

UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER LOYALTY: THE ROLES OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT, COMPANY REPUTATION, AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Sutrisno Wibowo¹⁾, Rizal Diaz Al-Ishlah²⁾

^{1,2}Department of Management, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: wibowo@umy.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction. The subjects of this study were users of J&T Express delivery services. This study used primary data with a sample of 185 respondents selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Form. Data analysis in this study was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) method, processed with SmartPLS software. The results show that Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation have a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction. Customer Relationship Management does not have a significant direct effect on Customer Loyalty, whereas Company Reputation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty. In addition, Customer Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty. The results also show that Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation affect Customer Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction. These findings indicate that Customer Satisfaction plays an important role in bridging the effect of Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty.

Keywords: *Customer Relationship Management, Company Reputation, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Logistics Service*

1. INTRODUCTION

The e-commerce industry in Indonesia has grown rapidly along with increasing internet penetration and changing consumer shopping behavior. This growth has driven increasing demand for logistics services as a key component in supporting the distribution of goods, thereby creating an increasingly high level of competition among delivery service companies (Statista, 2024). Amid intense competition, service companies can no longer rely solely on operational efficiency but are also required to build long-term relationships with customers to sustain their business (Kotler & Keller, 2022).

In this context, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is regarded as an important strategy oriented toward creating long-term value through the management of interaction, communication, and sustainable relationships with customers (Buttle & Maklan, 2019). Effective implementation of CRM enables companies to understand customer needs more deeply, handle complaints responsively, and create a more personalized service experience, which ultimately contributes to increased customer satisfaction (Harahap et al., 2023).

In addition to CRM, Company Reputation is an intangible asset that plays a strategic role in the service industry. Company reputation reflects customers' collective perception of the credibility, reliability, and quality of the service provided (Wiedmann & Buxel, 2023). A

positive reputation can reduce customer uncertainty in decision-making and increase trust in the company, which ultimately affects customer satisfaction and loyalty (Barney, 1991).

PT J&T Express is one of the delivery service companies with a strong reputation and a large market share in Indonesia. However, the high intensity of service usage has also been accompanied by various customer complaints regarding delivery delays, lost items, and damaged goods, which can potentially reduce customer satisfaction (Databoks, 2024). This condition indicates a gap between the company's reputation and the service experience felt by customers, making it interesting to examine further.

A number of previous studies show inconsistent results regarding the effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty. A study by Khan et al. (2022) found that CRM has a significant effect on customer loyalty, while Sugiat et al. (2023) found that the effect of CRM on loyalty is not significant directly and requires the role of Customer Satisfaction as a mediating variable. This inconsistency in findings indicates that the mechanism of customer loyalty formation still requires further testing, particularly in the context of the logistics service industry.

Based on the phenomena and research gap described above, this study aims to analyze the effect of Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfaction as a mediating variable among users of J&T Express services in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

Relationship Marketing Theory

Relationship Marketing Theory emphasizes that the main goal of service marketing is to build and maintain mutually beneficial long-term relationships between companies and customers through trust, commitment, and sustained communication (Grönroos, 1994). In this context, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is regarded as the strategic implementation of relationship marketing that focuses on the systematic management of company interactions with customers. Effective implementation of CRM enables companies to understand customer needs, improve service quality, and handle complaints responsively, thereby increasing Customer Satisfaction which ultimately drives the formation of Customer Loyalty (Buttle & Maklan, 2019).

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory states that sustainable competitive advantage stems from a company's internal resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). Company Reputation is one of the intangible resources that meets these characteristics because it is formed from consistent performance and customers' positive perceptions of the company's credibility and quality. A good company reputation can reduce customer uncertainty, build trust, and create perceived value, thereby playing an important role in increasing Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty, particularly in intangible service industries such as logistics services (Wiedmann & Buxel, 2023).

The Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Satisfaction

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) focuses on managing long-term relationships between companies and customers through effective communication, trust, and commitment (Grönroos, 1994). Good implementation of CRM enables companies to understand customer needs more deeply and handle complaints responsively, thereby improving the service experience perceived by customers. A positive service experience has the potential to increase the level of customer satisfaction. A number of previous studies show that CRM has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction (Khan et al., 2022; Sugiat et al., 2023)

H1: Customer Relationship Management has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction.

The Effect of Company Reputation on Customer Satisfaction

Company Reputation reflects customers' perceptions of the company's credibility, reliability, and quality. A good reputation shapes customers' positive expectations of the service they will receive. When the service experience matches those expectations, customers tend to feel satisfied. Previous research shows that Company Reputation has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction (Khan et al., 2022).

H2: Company Reputation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction.

The Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty

Conceptually, CRM plays a role in building long-term relationships with customers that can drive the formation of loyalty. However, empirical findings show inconsistent results. Some studies have found that CRM has a direct effect on Customer Loyalty, while other studies show that this effect is not significant without the role of Customer Satisfaction as a mediating mechanism (Sugiat et al., 2023). Based on the theoretical foundation and these empirical findings, the effect of CRM on loyalty still needs to be tested.

H3: Customer Relationship Management has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty.

The Effect of Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty

From the Resource-Based View perspective, Company Reputation is a strategic asset capable of creating sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). A good company reputation increases customer trust and commitment, encouraging customers to continue using the company's services and making them less likely to switch to competitors. Previous research shows that Company Reputation has a positive effect on Customer Loyalty (Khan et al, 2022; Nirmala & Yuliana, 2021).

H4: Company Reputation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty.

The Effect of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty

Customer Satisfaction is a key factor in the formation of customer loyalty. Customers who feel satisfied with the service they receive tend to make repeat purchases, give recommendations to others, and maintain long-term relationships with the company. The positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty has been widely demonstrated in various service marketing studies (Oliver, 2014; Sugiat et al., 2023).

H5: Customer Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty.

The Role of Customer Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable

Customer Satisfaction is positioned as a mechanism that bridges the effect of Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty. Good implementation of CRM and company reputation first influence customer satisfaction, which then drives the formation of loyalty. Previous research shows that Customer Satisfaction can mediate the relationship between CRM and Customer Loyalty, as well as between Company Reputation and Customer Loyalty (Khan et al., 2022; Sugiat et al., 2023).

H6: Customer Satisfaction mediates the effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty.

H7: Customer Satisfaction mediates the effect of Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty.

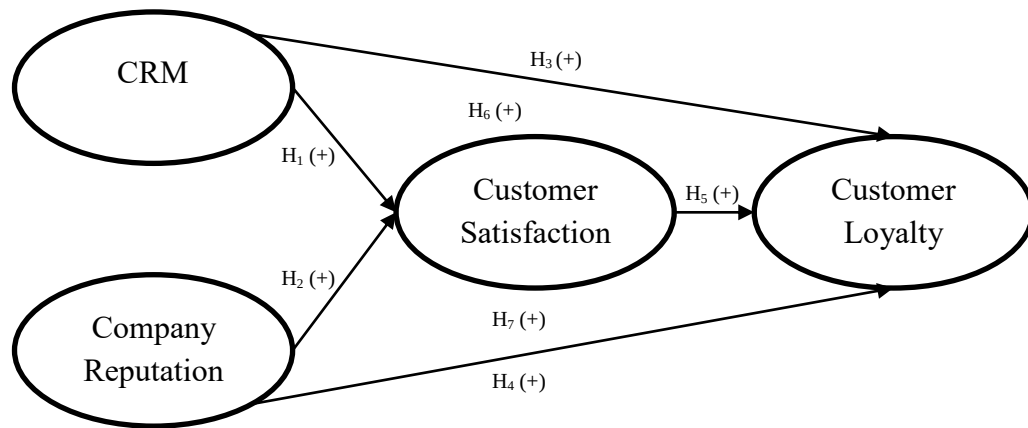


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Research Model (Khan et al., 2022)

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with the aim of analyzing the effect of Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfaction as a mediating variable among users of J&T Express delivery services in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. A quantitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on testing relationships between variables based on empirical data measured objectively using a structured research instrument.

The population in this study consists of J&T Express service users residing in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with respondent criteria being individuals who had used J&T Express services at least twice in the past six months and had filed a complaint about the company's service. The sample used in this study consisted of 185 respondents. The sample size was determined based on the criteria of Hair et al., which state that the minimum sample size in Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) analysis is five to ten times the number of indicators used in the study.

The data in this study are primary data obtained through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Form. The questionnaire was developed based on variable indicators adapted from previous research and measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Before data processing, the questionnaire was first tested to ensure the completeness and validity of respondents' answers.

Data analysis in this study was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) method with the aid of SmartPLS software. Evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) was conducted through tests of construct validity and reliability, including the values of outer loading, average variance extracted (AVE), Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability. Furthermore, evaluation of the structural model (inner model) was conducted by examining the coefficient of determination (R^2) and testing the significance of relationships between variables through the bootstrapping.

Testing of the mediating effect of Customer Satisfaction was conducted by analyzing the direct and indirect effects between variables in the research model. Mediation is categorized as full mediation if the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable becomes non-significant after the mediating variable is included, and as partial mediation if that effect remains significant but shows a decrease in coefficient value. All hypothesis testing in this study used a significance level of 5 percent.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

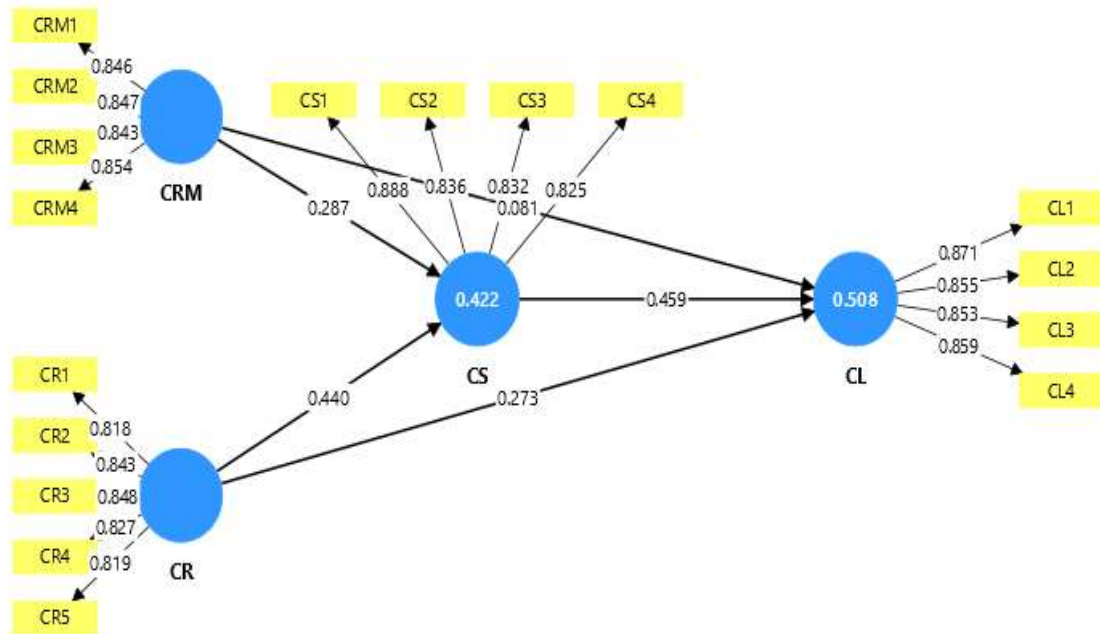
3.1 Research Results

Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 185 respondents who were users of J&T Express delivery services in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. By gender, respondents were dominated by women, totaling 106 people, while male respondents totaled 79 people. The majority of respondents were in the 22–26 age range (68 people) and the 27–31 age range (65 people), indicating a dominance of the productive age group. In terms of online shopping frequency per month, most respondents shopped 4–6 times (60 people), followed by frequencies of 1–3 times and 7–10 times (47 people each), and more than 10 times (31 people). These characteristics indicate that respondents have a relatively high intensity of delivery service use, which is relevant to the objective of this study.

Table 1 Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Number
Gender	Female	106
	Male	79
	Total	185
Age	17–21 years	23
	22–26 years	68
	27–31 years	65
	>31 years	29
	Total	185
Online Shopping Frequency / Month	1–3 times	47
	4–6 times	60
	7–10 times	47
	>10 times	31
	Total	185

Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model)**Figure 2. Measurement Model (Outer Model)**

Evaluation of the outer model was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the research constructs. The test results show that all indicators have an outer loading value above 0.70, thereby meeting the criteria for convergent validity. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted value for all constructs is above 0.50, indicating that the constructs are able to adequately explain indicator variance. The discriminant validity test using the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) shows that all values are below 0.90, meaning that each construct can be empirically distinguished. Furthermore, the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for all constructs are above 0.70, indicating that the research instrument has a good level of reliability.

Table 2 Outer Loading Values

Indicator	CL	CR	CRM	CS
CL1	0.871			
CL2	0.855			
CL3	0.853			
CL4	0.859			
CR1		0.818		
CR2		0.843		
CR3		0.848		
CR4		0.827		
CR5		0.819		

Indicator	CL	CR	CRM	CS
CRM1			0.846	
CRM2			0.847	
CRM3			0.843	
CRM4			0.854	
CS1				0.888
CS2				0.836
CS3				0.832
CS4				0.825

Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

Based on Table 2, all indicators for each construct have an outer loading value above 0.70. These results indicate that each indicator adequately reflects its construct, thereby meeting the criteria for convergent validity and being deemed suitable for use in the research model.

Table 3. AVE Values

Variable	AVE
Customer Loyalty (CL)	0.739
Company Reputation (CR)	0.691
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	0.718
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	0.715

Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

Table 3 shows that all constructs have an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value greater than 0.50. This indicates that each construct is able to explain more than 50 percent of its indicator variance, thereby meeting the criteria for convergent validity.

Table 4. HTMT Values

Variable	CL	CR	CRM	CS
CL				
CR	0.671			
CRM	0.552	0.658		
CS	0.759	0.688	0.621	

Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

The discriminant validity test results in Table 4 show that all Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values are below the threshold of 0.90. It can therefore be concluded that each construct in this study has a good level of discrimination and can be empirically distinguished.

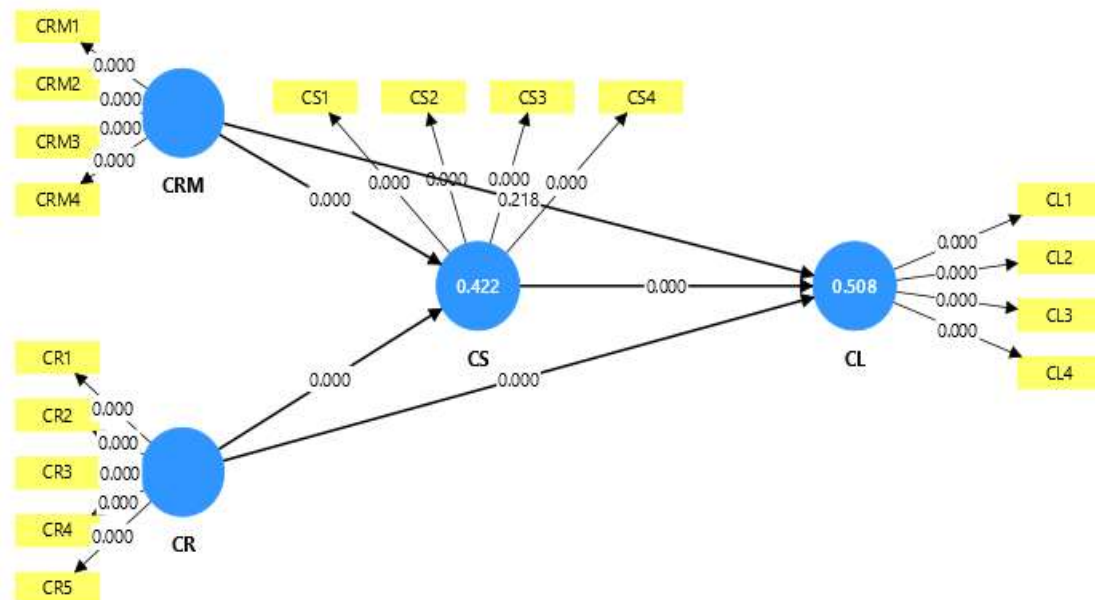
Table 5. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
CL	0.882	0.919
CR	0.888	0.918
CRM	0.869	0.911
CS	0.867	0.909

Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

Based on Table 5, all constructs have Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values above 0.70. These results indicate that the research instrument has a good level of internal consistency and can be considered reliable.

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)

**Figure 3. Structural Model (Inner Model)**

Evaluation of the structural model (inner model) in this study was conducted to assess the ability of the exogenous variables to explain the endogenous variables and to determine the magnitude of the effect of each construct in the research model. Testing of the inner model was conducted using the coefficient of determination (R-square) to examine the extent of variation in the endogenous variable that can be explained by the exogenous variables, and the effect size (F-square) value to measure the magnitude of the contribution of each exogenous variable to the endogenous variable. The use of both measures provides a comprehensive picture of the strength of the structural model and the practical significance of the relationships between the variables tested.

Table 6. R-Square Values

Endogenous Variable	R-square	R-square Adjusted
Customer Loyalty (CL)	0.508	0.500
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	0.422	0.415

Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

Based on Table 6, the R-square value for the variable Customer Loyalty (CL) is 0.508, with an R-square adjusted of 0.500. These results indicate that Customer Relationship Management, Company Reputation, and Customer Satisfaction are able to explain 50.8 percent of the variation in Customer Loyalty, while the remainder is explained by other variables outside the research model.

Meanwhile, the R-square value for the variable Customer Satisfaction (CS) is 0.422, with an R-square adjusted of 0.415. This indicates that Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation are able to explain 42.2 percent of the variation in Customer Satisfaction. Overall, the R-square values for both endogenous variables fall into the moderate category, indicating that the structural model has a fairly good explanatory ability.

Table 7. F-Square Values

Exogenous Variable	CL	CS
Company Reputation (CR)	0.082	0.222
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	0.008	0.095
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	0.247	–

Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

Based on Table 7, the results of the effect size (f^2) test show that Company Reputation has a moderate effect on Customer Satisfaction with an f^2 value of 0.222. Furthermore, Customer Satisfaction has a moderate effect on Customer Loyalty with an f^2 value of 0.247, indicating that customer satisfaction plays an important role in shaping customer loyalty.

Meanwhile, the effect of Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty has an f^2 value of 0.082, which falls into the small category. The effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Satisfaction is also in the small category, with an f^2 value of 0.095. The effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty has an f^2 value of 0.008, indicating that the effect of CRM on customer loyalty is very small and tends to be practically insubstantial.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is used to statistically verify the truth of a statement and to determine whether the statement is accepted or rejected (Haryono, 2016). In hypothesis testing, if the value of Sample Original ($O \geq 0$), t-statistic ≥ 1.96 and p-values $\leq 0,05$, then the hypothesis indicates a positive and significant relationship between the two variables tested (Haryono, 2016).

Table 8. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
Company Reputation → Customer Loyalty	0.270	0.273	0.067	4.046	0.000	Positive and significant

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
						(accepted)
Company Reputation → Customer Satisfaction	0.432	0.433	0.066	6.565	0.000	Positive and significant (accepted)
Customer Relationship Management → Customer Loyalty	0.068	0.069	0.068	1.015	0.310	Positive and not significant (rejected)
Customer Relationship Management → Customer Satisfaction	0.278	0.282	0.064	4.312	0.000	Positive and significant (accepted)
Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty	0.465	0.463	0.065	7.138	0.000	Positive and significant (accepted)

Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

Testing of the direct effect hypotheses in this study was conducted by analyzing the path coefficient values, including Original Sample (O), T Statistics, and P Values. The value of Original Sample (O) is used to indicate the direction of the effect between variables, where a positive value indicates a relationship in the same direction, while a negative value indicates an opposite relationship. Meanwhile, the significance of the effect is determined based on the P Values value, using a significance level of 5 percent.

Based on the test results, Company Reputation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty, as indicated by an Original Sample (O) of 0.270 and P Values of 0.000. In addition, Company Reputation also has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction with an Original Sample (O) of 0.432 and P Values of 0.000.

Furthermore, the test results show that Customer Relationship Management does not have a significant effect on Customer Loyalty, despite showing a positive direction of effect indicated by an Original Sample (O) of 0.068, but a P Values of 0.310 indicates that this effect is not statistically significant. However, Customer Relationship Management has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction, with an Original Sample (O) of 0.278 and P Values of 0.000.

Finally, Customer Satisfaction is shown to have a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty, as indicated by an Original Sample (O) of 0.465 and P Values of 0.000. These findings confirm that customer satisfaction plays an important role in shaping customer loyalty.

Table 9. Indirect Effect Testing

Variable	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
Company Reputation → Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty	0.202	0.201	0.038	5.342	0.000	Positive and significant (accepted)

Customer Relationship Management → Customer Satisfaction → Customer Loyalty	0.132	0.133	0.035	3.787	0.000	Positive and significant (accepted)
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Source: Processed by the Researcher (2026)

Testing of the indirect effect in this study was conducted to determine the role of Customer Satisfaction as a mediating variable in the relationship between the independent variables and Customer Loyalty. The value of Original Sample (O) is used to examine the direction of the indirect effect, while the significance of the effect is determined based on the P Values value, using a significance level of 5 percent.

Based on the test results, Customer Satisfaction is shown to significantly mediate the effect of Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty, as indicated by an Original Sample (O) of 0.202 and P Values of 0.000, so the hypothesis is accepted. In addition, Customer Satisfaction is also shown to significantly mediate the effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty, with an Original Sample (O) of 0.132 and P Values of 0.000, so the hypothesis is accepted.

These findings indicate that the increase in customer loyalty is not only directly influenced by company reputation and customer relationship management, but also through increased customer satisfaction as an important mediating mechanism.

3.2 Discussion

The results show that Company Reputation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty. These findings indicate that a good company reputation can build customer trust and confidence to continue using the company's services. In the context of logistics services, reputation becomes an important quality signal because customers cannot evaluate the service directly before using it. These findings are consistent with Resource-Based View Theory, which views reputation as a strategic and difficult-to-imitate intangible asset capable of creating sustainable competitive advantage through customer loyalty.

In addition, the results also show that Company Reputation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction. A good reputation shapes customers' positive expectations of the quality of service they will receive. When the service provided meets or exceeds those expectations, customers tend to feel satisfied. These findings confirm that company reputation not only functions as a differentiation tool but also plays a role in shaping customers' experience and evaluation of the service.

The next test results show that Customer Relationship Management does not have a significant direct effect on Customer Loyalty, despite showing a positive direction of effect. These findings indicate that customer relationship management is not yet strong enough to directly drive loyalty without customer satisfaction as an outcome of that interaction. In this context, CRM functions more as a long-term strategy whose impact on loyalty is not instant, but occurs through the psychological mechanism of customer satisfaction.

Nevertheless, Customer Relationship Management is shown to have a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction. These findings indicate that good implementation of CRM, such as effective communication, responsive complaint handling, and attention to customer needs, can increase customer satisfaction. This result supports Relationship Marketing Theory, which emphasizes that the quality of the relationship between a company and its customers is a key factor in creating satisfaction.

Furthermore, the results show that Customer Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty. Customers who feel satisfied with the service they receive tend to

intend to use the company's services again, give recommendations to others, and maintain long-term relationships with the company. These findings confirm the central role of customer satisfaction as the primary determinant of customer loyalty in the service industry.

Furthermore, the results of the indirect effect testing show that Customer Satisfaction fully mediates the effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty. This indicates that CRM alone cannot directly shape customer loyalty, but must first increase customer satisfaction. In addition, Customer Satisfaction also partially mediates the effect of Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty, showing that company reputation can affect loyalty both directly and through increased customer satisfaction.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that Customer Satisfaction plays a key role as a mediating variable in the relationship between customer relationship management strategy, company reputation, and customer loyalty. Therefore, logistics service companies need to prioritize increasing customer satisfaction by strengthening effective CRM strategies and consistently maintaining company reputation in order to create sustainable customer loyalty.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze the effect of Customer Relationship Management and Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfaction as a mediating variable among users of J&T Express delivery services in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The results show that Company Reputation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty and Customer Satisfaction. Meanwhile, Customer Relationship Management has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction, but does not have a significant direct effect on Customer Loyalty.

In addition, Customer Satisfaction is shown to have a positive and significant effect on Customer Loyalty. The results of the indirect effect testing show that Customer Satisfaction fully mediates the effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty, and partially mediates the effect of Company Reputation on Customer Loyalty. These findings confirm that customer satisfaction plays a central role in bridging customer relationship management strategy and company reputation in shaping customer loyalty.

Overall, this study concludes that increasing customer loyalty in logistics service companies does not only depend directly on customer relationship management strategy and company reputation, but is also strongly influenced by the company's ability to create customer satisfaction. Therefore, companies need to prioritize increasing customer satisfaction through effective customer relationship management and the sustained maintenance of company reputation.

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