

## **CHANGES IN SPARE PARTS PRICES, CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND PROFITABILITY STRATEGY AT PT ASTRA INTERNATIONAL TBK - TSO AUTO2000 MT HARYONO WORKSHOP**

**Nabil Yazid Hasan**

Management Study Program, Faculty of Business and Economics, Islamic University of  
Indonesia

Email: [21311105@students.uii.ac.id](mailto:21311105@students.uii.ac.id)

### **Abstract**

*The Indonesian automotive industry is experiencing significant growth, driving an increasing demand for after-sales services, including spare parts. However, fluctuations in spare part prices pose a challenge that can impact customer satisfaction and the sustainability of workshop profitability. This study aims to analyze the impact of spare part price changes on customer satisfaction and the profitability strategies implemented by Auto2000 MT Haryono, Balikpapan. A qualitative case study was used. Data were collected through structured interviews with five respondents—four customers and one workshop manager—and non-participant observation during an internship. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques. The results show that changes in spare part prices elicit an initial reaction of surprise from customers, but do not directly reduce satisfaction levels if communication is conducted openly and responsively. Customer satisfaction is largely determined by service quality, information transparency, and established loyalty. Conversely, centrally controlled price adjustments can actually increase workshop profitability when accompanied by compensation strategies such as the Toyota Care program and seasonal promotions. This study concludes that balancing clear price communication and increasing service value is key to maintaining customer satisfaction and sustainable profits. This study provides practical contributions to workshop management in designing customer-oriented pricing and communication strategies, and opens up opportunities for further exploration in other automotive workshop contexts.*

**Keywords:** Pricing, Customer Satisfaction, Profitability, Workshop Strategy, Auto2000

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia's automotive industry is growing rapidly, both in terms of vehicle production and after-sales service. According to data from the Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries (Gaikindo), car sales in Indonesia will surpass 1 million units by 2023, reflecting continued rising demand.(GAIKINDO, 2023)As the number of vehicles increases, the need for maintenance and repair services at workshops also increases, including the demand for quality spare parts at affordable prices. However, fluctuating spare part prices present a challenge for workshops in maintaining customer satisfaction and business profitability.

Changes in spare part prices are influenced by various factors, including inflation, exchange rate fluctuations, production costs, and the policies of manufacturers and distributors. Prasetyo and Santoso (2022) found that volatile spare part prices can lead to customer dissatisfaction, especially if price increases are not accompanied by improvements in service quality. Customers who feel disadvantaged by price increases may switch to other repair shops or choose alternative parts with less guaranteed quality. As a result, customer loyalty can decline, ultimately impacting the repair shop's profits.

Authorized workshops, such as Auto2000, part of PT Astra International Tbk, generally have more transparent pricing standards than unofficial workshops. However, during an internship at Auto2000 MT Haryono, it was discovered that spare part prices frequently changed suddenly without adequate notification to customers. This situation can lead to confusion and complaints from customers, which ultimately has the potential to affect the workshop's image. A study conducted by Widajanto (2024) also shows that the instability of spare parts prices can disrupt customers' budget planning and reduce their level of satisfaction with workshop services.

Besides impacting customers, changes in spare part prices can also impact a repair shop's profitability. Price increases without a proper strategy can result in the loss of loyal customers and decreased transaction volume. Conversely, price reductions to attract customers risk reducing profit margins, which can impact business sustainability. A study by Saputra and Hidayat (2016) revealed that competitive prices play an important role in attracting customers and increasing workshop profits, but must be balanced with good service quality.

This study aims to analyze the impact of changes in spare parts prices on customer satisfaction and repair shop profits, using a case study of Auto2000 MT Haryono. This research aims to gain a deeper understanding of how repair shops can develop optimal pricing policies to maintain customer satisfaction while maximizing profits.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research employed a qualitative research method using a case study. The qualitative approach aims to explore and understand a phenomenon in depth through narratives based on the experiences and perspectives of individuals directly involved in the phenomenon. (Ardiansyah & Jailani, 2023). The research in this internship report focuses on two units of analysis: individual customers and individuals representing the company. The data collection techniques used were interviews and documentation. The data analysis technique used was thematic analysis.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Data Encoding

The data processing in this study was conducted using a thematic approach, involving repeated reading of interview transcripts to identify patterns of meaning consistent with the study's focus. Through this process, several key themes were identified related to changes in spare part prices and strategies for workshop profitability. These key themes are presented in the following table.

**Table 1.Data Coding Results**

No	Source person	Quote	Code	Category	Main Theme
1	Mr. Af	<i>"I was shocked at first"</i>	Surprised	Customer Reactions When Prices Increase	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
2	Mr. Ra	<i>"I was shocked at first because I thought the initial price was fixed."</i>	Startled	Customer Reactions When Prices Increase	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
3	Mr. R	<i>"Because there has been no price increase, I can't answer."</i>	No Increase Occurred	Customer Reactions When Prices Increase	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
4	Mr. Af	<i>"From my perspective, it's not too big, because their communication is very good as long as they are informed and asked for approval."</i>	Open Communication	Impact of Customer Satisfaction Reactions on Price Increases	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
5	Mr. Ra	<i>"There was a slight impact because I hoped the price that was stated at the beginning would be a fixed price. But because the communication was good and fast, I still feel comfortable as a customer."</i>	Influence on Price Increases	Impact of Customer Satisfaction Reactions on Price Increases	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
6	Mr. R	<i>"There aren't any, sir. For now, I'll just stay here. There aren't any other preferences either."</i>	Not Affected	Impact of Customer Satisfaction Reactions on Price Increases	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
7	Mr. K	<i>"Not really. I will definitely still use Auto 2000 services"</i>	Not Affected	Impact of price changes for	Impact of price changes on

N o	Source person	Quote	Code	Category	Main Theme
		<i>because I'm used to it. After all, it's a repair shop whose quality is trusted."</i>		repeat purchases or returning to use workshop services	customer satisfaction
8	Mr. R	<i>"It might still be, bro, because going to an authorized dealer workshop is definitely the safest choice, bro. That's why it's likely to stay here."</i>	Keep Using Auto200 Workshop	Impact of price changes for repeat purchases or returning to use workshop services	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
9	Mr. K	<i>"Not at all, sir, because the increase is quite clear. Unless the reason for the price increase is unclear, maybe I'm disappointed."</i>	The Reason is Quite Clear	Perception of increasing price changes	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
10	Mr. Ra	<i>"There are a few, but because they quickly contacted me before the goods were installed, it really helped to maintain my trust in Auto 2000."</i>	Little Influence	Perception of increasing price changes	Impact of price changes on customer satisfaction
11	Mr. T	<i>"For the company, annual targets are already set before the start of the year, right, sir? That's right, sir."</i>	Company Target	Sudden price changes against the Company's profit targets	Company Profitability
12	Mr. T	<i>"Toyota currently has a free service and spare parts program for routine maintenance, from 10,000 km to 60,000 km, or every six months. Now, through this program, the Toyota Care program, some spare parts like oil, oil filters, and gaskets, which were previously paid, are now free, sir. And that leaves a cost to the customer, right?"</i>	Toyota Program	Specific strategies or programs for increasing spare part costs	Strategy to Increase Profitability

N o	Source person	Quote	Code	Category	Main Theme
		"But for campaigns, they are adjusted to the conditions of the month, for example, a spare parts campaign for customers who are going home for Eid this year, Sir, in 2025. And possibly a spare parts campaign for Christmas and New Year."			
13	Mr. T	"The impact on company profits will definitely increase, bro."	Profit Increase	Impact of price increases on the company	Company Profitability
14	Mr. T	"Changes in spare part prices generally occur twice a year and are determined by the central party (Toyota Astra Motor)"	Price Increase Decision Maker	Pricing Mechanism	Strategy to Increase Profitability

#### Theme Identification

1. One of the main themes that emerged from the data coding was customers' initial reactions to the price increase. Some customers expressed surprise upon learning of the price change. For example, one respondent stated,

*"At first I was shocked" (Mr. Af),*

*"At first I was shocked because I thought the initial price was fixed" (Mas Ra).*

This spontaneous reaction shows that unmet initial expectations can cause discomfort.

2. The next theme was the impact of customer satisfaction reactions to price increases. Several respondents indicated that despite the price increase, their satisfaction levels remained stable due to good service. Mas R, for example, stated,

*"There aren't any, sir. For now, I'll just stay here. There aren't any other preferences either." (Mas R)*

This indicates that satisfaction with the service remains strong despite price changes. Mas Ra expressed a similar sentiment, stating,

*"I still feel comfortable as a customer" (Mas Ra)*

While acknowledging a slight impact from price changes, this demonstrates that customer satisfaction isn't solely determined by price, but also by the quality of service and the emotional well-being they experience.

3. Furthermore, there is a theme of customer loyalty despite price increases. Some customers stated that they continued using the service due to convenience, habit, or perceived quality. For example, Mas K stated,

*"I will definitely still use Auto 2000's services because I'm used to it and it's a workshop whose quality is trusted." (Mas K)*

While other customers said the same thing.

*"Going to an authorized dealership is definitely the safest choice, sir." (Mas Ra)*

This shows that customer loyalty can last if the value and trust in the service remains strong.

4. Customer perceptions of the reasons for price increases were also a key theme. Respondents indicated that they would accept a price increase if the reasons behind the increase were considered reasonable and communicated well. Mas K explained,

*"Not at all, sir, because the increase is quite clear. Unless the reason for the price increase is unclear, I might be disappointed," (Mas K)*

while Mas Ra added,

*"Because they were quick to contact me before the product was installed, that really helped maintain my trust in Auto 2000." (Mas Ra)*

This underscores the importance of transparency in shaping positive perceptions of price changes.

5. On the corporate side, an emerging theme was the impact of price changes on profitability and corporate strategy. Mr. T explained that

*"The company's annual targets are fixed before the start of the year" (Mr. T)*

That there are programs such as Toyota Care that provide free services as part of a strategy,

*"Some spare parts such as oil, oil filter, gasket... are free" (Mr. T)*

*"The impact on company profits will definitely increase, sir" (Mr. T)*

This shows that price increases not only impact customers, but also play a role in the company's financial strategy and goals.

6. The final theme identified from the data is that pricing decisions are determined centrally. This theme underscores that spare parts pricing is centralized by the company's central management, namely Toyota Astra Motor. This situation reflects limited authority at the branch level in setting prices and also indicates a top-down decision-making process.

*"Changes in spare part prices generally occur twice a year and are determined by the central party (Toyota Astra Motor)" (Mr. T).*

## **Thematic Analysis**

The results of the thematic analysis in this study indicate that changes in spare parts prices are closely linked and influence each other between the dimensions of customer satisfaction and the workshop's profitability strategy. The themes identified form a consistent and complementary narrative. The first theme, namely customers' initial reactions to price increases, demonstrates that the discrepancy between initial expectations and reality often elicits a response of surprise. However, this discomfort can be mitigated through transparent and responsive information delivery by the workshop.

Furthermore, the theme of the impact of price increases on customer satisfaction demonstrates that satisfaction is not solely determined by price, but is also significantly influenced by service quality and communication patterns. In this context, maintained satisfaction contributes to the formation of customer loyalty, which is the next theme. This loyalty stems not only from functional experience but also from trust, comfort, and the habit of using repair shop services on a continuous basis.

Furthermore, customer perceptions of the reasons for price increases reinforce the understanding that acceptance of price changes depends heavily on how rational and clearly those reasons are communicated. If the reasons are perceived as logical and communicated openly, customers are more likely to maintain their trust in the repair shop. From a managerial perspective, the themes of profitability and company strategy suggest that measures such as the Toyota Care service program are approaches used to maintain customer satisfaction by providing added value.

## **Discussion**

### **Contextualization of Findings**

The results of this study provide comprehensive answers to the three research questions. In response to the first question regarding the mechanism for determining and changing spare part prices, it was found that the authority to set prices rests entirely with the head office, namely Toyota Astra Motor, which usually adjusts prices twice a year. This indicates that Auto2000 branch workshops do not have the authority to set prices, but must comply with the policies set by the head office. In this case, the responsibility of the workshop is more to ensure that price changes are communicated to customers clearly and transparently to avoid misunderstandings or dissatisfaction. As stated by (Pratama & Djawoto, 2020), The company sets prices that are commensurate with the benefits and quality obtained by customers.

Answering the second question about the impact of price changes on profit-making strategies, this study revealed that price increases are not always a barrier for companies; they can even be a means to increase profits, especially when supported by the right strategic approach. The strategy adopted by management does not rely solely on price but is also complemented by various value-added programs such as "Toyota Care" and seasonal campaigns. This program provides free service for certain spare

parts within a periodic service package up to 60,000 km, which were previously charged for, such as engine oil, oil filters, and gaskets. In addition, there are special campaigns, such as spare part promotions during the homecoming season or long holidays. By providing additional incentives and conveniences, companies are able to maintain customer satisfaction and even strengthen their loyalty. This demonstrates that a careful strategic approach can shift the pressure of pricing policy into an opportunity to strengthen long-term relationships with customers while achieving the company's financial goals. The findings presented by (Lumintang et al., 2023) shows that customers remain satisfied and loyal if the promotions carried out are in line with the quality of service and price suitability.

In response to the third question regarding the impact of price changes on customer satisfaction, this study found that some customers' initial reactions to price increases were marked by surprise or unpreparedness, particularly if the initial information they received differed from the actual price at the time of the transaction. However, customer satisfaction generally remained positive if the communication process was transparent and prompt. Customers expressed that as long as the repair shop provided a reasonable explanation and communicated the price change before the service was performed, they remained comfortable and trusted Auto2000's services. This suggests that customer satisfaction in this context is not solely influenced by the nominal price, but rather by service aspects, the quality of interactions, and clarity and openness in communication. Trust in the repair shop as an authorized service provider and consistent technical quality also contributed to this satisfaction. Quality service remains a key component in creating a positive customer experience. As stated by Saharuddin et al., (2024), Workshop managers are required to ensure that the services provided remain optimal, responsive, and in accordance with consumer expectations.

### **Practical Implications**

There are several practical implications that can serve as strategic guidance for Auto2000 management in addressing fluctuating spare parts prices without compromising customer satisfaction. One key point is the need to communicate price changes openly and promptly to customers. This approach has proven effective in mitigating negative reactions and maintaining customer satisfaction despite price increases. Therefore, the company is advised to strengthen its service communication channels, both through direct channels such as SMS and telephone, and through the official Auto2000 app, which provides instant information.

Additionally, expanding and improving training for customer service staff is a priority, particularly in the ability to communicate empathetically and explain pricing policies professionally. This will strengthen trust and create a positive image of the company's pricing policy. Furthermore, additional service programs such as "Toyota Care," which provides free regular service and spare parts, have proven to be instrumental in



maintaining customer loyalty. Therefore, such programs should be maintained and even expanded, so that customers feel they are receiving more than just a price.

Companies can also run regular seasonal promotions, such as homecoming promotions during Eid or the end of the year, to compensate for price increases. This strategy not only increases satisfaction but also strengthens the perception of the value of the service provided. Furthermore, developing a customer membership program or loyalty system with rewards such as points or discounts can also strengthen the relationship between customers and the Auto2000 brand. Finally, it is important for companies to establish a digital feedback system to regularly assess the impact of pricing policies. The data obtained can be used as a basis for refining future communication and service strategies. By implementing these measures, Auto2000 can not only maintain customer satisfaction but also optimize profitability sustainably amidst constantly changing price dynamics.

## CONCLUSION

This study revealed that changes in spare parts prices at the Auto2000 MT Haryono Balikpapan repair shop impact customer perceptions, satisfaction levels, and loyalty. Customers' initial response to price increases is generally one of surprise, especially because the prices they previously expected do not match reality. However, this discomfort can be mitigated if the repair shop provides transparent information about price increases and provides clear reasons. These findings indicate that customer satisfaction is not solely determined by price, but is more influenced by service quality and effective communication. Several customers stated that they remain comfortable and choose to continue using Auto2000 services because they are used to and trust the repair shop's quality. This loyalty stems from trust, emotional comfort, and previous positive experiences. Furthermore, customer perception of the reasons behind price increases is also important; as long as the reasons are considered reasonable and communicated well, customers are likely to accept the change. From a management perspective, price adjustments can increase company profits, especially when accompanied by appropriate strategies such as the "Toyota Care" program and seasonal promotions that provide added value to consumers. Therefore, price transparency, excellent service, and relevant marketing strategies are important elements to maintain a balance between customer satisfaction and achieving the company's financial targets.

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