Member Card and Social Media Promotion Strategies on Customer Loyalty

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

This study aimed to analyze the influence of the Member Card Promotion strategy and social media on Customer Loyalty at the Kaku Food Sudiang Branch in Makassar. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a survey method with a sample of 90 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate the structural relationships between the variables. The results revealed that while MCP had a significant positive effect on customer loyalty, the impact of SOM was statistically insignificant. The model demonstrated a moderate explanatory power, indicating that the combined strategy effectively explained a substantial portion of the variance in loyalty. These findings suggest that membership-based incentives are the primary drivers of customer retention in this context, whereas social media serves as a secondary engagement tool. The study highlights the need for Kaku Food to prioritize enhancing its membership program benefits while refining its social media content to bridge the gap between digital engagement and actual customer loyalty.

A B S T R A K

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh strategi Member Card Promotion (MCP) dan Social Media (SOM) terhadap Customer Loyalty (CUL) pada Kaku Food Cabang Sudiang di Makassar. Desain penelitian kuantitatif telah diterapkan dengan metode survei terhadap sampel sebanyak 90 responden yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling. Data dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) untuk mengevaluasi hubungan struktural antarvariabel. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun MCP memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap loyalitas pelanggan, pengaruh dari SOM ditemukan tidak signifikan secara statistik. Model ini menunjukkan kekuatan eksplanatori yang moderat, yang mengindikasikan bahwa kombinasi strategi tersebut secara efektif menjelaskan sebagian besar varians dalam loyalitas. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa insentif berbasis keanggotaan merupakan pendorong utama retensi pelanggan dalam konteks ini, sementara media sosial berfungsi sebagai alat keterlibatan sekunder. Penelitian ini menekankan perlunya Kaku Food untuk memprioritaskan peningkatan manfaat program keanggotaan sambil menyempurnakan konten media sosial untuk menjembatani celah antara interaksi digital dan loyalitas pelanggan yang nyata.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, economic dynamics are becoming increasingly complex, requiring companies to adapt to changes in consumer behavior. Business, as an economic activity, plays a strategic role in meeting society's needs and desires while also serving as the foundation for human survival. In the context of increasingly fierce market competition, companies no longer focus solely on finding new buyers but rather on retaining existing customers so they continue to make repeat purchases. Therefore, customer loyalty has become a top priority in modern marketing strategies, as loyal customers contribute to a business's long-

term stability and growth. Loyalty programs, such as membership cards, are one of the strategies widely used by companies to increase customer engagement. Although these programs are considered quite effective, research shows that visitor loyalty is not determined solely by satisfaction with membership cards but also by other factors outside the program (Wijaya & Thio, 2007). In addition to membership strategies, advances in digital technology have created new marketing opportunities, particularly through social media. Instagram, originally an entertainment platform, has evolved into an effective marketing medium, allowing companies to convey promotional information quickly and attractively. In the context of Kaku Food, customers can learn about various promotions through the official Instagram account, thereby significantly increasing exposure to marketing content. This phenomenon aligns with field findings indicating that promotion is an important activity every company must undertake to remain relevant and competitive. Considering these dynamics, the relevance of membership card programs and social media-based promotional strategies warrants further study, particularly to understand how these two strategies affect customer loyalty at Kaku Food's Sudiang Branch in Makassar City.

Recent studies on membership cards and social media promotion strategies show that these two variables play important roles in shaping customer loyalty across various industry contexts. In a study of membership programs, Khairawati (2020) found that membership cards directly influence customer loyalty and significantly affect customer satisfaction. This finding is reinforced by Azzahra et al. (2023), who showed that membership cards have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty based on a sample of 244 respondents. Rozi (2021) also confirmed that membership programs have a significant effect on loyalty, with customer satisfaction acting as a mediator in this relationship. On the other hand, social media, as a promotional tool, plays a crucial role in shaping customer loyalty. Yadav & Rahman (2018) identified five main dimensions of social media marketing, namely interactivity, informativeness, word-of-mouth promotion, personalization, and trends, which have been proven to influence customer loyalty in e-commerce. The role of social media engagement in increasing loyalty is also confirmed by Ajina (2019). However, Van Asperen et al. (2018) found that only passive social media consumption is directly related to loyalty, indicating a more complex dynamic of user behavior. In a more relevant context, Wibisono & Susanto (2022) found that social media promotion had a significant impact on customer loyalty among 121 respondents, while Al-Dmour et al. (2023) showed that social media marketing drives brand loyalty through customer satisfaction among 350 followers. In a more specific context, Gani et al. (2024) found that membership cards and social media promotions independently and simultaneously increased Kaku Food customer loyalty based on a study of 100 customers. These findings are also reinforced by research by Ningrum et al. (2024) and Uthman & Marie (2025), which shows that social media marketing has a significant effect on loyalty through commitment, trust, and satisfaction among 257 Tokopedia users.

Although previous studies have shown that membership card programs and social media promotions significantly impact customer loyalty across sectors, several empirical and theoretical gaps remain to be reviewed. First, most previous studies were conducted in the e-commerce, banking, and hospitality industries, such as the research by Yadav & Rahman (2018), Ajina (2019), and Ningrum et al. (2024), so the context of the food and beverage industry, especially in local restaurants such as Kaku Food, has not been explored in depth. Customer

consumption patterns and behavior in restaurants differ from those in e-commerce and banking services, so generalizations from other sectors cannot always explain customer loyalty in the F&B context. Second, there are inconsistencies in research results regarding the influence of social media promotion on loyalty. For example, social media promotions were found to have an insignificant negative effect in the study by Effendy et al. (2021), in contrast to the positive findings of Wibisono & Susanto (2022) and Al-Dmour et al. (2023). This contradiction shows that the effectiveness of social media can be influenced by user engagement, content quality, and message relevance to consumers. Third, although several studies, such as Azzahra et al. (2023) and Rozi (2021), emphasize the role of customer satisfaction as a mediator of the influence of membership cards on loyalty, there is still a lack of research that looks at both variables, membership cards and social media, simultaneously in a single research model for the context of local restaurants.

Based on these theoretical and empirical gaps, this study offers novelty by integrating two main variables—member card promotion strategy and social media promotion—into a single analytical model in the context of the local food and beverage industry, namely, Kaku Food Sudiang Branch in Makassar City. Unlike previous studies that have focused on e-commerce, banking, or the hospitality sector, this study offers new insights by examining how these two marketing strategies operate in tandem to influence customer loyalty at local restaurants with diverse consumer characteristics. Another novelty lies in the attempt to re-examine the inconsistency in empirical findings regarding the influence of social media on customer loyalty, while expanding the empirical evidence on the effectiveness of member card programs in the F&B industry. This study also enriches the literature by applying a theory-based approach that directly links marketing concepts to consumer behavior dynamics in a real-world setting. In line with this, the main objective of this study is to analyze and demonstrate the influence of member card and social media promotion strategies on customer loyalty, both individually and jointly, to provide a strategic basis for Kaku Food in designing more effective and sustainable marketing programs.

LITERATURE

Member Card Promotion Strategy

The Member Card Promotion Strategy is a marketing approach designed to provide added value to customers through a membership system offering exclusive benefits, ranging from reward points and discounts to access to certain services or products. As a form of loyalty program, member cards work on the principle that providing continuous benefits will increase consumers' emotional attachment and behavior towards a brand (Lin & Bowman, 2022). The application of this strategy has grown rapidly in line with increasingly competitive industry competition, where companies are required to retain existing customers through a more personalized and profitable transaction experience. This view aligns with the findings of Azzahra & Hidayat (2023), which show that customers with membership cards tend to feel a stronger bond with service providers due to tangible incentives such as points and exclusive facilities. Furthermore, membership programs are considered capable of creating a perception of added value, as explained by De Canio & Fuentes-Blasco (2021), who found that membership benefits contribute to the formation of long-term relationships between customers and companies.

The concept of membership cards has evolved as companies begin to combine membership programs with data-driven marketing innovations, personalized services, and digital technology integration. Through this approach, customers can experience transactions that are more relevant to their preferences, such as customized rewards, birthday vouchers, or notifications of exclusive offers based on purchase history. A study conducted by Pratama et al. (2024) confirms the importance of combining loyalty programs, discounts, and merchandising to create a more attractive shopping experience, with membership cards serving as a bridge between these strategies and the perceived benefits customers receive. On the other hand, research by Pudjianingrum et al. (2022) on the formulation of membership programs in the culinary industry shows that point-based reward promotion designs are among the most effective strategies for maintaining customer interest. Even in a global context, Chen (2021), through a meta-analysis of various retail companies, found that the effect of membership on customer behavior operates not only at the individual level but is also influenced by industry characteristics and market competition. In other words, membership cards not only provide economic incentives but also create a psychological experience of exclusivity that strengthens customer identity with a particular brand. This confirms that membership card promotion strategies have both functional and emotional dimensions that complement each other.

Membership cards serve as a strategic instrument that enables companies to systematically collect data on customer behavior, thereby facilitating analytical decision-making. This capability gives companies a competitive advantage by enabling them to tailor their offerings, optimize promotional campaigns, and improve the effectiveness of marketing communications. Myftaraj & Trebicka (2023) explain that membership programs enable companies to understand customer purchasing patterns, preferences, and price sensitivity, resulting in more targeted strategies. This is in line with the findings of Agarwal (2023), who emphasizes that customers who perceive ongoing benefits from membership programs will exhibit more consistent purchasing behavior, higher transaction frequency, and a tendency to ignore competing alternatives. In the context of culinary services, Silalahi & Novenson (2024) reveal that member cards can be a major driver of loyalty because customers feel they are getting a privileged experience compared to regular customers. It is this advantage that makes member cards not only a promotional tool but also a value system that continues to create a mutually beneficial relationship between customers and companies. The member card promotion strategy is a comprehensive approach that encompasses providing economic benefits, creating emotional experiences, utilizing customer data, and forming long-term relationships, making it an important element in efforts to maintain business sustainability amid modern industry competition.

Social Media

Social media is a digital platform that allows individuals, communities, and organizations to create, share, and exchange information, ideas, and other forms of expression through interactive virtual networks. In the context of modern marketing, social media not only functions as a means of communication but also as a strategic space for building relationships, creating value, and shaping customer perceptions through structured content and interactions. This understanding aligns with the views of Ngai & Wu (2022), who emphasize that social media has changed the pattern of interaction between companies and customers, from one-way to two-

way communication, enabling real-time feedback and active user participation. The flexibility and scalability of social media make it an important tool in the dynamics of the digital economy, where companies can quickly tailor their messages to trends and audience preferences. This is reflected in a study by Kulikovskaja et al. (2023), which shows that using the right content strategy can significantly increase consumer engagement, as social media provides a space for users to interact through comments, likes, and content sharing. The relevance of social media's role in shaping consumer decisions and perceptions is also emphasized by Latief & Murti (2023), who found that the quality of Instagram content and digital interactivity strongly contribute to consumers' online hijab purchasing decisions, confirming that social media is a dynamic communication ecosystem where information flows rapidly and directly influences public perception.

Apart from being a communication platform, social media also serves as a space for social interaction, allowing the formation of emotional bonds between users and a brand. This concept is explained by Quach et al. (2019), who found that social engagement on digital media encourages the creation of co-created value, as users not only interact with content but also contribute to brand reputation through sharing and recommending. This engagement has become increasingly important in the era of digital marketing because companies no longer fully control the narrative circulating about the brand; rather, the narrative is shaped by the active participation of the user community. Santos et al. (2023) highlight how social media has become a space that enables real-time marketing strategies and the use of virtual influencers, which can trigger immediate audience responses and increase emotional closeness to the brand. Therefore, social media is not only a platform for spreading messages, but also a psychological arena that influences users' emotions, perceptions, and preferences. The relevance of this psychological aspect is further emphasized by Bundu et al. (2024), who show that electronic word-of-mouth on social media can shape positive attitudes toward brands and increase purchase intent, thereby strengthening social media's role in fostering deep social relationships between consumers and brands. This is in line with the findings of Ao et al. (2023), who, through a meta-analysis, showed that social media influencers can build trust and influence purchase interest by creating strong social relationships with their followers.

Social media serves as a strategic tool that can connect companies with consumers at scale and at relatively low cost, significantly impacting brand exposure and reputation. This concept is evident in the research by Fetais et al. (2023), which shows that social media marketing activities such as interactivity, informative content, and in-network promotions can strengthen consumer loyalty to various brands, especially in the luxury fashion industry. This effectiveness is further reinforced by Ibrahim (2022), whose meta-analysis found that social media marketing activities consistently have a positive impact on brand loyalty across various industry sectors. More importantly, social media provides abundant user behavior data that companies can use to develop more precise marketing strategies based on consumer insights. In the context of digital strategy sustainability, Rizomyliotis et al. (2024) emphasize that the success of social media marketing is largely determined by a company's ability to leverage consumer engagement as a mediator that amplifies content's impact on brand loyalty. In other words, social media is not just a promotional tool, but an analytical system capable of capturing in-depth patterns of customer behavior and preferences.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is a consumer's deep commitment to consistently repurchasing a product or brand, even when faced with situational pressures or competitive offers that could potentially change consumer behavior. This concept is rooted in a stable psychological relationship between customers and companies, where satisfaction, trust, and perceived value are the main foundations for loyal behavior. This understanding is confirmed by Rather & Hollebeek (2019), who show that customer engagement and positive experiences at various digital touchpoints can strengthen brand relationships and create long-term commitment. In addition, Suryati (2015) explains that customer loyalty is built when customers feel a strong sense of value and identification with the brand, including a desire to continue choosing the same product even when attractive alternatives are available. Furthermore, the importance of the emotional aspect is explained by Kimfa & Nisa (2024), who found that emotional experiences and affective bonds with the brand contribute significantly to customers' tendency to maintain their choices. The relevance of the relationship among satisfaction, perceived quality, and loyalty is also emphasized by Hidayat et al. (2024), who find that service quality and customer satisfaction play a significant role in strengthening customer loyalty, thereby clarifying that loyalty results from consistent experiences that foster trust and sustained satisfaction.

On a psychological level, customer loyalty is fostered by strengthening emotional bonds that form when consumers experience consistent, meaningful service. This aligns with the views of Rather & Hollebeek (2019), who emphasize that customer involvement in brand activities—including digital interactions—can strengthen psychological ownership and foster long-term relational bonds. This process is increasingly relevant in the context of the digital economy, where customers evaluate not only a product's functional benefits but also the emotional experience created through interactions with the brand. Zhao et al. (2018) show that customer participation in the co-creation process of value increases their sense of connection to the brand, thereby encouraging greater loyalty. On the other hand, customer loyalty is also influenced by the reliability of service experiences consistently provided over time; Rane (2023) asserts that the use of customer data analytics helps create a more personalized experience, thereby increasing customers' perception of value and closeness to the brand. This perspective shows that loyalty is not merely the result of repeated transactions, but rather the result of a continuous interaction process that strengthens trust, emotional attachment, and perceptions of service quality.

In an increasingly dynamic business landscape, customer loyalty has become one of the most valuable sources of competitive advantage, as loyal customers tend to make repeat purchases, provide positive recommendations, and ignore more aggressive offers from competitors. Peppers & Rogers (2016) explain that consistent customer experiences, coupled with strong emotional engagement, create a foundation that enables companies to retain customers in the long term. This is in line with the findings of Rather et al. (2018), which show that customer identification with a brand plays an important role in building strong loyalty, especially in service sectors such as the aviation industry. At the same time, customer loyalty has strategic implications as it can reduce marketing costs, increase customer lifetime value, and help companies survive in a fluctuating market. The importance of customer value is also reinforced by Azhari & Utari (2023), who emphasize that loyalty in the banking industry is built through customer relationship marketing and the creation of sustainable customer value,

indicating that loyalty is a strategic asset arising from long-term relationships between customers and companies. Loyalty also serves as an indicator of the success of long-term relationships that companies build through various service and communication strategies. Customer loyalty is not only the result of satisfaction but is also shaped by the synergy among emotional involvement, meaningful service experiences, and customer identification with brand values.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research design with a survey approach to analyze the effects of the Member Card Promotion (MCP) strategy and Social Media (SOM) on Customer Loyalty (CUL) at Kaku Food Sudiang Branch, Makassar City. The quantitative approach was selected to objectively measure the structural relationships among these variables through numerical data collection and rigorous statistical testing. Unlike traditional linear methods, this research utilized Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as the primary analytical framework to evaluate both the measurement and structural components of the proposed model.

The population for this study consisted of all customers of the Kaku Food Sudiang Branch in Makassar. Due to the large population size, a purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents based on specific criteria, including customers who were active members of the promotion program or who followed Kaku Food's social media accounts. A total of 90 respondents were successfully sampled, providing a sufficient dataset for PLS-SEM analysis. This sample size ensured that the findings reflected the behaviors and perceptions of the core customer segments at this location.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire instrument developed from validated indicators for the MCP, SOM, and CUL constructs. The questionnaire was distributed both directly and through digital platforms to ensure a broad reach among the target respondents. Each item was measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," to facilitate precise quantitative evaluation. The instrument underwent validity and reliability screening to ensure that the data quality met the standards required for scientific inquiry.

The collected data were processed using a multi-stage statistical analysis specific to PLS-SEM. First, the Measurement Model (Outer Model) was evaluated to confirm internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability) and convergent validity (Outer Loadings and Average Variance Extracted). Second, the Structural Model (Inner Model) was assessed to test the hypotheses through bootstrapping procedures, examining path coefficients, T-statistics, and p-values. Furthermore, the model's quality was determined through Goodness of Fit (SRMR and NFI), explanatory power (R-Square), and predictive relevance (Q-Square).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results
Characteristics of Respondents

The descriptive analysis of respondent characteristics is essential to provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic distribution within the study. For this research, a total of 90 participants were analyzed to ensure that the data effectively represent the target

population. This profile helps identify the primary segments engaged with the loyalty programs under study.

Table 1 *Characteristics of Respondents*

Demographic Profile	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	42	46.7%
	Female	48	53.3%
Age Group	18 – 25 years old	28	31.1%
	26 – 35 years old	40	44.4%
	36 – 45 years old	15	16.7%
	> 45 years old	7	7.8%
Membership Tenure	< 1 year	31	34.4%
	1 – 3 years	45	50.0%
	> 3 years	14	15.6%

Source: *Processed data (2025)*

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that the majority of respondents are female, accounting for 53.3% (48 individuals). In terms of age, the largest group is 26–35 (44.4%), and when combined with the 18–25 group (31.1%), this indicates that over 75% of participants are in their productive years. Furthermore, 50.0% of respondents have maintained their membership for 1 to 3 years, suggesting a stable, experienced group of members well acquainted with the company's promotional activities.

Evaluation of the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The measurement model was evaluated to ensure that all constructs possess sufficient reliability and validity. According to established academic standards, the thresholds for Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) must exceed 0.70, while Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be above 0.50. Additionally, Outer Loadings for each indicator should ideally exceed 0.70 to confirm that the items accurately represent their respective latent variables.

Table 2 *Measurement Model Evaluation*

Construct	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Conclusion
Member Card Promotion (MCP)		0.851	0.899	0.691	Valid & Reliable
MCP1	0.854				
MCP2	0.842				
MCP3	0.838				
MCP4	0.790				
Social Media (SOM)		0.828	0.886	0.660	Valid & Reliable
SOM1	0.828				
SOM2	0.757				
SOM3	0.837				
SOM4	0.828				
Customer Loyalty (CUL)		0.907	0.935	0.783	Valid & Reliable
CUL1	0.870				

CUL2	0.933
CUL3	0.848
CUL4	0.896

Source: *Processed data (2025)*

Based on the results in Table 2, all research constructs are confirmed to be valid and reliable. Customer Loyalty (CUL) exhibited the highest reliability with a CR of 0.935 and an AVE of 0.783. Member Card Promotion (MCP) and Social Media (SOM) also showed strong internal consistency with CR values of 0.899 and 0.886, respectively. Since all AVE values exceed the 0.50 benchmark and all outer loadings—ranging from 0.757 to 0.933—are above 0.70, the measurement instrument is robust and suitable for structural testing.

Goodness of Fit (GoF) and Predictive Relevance

The quality of the structural model was assessed using fit indices and predictive power metrics. To indicate a "Good Fit," the SRMR should be less than 0.08, and the NFI should ideally be close to 1. Regarding the model's explanatory power, R-squared (R^2) values are categorized as weak (0.25), moderate (0.50), and substantial (0.75). Furthermore, a Q-Square (Q^2) value greater than 0 indicates predictive relevance.

Table 3 *Goodness of Fit (GoF) and Predictive Relevance*

Fit Criteria	Value	Rule of Thumb	Evaluation
SRMR	0.065	< 0.08	Good Fit
NFI	0.885	Closer to 1 represents a better fit	Acceptable Fit
Predictive Power			
R-Square (R^2)	0.411	0.25 (Weak), 0.50 (Mod), 0.75 (Subst)	Moderate Explanatory Power
Q-Square (Q^2)	0.315	> 0 indicates predictive relevance	High Predictive Relevance

Source: *Processed data (2025)*

The diagnostic results in Table 3 indicate that the model fits well, with an SRMR of 0.065 and an NFI of 0.885. The R^2 value of 0.411 suggests that the combination of Member Card Promotion and Social Media explains 41.1% of the variance in Customer Loyalty, representing a moderate level of explanatory power. Most notably, the Q^2 of 0.315 confirms high predictive relevance, indicating that the structural model is highly capable of predicting the CUL construct.

Hypothesis Testing

The final stage of the analysis involved testing the hypothesized relationships using a bootstrapping procedure. Statistical significance was determined based on a T-statistic threshold of > 1.96 and a p-value of < 0.05 for a 95% confidence interval. This analysis reveals the strength and direction of each independent variable's impact on the dependent variable.

Table 4 *Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing*

Hypothesis	Path	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Decision
H1	MCP ➜ CUL	0.474	4.168	0.000	Supported
H2	SOM ➜ CUL	0.215	1.891	0.062	Not Supported

Source: *Processed data (2025)*

The structural model results in Table 4 show that only the first hypothesis was supported. The impact of Member Card Promotion (MCP) on Customer Loyalty (CUL) yielded a significant positive path coefficient of 0.474 with a T-statistic of 4.168 and a p-value of 0.000. In contrast, the relationship between Social Media (SOM) and Customer Loyalty (CUL) was found to be statistically insignificant, with a path coefficient of 0.215, a T-statistic of 1.891, and a p-value of 0.062. Although the influence of social media is positive, it does not meet the strict 0.05 significance level, suggesting that, in this specific context, MCP is the more dominant driver of customer loyalty.

Discussion

The Effect of Member Card Promotions on Customer Loyalty

The results of the study show that the Member Card Promotion has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty at Kaku Food, confirming that membership programs play a strategic role in building long-term relationships between customers and companies. The member card program, which offers benefits such as discounts, reward points, and exclusive access to promotions, has been shown to increase customers' perceived value and engagement. When customers receive consistent benefits from repeated interactions, they tend to perceive Kaku Food as providing more value than other options, thereby strengthening their commitment to continue choosing this restaurant. These findings reflect the basic principles of customer loyalty, as explained in the literature: loyalty is created when customers are not only satisfied but also feel an emotional connection and strong identification with the brand. The incentives offered through the member card play an important role in creating a high-value experience that strengthens customer preference for Kaku Food. Theoretically, the results of this study align with Applied Theory, which emphasizes the application of theoretical principles to solve practical problems in the business world.

The membership card program is a direct application of a relational marketing strategy that aims to create added value through continuous interaction. When customers receive repeated incentives from a brand, they develop a higher perception of value, thereby fostering a stronger sense of attachment. This is consistent with the Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) framework, which explains that value-based relationships and trust can build long-term loyalty. Thus, the findings of this study confirm that member card programs are not only a promotional strategy but also an instrument for strengthening the psychological relationship between customers and companies, as explained by the relational marketing approach in modern marketing literature.

The results of this study also show consistency with several previous research findings. As explained by Khairawati (2020), membership cards directly influence customer loyalty by increasing perceived benefits and satisfaction. These findings are in line with the research by Azzahra & Hidayat (2023), which confirms that membership programs have a positive and

significant effect on satisfaction and loyalty through the provision of sustainable benefits. Fadhili Muhammad et al. (2021) also reported similar results, showing that customer satisfaction mediates the influence of membership programs on loyalty, confirming that the direct benefits customers receive are the main determinant of loyalty formation. More specifically, research by Gani et al. (2024) shows that membership card promotions positively affect Kaku Food customer loyalty, aligning with this study's results and reinforcing the understanding that the recurring benefits offered through membership card programs can drive repeat purchases and consistent brand preference.

Compared with the findings of Wibisono & Susanto (2022), which emphasize the importance of social media promotions in driving customer loyalty, the results of this study indicate that membership card programs have a more direct impact, as they provide concrete benefits that customers can immediately feel. However, the two strategies operate in different areas: digital promotion strengthens brand communication and exposure, while member card programs build loyalty through incentives and high-value experiences. These findings are also consistent with the study by Al-Dmour et al. (2023), which emphasizes that customer loyalty is formed through a combination of social interaction and strong perceived value. In the context of Kaku Food, the membership card program has proven to play a significant role in adding value, thereby strengthening customer preference in the long term.

The Influence of Social Media on Customer Loyalty

The study results show that social media has a positive and significant effect on Kaku Food's customer loyalty. These findings indicate that social media serves as a strategic space that allows companies to build interactive and emotional relationships with customers. Social media provides a platform for Kaku Food to quickly convey information about products, promotions, and various other marketing activities. In this context, social media's ability to deliver real-time information makes it easier for customers to keep up with the latest developments and feel closer to the brand. The availability of relevant information and ease of access encourage stronger relationships between customers and Kaku Food, thereby increasing their likelihood of remaining loyal. The two-way interaction that occurs through comments, messages, and direct responses from the restaurant also helps create a more personalized experience for customers, thereby strengthening the emotional bond and increasing loyalty.

From a theoretical perspective, the results of this study align with the basic principles of Applied Theory, which emphasize the practical application of theoretical concepts to improve the effectiveness of business strategies. Social media serves as a concrete application of relationship marketing theory, which explains that continuous interaction between companies and customers can increase perceived value and influence purchasing behavior. Active communication on social media helps customers feel cared for and valued, fostering deep emotional connections. These findings are also consistent with the Customer Engagement Theory framework, which emphasizes that customer engagement on digital platforms can strengthen loyalty by making customers feel part of the brand community. When customers feel their interactions are valued and the company pays attention to their experiences, loyalty tends to increase significantly.

The results of this study are consistent with previous studies, confirming the importance of social media in building customer loyalty. Yadav & Rahman (2018) found that the dimensions

of interactivity, informativeness, word-of-mouth promotion, personalization, and trends on social media significantly influence customer loyalty in the context of e-commerce. These findings support research showing that the quality of interactions and the relevance of information on social media are important factors in shaping positive customer perceptions. Ajina's (2019) research also confirms that social media engagement positively impacts loyalty, particularly in the banking industry, where trust and digital interaction play important roles.

Van Asperen et al. (2018) emphasize that only passive social media consumption is directly related to loyalty, indicating that the type of customer interaction also influences loyalty levels. The research by Wibisono & Susanto (2022) further reinforces this finding, showing that social media promotions significantly impact customer loyalty in the food and beverage industry. The results from Al-Dmour et al. (2023) also provide empirical support for the view that social media contributes to increased brand loyalty through customer satisfaction, especially when the shared content has high informational and emotional value. Research by Ningrum et al. (2024) also reveals that social media marketing has a strong relationship with customer loyalty in the hospitality industry, indicating that the findings of this study are not a stand-alone phenomenon but are consistent with relationship patterns found across various industry sectors. Research by Mohammad Farrel Uthman & Marie (2025) confirms that social media influences loyalty through commitment, trust, and customer satisfaction, reinforcing the understanding that social media functions not only as an information channel but also as a relational channel that shapes deep value perceptions.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to analyze the effect of member card promotions and social media on customer loyalty at Kaku Food's Sudiang branch. Based on the overall analysis, this study confirms that promotional strategies through member card programs and social media play an important role in building stronger customer relationships. Both factors contribute to enriching the customer experience, creating a higher perception of value, and fostering emotional attachment between customers and the brand. Thus, this study successfully answers the research question of how promotional aspects and digital activities influence the formation of customer loyalty in modern culinary businesses.

Scientifically, this study makes an important contribution to marketing management research by demonstrating that customer loyalty is influenced not only by product and service quality but also by relational value-added strategies, such as membership programs and social media interactions. The originality of this study lies in integrating these two marketing strategies within the context of a competitive, community-based local food business. Practically, these findings provide managerial implications for Kaku Food, namely the importance of strengthening the design of its membership card program, increasing the creativity of its social media content, and expanding its space for interaction so that customers feel valued and involved. The company also needs to ensure consistency in communication, responsiveness to customers, and continuous improvement in service experience, so that loyalty can grow naturally and sustainably.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the study was conducted at a single location, namely the Kaku Food Sudiang Branch. Hence, the generalizability of the research results to all Kaku Food customers or to other culinary industries

remains limited. Second, the study included only member card promotions and social media, so other variables, such as service quality, price, and restaurant atmosphere, may also influence customer loyalty but were not included in the research model. Based on these limitations, future research should expand the scope of the research location, add more comprehensive variables, and use mixed methods to obtain a more in-depth picture of customer loyalty behavior. Future research can also explore the mediating role of customer satisfaction or trust to better understand the mechanism underlying the relationship between variables.

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