a direct impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the B2B context, with satisfaction acting as a full mediator in this relationship. This finding implies that the quality of service interactions, such as the speed of handling issues and the effectiveness of the solutions provided, plays a crucial role in strengthening customers' intentions to recommend the company's services.

Furthermore, the studies by Saputra and Yulfiswandi (2023) and Ibrahim and Abubakar (2023) reinforce the view that customer loyalty is not solely derived from product quality, but also from positive service experiences. Ibrahim and Abubakar (2023), in the context of Airtel Nigeria, found that the dimensions of reliability, assurance, and responsiveness positively influenced customer satisfaction, although brand loyalty did not moderate these relationships. Conversely, Saputra and Yulfiswandi (2023) emphasized that while trust does not always have a direct effect on loyalty, service quality indirectly enhances loyalty through customer satisfaction. This finding underscores

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the critical role of Call Centers in shaping positive brand perceptions, as they serve as the direct representation of a company's values in the eyes of its customers. From a managerial perspective, Conde and Wangbenmad (2024) assert that customer service is the most significant determinant in shaping brand image within the telecommunications industry. When customer service is delivered consistently and with empathy, customers' perceptions of the brand improve, leading to higher levels of loyalty and recommendation intentions. Accordingly, the Call Center functions not merely as an operational unit but as a strategic platform for cultivating a positive customer experience. Service interactions that emphasize solution orientation and two-way communication form the foundation for building long-term, productive relationships between customers and the company.

Furthermore, the quality of Call Center services plays a crucial role in reducing potential switching behavior. Widodo and Jauhari (2023) found that IndiHome customers with poor service experiences tend to exhibit low attitudinal loyalty, thereby increasing the likelihood of switching to other providers. Strengthening call center performance, therefore, serves not only as a strategy to retain customers but also as a means to enhance recommendation value through increased trust. Hassim and Shamsudin (2023) further emphasized that the combination of service innovation and customer satisfaction forms an effective synergy in fostering customer loyalty within Malaysia's telecommunications industry, underscoring the universal relevance of service quality for brand advocacy.

Integration of Product and Service Quality on Customer Recommendation Intention

Product and service quality essentially represent two interconnected dimensions of the overall customer experience. Both mutually reinforce each other in shaping customer satisfaction and recommendation intention. Malek and Dave (2023) emphasize that in the modern telecommunications industry, corporate focus has shifted from customer acquisition toward experience-based retention strategies. This integrative perspective posits that a high perception of product quality, without the support of responsive customer service, will not generate strong advocacy. Conversely, an excellent call center service cannot compensate for fundamental weaknesses in network quality or product stability. This underscores the necessity of synergy between technical excellence and human interaction in shaping a positive customer perception.

In the context of the telecommunications industry, this relationship appears consistent with patterns identified in prior research. Iqbal and Indradewa (2023) highlight that customer value and service quality exert a direct effect on customer satisfaction and repurchase decisions. However, findings by Widodo and Jauhari (2023) indicate that negative perceptions of network reliability and security can diminish loyalty, even when customer service performance is satisfactory. This suggests that product performance remains the foundational element of trust underpinning customer loyalty. Meanwhile, the study by Danendra et al. (2024) demonstrates that positive customer experiences derived from high-quality interactions significantly enhance positive emotional experiences, which play a crucial role in shaping recommendation behavior.

The integrated service-product quality approach is also supported by the Expectation Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1997), which posits that customers' intentions to recommend a service are significantly influenced by the extent to which their initial expectations are confirmed through actual experiences. Nikhashemi et al. (2021) identified a value chain linking perceived value, trust, brand image, and word-of-mouth communication in the telecommunications industry, reinforcing the argument that customer advocacy arises not only from cognitive satisfaction but also from emotional trust in the brand's integrity and quality. Within the telecommunications sector, this underscores that the synergy between product enhancement, network quality, and service performance, particularly through call center interactions, creates a holistic experience that motivates customers to recommend the service to others.

Alrwashdeh et al. (2020) and Ramadiantio et al. (2020) demonstrated that both service quality and perceived value have a significant relationship with customer satisfaction and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). This finding indicates that telecommunication customers are increasingly active in digitally sharing their experiences, making recommendation intention a crucial indicator of modern service quality success. Accordingly, this study affirms that the combination of perceived product quality and call center service effectiveness serves as a key determinant in fostering customer loyalty and recommendation intention, particularly in today's highly competitive digital era.

CONCLUSION

Based on a systematic review of 19 articles, this study confirms that the perceived quality of products and Call Center services plays a crucial role in shaping customers' recommendation intentions within the

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telecommunications industry. Perceived product quality emerges as a key determinant influencing customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. High-performance services, network stability, and consistent digital experiences significantly enhance customers' perceived value in the telecommunications sector. When customers perceive that their needs and expectations are met, they are more likely to engage in positive word-of-mouth, thereby organically expanding brand advocacy. Furthermore, the quality of Call Center services holds strategic significance in strengthening the customer-company relationship. Empathetic, responsive, and solution-oriented interactions create positive emotional experiences that foster loyalty and increase recommendation intentions. Thus, customer service functions not merely as an operational component but as a tangible representation of the company's core values and corporate image in the eyes of consumers.

The improvement of product and network quality must be accompanied by enhanced Call Center performance to deliver a seamless service experience. The synergy between these elements serves as a key factor in fostering long-term trust, emotional loyalty, and sustained customer advocacy. Practically, this study recommends that telecommunication companies strengthen their integrated service quality improvement strategies through a customer-centered integration approach. Development efforts should focus on enhancing Call Center response speed, service personalization, and network technology innovation. From a theoretical perspective, the findings enrich academic understanding of the relationship between perceived product quality and service quality toward recommendation intention within the framework of the Service Quality Model and Expectation Confirmation Theory. The integration of these two factors is believed to reinforce Telkom Group's competitive advantage in navigating the dynamics of the convergent telecommunications industry in the digital era.

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