

The Influence of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Product Quality on Consumer Loyalty of Roti'O in Cimahi City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the impact of customer relationship management (CRM) and product quality on customer loyalty at Roti'o in Cimahi City. The research adopts a quantitative approach supported by descriptive and verification analysis. A total of 100 participants were selected using the Lemeshow formula and the purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using a closed-ended Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using multiple regression in SPSS version 25. The results indicate that CRM has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, whereas product quality does not show a significant influence. However, when tested simultaneously, both independent variables exhibit a significant effect on customer loyalty. These findings suggest that customer relationship management is the primary factor in building customer loyalty, while product quality remains a supporting element that enhances the overall consumption experience.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Competition in Indonesia's food and beverage industry has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, particularly in the rapidly growing bread and bakery segment, which has experienced increasing consumer demand. This condition encourages companies to develop more comprehensive strategies to retain customers, considering that customer loyalty is a crucial factor for long-term sustainability. Previous studies indicate that customer relationship management (CRM) plays an important role in building and maintaining consistent customer relationships; however, its implementation in the food retail industry has not yielded uniform findings. Sari [1] indicates that the application of CRM in the bakery industry has not been optimal in strengthening consumer loyalty, although service quality has shown an effective contribution. These findings suggest a level of complexity in CRM

mechanisms that warrants deeper investigation, particularly when combined with product quality factors. Product quality has been widely recognized as an important factor influencing consumer purchasing decisions and product evaluations [2]. On the other hand, product quality has a significant contribution to the creation of customer satisfaction and loyalty, as demonstrated by Sahid and Abadi [3], who found that product quality has a real and positive impact on the formation of customer loyalty through the mediation of expectation fulfillment.

Nevertheless, there is a significant research gap regarding how the interaction between CRM and product quality simultaneously influences customer loyalty, especially in the context of local bakery businesses in Indonesia. Most previous studies have examined these variables separately or focused on different industries, thus failing to provide a comprehensive understanding of their synergy in building loyalty. Cardia et al. [4] emphasized that product quality and experiential marketing jointly encourage customer loyalty; however, the role of CRM in this context has not been discussed in depth. Research by Malki et al. [5] in the food delivery industry indicates that product and service quality influence customer loyalty, with satisfaction acting as a mediator; however, a more holistic CRM dimension has not been the focus of analysis. This situation calls for an integrative study of how CRM and product quality can synergize to build customer loyalty in the local bakery industry. Roti'o, as one of the local bakery brands in Cimahi City, faces intense competition from national and international brands; therefore, a deeper examination of the factors influencing customer loyalty is crucial for its business sustainability.

The novelty of this research lies in applying an integrative approach that combines CRM and product quality as predictors of customer loyalty in Indonesia's local bakery industry. This field remains underexplored in the academic literature. This study provides practical implications for bakery business practitioners in formulating more effective marketing approaches by simultaneously considering both dimensions. Furthermore, selecting Roti'o Cimahi as the research object offers a unique perspective, given the characteristics of local consumers whose preferences and purchasing behaviors differ from those in metropolitan areas. Thus, this study is expected to fill a gap in the existing literature while providing strategic recommendations for Roti'o management to enhance customer loyalty through CRM optimization and product quality improvement.

Based on the preceding background, this study seeks to answer the following questions: Does customer relationship management (CRM) affect customer loyalty at Roti'o Cimahi? Does product quality affect customer loyalty at Roti'o Cimahi? Do customer relationship management (CRM) and product quality simultaneously influence customer loyalty at Roti'o Cimahi? In light of these questions, this study aims to identify and evaluate the extent to which CRM influences customer loyalty at Roti'o Cimahi. In addition, this study examines the effect of product quality on customer loyalty and explores how these two variables interact to shape customer loyalty.

This study is expected to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in marketing management, particularly in consumer behavior and customer retention strategies. Moreover, it enhances understanding of the relationships among CRM, product quality, and customer loyalty in the food and beverage industry, while offering a conceptual framework

for future research. From a practical perspective, this research can assist management in identifying key steps in designing more effective CRM programs. Consequently, product quality can be improved to meet consumer needs and expectations. For other bakery and bread business practitioners, the findings of this study can also serve as a reference for developing marketing strategies to increase customer loyalty. This can be achieved through effective customer relationship management and maintaining consistent product quality.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) can be understood as a set of managerial actions designed by business practitioners to build closeness with customers, maintain these relationships continuously, and manage long-term interactions sustainably. According to Shafira [6], the complex elements of management systems involve understanding and resolving all interconnections and contacts between customers and businesses. Optimizing these relationships encourages harmonious interactions and enhances customer compliance and loyalty. This loyalty is strengthened by organized data management systems that function to maintain relational ties with customers. Such conditions encourage a shift from standardized services toward customized services that meet the specific and dynamic needs of customers, reflecting individual service psychology.

Similarly, Umatin et al. [7] explain that CRM is a managerial approach used to manage and maintain interactions between a company and its customers. Through this approach, companies aim to strengthen relationships while creating sustainable value for both parties. Thus, CRM does not merely emphasize transactions but also considers continuous relational bonds and customer value creation.

Ren et al. [8] further state that CRM represents a continuous customer learning process. In practice, companies attempt to understand customers deeply, including their behaviors, preferences, and expectations, in order to deliver services that are not only satisfactory but exceed expectations. This condition indicates that CRM is not merely a marketing process but also a commitment to nurturing and delivering meaningful, positive customer experiences.

These findings are consistent with the study by Lyman et al. [9], which found that CRM implementation has a significant, positive contribution to customer loyalty at Matahari Department Store Manado. In other words, customer loyalty increases as CRM practices improve. This result is strengthened by the research of Lantang and Keni [10] at PT Nasmoco Pemuda Semarang, which showed that CRM implementation had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, with a coefficient of determination of 46%. This indicates that nearly half of the variation in customer loyalty can be explained by CRM effectiveness.

However, previous studies also indicate that the relationships among variables influencing loyalty do not always show consistent results. The study by Dewi et al. [11] found that CRM did not provide a strong contribution to customer loyalty. Although CRM helped companies understand customer needs and behavioral patterns, it was not sufficient to create a strong attachment that would encourage long-term retention. Customers tended to prioritize product quality, perceived benefits, and alternative competitors offering greater

value. Similar results were reported by Guan et al. [12] in a study of BCA customers in Manado, which confirmed that CRM improved satisfaction but did not automatically translate into loyalty. Customer loyalty was more strongly influenced by trust, overall service experience, facility convenience, and individual preferences toward other banks.

Overall, these findings illustrate that industry conditions, customer characteristics, and the strength of value propositions strongly influence CRM's effectiveness in building loyalty. CRM can be a decisive factor in certain contexts, but its role may weaken when supporting aspects are not optimized.

Furthermore, Nguyen et al. [13] explain that relationship management between companies and customers is a process designed to provide mutual benefits. Effective relationship management not only generates economic advantages for companies but also builds trust and encourages customer loyalty toward products and services.

Based on these definitions, it can be concluded that CRM is a series of relationship management activities between companies and customers that focus on understanding, maintaining, and developing long-term relationships. CRM involves customer data management, intensive interactions, and value creation for both parties. Strategically, CRM serves as a fundamental foundation for strengthening customer loyalty and creating a sustainable competitive advantage.

Product Quality

Product quality is the set of attributes that indicate how well a product meets customer needs and expectations. According to Sihombing and Sumurung [14], product quality standards reflect the ability of goods or services to fulfill predetermined specifications and accommodate customer needs. From a marketing perspective, Pawestri and Suji'ah [15] affirm that product quality is an important instrument in promotional strategies that can influence company performance.

Wisudaningsi et al. [16] explain that product quality reflects a product's capacity to perform its functions optimally, including durability, reliability, timeliness, ease of use, and other attributes that support product performance. Muttaqin Rani and Ilham [17] state that product quality is closely related to usability characteristics and inherent product traits, both in physical products and services, which are assessed against expected quality standards such as durability, reliability, precision, accessibility, and reparability.

This understanding aligns with Ningsih [18], who found that product quality plays a significant role in customer loyalty among Telkom Flexi prepaid card users in Denpasar. Similar findings were reported by Ansah [19] among Smartfren users, indicating that high product quality has a positive and significant impact on customer loyalty. Likewise, Nadiya et al. [20] demonstrated that product quality significantly influences customer loyalty at ERIGO.

Conversely, Felix et al. [21] found that product quality did not have a direct significant effect on customer loyalty among McDonald's MT. Haryono Malang customers, although it significantly influenced customer satisfaction. This suggests that indicators such as performance, additional features, aesthetics, and perceived quality are insufficient to drive loyalty without customer satisfaction. Similar findings were reported by Santoso (2019)

among Geprek Benu Rawamangun customers, showing that product quality did not significantly influence loyalty and even showed a negative direction. These findings imply that taste, portion size, menu variety, and packaging are insufficient to directly enhance loyalty without support from other factors such as price, service experience, or personal preferences.

Based on these perspectives, product quality can be defined as the overall characteristics of a product and its ability to fulfill customer needs and expectations across multiple dimensions, including durability, reliability, accuracy, ease of use, and ease of maintenance. Superior product quality plays an important role as a marketing instrument in achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty. However, in the context of this study, product quality has not demonstrated a strong contribution to loyalty, indicating that at Roti'O Cimahi, product quality alone is insufficient to directly build loyalty without the support of other factors such as CRM or service experience.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty represents a high level of commitment from customers to repurchase a particular product or brand despite competitive pressures. In modern marketing, loyalty is considered a key factor in business success. Wijayanti [22] defines loyalty as a customer's commitment to consistently repurchase preferred products or services in the future, even when influenced by competitors.

Oliver [23] expands on this concept by emphasizing that loyalty reflects customers' consistent repurchase of products or services over time. This behavioral consistency plays a significant role in maintaining company revenue stability. Rizal and Ismail [24] define customer loyalty as the level of attachment and commitment to a brand, product, or service, reflected in repeat purchases and recommendations to others. Jumawan and Ilham Prasetyo [25] add that loyalty also reflects customers' reluctance to switch brands, representing psychological resilience in competitive markets.

Thus, loyalty does not merely refer to satisfaction, but also includes long-term bonds formed through trust and positive experiences. Empirical evidence shows that service quality, brand image, and customer satisfaction significantly influence customer loyalty, indicating that quality-related perceptions play an important role in shaping long-term customer commitment [26]. Previous studies have demonstrated that customer loyalty is strongly influenced by product quality, with customer satisfaction mediating the relationship, indicating that positive evaluations of product performance contribute to stronger loyalty and more favorable behavioral intentions [27].

Relationships Among Variables

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and product quality are two factors frequently examined in studies on customer loyalty. Previous research indicates that CRM significantly contributes to the formation of sustainable relational bonds between businesses and customers. Wisudaningsi et al. [16] confirmed that optimal CRM implementation strengthens loyalty because customers feel well-treated and continuously engaged. This is

consistent with Kumar and Shankar [28], who found that CRM enhances loyalty through structured interactions and more personalized relationship management.

Meanwhile, product quality also plays a crucial role in loyalty, as consumers tend to continue using products they perceive as reliable and consistent with expectations. This conclusion is supported by Ledro et al. [29], who found that product quality positively affects customer loyalty.

Drawing on previous findings and theoretical perspectives on CRM, product quality, and customer loyalty, which indicate interrelationships among these variables, the research framework of this study is as follows.

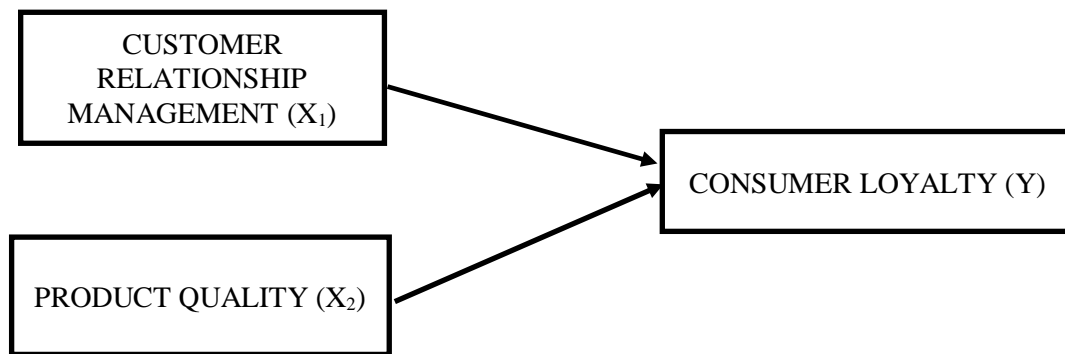


Figure 1. Research Model

Referring to the previously developed research model, the relationships between variables in the context of this study are explained through the following three hypotheses:

H1: Customer relationship management (CRM) has a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty.

H2: Product quality is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on consumer loyalty.

H3: Customer relationship management (CRM) and product quality simultaneously have a significant effect on consumer loyalty.

3. METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach through descriptive and verification (associative) methods. The quantitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on hypothesis testing and measuring the magnitude of the influence between variables. According to Sugiyono [30], research techniques that rely on numerical data processing are based on a positivistic paradigm and are used to examine predetermined population groups or samples, with data analysis relying on statistical techniques.

The descriptive method was used to provide an understanding of the characteristics of the aspects studied, namely CRM, product quality level, and Roti'o customer loyalty in Cimahi City. Meanwhile, the verification method was applied to examine the relationship and influence of the independent variables (CRM and product quality) on the dependent variable (customer loyalty). This study focused on consumers who had purchased Roti'o brand items at least once in Cimahi City. Because the total population cannot be clearly

determined (infinite population), sample selection was calculated using the Lameshow formula, as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times P(1 - P)}{d^2}$$

Description:

n = minimum sample size

Z = standard value at a 95% confidence level (1.96)

P = estimated population proportion (0.5 because the true proportion is unknown)

d = tolerable margin of error (0.1 or 10%)

Thus, the sample size calculation is:

$$n = \frac{(1,96)^2 \times 0,5 (1 - 0,5)}{(0,1)^2} = \frac{3,8426 \times 0,25}{0,01} = 96,04$$

Based on the calculation results, the minimum required number of respondents was 96, which was subsequently increased to 100 to account for the possibility of incomplete or invalid data. The sampling technique employed was non-probability purposive sampling. The sample selection criteria were: (1) respondents who had made purchases at Roti'o at least twice within the last three months; and (2) respondents aged at least 17 years.

This technique was chosen for its efficiency and for the relevance of the information obtained from participants with direct experience with Roti'o products and services. Data collection was conducted using a survey method through a closed-ended questionnaire designed based on indicators of each research variable. The questionnaire was measured using a Likert scale with five alternative response options: Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

Primary data were collected directly from participants via online questionnaires (Google Forms) and offline distribution at several Roti'o outlets in Cimahi City. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability. Validity testing was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation, while reliability was analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha. The instrument was considered valid when the calculated r-value exceeded the r-table value and reliable when Cronbach's Alpha exceeded 0.70 (Ghozali, 2018). Thus, the research instrument was deemed valid for identifying customer perceptions regarding the studied variables.

The collected data were analyzed descriptively and verified using multiple linear regression. This regression analysis was applied to evaluate the extent to which CRM and product quality influenced customer loyalty both individually and simultaneously. Partial testing was conducted using the t-test, while the overall effect was examined using the F-test at a significance level of 0.05. All data processing procedures were carried out using SPSS version 25.

Hypothesis testing was conducted through t-tests to assess the effect of each variable at a significance level (α) of 0.05. All data processing and analysis procedures were performed using SPSS version 25, and the results were subsequently used to confirm the research assumptions formulated in the earlier stage.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability Tests

The results of the validity and reliability tests are presented as follows:

Table 1. Variable Validity Test

	Variable	Score	Criteria	Conclusion
X₁	Customer Relationship Management	0,286–0,529	> 0,300	Valid
X₂	Product Quality	0,344–0,491	> 0,300	Valid
Y	Consumer Loyalty	0,400–0,671	> 0,300	Valid

Source: Primary Data, processed (2025)

The instrument's validity was tested to assess the accuracy of each item in measuring the variables, ensuring that the findings accurately represent the actual situation. According to Sugiyono [30], a good research instrument is one that accurately describes data. Therefore, its statement items must have adequate correlation with the variable's total value. An item is considered valid if its correlation value is above 0.3, the minimum threshold for feasibility. The test results, as shown in Table 1, indicate that each indicator demonstrates a significant relationship with the variables studied. Therefore, the measurement instrument in this study meets the feasibility criteria. The lowest correlation value for the CRM variable, 0.286, is still acceptable because it is close to the minimum threshold of 0.30, and the instrument still demonstrates consistent relationships between items. Furthermore, in social research, correlation values in the range of 0.25-0.30 are still considered appropriate for use, provided the items demonstrate a relevant relationship with the construct being measured.

Reliability Test

Table 2. Variable Reliability Test

	Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Criteria	Conclusion
X₁	Customer Relationship Management	0,721	> 0,700	Valid
X₂	Product Quality	0,722	> 0,700	Valid
Y	Consumer Loyalty	0,842	> 0,700	Valid

Source: Primary Data, processed (2025)

Reliability testing was conducted to ensure that the measuring instrument in this study demonstrated adequate consistency when used to measure the same variables. A reliable measuring instrument can provide stable and consistent answers over time. According to Lutzky [31], a measuring instrument is considered reliable when its Cronbach's Alpha score is above 0.70, as this score indicates that all statement items have adequate internal stability. Based on the reliability test findings, the Cronbach's Alpha scores for the variables studied exceeded the recommended reliability level, indicating that the measuring instrument is reliable. Therefore, the questionnaire used in this study demonstrated strong internal consistency and is suitable as a data collection tool for measuring CRM, product quality, and consumer loyalty.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

	N.	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev
CRM	96	23	40	34,10	3,29
Product Quality	96	25	40	35,57	3,05
Consumer Loyalty	96	25	50	41,23	5,39

Source: Primary Data, processed (2025)

Descriptive statistical analysis was applied to examine the patterns of respondents' responses to the CRM, product quality, and consumer loyalty variables before proceeding to further testing. Descriptive statistics display the highest, lowest, mean, and standard deviation values to illustrate the trends and distribution of data from 96 respondents. From the data analysis results presented in Table 3, the CRM variable indicates a mean score of 34.10, a minimum of 23, a maximum of 40, and a standard deviation of 3.29. This indicates that respondents' assessments of CRM tend to be in the high category, with a relatively stable range of responses.

Furthermore, the product quality variable has a value of 35.57, with a minimum score of 25, a maximum of 40, and a standard deviation of 3.05. This relatively high average score indicates that participants perceive the product's quality positively, with a limited range of responses. Meanwhile, the consumer loyalty variable had a mean of 41.23, with a minimum of 25 and a maximum of 50. The standard deviation was 5.39. This value indicates that consumer loyalty is in the good category, although the data distribution shows variation exceeding that of the other variables studied.

Overall, the descriptive analysis findings indicate that the three variables in this study fall within the good to excellent quality range, with high mean values and standard deviations within reasonable limits. This indicates that respondents' perceptions of CRM, product quality, and consumer loyalty are relatively consistent.

Partial Test (*t*-Test)

Table 4. Partial Test (*t*-Test)

	B	Std. Error	Beta		
	2.902	5.543		.523	.602
CRM	.930	.154	.569	6.037	.000
Product Quality	.185	.167	.105	1.112	.269

Source: Primary Data, processed (2025)

A *t*-test was used to assess the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable. This test was conducted by examining differences in significance scores (*sig*) using a threshold error value ($\alpha = 0.05$). When the *sig* value is < 0.05 , it can be concluded that the independent variable has a significant impact based on individual testing of the dependent variable. The partial test findings in Table 4 indicate that the customer relationship management (CRM) variable has a coefficient of 0.930, a *sig* value of 0.000, and a *t*-value of 6.037. These figures are below 0.05, thus concluding that CRM has a significant positive impact on customer loyalty. In other words, the greater the level of CRM implementation, the greater the level of customer loyalty towards the company.

In contrast, the variable related to product quality showed a coefficient of 0.185, a significance value of 0.269, and a t-value of 1.112, all of which are greater than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that product quality has a positive but insignificant partial impact on customer loyalty. This finding indicates that, within the scope of this study, customer loyalty is directly influenced by CRM factors rather than individual product quality. Overall, the t-test results indicate that only the CRM variable has a significant impact on customer loyalty, while product quality does not have a significant partial effect.

Simultaneous Test (F Test)

Table 5. Simultaneous Test (F Test)

Model	f	Sig	Conclusion
1	30.472	0.000	Significant

Source: Primary Data, processed (2025)

The F-test is used to determine whether the independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable simultaneously. The validation step compares the significance level (sig) against an error threshold of 0.05. A regression model is considered significant if the sig is below 0.05, indicating that the independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable. Based on the results of the simultaneous test analysis shown in Table 5, the calculated F-value is 30.472, with a significance level of 0.000. This value is below 0.05, indicating that the regression model applied in this study is significant. In other words, customer relationship management (CRM) and product quality variables simultaneously have a significant impact on consumer loyalty. This finding indicates that the combination of CRM implementation and perceptions of product quality can significantly explain variations in consumer loyalty. Therefore, the multiple linear regression model in this study can predict consumer loyalty based on these two independent variables.

Coefficient of Determination (R²) Test

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination (R²) Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square
1	0.629	0.396	0.383

Source: Primary Data, processed (2025)

The R-squared value measures the extent to which the independent variables explain changes in the dependent variables. R-values range from 0 to 1, and the closer they are to 1, the more effective the model is in explaining the dependent variable. According to the test shown in Table 6, the R-square value obtained was 0.396, indicating that customer relationship management (CRM) and product quality standards can explain 39.6% of the variation in changes in consumer loyalty. Meanwhile, the remaining 60.4% is influenced by other variables outside the scope of this study. The adjusted R-square of 0.383 also supports the model's suitability, as it is not significantly different from the R-square. Overall, this coefficient of determination indicates that CRM and product quality have an adequate contribution to influencing customer loyalty. However, other variables that impact loyalty were not included in this study. These factors may include price, promotion, outlet

convenience, location, and brand image. The presence of these factors explains why the R-square value is only 39.6%, indicating that around 60.4% of the variation in consumer loyalty stems from external factors in this study.

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the contributions of customer relationship management (CRM) and product quality to customer loyalty at Roti'O in Cimahi City, a local bakery. The analysis revealed that CRM had a positive, significant impact on customer loyalty, whereas product quality did not. This finding indicates that CRM plays the most influential role in building customer commitment. This finding aligns with research [32], which states that CRM focuses on long-term relationships rather than transactions. This study also supports the view [33] that CRM is a commitment to building positive, ongoing customer experiences.

Although product quality achieved a high descriptive score, the regression results indicate it has not had a significant impact on customer loyalty ($\text{Sig} = 0.269$). This indicates that product quality is perceived as good by customers, but not strong enough to drive loyalty on its own. This may occur because Roti'O consumers are more influenced by their experiences interacting with the brand, such as the convenience of service, attentive staff, and speed of transactions. These factors often form a stronger emotional connection than product quality alone, making customer experience a more dominant aspect in building loyalty. In other words, product quality is a basic requirement, but loyalty is more influenced by psychological factors and the relationship established with the company through service, communication, and transaction experiences. These results differ from some previous studies, which found that product quality has a direct impact on customer loyalty [33]. These differences in findings indicate that, in the context of the local bakery industry, product quality plays a supporting role rather than a determining factor in loyalty.

Although statistically insignificant, product quality remains a strategic attribute, influencing brand quality assessments and consumer satisfaction. Therefore, Roti'O still needs to improve product quality, particularly in maintaining consistent taste, aroma, and freshness. However, to build loyalty, the company needs to place a stronger emphasis on CRM implementation. These findings confirm that CRM is a dominant factor influencing consumer loyalty, therefore, customer relationship strategies should be a primary focus for companies. Therefore, a positive customer experience through personal interactions, responsive service, and effective communication will foster stronger loyalty than relying solely on product quality.

The selection of Roti'O in Cimahi City as the research object makes an important contribution by offering a more diverse consumer perspective than similar studies in urban areas. The characteristics of local consumers, who tend to prioritize interpersonal relationships and more affordable product prices, provide relevant insights for the local bakery industry. Roti'O's success in maintaining consumer loyalty through a combination of high-quality products and effective CRM implementation can serve as an example for other industry players when designing more targeted marketing strategies for the local market segment.

This research not only enriches the literature on the contributions of CRM and product quality to customer loyalty but also provides companies with benefits in developing consumer-oriented promotional efforts. Future studies are recommended to explore other variables, such as price, promotion, and service experience, which are suspected to contribute additionally to building consumer loyalty in the local bakery industry.

5. CONCLUSION

This study underscores the strategic importance of relationship-oriented marketing in sustaining consumer attachment within the local bakery context. The overall evidence suggests that customer loyalty is shaped more by how firms manage interactions, communication, and long-term relationships than by functional product attributes alone. While product quality remains an essential baseline that shapes consumer expectations, it primarily serves as a supporting condition rather than a direct driver of loyalty formation.

From a managerial perspective, the findings imply that businesses should prioritize developing effective customer relationship management practices, particularly those that emphasize personalization, responsiveness, and relational continuity. Strengthening these aspects enables firms to create emotional bonds and trust, which are critical for repeat purchasing behavior. At the same time, maintaining consistent product standards remains necessary to safeguard brand credibility and prevent dissatisfaction, even if quality improvements do not, in and of themselves, translate into stronger loyalty.

The scope of this research is constrained by its focus on a limited set of variables and its concentration on a single geographic area. Such boundaries restrict the ability to generalize the insights to broader market segments or different industry settings. Additionally, reliance on a cross-sectional survey limits deeper exploration of behavioral and experiential dimensions of loyalty. Future research is encouraged to incorporate additional explanatory factors, such as pricing strategies, promotional intensity, service encounters, brand image, or experiential value, to obtain a more holistic understanding of loyalty formation. Methodological enrichment through mixed-methods or qualitative approaches, including interviews and observations, may also yield richer insights into consumer motivations. For the wider community and industry practitioners, this study contributes practical knowledge by highlighting that sustainable loyalty in local food businesses is not solely a matter of product excellence, but is strongly influenced by the quality of relationships built between firms and their customers.

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