

**PERCEPTION OF THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMER
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT ON BRAND LOYALTY AMONG
BENIN RESIDENTS**

BY

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
MASS COMMUNICATION, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF
BENIN, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE. IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS
(B.A HONS) DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION**

DECEMBER, 2024

DECLARATION

This project is based on a study undertaken by me, **ABOSIOREAMHE OSIORENOYA THERESAMARY**, in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts under the supervision of Prof. Ezekiel. S. Asemah. All ideas are the products of my personal research where the views of others were used, they were duly acknowledged.

ABOSIOREAMHE OSIORENOYA THERESAMARY
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work '**PERCEPTION OF THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT ON BRAND LOYALTY AMONG BENIN RESIDENTS**' written and submitted by **ABOSIOREAMHE OSIORENOYA THERESAMARY** Matriculation Number **ART2100858** to the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.

Prof. E. S. Asemah.
Project Supervisor

Date

Dr. D.O. Ekhareafo
Head of Department

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God, who has been my guiding light and source of strength throughout this academic journey in the University of Benin.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I dedicate this project to God Almighty ,the Author and Finisher of my faith. Your divine guidance, wisdom, and strength have been my constant companion throughout this journey. Your unwavering love, mercy, and grace have sustained me, and your presence has been my rock, my shield, and my comfort throughout my Undergraduate Programme.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	i
Declaration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	ii
Certification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iii
Dedication	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	iv
Acknowledgements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	v
Table of Contents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	viii
List of Tables		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	xi
Abstract	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	xii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
1.3. Objectives of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
1.4. Research Questions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
1.5. Scope of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
1.6. Significance of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
1.7. Definition of Terms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
1.8. Limitations of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Conceptual Review	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
2.1.1. Overview of Customer Relationship and Customer Satisfaction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9

2.1.2	Overview of Brand and Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	14
2.2.	Opinion Review	-	-	-	-	17
2.2.1.	Strategies for Building Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	17
2.2.2.	Functions of Customer Relationship Management.	-	-	-	-	19
2.2.3.	Factors that influence Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	21
2.2.4.	Types of Customers	-	-	-	-	23
2.2.5.	Challenges of Customer Relationship Management	-	-	-	-	25
2.2.6.	Nexus between Customer Relationship Management and Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	28
2.3.	Review of Empirical Studies	-	-	-	-	33
2.4.	Theoretical Framework	-	-	-	-	35
2.4.1.	The Interactional View Theory	-	-	-	-	35
2.4.2.	Relationship Management Theory	-	-	-	-	38
 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY						
3.1.	Research Design	-	-	-	-	41
3.2.	Population of the Study	-	-	-	-	41
3.3.	Sample Size	-	-	-	-	42
3.4.	Sampling Procedure	-	-	-	-	42
3.5.	Research Instrument	-	-	-	-	42
3.6.	Validity of Instrument	-	-	-	-	43

3.7.	Reliability of the Instrument	-	-	-	-	-	43
3.8.	Method of Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	43
3.9.	Method of Data Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	44

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1.	Data Presentation and Analysis.	-	-	-	-	-	45
4.2.	Discussion of Findings	-	-	-	-	-	54

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1.	Summary	-	-	-	-	-	59
5.2.	Conclusion	-	-	-	-	-	60
5.3.	Recommendations	-	-	-	-	-	61
	REFERENCES	-	-	-	-	-	62
	APPENDIX I	-	-	-	-	-	67
	APPENDIX II	-	-	-	-	-	70

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents-	-	-	-	-	45
Table 2: Age of Respondents	-	-	-	-	46
Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents	-	-	-	-	46
Table 4: Educational Qualification of Respondents	-	-	-	-	47
Table 5: Occupation of Respondents	-	-	-	-	47
Table 6: Knowledge of Customer Relationship	-	-	-	-	48
Table 7: There is a Relationship between customer relationship and brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	48
Table 8: Customer Relationship Contributing to Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	49
Table 9: Extent to which Customer Relationship Contributes to Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	49
Table 10: Customer Relationship helps to Project the Image of Organisations	-	-	-	-	50
Table 11: Extent to which Customer Relationship helps an Organisation to Project its Image	-	-	-	-	51
Table 12: Using Customer Relationship Strategies to Enhance Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	51
Table 13: Extent to which Customer Relationship Strategies Enhance Brand Loyalty-	-	-	-	-	52
Table 14: Constant Communication of Organisation’s Activities Enhancing Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	53
Table 15: Customer Relationship alone enhancing Brand Loyalty	-	-	-	-	53

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to determine the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty, using Benin metropolis as the area of study. The rationale for the study was to find out the extent to which customer relationship influences brand loyalty. Survey research design was adopted while questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty, find out the extent to which customer relationship management is relevant to brand loyalty, determine customer relationship management activities that enhance brand loyalty and determine whether customer relationship management alone can enhance brand loyalty. The study was anchored on interactional view theory and relationship management theory. The findings showed that there is a relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty. Findings also showed that customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. This implies that customer relationship management is the strongest and the most efficient approach in maintaining and creating relationships with customers. More so, the findings showed that the extent to which customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. Findings further showed that there are several techniques through which organisations can carry out customer relationship management, so as to win customer loyalty. The techniques as gathered from the questionnaire are integrated marketing communications, product quality, customer satisfaction and corporate branding. The findings, however, revealed that only customer relationship management cannot lead to brand loyalty. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that there is a strong link between customer relationship management and brand loyalty. It was recommended among others that organisations should endeavour to engage in customer relationship marketing, as it is one of the ways of winning customer loyalty.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has emerged as a strategic approach that enables organisations to better understand and serve their customers, with the ultimate goal of fostering customer loyalty and brand advocacy (Asemah, Kente & Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2020; Asemah, Kente, Nkwam-Uwaoma & Amah, 2021). Effective CRM efforts can help organisations enhance customer satisfaction and also help to build brand loyalty and repeat business. Human needs are insatiable. This statement has been and still remains valid even in this 21st century – The ICT era. In the business world, the desire of every organisation is to meet the satisfaction of their customers, and these customer satisfactions are of different nature (Ande, 2012; Rabb, Ajami, Gargeya, and Goddard, n.d, cited in Ugande and Asemah, 2013).

The goal of every company is to have a large share of customers in the market; this is because we operate an open market system in our society; hence companies need to win the goodwill of their customers, so as to keep

going in their businesses; customers are very key to every organisation, whether commercial or non-commercial, this makes it imperative for companies to take the issue of customer relationship management seriously, so as to keep their customers. This perhaps explains why Nadia and Nas (2013, p. 1) and Higgins (n. d) aver that the key to a profitable business is customer loyalty.

Benin, the capital city of Edo State in Nigeria, is a vibrant commercial hub with a diverse consumer market. As businesses in Benin continue to compete for customer attention and loyalty, understanding the perception of CRM and its influence on brand loyalty among Benin residents becomes increasingly crucial. This study aims to explore the relationship between customer perceptions of CRM practices and their level of brand loyalty in the Benin consumer market. It seeks to investigate how various CRM dimensions, such as customer service, personalisation and customer engagement, impact the development of brand loyalty among Benin residents. It is, therefore, in line with this, that the study investigates the influence of customer relationship management on customer loyalty, using Benin as the area of study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Businesses in Benin, the capital city of Edo State, Nigeria, operate in a highly competitive environment characterised by rapidly changing consumer preferences, increased product and service offerings and the need to retain loyal customers. The ability of companies to effectively manage their relationships with customers has become a critical determinant of their success and sustainability (Ogunnaike & Ogbari, 2008; Asemah & Ekharefo, 2022; Asemah, Nkwam-Uwaoma & Amah, 2023). While customer relationship management (CRM) has been widely recognised as a strategic approach to enhance customer satisfaction, retention and loyalty, the extent to which Benin residents perceive the influence of CRM on their brand loyalty remains understudied. This gap in understanding the local consumer dynamics presents a significant challenge for businesses in Benin as they strive to develop and maintain strong, long-lasting relationships with their customers.

Despite the growing importance of CRM in the business landscape, there is a lack of empirical evidence on how Benin residents perceive the influence of CRM on their brand loyalty. This lack of understanding hinders the ability of Benin-based organisations to design and implement effective CRM strategies that cater to the needs and preferences of their local customer base, ultimately limiting their capacity to build and sustain brand loyalty. The

study aims to address this problem by investigating the perception of the influence of CRM on brand loyalty among Benin residents.

To this end, it becomes pertinent to ask whether customer relationship is relevant to brand loyalty; the extent to which it is relevant to customer relationship and the perception of the audience about relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty. Thus, the problem this study investigates is the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty using Benin City in Edo state as an area of study.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are?

1. Ascertain the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty.
2. Find out the extent to which customer relationship management is relevant to brand loyalty.
3. Determine customer relationship management activities that enhance brand loyalty.
4. Determine whether customer relationship management alone can enhance brand loyalty.

1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions have been designed to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty?
2. To what extent is customer relationship management relevant to brand loyalty?
3. What are the customer relationship management activities that can enhance brand loyalty?
4. Can customer relationship management alone enhance brand loyalty?

1.5. Scope of the Study

The study is restricted to the appraisal of the relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty. This area of study was considered because it has become imperative for companies to pay attention customer relationship if they must attract more customers to themselves. Thus, the study focuses on Benin, Benin City, Edo state.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The study is of paramount importance to business organisations particularly as it addresses a specific area of customer issue that is of utmost concern to every organisation and that can complement the traditional

marketing theories and practices for maximum impact More specifically, the significance of this study to companies and other business people is that it contributes to providing them with a periscope for empirically viewing and explaining the various ways customer relations strategies impact on the business performance, thereby contributing to the enlightenment campaign on the complementary role of customer relations to the traditional marketing theories and practices.

The study can help identify the specific CRM strategies and practices that are most effective in fostering brand loyalty among Benin residents. This information can guide businesses in Benin to optimise their CRM efforts and enhance their relationships with customers. The findings of the study can inform business decisions related to customer retention, marketing, and brand management strategies.

By understanding the perception of CRM's influence on brand loyalty, businesses can make more informed choices to improve their competitive position and financial performance. The study focuses on the Benin market, which provides contextual relevance and an opportunity to understand the unique dynamics and factors that influence customer behaviour in this specific

geographical location. This can be particularly valuable for businesses operating in Benin or those considering expansion into the Benin market.

The study can contribute to the theoretical understanding of the relationship between CRM and brand loyalty, particularly in the Benin context. The findings may validate or challenge existing theories, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of customer loyalty dynamics. The study's results can provide practical guidance for businesses in Benin on how to develop and implement effective CRM strategies to enhance brand loyalty and customer retention. This can help businesses in Benin gain a competitive advantage and improve their overall performance.

1.7. Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined:

Customer Satisfaction: In this context means the level at which customer's expectations are met

External publics: Outsiders that relate with the organisation and have one or more accounts with the organisation

Internal Publics: employees of an organisation who are answerable to the organisation at anytime and who work to see that the organisations objectives are achieved.

Organisation: a group of people who come together in a formal setting with the aim of achieving certain goals and objectives. These groups of persons work hand in hand to make sure that they achieve their aim as well as sustain anyone who has good dealings with them.

Public: Public in this study are group of individual people that are affected by the public relations, that is those who benefit from its activities

Public Relations: Public relations refers to the practice of managing the flow of information and communication between an organisation (or individual) and its stakeholders, with the aim of building and maintaining a positive public image and reputation.

Satisfaction: Satisfaction refers to contentment or the good feel in that you have achieved something.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

During the course of the research work, the researcher was faced with so many administrative bottle-necks. The greater constrain the researcher had during this work was time coupled with academic work. Another noticeable

limitation was the attitude of the respondent. They were unwilling to fill the questionnaire but later granted me the time and attention that made this research work successful. Also another limitation to this research work was that of financial constrain in area of printing some material that is relevant to the topic.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is a review of related literature. The essence of this is to ascertain what other researchers have done concerning this work. Thus, this chapter reviews areas related to the research.

2.1. Conceptual Review

2.1.1. Overview of Customer Relationship and Customer Satisfaction

The key aspects of CRM as Asemah (2022) notes include:

- a. **Customer-Centric Focus:** CRM places the customer at the centre of the organisation's business strategy and operations. It emphasises understanding customer needs, preferences and behaviours to tailor products, services and interactions accordingly.

- b. **Integrated Customer Data:** CRM involves collecting, storing and analysing customer data from various touchpoints (e.g., sales, marketing and customer service). This data is used to gain a comprehensive view of the customer and to personalise the customer experience.
- c. **Technology and Automation:** CRM systems and software are used to automate and streamline various customer-facing processes, such as lead management, order processing and customer service. These technologies enable organisations to efficiently manage customer interactions and maintain detailed customer records.
- d. **Relationship Building:** CRM focuses on building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with customers. Strategies are developed to enhance customer engagement, improve customer satisfaction and foster customer loyalty.
- e. **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** CRM requires collaboration and information sharing across different departments, such as sales, marketing, and customer service. This integration helps organisations deliver a consistent and seamless customer experience.
- f. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** CRM relies on the analysis of customer data to derive insights and make informed decisions about customer

segmentation, targeted marketing and service optimisation (Asemah, 2014). Customer Relations (CRs) is that aspect of Public Relations and marketing that tries to create mutual understanding, goodwill and rapport between goods and service providers and their customers. Through it, customers' needs, values and expectations are distilled from the mirage of endless lists, and companies juxtapose the customers' side with theirs so as to keep the old clientele while winning new ones without extra demand on the organisation's profit account and image.

CRs has turned out to be a very important concept in research and practice in building business image, attracting new customers and retaining existing ones and has become one of the most significant success factors of business competition for either product or service providers (Adeniyi, 2006, p. 8). However, customer relations according to Claudia, Lisa & Jonathan (2001, p. 99) entails "more than simple interaction such as those involving a simple employee dealing with a simple customer to complex situations that traverses all the departments and involve multiple customers."

Writing further on CRs Process, Demand Media Inc (2012) notes that positive customer relations will build a solid reputation for a business and earn repeat customers through: listening to the customer; being friendly; providing

prompt and courteous complaints resolution; provision of quality services and meeting set customer goals.

Cook, cited in Taylor & Smith (2003, p. 108) also identified 10 specific stages of developing a customer care programme to include gaining management commitment; developing total quality management; listening to customers; establishing a customer care programme; engendering ownership; understanding internal customers (employees); training; communicating; recognizing and rewarding good service; and sustaining a customer focus.

Customer satisfaction refers to the degree to which a customer's expectations and requirements are met or exceeded by the performance of a product or service. It is a measure of how well a company's offerings align with the customer's preferences and perceptions. The key aspects of customer satisfaction include:

- a. **Expectation Management:** Customers form expectations based on their prior experiences, marketing promises and word-of-mouth. Effective customer satisfaction requires managing customer expectations and ensuring that the actual product or service performance meets or exceeds those expectations.

- b. **Perceived Value:** Customers evaluate the overall value of a product or service based on the perceived benefits they receive in relation to the price they pay. Providing a high perceived value is crucial for customer satisfaction.
- c. **Emotional Response:** Customer satisfaction goes beyond just functional performance; it also involves the emotional response and feelings that customers have towards a company, its products, and its services. Positive emotional experiences can contribute to higher customer satisfaction.
- d. **Comparison to Alternatives:** Customers often compare a company's offerings to those of its competitors, and their satisfaction is influenced by how the company's products or services stack up against the alternatives. Providing a competitive edge and differentiated value can enhance customer satisfaction.
- e. **Ongoing Relationship:** Customer satisfaction is not a one-time event; it is an ongoing process that requires continuous monitoring and improvement. Maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction over time is essential for building long-term customer loyalty (Samuel (2006; Parker and Mathew, 2001; McQuitty, Finn & Wiley, 2000; Luo & Homburg, 2007; Dimitriades, 2006; Chi & Qu, 2008).

Customer needs are perpetually changing and the banking sector needs to keep abreast with the new demands, foster skills improvement and product research so as to provide the best products to this ever changing customer needs and deliver the service in the best way (Demand Media Inc, 2012; Black, 2001; Onu, 2008).

2.1.2 Overview of Brand and Brand Loyalty

A brand is a set of unique characteristics, associations and perceptions that define a product, service or organisation in the minds of customers and the general public. The key elements that define a brand include:

- a. **Brand Name:** The distinctive name used to identify a product, service or organisation. It is often the primary way customers recognize and remember a brand.
- b. **Brand Identity:** The visual elements that represent the brand, such as the logo, colour scheme, typography and imagery. These elements work together to create a distinctive and recognisable brand image.
- c. **Brand Personality:** The set of human-like characteristics and traits associated with a brand, such as being innovative, trustworthy, fun or

sophisticated. Brand personality helps create an emotional connection with customers.

- d. **Brand Positioning:** The unique place a brand occupies in the minds of customers, relative to competing brands. Effective positioning differentiates the brand and highlights its competitive advantages.
- e. **Brand Equity:** The perceived value and loyalty associated with a brand, which can be measured by factors such as brand awareness, perceived quality and customer loyalty. Strong brand equity can lead to increased pricing power, customer loyalty and financial value.
- f. **Brand Experience:** The overall experience customers have with a brand, including their interactions, emotions and perceptions across various touchpoints. A positive brand experience can strengthen customer loyalty and advocacy (Novo (2004; Matzler, 2008; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001)

Brand loyalty refers to the commitment and preference that customers have towards a particular brand, leading to repeat purchases and a strong emotional attachment to the brand (Oliver, 2000; Windbergs & Olbrich, 2006). Brand loyalty refers to the commitment and positive attitude a customer has towards a particular brand, which leads to repeated purchases and a preference

for that brand over others. It is a measure of the strength of the customer's connection and attachment to a brand. Key characteristics of brand loyalty include:

- a. **Repeated Purchase Behaviour:** Brand-loyal customers consistently choose the same brand over competitors when making purchases. They exhibit a pattern of repeat purchases and demonstrate a high likelihood of repurchasing the brand in the future.
- b. **Preference and Commitment:** Brand-loyal customers have a strong preference for the brand and feel a sense of commitment to it. They are willing to go out of their way to acquire or use the brand, even if it requires additional effort or cost.
- c. **Resistance to Alternatives:** Brand-loyal customers are less likely to switch to competitor brands, even in the face of price changes or the introduction of new products. They are willing to pay a premium price for the preferred brand and are less price-sensitive.
- d. **Positive Word-of-Mouth:** Brand-loyal customers often become advocates for the brand, actively promoting it and recommending it to others. They share positive experiences and create valuable word-of-mouth marketing for the brand.

- e. **Emotional Attachment:** Brand loyalty goes beyond just rational decision-making; it involves an emotional connection and a sense of identity with the brand. Customers may feel a strong attachment to the brand and perceive it as an extension of their own self-image or personality (Biggs & Swailes, 2006; Tracy, 2012;

2.2. Opinion Review

2.2.1. Strategies for Building Brand Loyalty

Companies can employ several strategies to effectively build and maintain strong brand loyalty among their customers; some of the strategies are:

- a. **Consistent Brand Experience:** Ensure a consistently positive and rewarding experience for customers across all touchpoints, including product quality, customer service and brand communications. Maintain a clear and cohesive brand identity, messaging, and visual elements to reinforce brand recognition and familiarity.
- b. **Customer-Centric Approach:** Deeply understand the needs, preferences, and pain points of the target customers. Tailor products, services, and marketing efforts to meet the specific requirements of the customer base.

Engage customers actively and solicit feedback to improve the overall brand experience.

- c. **Emotional Branding:** Build an emotional connection with customers by creating a brand personality and associating it with positive emotions and values. Leverage storytelling, brand narratives and social responsibility initiatives to foster a sense of belonging and affinity with the brand.
- d. **Loyalty Programmes and Rewards:** Implement well-designed loyalty programs that offer exclusive benefits, discounts and incentives for repeat purchases or engagement. Ensure that the loyalty program provides genuine value and is aligned with the customer's preferences and behaviours.
- e. **Exceptional Customer Service:** Provide responsive, empathetic and personalised customer service to address customer concerns and maintain a positive brand perception. Empower frontline employees to handle customer issues effectively and resolve them to the customer's satisfaction.
- f. **Brand Innovation and Evolution:** Continuously innovate and evolve the brand to stay relevant and meet the changing needs of customers. Introduce new products, services or brand extensions that complement the existing offerings and enhance the customer experience.

- g. **Community Building:** Foster a sense of community among brand advocates and loyal customers by creating online forums, social media groups, or offline brand events. Encourage customers to share their experiences, provide feedback, and interact with the brand and fellow customers.
- h. **Consistency and Authenticity:** Maintain consistency in brand messaging, values and the overall brand experience across all touchpoints. Ensure that the brand's actions and communications are authentic and aligned with the brand's core identity.

2.2.2. Functions of Customer Relationship Management

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) serves several key functions that contribute to the success of a business. The main functions of CRM as noted by Asemah et al (2023) include:

- a. **Customer Data Management:** Collecting, organising and storing customer information, such as contact details, purchase history, preferences and interactions. Maintaining a centralised database to provide a comprehensive view of the customer.
- b. **Customer Segmentation and Targeting:** Dividing the customer base into distinct segments based on various criteria, such as demographics,

behaviour or needs. Tailoring marketing, sales, and service strategies to specific customer segments to better meet their unique requirements.

- c. **Customer Acquisition:** Implementing strategies and tools to attract new customers, such as lead generation, promotional campaigns and targeted advertising. Optimising the customer acquisition process to improve conversion rates and expand the customer base.
- d. **Customer Retention and Loyalty:** Developing and implementing programmes and initiatives to foster long-term relationships with customers, such as loyalty programmes, personalised offers, and exceptional customer service. Monitoring customer satisfaction and addressing any issues or concerns to maintain a high level of customer loyalty.
- e. **Customer Engagement and Communication:** Facilitating seamless and personalised interactions with customers across various channels (e.g., email, phone, social media, chat). Providing timely and relevant information, offers and support to enhance the overall customer experience.
- f. **Sales and Marketing Automation:** Automating and streamlining sales and marketing processes, such as lead management, opportunity tracking and campaign management. Improving efficiency, reducing manual tasks and enabling data-driven decision-making.

- g. **Customer Service and Support:** Enhancing the customer service experience by providing efficient, responsive and personalised assistance to address customer inquiries, complaints and requests. Leveraging CRM tools to optimise service delivery and enhance customer satisfaction.
- h. **Analytics and Reporting:** Collecting and analysing customer data to generate insights, identify trends and measure the effectiveness of CRM initiatives. Providing actionable intelligence to inform strategic decisions and continuously improve the customer experience.

By effectively executing these key functions, businesses can build stronger, more profitable relationships with their customers, leading to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately, business growth and profitability.

2.2.3. Factors that influence Brand Loyalty

There are several key factors that can influence brand loyalty. Here are some of the main ones:

- a. **Product Quality and Consistency:** Customers are more likely to be loyal to brands that consistently deliver high-quality products that meet or exceed

their expectations. Reliable and consistent product performance is crucial for building trust and loyalty.

- b. **Customer Service and Support:** Responsive, helpful and personalised customer service can create positive experiences and foster loyalty. Efficient problem-solving and complaint handling also contribute to customer satisfaction and loyalty
- c. **Brand Image and Reputation:** A strong, positive brand image and reputation can differentiate a brand and make it more appealing to loyal customers. Brand values, authenticity and perceived social responsibility can also influence loyalty.
- d. **Emotional Connection:** Brands that can create an emotional bond and sense of belonging with customers are more likely to cultivate loyal relationships. Factors like brand personality, nostalgia and self-expression can contribute to emotional attachment.
- e. **Perceived Value:** Customers are more likely to be loyal to brands that offer a good balance of quality, features and price. Perceived value can be influenced by both functional and symbolic attributes of the brand.
- f. **Switching Costs:** The effort, time, or financial costs associated with switching to a competing brand can increase customer loyalty. Loyalty

programmes, personalised experiences and high-switching barriers can contribute to this factor.

- g. **Convenience and Accessibility:** Brands that are easily accessible, conveniently located or integrated into the customer's lifestyle are more likely to retain loyal customers. Availability, distribution channels, and omnichannel experiences can impact convenience and accessibility.
- h. **Brand Innovation and Adaptation:** Customers may remain loyal to brands that continuously innovate, adapt to changing market trends and provide new and improved offerings. Brands that demonstrate responsiveness to customer needs and preferences can maintain loyalty.
- i. **Peer Influence and Word-of-Mouth:** Positive recommendations and endorsements from friends, family or influential individuals can significantly influence brand loyalty. Online reviews, social media, and influencer marketing can also shape brand perceptions and loyalty.
- j. **Demographic and Cultural Factors:** Factors such as age, income, education, and cultural background can impact an individual's brand loyalty preferences and behaviours. Understanding the target market's unique needs and preferences is crucial for building loyalty.

These factors can work individually or in combination to shape and sustain brand loyalty over time. Successful brands often strategically address multiple factors to create a comprehensive loyalty-building approach.

2.2.4. Types of Customers

There are several common types of customers that businesses and organisations may encounter. Here are some of the main categories:

- a. **Loyal Customers:** These are customers who repeatedly purchase from the same brand or business, often due to positive experiences, emotional attachment, or perceived value. Loyal customers tend to be less price-sensitive and can become brand advocates.
- b. **Impulse Buyers:** These customers make unplanned, spontaneous purchases, often driven by emotions, visual cues, or immediate needs. Impulse buyers may not have a strong loyalty to any particular brand and can be influenced by in-store promotions or appealing product displays.
- c. **Discount-Oriented Customers:** These customers are primarily motivated by price and actively seek out the best deals, discounts or bargains. They may switch between brands or retailers to find the lowest prices and their loyalty is often contingent on maintaining competitive pricing.

- d. **Need-Based Customers:** These customers have specific, defined needs that they are seeking to fulfill through a product or service. Their purchases are often more rational and less influenced by emotional or impulsive factors.
- e. **Status-Conscious Customers:** These customers are motivated by the perceived social status or prestige associated with certain brands or products. They may be willing to pay premium prices for luxury or high-end items to enhance their self-image or social standing.
- f. **Convenience-Oriented Customers:** These customers value ease, accessibility and time-saving when making purchases. They may prioritise factors like location, operating hours or online availability over other product or service attributes.
- g. **Ethical Consumers:** These customers are strongly influenced by a brand's environmental, social, or ethical practices and policies. They may prefer to support businesses that align with their personal values and principles.
- h. **Novice Customers:** These are customers who are new to a particular product, service, or industry and may have limited knowledge or experience. They may require more guidance, information and support during the purchasing process.

Understanding the different types of customers and their unique characteristics, motivations and behaviours can help businesses develop more effective marketing strategies, customer experiences and loyalty programs to better meet their needs and preferences.

2.2.5. Challenges of Customer Relationship Management

Implementing and maintaining an effective customer relationship management (CRM) strategy can come with several challenges that organisations need to address. Some of the challenges as noted by Asemah et al (2023) are:

- a. **Data Management:** Collecting, storing and managing large volumes of customer data can be a complex and resource-intensive task. Ensuring data quality, security and compliance with regulations can also pose significant challenges.
- b. **Integration and Compatibility:** Integrating CRM systems with other enterprise software, such as ERP, marketing automation, and customer service platforms, can be technically challenging. Ensuring seamless data flow and cross-functional collaboration can be difficult, especially in organisations with legacy systems.

- c. **User Adoption and Training:** Convincing employees, especially those resistant to change, to adopt and consistently use the CRM system can be a significant hurdle. Providing comprehensive training and support to ensure effective utilisation of the CRM system is crucial but can be time-consuming and costly.
- d. **Personalisation and Customisation:** Delivering truly personalised customer experiences requires a deep understanding of individual customer needs and preferences. Customising the CRM system to cater to the unique requirements of different customer segments or business units can be complex and resource-intensive.
- e. **Multichannel Coordination:** Managing consistent and coherent customer experiences across multiple communication channels, such as in-person, phone, email, and social media, can be challenging. Ensuring seamless data flow and coordinated responses across these channels requires robust processes and technology integration.
- f. **Balancing Data Privacy and Personalisation:** Customers are increasingly concerned about data privacy and the use of their personal information. Organisations must carefully balance the need for personalisation with respecting customer privacy and complying with data protection regulations.

- g. **Organisational Silos and Resistance to Change:** Entrenched organisational silos and resistance to change can hinder the successful implementation and adoption of a CRM strategy. Overcoming these cultural and structural barriers requires strong leadership, effective change management, and a shared understanding of the benefits of CRM.
- h. **Measuring and Demonstrating ROI:** Quantifying the financial and operational benefits of CRM can be challenging, especially in the short term. Demonstrating the tangible return on investment (ROI) to secure ongoing management support and budget allocation can be a persistent challenge.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and strategic approach to CRM, involving the right combination of technology, processes and organisational change management. Successful CRM implementation also relies on a deep understanding of customer needs, continuous learning, and a willingness to adapt to evolving market conditions.

2.2.6. Nexus between Customer Relationship Management and Brand Loyalty

The relationship between customer relationship management (CRM) and brand loyalty is a fundamental concept in marketing and business strategy.

Effective CRM focuses on building and maintaining strong, long-term relationships with customers. By understanding customer needs, preferences, and behaviours, companies can tailor their products, services, and communications to better meet the customers' expectations. A positive customer experience and a sense of trust and affinity with the brand are essential for fostering customer loyalty (Ugande & Asemah, 2014; Stringefellow, 2008).

Brand loyalty refers to the customer's commitment and attachment to a particular brand, leading to repeated purchases and a willingness to advocate for the brand. CRM strategies and initiatives play a crucial role in nurturing and sustaining brand loyalty over time. Leveraging customer data to personalise the customer experience, such as targeted promotions, customised product recommendations and personalised communication (Hughes & Fill, 2003; Kotler & Keller, 2006). Customer relationship management ensure a cohesive and positive brand experience across all touchpoints, from product quality to customer service. More so, it helps in implementing well-designed loyalty programs that offer exclusive benefits and rewards to incentivise repeat business and customer engagement (Jobber, 2007; O'Driscoll, 2006; Gray & Byun, 2001).

It helps in maintaining regular and meaningful communication with customers, addressing their concerns and providing valuable information and content. Customer relationship management fosters a sense of community and emotional connection with the brand by encouraging customer participation, feedback, and advocacy. Effective CRM strategies not only build brand loyalty but also provide valuable insights and data that can further enhance the customer experience and strengthen the brand-customer relationship. Brand loyalty, in turn, leads to increased customer retention, higher lifetime value, and greater advocacy, which can positively impact the company's overall performance and profitability.

Companies often use metrics such as Net Promoter Score (NPS), customer satisfaction (CSAT), and customer loyalty indices to measure and track the level of brand loyalty among their customer base. Continuous monitoring and analysis of these metrics can help companies identify areas for improvement and refine their CRM strategies to maintain and strengthen brand loyalty over time. Thus, the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty is a mutually reinforcing one. Effective CRM strategies are instrumental in building and sustaining strong brand loyalty,

which in turn, contributes to the long-term success and competitiveness of the business

The relationship between customer relationship management (CRM) and brand loyalty is a crucial one for businesses to understand and cultivate. The relationship as noted by Asemah et al (2023) can be explained thus:

- a. **Building Trust and Rapport:** Effective CRM practices, such as personalised interactions, prompt issue resolution and consistent communication, help establish trust between the customer and the brand. When customers feel that the brand genuinely cares about their needs and experiences, they are more likely to develop a sense of loyalty.
- b. **Enhancing Customer Satisfaction:** CRM strategies that focus on delivering superior customer service, meeting or exceeding customer expectations and providing value-added experiences can lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers are more inclined to remain loyal and continue doing business with the brand.
- c. **Creating Emotional Connections:** CRM initiatives that foster emotional engagement, such as personalised marketing, loyalty programmes and community-building, can help customers develop a stronger attachment to the brand. Emotional connections contribute to the formation of brand

loyalty, as customers are more likely to remain loyal to brands they feel a personal affinity towards.

- d. **Enhancing Perceived Value:** Effective CRM can help customers perceive the brand as providing greater value, whether it's through tailored offers, bundled products, or value-added services. When customers feel they are receiving more value from the brand, they are more likely to remain loyal and less susceptible to competitive offerings.
- e. **Reducing Switching Costs:** CRM strategies that create personalised experiences, such as loyalty programmes, customised service and data-driven insights, can increase the perceived switching costs for customers. As the effort and inconvenience associated with switching to a competitor increases, customers are more likely to maintain their loyalty to the brand.
- f. **Facilitating Feedback and Responsiveness:** CRM processes that encourage customer feedback, address concerns promptly and demonstrate the brand's responsiveness to customer needs can foster a sense of partnership and mutual investment. Customers who feel their input is valued and that the brand is committed to addressing their concerns are more likely to remain loyal.

g. **Cultivating Brand Advocacy:** Successful CRM that delivers exceptional customer experiences can turn loyal customers into brand advocates, who actively promote and recommend the brand to their peers. Word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied and loyal customers can further strengthen the brand's reputation and attract new customers, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of loyalty.

By implementing effective CRM strategies that focus on building strong customer relationships, businesses can enhance brand loyalty, increase customer retention, and ultimately achieve long-term business success. The key is to understand the specific needs and preferences of the target customer base and tailor the CRM approach accordingly.

2.3. Review of Empirical Studies

Dan Manajemen (2022) carried out to determine the influence of management of customer relationship and brand image on loyalty. The scholar found that customer relationship management has a significant influence on stay decision and that brand image has influences brand loyalty to a very great extent.

Adnan, Yaseen, Khan & Khan (n. d.) conducted a study to find out the impact of customer relationship on retaining the customers through engaging them towards the brands. The scholars used survey method. Their findings showed that brands must exert their highest efforts in building a strong relationship with their customers so as to retain them with the brands through building positive image within the minds of customers through engaging the customers by providing the products beyond their expectations.

Ugande and Asemah (2013) investigated the link between customer relationship management and customer loyalty. Their main objective was to determine the relationship between customer relationship and customer loyalty. The scholars adopted quantitative research design, while questionnaire was used as an instrument to gather data from the sampled population (public relations practitioners in Plateau State). Their findings show that organisations need to carry out customer relationship management because it leads to customer loyalty. The techniques through which organisations can carry out customer relationship management so as to win customer loyalty as found out by the authors are: integrated marketing communications, product quality, customer satisfaction and corporate branding. The authors also found out that several factors act as challenges to the implementation of customer relationship

management in organisations; they are: attitude of the management to customer relationship management programmes, using wrong media for communicating with the customers, employees' negative attitudes, lack of trained personal to handle customer relations programmes and determining the right time for customer needs. Based on the findings, the Ugande and Asemah concluded that there is a strong link between customer relationship management and customer loyalty. To this end, the authors recommended among others, that organisations should endeavour to engage in customer relationship marketing, as it is one of the ways of winning customer loyalty; this relationship management should be a continuous one; it should be done regularly, because customer relationship is not what you do today and abandon tomorrow; attitudes often change; so, to keep retaining customers, organisations should relate with their customers regularly. Ugande and Asemah's study shares similarity with this because they both look at the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty and they both adopted quantitative research that is survey, using questionnaire as instrument of data collection. However, while Ugande and Asemah only focused on public relations practitioners, this study is all encompassing as it focuses on a larger sector of the society of the society comprising of different people.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on two theories: they are interactional view theory relationship management theory.

2.4.1. The Interactional View Theory

The interactional view theory is a perspective on communication and interpersonal relationships developed by communication scholars such as Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin Bavelas and Don D. Jackson. The key principles of the interactional view theory as noted by Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma (2017) are:

- a. **Communicative Behaviours are Contextual:** The meaning and interpretation of communicative behaviours are heavily influenced by the context in which they occur. The same behaviour can have different meanings depending on the surrounding circumstances and the relationship between the communicators.
- b. **Communication is a Circular Process:** Communication is not a linear, one-way process, but a circular, interactive process where participants both send and receive messages. Each person's responses and behaviours influence and are influenced by the other person's responses.

- c. **The Relationship is the Message:** The relationship between communicators is as important, if not more important, than the literal content of the messages exchanged. The nature of the relationship between individuals shapes the way they communicate and interpret each other's messages.
- d. **Meta-communication:** Communicators engage in metacommunication, which is communication about the communication itself. Meta-communication helps establish the nature of the relationship and the context in which the communication takes place.
- e. **Symmetrical and Complementary Relationships:** Relationships can be either symmetrical, where the partners have an equal footing, or complementary, where the partners have different but complementary roles. The type of relationship can influence the communication patterns and dynamics between the individuals.
- f. **Paradoxical Communication:** Communicators can sometimes engage in paradoxical communication, where the verbal and nonverbal messages contradict each other. This can lead to confusion and misunderstandings in the relationship.

The interactional view theory emphasises the importance of understanding the context, the relationship, and the interactive nature of communication, rather than just focusing on the literal content of the messages. It has been influential in the fields of interpersonal communication, family therapy and organisational communication. The interactional view depends on the current situation. As the name suggest, interaction which means action between individuals made it clear that people have different point of view and it is the mismatching of content of relationship that causes miscommunication within the situation (Haralambos & Holbom, 2008, 99). The interactional view is framed within the axiom “one cannot not communicate” Watzlawick, cited in Blandford (2009, p. 203). According to the theory, every communication has both a content and a relationship dimension. Communication is either symmetric or complementary. This is based on the idea that even if you do not do anything your nonverbal communication speaks volumes.

According to Iyaji (2014, p. 65), interactional view theory is concerned with the kind of interaction that takes place with employees and customers in an organisation and the way they interpret certain policy of the organisation. It is the way employees and customers view situation that determines the end product. According to him, individuals reach agreement with one another that

provides a concession for a time. Watzlawick, cited in Blandford (2009, p. 204) sees the interactional view theory as the type that can be applied in different areas of communication studies. The axioms in the theory is a framework for how communication takes place. This means that the theory is related to the study because it lays emphasis on the importance of communication.

2.4. 2. Relationship Management Theory

The relationship management theory is a framework for understanding and guiding the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. The key principles of the relationship management theory are:

- a. **Relationship Initiation:** Relationships begin with an initial encounter or interaction between individuals. This initial interaction sets the stage for the development of the relationship.
- b. **Relationship Progression:** Relationships evolve over time through a series of interactions and exchanges. The relationship can progress through various stages, such as acquaintance, friendship or romantic partnership.
- c. **Relationship Maintenance:** Successful relationships require ongoing effort and maintenance to sustain the bond between individuals. Strategies

for relationship maintenance include regular communication, conflict resolution, and shared activities or experiences.

- d. **Relational Dialectics:** Relationships involve the interplay of opposing forces or dialectics, such as autonomy vs. connection, openness vs. privacy and stability vs. change. Navigating these dialectics is essential for relationship management.
- e. **Relational Uncertainty:** Individuals in a relationship may experience uncertainty about the status, commitment or future of the relationship. Reducing relational uncertainty is important for relationship satisfaction and stability.
- f. **Relational Challenges and Repairs:** Relationships may encounter challenges or conflicts that threaten their well-being. Effective relationship management involves identifying and addressing these challenges, as well as repairing any damage to the relationship.
- g. **Relationship Termination:** Relationships can end for various reasons, such as irreconcilable differences, infidelity or changing life circumstances. The way a relationship ends can have a significant impact on the individuals involved. The relationship management theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how interpersonal

relationships are initiated, developed, maintained, and potentially terminated.

Relationship Management theory is useful in Public Relations because it explains the way to think about relationship. The monitoring of relationship becomes the function of public relations personnel. Through this theory, it is thought that public Relations people are those who see to the fact that their customers are given the needed attention by relating with them in a peaceful manner (Boie, 2012; Ledingham & Bruning, 2000; Ledingham, 2003).

Besides, if the banking sector keeps their system open, they allow for the two way flow of resources and information between the organisation and its customers. They use information to adapt with the customers or they use the incoming information to try to control their customers and relate properly with them.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is concerned with the research design, population of study, sample size, sample technique, research instruments, validation of instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

Survey research design was adopted in this study. Survey is a method in which a population is studied by collecting and analysing data to determine hidden facts. Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekharefo and Okpanachi (2022) note that survey research design refers to the methodological approach used to conduct surveys, which are a widely used tool in social science, market research and various other fields. Asemah et al (2022) note that surveys allow researchers to gather data from a representative sample of the target population which can then be used to make inferences about the larger population. It is based on the foregoing that the researcher used survey design.

3.2. Population of the Study

Benin residents formed the population of this study. The projected population of Benin city is one million four hundred and ninety six (1,496,000).

3.3. Sample Size

The researcher used the Taro Yamane sample size determination formula to arrive at a sample size of 400. Therefore, the sample for this study is 400 (see formula and in computation in appendix).

3.4. Sampling Procedure

The researcher used purposive sampling and simple random sampling technique in the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select Ekenhuan, Ringroad, Aduwawa and Ugbowo. This is because it was believed that it is the area where the researcher would be able to get reliable data about the subject matter. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 respondents from each of the four areas in Benin. This is because simple random sampling technique gives every respondent in a population equal opportunity of being selected.. This enables the researcher to select the four hundred (400) samples for the study.

3.5. Research Instrument

An 18 item questionnaire was designed and administered to the respondents to elicit data on the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty. The questionnaire consists of different options for the respondents to choose. The questionnaire was drawn and administered

to four hundred (400) Benin residents to enable the researcher gather data on how the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty.

3.6. Validity of Instrument

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was given to two mass communication lecturers to go through for proper corrections, after which it was passed to the researcher's supervisor for examination and vetting.

3.7. Reliability of the Instrument

The researcher used pretesting method to ensure that the questionnaire is reliable. The researcher organised fifteen people and shared the questionnaire to them to know the reliability of the questionnaire in line with the research questions

3.8. Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered personally on face to face contact. The researcher waited to take back the questionnaire from the respondents. This was to ensure authenticity of information and to enhance close monitoring of the responses by the respondents to the questionnaire. The researcher also

goes through books, journals and the online to seek more information for the study.

3.9. Method of Data Analysis

Since the research topic is that of survey, simple table, frequency and percentage were used to analyse the data collected from the respondent. The data collected were put together, compared and contrasted to ease the description of finding.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter is concerned with data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. The researcher made use of questionnaire as instrument of data collection for this study. Four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents. Out of the 400 copies, only 385 copies were retrieved and out of the 385 copies retrieved, 4 copies were not well filled. Thus, the presentation and analysis was based on 381 copies. This is considered adequate because it represents 91% of the return rate of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Male	171	49
Female	210	59
Total	381	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data in table 1 show the sex distribution of the respondents. Out of the 381 copies of questionnaire that were found useful, 171 (49%) were male respondents, while the remaining 210 (59%) were female. This shows that the female respondents were more.

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
16-25	160	42
26-35	75	20
36-45	80	21
45 and above	66	17
Total	381	100%

Source: Field survey, 2024

From the table above, 160 respondents (42%) fell under the age bracket of 16-25, 75 respondents (20%) were under the bracket of 26-35, 80 respondents (21%) were under the age bracket of 36-45, while the remaining 66 respondents (17%) were between the age brackets of 45 and above. This shows that respondents of the age bracket of 16-25 were more than any other respondent.

Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Married	209	65
Single	172	45
Divorced	Nil	Nil
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

From the table above, 209 respondents (65%) were married, while the remaining 172 respondents (45%) were single. None of the respondents ticked divorced. This shows that the married people responded more.

Table 4: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE	33	9
OND	68	18
NCE	27	7
HND	72	19
Degree	141	37
Others, specify	40	10
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Out of the 381 respondents that returned their copies of questionnaire, 9% were SSCE holders; 18% were OND; 7% were NCE; 19% were HND; 37% were first degree holders, while the remaining 10% ticked others. This implies that those with first Degree responded more.

Table 5: Occupation of Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Civil servant	150	39
Private sector	110	29
Self-employed	75	20
Students	46	12

Others	Nil	Nil
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

The question in table 5 was designed to determine the occupation of the respondents. Out of the 381 respondents, 39% were civil servants, 29% were in the private sector, 20% were self-employed, while the remaining 12% were students. This implies that the civil servants responded more.

Table 6: Knowledge of Customer Relationship

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	381	100
No	Nil	Nil
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

The question in table 6 was designed to ascertain whether the respondents have knowledge of customer relationship. The data show that all the respondents have knowledge of customer relationship. This is based on the fact that all the respondents ticked yes.

Table 7: There is a Relationship between customer relationship and brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	<i>109</i>	21
Agree	262	69
Undecided	10	10
Disagree	Nil	Nil
Strongly disagree	Nil	Nil
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

The data in the above show that there is a relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty. Out of the 381 respondents that returned their copies of questionnaire, 21% strongly agreed, 69% agreed, 10% ticked undecided, while none ticked disagree and strongly disagree. Since majority of the respondents agreed (90%), it, therefore, implies that there is a relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty.

Table 8: Customer Relationship Contributing to Brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	167	44
Agree	96	25
Undecided	19	5
Disagree	59	15
Strongly disagree	40	10
Total	381	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The question in table 8 was designed to ascertain whether customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. The data show that customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. Out of the 381 respondents, 44% strongly agreed, 25% agreed, 5% ticked undecided, 15% strongly disagreed, while the remaining 10% strongly disagreed. This shows that customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty.

Table 9: Extent to which Customer Relationship Contributes to Brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Great Extent	100	26
Great Extent	133	35
Undecided	28	7
Low Extent	80	21
Very low Extent	40	10
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 9 shows the extent to which customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. Out of the 381 respondents, 26% said it was to a very great extent; 35% ticked great extent; 7% ticked undecided; 21% ticked low extent, while the remaining 10 ticked very low extent. This implies that customer relationship greatly contributes to brand loyalty.

Table 10: Customer Relationship helps to Project the Image of Organisations

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	177	46
Agree	124	33
Undecided	9	2
Disagree	25	7
Strongly disagree	46	12
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

The question in table 10 sought to determine whether customer relationship helps to project the image of organisations. The data show that

customer relationship helps to project the image of organisations. This is based on the fact that majority of the respondents agreed to that effect. Out of the 381 respondents, 46% strongly agreed, 33% agreed, 2% ticked undecided, 7% disagreed, while the remaining 12% strongly disagreed.

Table 11: Extent to which Customer Relationship helps an Organisation to Project its Image

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very great extent	120	31
Great extent	151	40
Undecided	20	5
Low extent	60	16
Very low extent	30	8
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

The data in table 11 showed that customer relationship management greatly helps an organisation to improve its image. Out of the 381 respondents, 31% said that it was to a very great extent, 40% claimed that it was to a great extent; 5% were undecided, 16% ticked low extent, while the remaining 8% said it was to a very low extent.

Table 12: Using Customer Relationship Strategies to Enhance Brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	110	30
Agree	150	39

Undecided	Nil	Nil
Disagree	70	18
Strongly disagree	51	13
Total	381	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

The question in table 12 was designed to determine whether companies must device customer relationship strategies. The data gathered showed that companies ought to device strategies for customer relationship. Out of the 381 respondents, 30% strongly agreed, 39% agreed, none ticked undecided, 18% disagreed, while the remaining 13% strongly disagreed. Since majority of the respondents (69%), it therefore, implies that companies must device customer relationship strategies

Table 13: Extent to which Customer Relationship Strategies Enhance Brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very great	186	49
Great	85	22
Undecided	30	8
Low Extent	20	5
Very Low Extent	60	16
Total	381	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data in table 13 showed that customer relationship strategies can greatly enhance brand loyalty. This is based on the fact that majority of the respondents agreed to that effect. Out of the 381 respondents, 49% ticked very

great, 22% ticked great, 8% were undecided, 5% ticked low extent, while the remaining 16% ticked very low extent.

Table 14: Constant Communication of Organisation’s Activities Enhancing Brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	110	29
Agree	145	38
Undecided	Nil	Nil
Disagree	76	20
Strongly disagree	50	13
Total	381	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The data in table 14 show that constant communication of organisation’s activities will also enhance brand loyalty. Out of the 381 respondents, 29% strongly agreed, 38% agreed, none ticked undecided, 20% disagreed, while the remaining 13% strongly disagreed.

Table 15: Customer Relationship alone enhancing Brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	Nil	Nil
Agree	Nil	Nil
Undecided	Nil	Nil
Disagree	199	52
Strongly disagree	182	48

Total	381	100
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Source: Field Survey, 2024

The question in table 15 was designed to determine whether customer relationship alone can lead to brand loyalty. The data show that only customer relationship cannot lead to brand loyalty. This is based on the fact that majority of the respondents agreed to that effect. Out of the 381 respondents, 52% respondents disagreed, while the remaining 48% strongly disagreed. This implies that customer relationship alone cannot lead to brand loyalty.

4.2. Discussion of Findings

The major aim of this research was to determine the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty among Benin residents in Edo state. The discussion, therefore, addressed the four (4) research questions raised in chapter one.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty?

Tables 7 and 8 provide the answers to the above questionnaire. The data in the above show that there is a relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty. The data in table 8 further supported the fact that customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. The data showed that customer

relationship contributes to brand loyalty. Out of the 381 respondents, 44% strongly agreed, 25% agreed, 5% ticked undecided, 15% strongly disagreed, while the remaining 10% strongly disagreed. This shows that customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty.

The above finding is in line with that of Ugande and Asemah (2013) who found out that customer relationship management influences customer loyalty. Customer relationship management has positive influence on customer loyalty. The scholars further posited that customer relationship management is a key factor in winning customer loyalty.

Research Question 2: To what extent is Customer Relationship Management Relevant to Brand Loyalty?

The above research question was designed to ascertain the extent to which customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. The data in table 9 provide the answer to the above question. Table 9 shows the extent to which customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. Out of the 381 respondents, 26% said it was to a very great extent; 35% ticked great extent; 7% ticked undecided; 21% ticked low extent, while the remaining 10 ticked very low extent. This implies that customer relationship greatly contributes to brand loyalty.

Ugande and Asemah (2013) noted that customer relationship management leads to greater patronage of products and services; enables organisations to win the goodwill of the customers; enables organisations to make more profits; makes the organisation to better understand the customers; leads to customer satisfaction and serves as a weapon organisations can use to fight competition. The findings tally with the data in the literature review where it was observed that customer relationship management is very important in every organisation.

Research Question 3: What are the Customer Relationship Management Activities that can Enhance Brand Loyalty?

The above question was designed to ascertain the customer relationship strategies that organisations can use to encourage brand loyalty. The responses from the unstructured questionnaire showed that companies can use various strategies to enhance brand loyalty.

Findings further show that there are several techniques through which organisations can carry out customer relationship management, so as to win customer loyalty. The techniques as gathered from the questionnaire are: integrated marketing communications, product quality, customer satisfaction and corporate branding.

Furthermore, the findings show that organisations need to carry out customer relationship management on a regular basis. The fact remains that you may have the goodwill of consumers today, but if you fail to maintain that relationship with your customers, they can easily change to other organisations that are ready to maintain cordial relationship with them on regular basis. Human beings change, they may like you today, when you are doing well, but the moment you stop doing good, they run away from you. This is necessary because customer relationship helps to project an organisation's image. The question in table 10 sought to determine whether customer relationship helps to project the image of organisations. The data show that customer relationship helps to project the image of organisations. This is based on the fact that majority of the respondents agreed to that effect. Out of the 381 respondents, 46% strongly agreed, 33% agreed, 2% ticked undecided, 7% disagreed, while the remaining 12% strongly disagreed.

Research Question 4: Can Customer Relationship Management alone enhance Brand Loyalty?

The above question was designed to determine whether only customer relationship management can lead to brand loyalty. The data showed that only customer relationship management cannot lead to brand loyalty. Table 15

provides answer to the above question. The question in table 15 was designed to determine whether customer relationship alone can lead to brand loyalty. The data show that only customer relationship cannot lead to brand loyalty. This is based on the fact that majority of the respondents agreed to that effect. Out of the 381 respondents, 52% respondents disagreed, while the remaining 48% strongly disagreed. This implies that customer relationship alone cannot lead to brand loyalty.

The above implies that various strategies must be combined to win the loyalty of the consumers. The various strategies have been discussed under question three. More so, table 12 shows that companies must device various strategies to win brand loyalty. The question in table 12 was designed to determine whether companies must device customer relationship strategies. The data gathered showed that companies ought to device strategies for customer relationship. Out of the 381 respondents, 30% strongly agreed, 39% agreed, none ticked undecided, 18% disagreed, while the remaining 13% strongly disagreed. Since majority of the respondents (69%), it therefore, implies that companies must device customer relationship strategies

The data in table 13 showed that customer relationship strategies can greatly enhance brand loyalty. This is based on the fact that majority of the

respondents agreed to that effect. Out of the 381 respondents, 49% ticked very great, 22% ticked great, 8% were undecided, 5% ticked low extent, while the remaining 16% ticked very low extent. The foregoing, therefore, implies that organisations must not only rely on customer relationship management to win brand loyalty; various strategies must be combined to win brand loyalty.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

The research work studied the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty, using Benin metropolis as the area of study. A review of related literature was provided to establish a foundation for the research work. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty; find out the extent to which customer relationship management is relevant to brand loyalty; determine customer relationship management activities that enhance brand loyalty and determine whether customer relationship management alone can enhance brand loyalty.

The study was anchored on two main theories; namely: interactional view theory and relationship management theory. Interactional view theory

assumes that man-cannot-not communicate; it lays emphasis on the importance of communication in the society while relationship management theory says that communication can be used to build relationship. The researcher adopted survey research design, while questionnaire was used as method of research design to carry out the research with the use of questionnaire. Multi stage sampling was used to arrive at the total number of respondents who were given copies of questionnaire. A simple table was used to present and analyse the data collected.

The findings showed that there is a relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty. Findings also showed that customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty. This implies that customer relationship management is the strongest and the most efficient approach in maintaining and creating relationships with customers. More so, the findings showed that the extent to which customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty.

Findings further show that there are several techniques through which organisations can carry out customer relationship management, so as to win customer loyalty. The techniques as gathered from the questionnaire are: integrated marketing communications, product quality, customer satisfaction

and corporate branding. The findings, however, revealed that only customer relationship management cannot lead to brand loyalty.

5.2. Conclusion

The researcher investigates the link between customer relationship management and brand loyalty using Benin as an area of study. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that effective customer relationship management leads to brand loyalty.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher, therefore, recommends that:

1. Organisations should endeavour to engage in customer relationship marketing, as it is one of the ways of winning customer loyalty.
2. This relationship management should be a continuous one; it should be done regularly, because customer relationship is not what you do today and abandon tomorrow; attitudes often change; so, to keep retaining customers, organisations should relate with their customers regularly.
3. More so, there is the need for employee training in the area of customer relationship; this is because employees can make or mar an organisation; when they are trained from time to time, they will know the benefits of relating well with customers.

4. The management of organisations should also be trained on the benefits of customer relationship management, because in most cases, the management of some organisations see customer relationship management as a mere waste of time, money and energy; thus, they need to be educated on the importance of customer relationship management.

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APPENDIX I
QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Mass Communication
Faculty of Arts
University of Benin

Dear Respondent,

REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE.

I am a final year student of Mass Communication Department, university of Benin. I am conducting research on the topic “relationship between customer relationship management and brand loyalty.” Kindly fill this questionnaire as honestly as possible. Any information given here shall be

treated as highly confidential and utilise purely for the purpose of this research work.

Thanks for your anticipated understanding.

Yours faithfully

TheresaMary Osioarenoya Abosioeamhe

Instruction: Please tick appropriate as possible

Section A: Bio-Data.

1. Sex (a) Male { } (b) Female { }
2. Age Bracket (a) 16-25 { } (b) 26-35 { } (c) 36-45 { } (d) 46-60 { } (e) over 60 { }
3. Marital status (a) single { } (b) married { } (c) divorced { }
4. Educational Qualification (a) SSCE or its equivalent { } (b) OND { } (c) NCE { } (d) HND { } (e) Degree { } (f) others (specify)
5. Occupation (a) civil servant { } (b) Private { } (c) self employed { } (d) student { } (e) others (specify).....

Section B

6. Do you have knowledge of customer relationship? (a) Yes { } (b) No { }

7. There is a relationship between customer relationship and brand loyalty. (a) Strongly agree { } (b) Agree { } (c) Strongly disagree { } (d) Disagree { } (e) undecided { }
8. Customer relationship contributes to brand loyalty (a) Strongly agree { } (b) Agree { } (c) Strongly disagree { } (d) Disagree { } (e) undecided { }
9. To what extent does customer relationship lead to brand loyalty? (a) very great extent { } (b) great extent { } (c) very low extent { } (d) low extent { } (e) neutral { }
10. Customer relationship management helps to project the corporate image of an organisation. (a) strongly agree { } (b) agree { } (c) undecided { } (d) disagree { } (e) strongly disagree { }
11. To what extent does customer relationship help to project the corporate image of an organisation? (a) very great extent { } (b) great extent { } (c) very low extent { } (d) low extent { } (e) neutral { }
12. Companies must device customer relationship management strategies to influence brand loyalty. (a) strongly agree { } (b) agree { } (c) undecided { } (d) disagree { } (e) strongly disagree { }
13. What are the customer relationship management strategies that companies can use to make you loyal to brand? _____

14. To what extent do the strategies enhance your brand loyalty? (a) very great extent { } (b) great extent { } (c) very low extent { } (d) low extent { } (e) not at all
15. Consistent communication of organisation activities will help customer to be loyal? (a) strongly agree { } (b) agree { } (c) strongly disagree { } (d) disagree { } (e) undecided { }

16. Customer relationship management alone can make a customer to be loyal to a product. (a) strongly agree { } (b) agree { } (c) strongly disagree { } (d) disagree { } (e) undecided { }

APPENDIX II

$$n = N$$

$$\frac{n}{1+N} (e)^2$$

$$n = 195,261$$

$$\frac{n}{1+195,261(0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{n = 195,261}{1+488.1525}$$

$$= 195,261$$

$$489.1525$$

$$n = 399.18$$

Therefore, the sample size is four hundred (400). That is, 399.18 was approximated to 400.
