

Customer Relationship Management as a Determinant of Customer Loyalty: Evidence from Restaurants in Bhubaneswar

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Abstract—In an increasingly competitive service environment, customer relationship management (CRM) has emerged as a critical strategic tool for fostering long-term customer loyalty, particularly within the restaurant industry. Drawing conceptual and methodological insights from prior empirical research on CRM and customer loyalty in the Indian restaurant sector, the present study examines the role of CRM in shaping customer loyalty among restaurants in Bhubaneswar. The study specifically investigates how CRM, through its core dimensions of trust and commitment, influences customer loyalty both directly and in conjunction with customer satisfaction and customer perceived value.

The research adopts a quantitative and cross-sectional research design. Primary data are collected from restaurant customers in Bhubaneswar using a structured questionnaire based on established and validated measurement scales. Responses are measured using a five-point Likert scale. Reliability and validity of the constructs are assessed through Cronbach's alpha and correlation analysis, while multiple regression and mediation analysis are employed to test the hypothesized relationships among customer satisfaction, customer perceived value, CRM, and customer loyalty. The study contributes to the existing literature by offering empirical evidence from a tier-II Indian city and reinforces the strategic importance of CRM in the restaurant industry. Managerially, the findings suggest that restaurant operators should invest in systematic CRM initiatives to build trust, improve customer experiences, and achieve sustainable customer loyalty.

Index Terms—Customer Relationship Management, Customer Loyalty, Restaurant Industry, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Experiences.

I. INTRODUCTION

The achievement of strategic objectives in the service sector is increasingly dependent on the development and sustenance of customer loyalty, a phenomenon extensively acknowledged by both scholars and practitioners in marketing literature (Oliver, 1999; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Earlier research primarily focused on establishing the existence of customer loyalty and identifying its core antecedents. Traditionally, managers have consistently emphasized customer loyalty as one of the most critical challenges faced by service-oriented organizations (Dick & Basu, 1994). This emphasis has intensified in recent years due to heightened competitive pressures and market saturation characterizing the contemporary business environment. Although a substantial body of research has examined customer loyalty, the literature remains fragmented, offering limited integrative insights into the diverse determinants shaping loyalty behavior. Furthermore, relatively little attention has been devoted to examining mediating mechanisms through which various factors enhance or reinforce customer loyalty. In today's hyper-competitive marketplace, managers are required to develop a refined understanding of customer expectations and satisfaction levels as a strategic imperative to achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

The importance of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is particularly evident in rapidly urbanizing markets such as Bhubaneswar, where the hospitality and food service sector has experienced

significant expansion driven by urbanization, increasing disposable incomes, and evolving consumer lifestyles. The city accommodates a heterogeneous mix of independent restaurants, quick-service establishments, and branded chains, thereby intensifying competition and rendering customer retention a strategic necessity. Despite this growth trajectory, empirical research investigating the effectiveness of CRM practices in fostering customer loyalty within the local restaurant context remains limited, indicating a clear research gap (Sin, Tse, & Yim, 2005).

Prior empirical studies have consistently established a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and organizational performance, suggesting that satisfied customers contribute significantly to long-term business sustainability and growth (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994). Subsequent research further demonstrates that customer satisfaction serves as a key antecedent to customer loyalty by encouraging repeat purchase behavior, positive word-of-mouth, and improved profitability (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000). However, satisfaction alone may not be sufficient to fully explain loyalty formation, thereby necessitating deeper examination of additional relational and psychological variables. Consequently, there is a pressing need for further research to conceptualize and empirically validate mediating factors that strengthen the satisfaction–loyalty relationship. A comprehensive understanding of these mediators would enable service firms to develop more effective relationship management strategies, ultimately fostering stronger customer commitment and superior long-term performance (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Contemporary research indicates that service evaluation dimensions particularly customer perceived value and customer satisfaction are frequently examined jointly in relation to customer loyalty outcomes (Zeithaml, 1988). These constructs are widely recognized as critical drivers in the formation and maintenance of customer loyalty. Accordingly, several scholars propose that key relational variables may operate as mediating mechanisms between service evaluation determinants and sustained loyalty (Caruana, 2002). Nevertheless, empirical evidence suggests that loyalty reinforcement extends beyond service evaluations alone and is significantly influenced by the effective

implementation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), which functions as a crucial mediating force in strengthening long-term customer relationships and loyalty outcomes (Payne & Frow, 2005).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has been widely acknowledged as a critical determinant of customer loyalty across service industries, including hospitality and restaurants. Recent studies emphasize that effective CRM strategies improve satisfaction and retention, thereby fostering loyalty (Khalafinezhad & Choi, 2024). CRM elements such as customer orientation, personalization, and knowledge management positively impact customer loyalty, mediated by satisfaction and perceived value (El Sheikh et al., 2020; Tri Syoftika & Rahmiati, 2025).

In restaurant contexts, sustainable CRM (susCRM) has emerged as a holistic strategy that enhances long-term loyalty by integrating continuous customer interaction, employee engagement, and value delivery (Hasan, 2021). susCRM reduces costs, maximizes retention, and regenerates customer needs to build stronger loyalty in competitive markets (Hasan, 2021).

Empirical investigations in service sectors, including restaurants, indicate significant relationships between CRM practices and customer satisfaction, which in turn strengthens loyalty outcomes (Imran, 2022; Sapar et al., 2025). These studies highlight direct effects of CRM on loyalty and indirect effects through customer satisfaction (Imran, 2022; Sapar et al., 2025).

Beyond restaurant-specific research, literature from broader hospitality contexts affirms that CRM implementation enhances customer loyalty by aligning service quality, customer trust, and engagement mechanisms with relational strategies (Hardjono & San, 2017; Sofi et al., 2024). CRM dimensions such as customer orientation and personalization are critical predictors of loyalty (Hardjono & San, 2017; Sofi et al., 2024). Cross-sector studies also support these findings, showing CRM's role in fostering loyalty is strengthened when customer trust moderates the CRM–loyalty relationship (International Journal of Bank Marketing, 2021). Furthermore, research exploring

value perceptions in restaurants demonstrates perceived value's influence on loyalty outcomes (Croitoru, 2024).

Overall, evidence suggests CRM strategies especially when sustainable, personalized, and trust-enhanced contribute significantly to customer loyalty in restaurant and hospitality sectors. Future research is advised to focus on contextual factors like technology adoption and cultural influences in markets such as Bhubaneswar where restaurant competition intensifies.

The reviewed literature demonstrates a strong and consistent relationship between Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and customer loyalty within the restaurant and hospitality sectors. CRM practices particularly personalization, customer engagement, and relationship quality enhance customer satisfaction, which in turn strengthens loyalty. Studies also show that sustainable and technology-driven CRM systems contribute to long-term retention and brand trust.

However, while CRM's influence on loyalty is well established in global contexts, its specific regional applications, such as in Bhubaneswar's restaurant industry, remain underexplored. Therefore, further empirical research in this context could provide valuable insights into localized CRM dynamics influenced by cultural and technological factors.

III. RESEARCH GAP

There is limited empirical evidence on the link between customer relationship management (CRM) and customer loyalty in regional restaurant markets like Bhubaneswar. Future research should also examine additional mediating and moderating factors such as trust, digital CRM tools, and customer engagement. Moreover, the lack of cross-regional and comparative studies restricts the generalizability of existing findings, indicating a need to test CRM-loyalty relationships beyond Bhubaneswar's restaurant context.

IV. OBJECTIVES

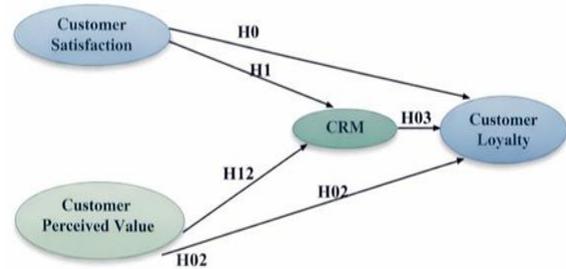
- To examine the impact of customer perceived value and satisfaction on customer loyalty.
- To evaluate the mediating role of Customer

Relationship Management (CRM) in this relationship.

- To identify key strategies in the service sector for enhancing customer loyalty.

V. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The interrelationships among customer satisfaction, perceived customer value, customer relationships, and customer loyalty are depicted in Figure 1. Within this framework, customer relationship management functions as the mediating construct governing these associations. The conceptual configuration of this model is derived from an extensive review of relevant scholarly literature. Furthermore, the figure delineates the underlying structure of the proposed hypotheses among the study variables.



VI. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H0: There is a positive association between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. H1: There is no positive association between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

H02: There is a positive association between customer perceived value and customer loyalty. H12: There is no positive association between customer perceived value and customer loyalty.

H03: There is a positive association between customer relationship management and customer loyalty.

VII. METHODOLOGY

The present research employs a concise, cross-sectional, and quantitative design to investigate the relationships among key variables. A random sampling technique was utilized to collect primary data, ensuring representation from diverse

respondents. The study framework was structured to examine both the associations and causal effects of the selected constructs through a model designed for efficient, economical, and comprehensive analysis. The research was conducted within the restaurant industry of Bhubaneswar, where 10 local restaurants were randomly chosen as sampling units. The target population consisted of restaurant customers, and out of 520 distributed questionnaires, 400 valid responses were obtained and used for empirical analysis. Measurement scales were adopted from established scholarly sources to ensure validity and reliability. Items from Cronin and Taylor (1992) and Lam et al. (2004) were employed to evaluate customer satisfaction, while measures of customer perceived

value were adapted from Wang et al. (2004) and Eggert and Ulaga (2002). Constructs related to Customer Relationship Management (CRM) were based on the Commitment-Trust Theory developed by Morgan and Hunt (1994), and customer loyalty was assessed using items derived from Zeithaml et al. (1996) and Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002) within a service context. Data were analyzed using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to capture the intensity of respondents' perceptions. To ensure measurement accuracy and internal consistency, a reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) was performed on all constructs prior to hypothesis testing.

VIII. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

8.1. Reliability Test

Table 1: Reliability Test

Construct	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Customer Loyalty	4	0.831	0.821
Customer Relationship Management	4	0.889	0.829
Customer Perceived Value	12	0.836	0.778
Customer Satisfaction	12	0.899	0.891

The reliability analysis for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) recorded the highest Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.891, indicating excellent internal consistency, as shown in Table 1.

The reliability coefficients for CRM (0.829), customer perceived value (0.778), and customer loyalty (0.821) further demonstrate acceptable to high reliability across constructs. Since all the Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the threshold of 0.70, the measurement scales exhibit strong internal consistency and reliability. A total of twelve items were analyzed to confirm positive and reliable outcomes for customer satisfaction and customer perceived value, while four items each were tested for CRM and customer loyalty, both of which also Table 2: Correlations:

reflected satisfactory reliability levels for this empirical study.

8.2. Validity Test.

Validity refers to the authenticity and soundness of research findings, ensuring that the analysis produces the precise and accurate outcomes intended by the researcher. Similarly, the reliability assessment indicates the extent to which a measurement tool consistently captures the construct it is designed to evaluate with precision. In this study, Table 2 presents a correlation analysis employed to examine the statistical significance and interrelationship among the study variables, thereby reinforcing the overall validity and reliability of the research model.

Correlations		Customer Loyalty	Customer Satisfaction	Customer Relationship Management	Customer Perceived Value
Customer Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	0.807**	0.687**	0.787**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	
Customer Satisfaction	N	400	400	400	400
	Pearson Correlation	1	0.809**	0.636**	0.807**
Customer Relationship Management	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0
	N	400	400	400	400
Customer Perceived Value	Pearson Correlation	0.636**	0.854**	1	0.787**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0
Customer Perceived Value	N	400	400	400	400

Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation coefficient analysis indicates a statistically significant and positive association between customer satisfaction and customer perceived value ($r(400)=0.809, p<0.01$)($r(400) = 0.809, p < 0.01$)($r(400)=0.809, p<0.01$). Likewise, customer relationship management (CRM) exhibits a strong and meaningful correlation with customer satisfaction ($r(400)=0.636, p<0.01$)($r(400) = 0.636, p < 0.01$)($r(400)=0.636, p<0.01$). The relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction also reflects a positive and significant linkage ($r(400)=0.807, p<0.01$)($r(400) = 0.807, p < 0.01$)($r(400)=0.807, p<0.01$). Furthermore, a high positive association is observed between CRM and customer perceived value ($r(400)=0.854, p<0.01$)($r(400) = 0.854, p < 0.01$)($r(400)=0.854, p<0.01$). In addition, customer loyalty shows a substantial correlation with customer perceived value ($r(400)=0.687, p<0.01$)($r(400) = 0.687, p < 0.01$)($r(400)=0.687, p<0.01$). Finally, CRM demonstrates a statistically significant and positive relationship with customer loyalty ($r(400)=0.787, p<0.01$)($r(400) = 0.787, p < 0.01$)($r(400)=0.787, p<0.01$), confirming the interdependence among these key constructs within the research model.

8.3. Demographic Profile

The demographic analysis of the respondents revealed that male participants constituted 82.4%, while female participants accounted for 17.6% of the total sample. The age distribution indicated that the majority of respondents (58.8%) belonged to the 31-40 years age group (see Table 3). Regarding educational background, a significant proportion of respondents (73.6%) held qualifications categorized under “other” education levels. In terms of employment status, the largest group (70%) comprised individuals working as lower-level supervisors, indicating their substantial representation within the study’s sample population.

Table 3: Descriptive Profile:

Construct		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
GENDER	MALE	330	82.5%	82.5%	82.5
	FEMALE	70	17.5%	17.5%	100
	TOTAL	400	100	100	
AGE	21-30	56	14.0%	14.0%	14
	31-40	235	58.8%	58.8%	72.8
	41-50	88	22.0%	22.0%	94.8

	51-60	21	5.3%	5.3%	100
	TOTAL	400	100	100	
EDUCATION	GRADUATION	24	6.0%	6.0%	6
	MASTERS OTHER	82	20.5%	20.5%	26.5
		294	73.5%	73.5%	100
	TOTAL	40	100	100	
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	OTHER STAFF	109	27.3%	27.3%	27.3
	LOWER MANAGER	280	70.0%	70.0%	97.3
	MIDDLE MANAGER	9	2.3%	2.3%	99.5
	HIGHER MANAGER	2	0.5%	0.5%	100
	TOTAL	400	100	100	

8.4. Regression Analysis

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.599	0.597	0.776	1.89774

To test Hypotheses 1 and 2, a linear regression analysis was conducted, indicating a statistically significant influence of customer perceived value and customer satisfaction (independent variables) on customer loyalty (dependent variable). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 59.9\%$) demonstrates that these predictors collectively explain approximately 59.9%

of the variance in customer loyalty. Furthermore, the obtained correlation coefficient ($R = 0.776$) confirms a strong and positive relationship, thereby supporting the proposed hypotheses and validating the model's predictive strength and explanatory power within the restaurant sector.

Table 5: Regression Analysis

Model	Standardized Coefficients	Coefficients		Sig.	t
	Beta	df	Std. Error		
Customer loyalty		2	1.625	0	5.051
Customer Perceived Value	0.788	399	0.048	0	17.2
Customer Satisfaction	0.773	397	0.056	0	16.34

The results emphasize the significance of the linear regression analysis, revealing a strong statistical relationship between the independent variables customer perceived value and customer satisfaction and the dependent variable, customer loyalty, with significance levels below 0.05. The beta coefficient for customer satisfaction shows a p-value of 0.215, while the corresponding tabulated p-value is 0.000, confirming a statistically significant and consistent

regression model. Similarly, the p-value for the customer perceived value variable is 0.000, indicating a substantial and meaningful linear association, supported by a beta coefficient of 0.113. These findings collectively suggest that both predictors exert a statistically significant and positive influence on customer loyalty within the analyzed model.

8.5. Mediation Regression Analysis

Table 6: Mediation Regression Analysis

Model		Standardized	Unstandardized		Sig.	t
		Coefficients	Coefficients			
		Beta	B	Std. Error		
1	(Constant)	0.8	8.409	1.615	0	5.205
	Customer Satisfaction		0.166	0.033	0	5.073
	(Constant)		5.834	1.614	0	3.614
2	Customer Relationship Management	0.876	0.342	0.066	0	5.201
	Customer Satisfaction	0.365	0.106	0.033	0.002	3.199

For Hypothesis (H1), the mediating effect of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) on the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty was analyzed using a simple linear regression model. A substantial variation between the beta coefficient values obtained without the mediator and those derived after introducing the mediator variable indicated the presence of partial mediation.

The significance levels for both Model 1 and Model 2 were recorded at $p = 0.000$, confirming that the regression analysis was statistically significant. Therefore, the findings of this research provide strong evidence that CRM partially mediates the association between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Table 7: Mediation Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Sig.	t
1 (Constant)	8.991	1.536	-	0	6.934
Customer Perceived Value	0.141	0.031	0.769	0	4.718
2 (Constant)	6.934	1.464	-0.726	0	4.735
Customer Relationship Management	0.349	0.066		0	5.276
Customer Perceived Value	0.08	0.029	0.371	0	2.774

Concerning hypothesis H12, the role of the mediator (i.e., customer relationship management) in the relationship between perceived customer value and customer loyalty was examined using a simple linear regression analysis. A significant difference was observed between the beta coefficients of Model 1 and Model 2, indicating that the relationship is subject to

partial mediation. The reported significance level of .000 confirms a robust linear relationship in both models. The study’s findings demonstrate that customer relationship management serves as a crucial mediating factor in the interplay among customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, and perceived customer value.

8.6. Hypothesis Testing Results

Table No. 8: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis Code	Statement of Hypothesis	Result	Remarks/Justification
H0	There is a positive association between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.	Accepted	Regression results ($p < 0.05$, $\beta = 0.773$) show a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty.
H1	There is a negative association between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.	Rejected	Opposite direction found satisfaction increases loyalty.
H02	There is a positive association between customer loyalty and customer perceived value.	Accepted	Regression results ($p < 0.05$, $\beta = 0.788$) confirm significant positive influence of perceived value on loyalty.
H12	There is a negative association between customer loyalty and customer perceived value.	Rejected	Evidence supports a positive, not negative, relationship.
H03	There is a positive association between customer loyalty and customer relationship management (CRM).	Accepted	Correlation ($r = 0.787$, $p < 0.01$) and mediation results confirm CRM's significant positive role in enhancing loyalty.

8.7. Connection Between Hypotheses and Analysis:

The analysis section of the study applied correlation and regression tests to examine the relationship between customer satisfaction, perceived value, customer relationship management (CRM), and customer loyalty. The results show that all independent variables customer satisfaction, customer perceived value, and CRM have a significant positive impact on customer loyalty.

For Hypothesis H0, the linear regression analysis (Table 5) reported a strong positive beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.773$, $p < 0.05$), confirming that customer satisfaction positively influences customer loyalty. This means that as satisfaction levels increase, customers are more likely to stay loyal to the restaurant. Therefore, H0 is accepted, and H1, which proposed a negative relationship, is rejected.

Similarly, for Hypothesis H02, the regression results indicated a significant positive beta ($\beta = 0.788$, $p < 0.05$) between customer perceived value and loyalty, confirming that customers who perceive higher value in the restaurant's offerings demonstrate stronger loyalty. Hence, H02 is accepted, and H12 is rejected.

Regarding Hypothesis H03, the correlation results ($r = 0.787$, $p < 0.01$) and mediation analysis (Tables 6 and 7) revealed that CRM has a significant positive

effect on customer loyalty, and it also partially mediates the relationship between satisfaction, perceived value, and loyalty. This means CRM strengthens the impact of satisfaction and perceived value on loyalty by enhancing customer trust and commitment. Thus, H03 is accepted.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the empirical results, the study clearly indicates that customer perceived value and customer satisfaction function as the most influential antecedents of customer loyalty. The empirical investigation was conducted using primary data collected from patrons of various restaurants in Bhubaneswar, with the objective of examining the effect of customer loyalty and the mediating role of the independent constructs. The findings reveal a strong and statistically significant relationship among customers' perceived value, customer satisfaction, and overall business performance. Consistent with prior empirical and theoretical studies, perceived customer value and satisfaction are widely recognized as core determinants of sustained loyalty toward products and services. Furthermore, the mediating influence of customer relationship

management has reinforced and preserved critical relational dimensions such as customer trust and commitment. Demographic variables, including age, gender, and educational level, were also found to exert a significant influence on the proposed relationships. Overall, the study confirms that customer relationship management is intrinsically linked to these constructs and plays a pivotal role in shaping customer loyalty outcomes.

This study posits that perceived consumer value, customer satisfaction, and customer relationship management (CRM) function as critical antecedents in the development of customer loyalty. To strengthen customer trust and commitment toward service offerings, restaurants and other service-oriented firms should implement high-quality CRM practices and provide systematic employee training, thereby enhancing customer retention and loyalty. Such initiatives are expected to attract a larger customer base; hence, CRM value should be formally integrated into organizational strategy. Furthermore, future research should examine additional levels of analysis and alternative independent variables to more accurately predict customer loyalty, given its central role in improving revenues, profitability, and overall firm performance. The present study specifically investigates the mediating role of CRM within these relationships. Other managerial dimensions may also be incorporated to assess their influence on specific associations. Empirically, this research is conducted within the restaurant sector of Bhubaneswar, and similar investigations across different industries and contexts are recommended to extend the generalizability of the findings.

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