

Research Article

The Role of Trust and Word of Mouth as Mediating Variables in Building Customer Loyalty

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Abstract.

This study aimed to examine the impact of customer relationship marketing on trust, word of mouth, and customer loyalty. It also sought to analyze the role of customer trust and word of mouth in mediating the influence of customer relationship marketing on customer loyalty at the Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City. The sample consisted of 140 customers of the Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City. Stratified random sampling was used to identify respondents. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to analyze data. The research results show that customer relationship marketing that focused on developing a service culture built customer trust at Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City. High levels of trust has the increases customer loyalty. By convincing others to choose a Kenangan Coffee Shop, word of mouth can also increase customer loyalty. Thus, this research further develops studies on customer loyalty, customer relationship marketing, and word of mouth.

Keywords: customer relationship, trust, word of mouth, customer loyalty

1. Introduction

Coffee has recently gained popularity as a fashionable beverage. According to data from the World Coffee Organization (ICO), coffee consumption in Indonesia has experienced a significant surge over the past decade. Specifically, Indonesian coffee consumption surged by almost 44% between October 2008 and September 2019 [1]. One of the successful coffee shops or coffee shops in Indonesia is Kopi Kenangan. Competition in the shop business looks very tight, especially in the Kenangan, Janji Jiwa, Kulo and Fore coffee shops and these companies are competing to position themselves to be the best in the eyes of customers and the wider community.

The primary objective of marketers is to effectively fulfill and gratify the demands and wants of their target consumers in a superior manner compared to their competitors.

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However, there has been a shift in these objectives, as the focus has now turned towards the significance of client loyalty [2]. In the short term and for the purpose of achieving sustained competitive advantage, customer loyalty is expected to play a pivotal role. The strategic benefit of customer loyalty is the reason behind this phenomenon. The correlation between client loyalty and the long-term viability of a company is significant. As per consumer feedback, organizations that demonstrate strong performance are those that successfully attract customers to make an initial purchase and thereafter encourage them to engage in recurring purchases [3].

Organizations must adopt the principles of client Relationship Marketing (CRM) in order to cultivate client loyalty. CRM has experienced a significant change, emerging as a new foundation for developing marketing strategies. [2] Within the realm of relationship marketing, CRM refers to the comprehensive process of establishing and preserving lucrative client relationships through the provision of exceptional customer value and satisfaction. This process encompasses all facets of acquiring, maintaining, and expanding the customer base. The research conducted by [4] and [5] has definitively established a substantial association between CRM and consumer loyalty.

The capacity to cultivate client trust is essential for fostering customer loyalty. According to [6], trust plays a crucial role in determining the quality of a relationship. [7] posits that consumer trust in a firm is positively associated with their inclination to engage in repeat purchases and disclose important personal information to the company. The empirical findings from several research done by [4, 8-12] provide substantial evidence supporting the proposition that Trust exerts a significant impact on loyalty.

The phenomenon of word of mouth has the potential to stimulate consumer purchases and exert an impact on community strategies. According to [13], employing efficient promotional strategies that do not entail substantial expenses can effectively cultivate a positive brand image and foster client loyalty, leading to repeat purchases. In order to cultivate positive word-of-mouth, an organization can employ a business strategy focused on enhancing customer relationship marketing. CRM is a strategic approach aimed at fostering client retention and cultivating enduring connections that yield mutual advantages [14]. The study conducted by [15] demonstrated a statistically significant and favorable relationship between word of mouth and customer loyalty.

The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive description of customer relationship marketing, customer trust, word of mouth, and customer loyalty. Furthermore, it aims to examine the influence of these factors on customer loyalty, with trust and word

of mouth serving as intermediary factors. This research offers significant insights to the field of management science, particularly in the domain of marketing management, by confirming the theory of consumer behavior and consumer loyalty. The coffee shop's management can utilize this information to make policy decisions that aim to promote client loyalty through customer relationship marketing, customer trust, and word of mouth.

2. Theoretical Review

2.1. Customer loyalty

Customer loyalty is a firm and consistent commitment to repurchase or sustain support for a preferred product or service over time, regardless of the effect of external variables and marketing strategies that would persuade the consumer to go elsewhere [16]. In connection with this, [16] argues that customer loyalty, customer loyalty pertains to the intention-consumer behavior towards items or services, with the potential outcome of future repeat purchases or service contract renewals, or conversely, their absence. This behavior also illustrates the likelihood of customers switching to alternative service providers or brands, as well as the likelihood of customers disseminating positive information to external parties.

Customer loyalty can be measured by various indicators, including repeat purchase behavior, retention rates, and referrals [17]. Repeat purchase behavior refers to the extent to which customers consistently choose to purchase a particular product, indicating their loyalty to that product. Retention rates measure the degree to which customers resist negative influences or temptations to switch to competing companies, reflecting their loyalty to the company. Referrals, on the other hand, pertain to the act of recommending the company to others, which serves as an indicator of the customer's overall satisfaction and loyalty towards the firm. Loyalty can be conceptualized as a sequential progression through four distinct stages: cognitive, emotive, conative, and action [18]. There are four values will be obtained There are four values that will be obtained if customer loyalty is implemented, including cost reduction in marketing, commerce expansion, customer acquisition, and time to respond to threats from competitors. Five factors contribute to the maintenance and expansion of loyalty: Providing amenities, establishing a close relationship with customers, measuring or managing customer satisfaction, and treating customers with courtesy [19].

2.2. Customer relationship marketing

CRM has evolved into a new approach to marketing strategy. Customer relationship marketing is a type of marketing in which businesses aim to acquire customers while also providing relevant marketing messages. Processes in customer relationship marketing include creating consumer information, calculating the benefits of having consumers, dividing consumers based on profits, managing consumers, and calculating the value of potential benefits and profits [20]. The author posits that CRM serves as a means to establish a closer connection with customers through the facilitation of two-way communication [3, 21]. CRM can serve as a strategic approach to cultivate enduring and favorable relationships with customers. Customer relationship marketing encompasses strategies such as prioritizing long-term customer relationships, maintaining effective communication with customers, engaging member organizations in marketing efforts, utilizing interactive marketing techniques, fostering a customer-centric service culture, and leveraging customer data for analysis and decision-making.

2.3. Consumer trust

According to [22], the success of marketing efforts relies on the establishment and maintenance of consumer trust, which in turn leads to people making purchases of a certain service even before experiencing it. According to [23], there is a belief that consumer trust plays a significant influence in shaping customer perceptions within their interactions with service organizations. [24] posits that Trust encompasses various fundamental components, one of which is its reliance on the accumulation of past experiences and deeds. A partner is generally anticipated to possess certain qualities, like trustworthiness and reliability. Trust encompasses a voluntary exposure to vulnerability, accompanied by sentiments of assurance and confidence in one's relationship. Trust plays a crucial function in establishing the degree of dedication in partnerships [25]. Furthermore, it has been argued that trust and commitment serve as mediators between satisfaction and loyalty [26]. As stated by reference [27], Trust in a company is mostly determined by two key factors: an assessment of the firm's competence and an assessment of the company's integrity or honesty. Based on the findings of [28], trust is determined by three primary factors: competence, benevolence, and integrity.

2.4. Word of mouth

As stated by [14], word of mouth refers to a type of direct communication where individuals engage in casual discussions about a product. This encompasses purchasers, nearby residents, acquaintances, relatives, and colleagues. As per references [29] and [30], the concept of “Word of Mouth” encompasses all the conversations individuals engage in regarding a brand, product, service, or company at various intervals within a specific timeframe. According to [31], the concept of word of mouth refers to the interpersonal communication process when individuals participate in the sharing of remarks, opinions, or ideas, without any explicit goal of engaging in sales activities.

According to the provided definitions, Word of Mouth may be characterized as a mode of interpersonal communication that seeks to disseminate information or exert persuasive effect on others in order to encourage their adoption of items or services offered by a certain entity. The word-of-mouth technique exerts a significant impact on customer behavior due to the presence of a strong interpersonal bond between the information supplier and the recipient, fostering a sense of trust and credibility.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Population and research sample

The research population comprises the customers of the prestigious coffee shop situated in Malang City. The exact population size in this study cannot be determined, hence the sample size is approximated by multiplying the number of indicators from four variables by 10, as recommended by [32]. Based on the previously established guidelines, the sample size was found to be 140 respondents. The result was obtained by multiplying 14 by 10. Upon conducting the necessary calculations to calculate the suitable sample size, it was ascertained that there would be a total of 140 replies.

3.2. Instruments and data sources

The research instrument used in this research was a questionnaire totalling 14 questions, which were measured using a Likert scale to assess the variables studied through participant responses. The primary data used is a questionnaire distributed to visitors to Kenangan Coffee Shop. The purpose of this survey was to learn more about the

opinions of participants on word-of-mouth marketing, customer loyalty, trust, and customer relationship management. Validity and reliability tests are performed in instrument testing to assess the reliability and validity of the research instruments that are being employed. Table 1 below displays the findings from the evaluation of the instrument's validity and reliability:

TABLE 1: Validity and reliability test results of question items.

Variable	Item	Correlation		Coefficient	
		Count	Status	Alpha	Status
Customer Relationship Marketing (X_1)	X1.1	0.720	Valid	0.741	Reliable
	X1.2	0.801	Valid		
	X1.3	0.814	Valid		
	X1.4	0.714	Valid		
	X1.5	0.511	Valid		
Customer Trust (Y_1)	Y1.1	0.906	Valid	0.840	Reliable
	Y1.2	0.863	Valid		
	Y1.3	0.860	Valid		
Word of mouth (Y_2)	Y2.1	0.789	Valid	0.712	Reliable
	Y2.2	0.884	Valid		
	Y2.3	0.724	Valid		
Customer Loyalty (Y_3)	Y3.1	0.859	Valid	0.662	Reliable
	Y3.2	0.798	Valid		
	Y3.3	0.650	Valid		

Due to the fact that all of the research questions have satisfied the criteria for validity and reliability testing, the findings of the instrument testing demonstrate that all of the research questions are valid and reliable.

3.3. Data analysis technique

The employed methodology involves the utilization of descriptive analysis, specifically employing descriptive statistics to calculate the mean value for each indicator under investigation. Additionally, the SEM analytical technique is utilized. The statistical technique known as SEM is employed to simultaneously test a set of very intricate relationships. A correlation can be created between one or many dependent variables and one or multiple independent factors. It has the potential to manifest as either factors or constructions that are constructed using many indicator variables.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. SEM analysis results

A presentation of the findings of the tests conducted with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) may be found in Figure 1 below:

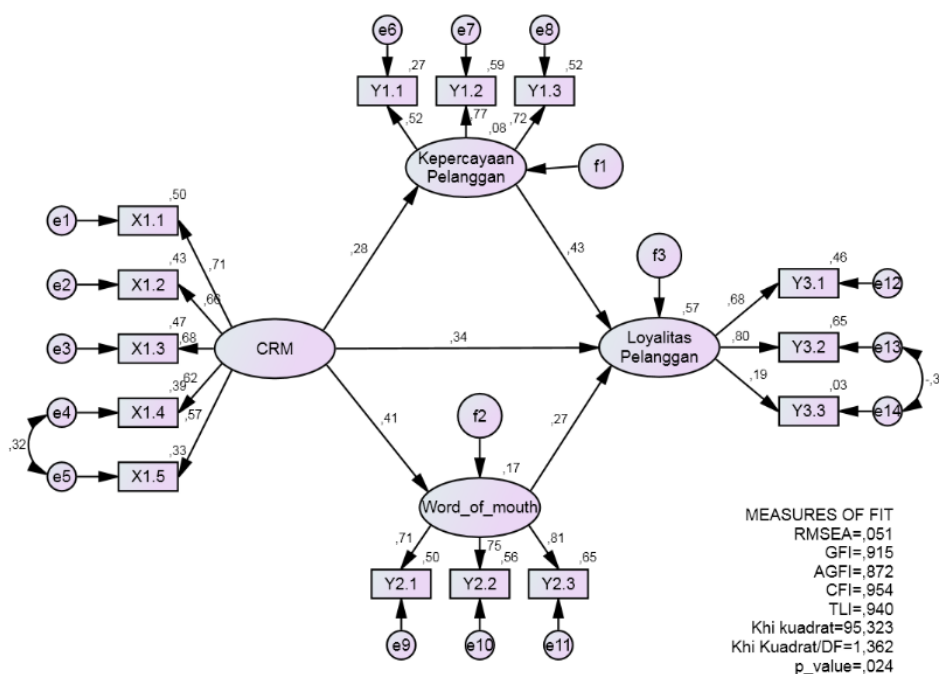


Figure 1: Structural model results.

According to the goodness of fit indices criteria that are stated in the following table, the final results of the model test, which are displayed in Table 2, were evaluated. These criteria are as follows:

TABLE 2: Evaluation of goodness of fit indices overall SEM model criteria.

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut-off Value	Model Results	Model Description
X ² -Chi square	Expected Small	95.323	Marginal
Sign Probability	≥ 0.05	0.024	Marginal
CMIN/DF	≤ 2.00	1.362	Good
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.915	Good
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.872	Marginal
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.940	Marginal
CFI	≥ 0.95	0.954	Good
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.051	Good

The assessment of the suggested model indicates that despite conducting a comprehensive analysis of the concept, no value has been generated that surpasses the critical threshold. [33] Propose that the optimal metrics for assessing the superiority of a model are a CMIN/DF ratio that is lower than 2 and an RMSEA value that is below 0.08. The threshold levels for the CMIN/DF and RMSEA measurements in this investigation have been satisfied. Consequently, the model can be classified as appropriate and adequate for implementation, thereby facilitating further discourse through interpretation.

To investigate the proposed hypothesis, the researcher utilized AMOS 20.0 to conduct a Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis. The output results of weighted regression comprise the critical ratio (Cr), which functions as the fundamental parameter for hypothesis testing. If the p-value is less than 5% significance, the study hypothesis will be accepted; otherwise, the null hypothesis will be rejected. The hypotheses numbered 1 through 5 in Table 3 are the earliest.

TABLE 3: Regression weight analysis results.

Correlation			Path Coefficient	C.r.	p-value	Information
CRM	->	Trust	0.281	2,270	0,023	Significant
CRM	->	Word mouth of	0.407	3,441	0,000	Significant
CRM	->	Loyalty	0.344	2,900	0,004	Significant
Trust	->	Loyalty	0.434	3,104	0,002	Significant
Word mouth of	->	Loyalty	0.270	2,516	0,012	Significant

The table above shows that customer relationship marketing has an effect on customer trust, as evidenced by the correlation coefficient (Cr) of 2.270 and p-value of 0.023. Customer relationship marketing has a considerable impact on customer trust, as evidenced by a p-value below the statistical significance level ($\alpha = 5\%$). Customers in Malang City are considerably more likely to believe Coffee Shops Kenangan when their customer connection marketing is effective, according to these findings.

The correlation coefficient (Cr) between customer relationship marketing and word of mouth is 3.441, showing a significant association (p-value = 0.000). Customer relationship marketing has a significant impact on word-of-mouth, as evidenced by a p-value below the statistical significance threshold ($\alpha = 5\%$). According to the study's findings, there is a favorable association between the quality of customer relationship marketing and the extent of word-of-mouth promotion. The case study of Kenangan Coffee Shop

in Malang City provides empirical evidence of a substantial increase of 40.7% in referrals generated through word-of-mouth.

A statistically significant p-value of 0.004 is associated with the correlation coefficient (Cr) of 2.900 between customer relationship marketing and consumer loyalty. The obtained p-value, which is below the predetermined level of statistical significance ($\alpha = 5\%$), provides support for the acceptance of the hypothesis that customer relationship marketing has a direct and significant effect on customer loyalty. These findings suggest that an improvement in customer relationship marketing is associated with a notable increase of 34.4% in customer loyalty towards Coffee Shop Kenangan in Malang City.

There is a statistically significant relationship between consumer trust and loyalty, as indicated by the correlation coefficient (Cr) of 3.104. There is a 0.0042 p-value linked to this correlation. With a p-value that shows statistical significance at a level of $\alpha = 5\%$, the premise that customer trust and loyalty are directly correlated can be accepted. Customer loyalty and trust in Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City are directly correlated, according to the study's results. In particular, the data shows that as consumer trust levels grow, loyalty increases by 43.4%.

The impact of word of mouth on consumer loyalty is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.0012 and a Cr value of 2.516. Assuming the p-value is below the predetermined 5% level of statistical significance, the assertion that word of mouth directly impacts customer loyalty can be upheld. Customers' loyalty to coffee shops, particularly Kenangan in Malang City, increased by 27% when told about it by word of mouth, according to this study.

According to the study's findings, customer trust plays a crucial role in the correlation between customer relationship marketing and customer confidence. The sum of all influences is greater than the sum of all direct influences, which is 0.556. In other words, this lends credence to the theory that customer trust mediates the connection between CRM and brand loyalty.

The study's findings highlight the importance of word of mouth as a mediator between customer relationship marketing and consumer trust. Compared to the direct influence value of 0.344, the total influence value of 0.455 is greater. This lends credence to the theory that SMM influences consumers' trust through word of mouth.

4.2. Discussion

The use of customer relationship marketing has positively influenced the enhancement of consumer confidence at Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City. Trust is widely regarded as a crucial component for achieving success in relationship marketing. Trust is an essential prerequisite for the longevity of a partnership. Trust serves as the foundation for a partnership approach when parties wish to establish a committed and binding connection [25]. In order to establish trust with customers, organizations must engage in effective communication, embrace customer-endorsed conventions, and refrain from making unfavorable evaluations [25].

Customer connection marketing has helped Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City acquire customers. This strategy involves always putting long-term customers first, communicating effectively with them, getting everyone on staff involved in marketing, creating a great service culture, and being open to using customer data about the products offered. In terms of customer relationship marketing, the indicator with the highest factor loading value is the one that pertains to creating a service culture for customers. Customers' high confidence in the establishment's consistency in the following areas suggests that customer relationship marketing focused on building a service culture for customers has helped Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City gain their trust.

According to the results, customer relationship marketing does affect trust, which is in line with what was found in the study by [34]. It has been shown that elements of customer relationship marketing affect client trust (reference [24]). According to research [35], building trust with customers is one of the primary goals of customer relationship marketing. Customer relationship marketing has helped Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City with their word-of-mouth promotion. This phenomenon can be attributed to the utilization of word-of-mouth marketing by customers of Kenangan Coffee Shop. This is evidenced by their act of sharing their personal experiences of visiting the coffee shop, endorsing it as the top choice for coffee consumption, and persuading others to select Kenangan Coffee Shop as their preferred coffee destination.

According to the factor loading value, the indicator of developing a service culture for customers is perceived to be the highest in relation to customer relationship marketing. Therefore, it can be concluded that focusing on developing a service culture for customers contributes to increasing word of mouth for Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang

City. By being persuasive, one can effectively influence others to select Kenangan Coffee Shop as their preferred destination for coffee consumption.

To stimulate word-of-mouth, a corporation may utilize a targeted business strategy known as customer relationship marketing, which aims to improve interactions with customers [36]. Customer relationship marketing is a strategy method focused on maintaining existing customers and building long-lasting, mutually beneficial ties. The results of this study offer further validation to the investigations conducted by [23] and [37], which illustrate a significant association between customer relationship marketing and word of mouth.

Building strong and long-lasting connections with important customer segments is how relationship marketing is achieved. Improved marketing output is possible with well-executed relationship marketing strategies. Companies engage in relationship marketing because it has the potential to boost their bottom line by fostering more brand loyalty among their clientele. Consumers in Malang City who are regulars at the Kenangan Coffee Shop will continue to patronize the establishment as long as the coffee they serve is to their liking, according to the factor loading value for customer relationship marketing. This suggests that the emphasis on building a service culture for customers is a key component of customer relationship marketing. Expanding on previous research by [34, 38, 39], as well as studies by [12, 40, 41] this study found that CRM had a substantial impact on customer loyalty.

Enhancing consumer loyalty at Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City is influenced by customer confidence. This phenomenon can be elucidated by the premise that customer loyalty towards Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City is contingent upon customer trust in the establishment. This confidence is established as a result of Kenangan Coffee Shop's consistent provision of comfortable surroundings, high-quality service, and unwavering commitment to patrons' welfare. Indicators of benevolence (factor loading value) pertaining to customer trust, such as a strong conviction that Kenangan Coffee Shop consistently delivers high-quality service, increase customer loyalty towards the Malang City location of Kenangan Coffee Shop, as evidenced by the inclination to patronize the establishment. Such brands will continue to patronize Kenangan Coffee Shop due to the fact that the coffee they provide satisfies their preferences.

According to the source [25], loyalty can only be fostered via trust and commitment. When customers have faith in the product's name, they are more likely to engage with

one another effectively, mostly about the product, which in turn increases the likelihood that they will become devoted customers. A consumer's level of brand loyalty is directly proportional to their level of faith in the goods they're purchasing. By providing evidence that trust substantially affects loyalty, this investigation builds upon earlier work by [8]. Trust has a major effect on loyalty, according to the study by [9]. Based on the studies cited in [10] and [11], trust has no effect on commitment but can influence loyalty.

Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City has a devoted client base that grows thanks to positive word of mouth. The commitment of clients to Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City can be ascribed to the utilization of word of mouth, which is generated through discussions about positive elements, suggestions, and persuasive interactions.

Based on the factor loading value, regarding word of mouth, the indicators that are shown convincingly, such as convincing other people to choose Kenangan Coffee Shop as a place to drink coffee, contribute to increasing customer loyalty towards Kenangan Coffee Shop in Malang City, which is shown by the habit of using brands such as Keep coming to the Kenangan Coffee Shop, because the coffee they offer suits your taste.

Word-of-mouth phenomenon can incite purchases and wield influence over communities. Strategies and promotions are effective since they do not require large expenses, build a positive reputation, and encourage customer loyalty. The findings of this research build upon the previous study conducted by [23], which demonstrated that word of mouth had a substantial impact on consumer loyalty. The study [15] demonstrated a substantial and favorable impact of word of mouth on customer loyalty.

Customer relationship marketing fosters customer trust and exerts an impact on customer loyalty. The findings suggest that customer relationship marketing, which prioritizes the cultivation of a service-oriented mindset, has a substantial impact on bolstering client trust. This trust is fostered by Kenangan Coffee Shop's ability to provide comfort, consistent quality service, and prioritize customer interests. The establishment of trust has a direct influence on the growth of consumer loyalty, as seen by their consistent patronage of the Kenangan Coffee Shop due to their satisfaction with the coffee's flavor. The findings of this study build upon previous research conducted by [24, 34, 35], demonstrating the impact of customer relationship marketing on consumer trust. Additionally, studies conducted by [8, 9, 11] provide evidence that trust has a significant influence on customer loyalty.

Influencing customer loyalty and facilitating the spread of good recommendations are two outcomes of customer relationship marketing. According to the results, a higher

degree of word-of-mouth referrals can be achieved through the implementation of customer relationship marketing tactics, particularly through the promotion of a service-oriented culture. This is evidenced by the persuasive nature of these referrals, which influence others to choose Kenangan Coffee Shop as their preferred coffee destination. The phenomenon of word of mouth significantly influences the enhancement of customer loyalty, as seen by the consistent patronage of Kenangan Coffee Shop due to the alignment between the coffee served and their personal preferences. The results of this study expand on prior studies conducted by [23] and [37], which show a significant association between customer relationship marketing and word of mouth. Furthermore, research carried out by [8, 9, 11] demonstrates that trust has a direct influence on loyalty.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

This study suggests that the adoption of customer relationship marketing, particularly through the development of a service culture, has a beneficial effect on improving customer trust at Kenangan Coffee Shop situated in Malang City. This is evidenced by the customers' strong belief in the shop's consistent delivery of high-quality service, as well as their inclination to recommend Kenangan Coffee Shop as a preferred destination for coffee consumption. Customer trust, as seen by a high level of Trust, plays a significant role in fostering customer loyalty, as demonstrated by their continued patronage of the Kenangan Coffee Shop due to the provision of coffee that aligns with their personal preferences. The phenomenon of word of mouth plays a significant role in fostering customer loyalty, as seen by the tendency of individuals to patronize a certain business, such as consistently visiting a notable coffee shop, due to the high quality of its coffee and the personalized service that aligns with their preferences.

The implementation of customer relationship marketing, through the cultivation of a service-oriented culture, has been found to positively impact customer loyalty. This is mostly attributed to the provision of personalized coffee offerings tailored to individual preferences. The implementation of customer relationship marketing, with a specific emphasis on cultivating a service-oriented culture for customers, plays a pivotal role in augmenting levels of consumer trust. The Kenangan Coffee Shop has been seen to foster client loyalty through the establishment of brand usage habits.

The implementation of customer relationship marketing strategies, namely through the cultivation of a service-oriented culture, plays a significant part in augmenting positive word-of-mouth referrals. This is evidenced by the persuasive influence exerted on potential customers, leading them to select Kenangan Coffee Shop as their preferred destination for coffee consumption. The phenomenon of word of mouth is a direct result of the efforts made by Kenangan Coffee Shop to enhance customer loyalty. Customers that consistently use these particular brands will likely continue to frequent the Kenangan Coffee Shop due to its ability to cater to their individual preferences in terms of coffee taste.

5.2. Recommendations

The research findings indicate that coffee shop management should prioritize the provision of exceptional customer service. Consequently, recommendations are proposed to enhance the quality of service offered to patrons. In order to enhance the reputation of the Kenangan Coffee Shop, it is imperative for management to cultivate positive relationships with customers, thereby encouraging them to disseminate their experiences to others. The results of this study could improve the current understanding and resources related to customer loyalty, particularly in the areas of customer relationship marketing, customer trust, and word-of-mouth communication. These observations help enhance comprehension of the variables that impact customers' choices to maintain loyalty to a specific brand and abstain from switching to competitors.

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