



INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND SOR THEORY IN “TASTE” MARKET SNACKS IN INCREASING CUSTOMER LOYALTY

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ABSTRACT

Communication is one of the main foundations in running a business. Communication needs to be established to establish relationships between businesses and their customers (Fathurohman & Safitri, 2020). This is intended as a means to find out how to communicate with customers and create product sales targets that suit consumer desires. Based on the existing background, this research aims to analyze interpersonal communication using social theory in the "RASA" market snack in increasing customer loyalty. This research model is qualitative in the form of field research. Primary data is the main data obtained through interviews, namely interviews with the sales manager of the "RASA" market snacks. Furthermore, secondary data will be obtained from documentation whose function is to support research to make it more accurate. Then this research uses the stimulus organism response (SOR) theory approach. In this research is that interpersonal communication has a strategic role in business development, being an effective means of changing the attitude of someone who starts as a consumer and continues to become a customer. With the SOR theory, it can be seen that interpersonal communication can be used as a strategy in implementing communication to change attitudes from consumers to customers. Customer retention is also influenced by friendliness, trust and product quality, the first impression of which is the main thing in running a business.

Keywords: customer loyalty; interpersonal communication; market snacks; sor theory

INTRODUCTION

The existence of customers is the main factor in maintaining the resilience of a business. Without customers, a business will not be able to run and will end up going out of business (Christanto, 2020). So it is not strange if there is a saying that a customer or consumer is king (Wahdaniah & Sari, 2020). A business unit has the task of finding consumers (Business Queensland, 2023). Someone who carries out activities looking for consumers is often referred to as a sales person. A sales person is a person whose profession is to increase product sales by persuading customers to buy products at the company where they work. Meanwhile, sales is the activity or business of selling products or services. In general, the definition of sales is the job of selling a product or promoting goods with clear arguments and descriptions to consumers (Bimantoro, 2019).

Consumer trust is an important part of running a business venture. Building good relationships with consumers is aimed at gaining trust and turning consumers into loyal customers of the products we sell (Segara, 2019). Loyal customers will certainly purchase products repeatedly in the future (Manihuruk, 2023). A special strategy is needed to achieve the goal of converting consumers into customers, and the strategy can be done by formulating a communication model (Fathurohman & Safitri, 2020). Communication is one of the main foundations in running a business. Communication needs to be established to establish relationships between businesses and their customers (Fathurohman & Safitri, 2020). This is intended as a means to find out how to communicate with customers and create product sales targets that suit consumer desires.

Strong communication with customers can also make it easier to promote the brand in the future, develop more intense relationships with existing customers and better understand the things that are problems for customers (Adilla, 2023). There are various communication models that can be chosen to interact with customers, one of which is interpersonal communication. The interpersonal

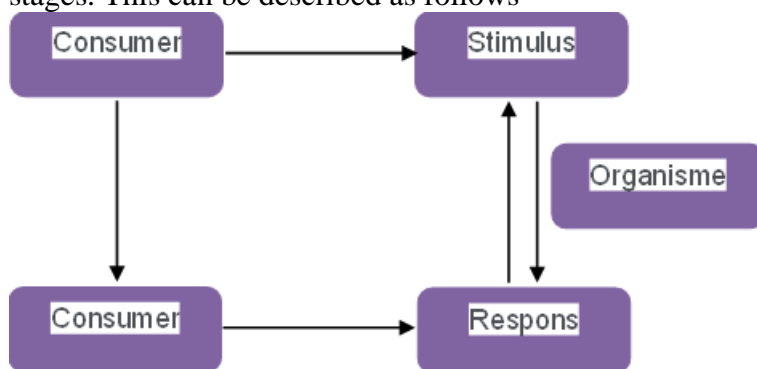
communication model is a person to person relationship (a relationship between one person and another person) (Anggraini et al., 2022). The use of this communication is an effort to change a person's attitudes, opinions, beliefs and behavior (Wati, 2017). Interpersonal communication allows for a dialogic communication process so it is felt that this type of communication is appropriate for interactions with customers. The existence of interpersonal communication has a strategic role for business development that serves consumers in an individual model. If interpersonal communication is applied well to customers, it will form loyal customers (DeVito, 2016). On the other hand, if interpersonal communication is implemented poorly, it will result in disloyal customers. Based on the existing background, this research aims to analyze interpersonal communication using social theory in the "RASA" market snack in increasing customer loyalty.

METHOD

This research model is qualitative in the form of field research. Researchers went into the field and then made observations about the symptoms that occurred in the surrounding environment. Data in research is divided into two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the main data obtained through interviews, namely interviews with the sales manager of the "RASA" market snacks. Furthermore, secondary data will be obtained from documentation whose function is to support research to make it more accurate. Then this research uses the stimulus organism response (SOR) theory approach. This theory states that behavior can change based on the level of quality that interacts with the organism, meaning that the impact of the media on individuals must be monitored with attention (Azura & Lubis, 2022).

RESULT

Based on the results of research conducted at the "RASA" Snack Market, several findings were found. The findings are: interpersonal communication carried out using the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) communication theory strategy in this business venture succeeded in changing the attitude of someone who was initially a consumer and then became a regular customer. The interpersonal communication model at the "RASA" Snack Market is implemented as best as possible for business development. The following are the results of the researcher's interview with the manager of the business owner "RASA" explaining the stages of forming loyal customers through several stages. This can be described as follows



Picture 1. Flowchat of the Flow of Changes from Consumers to Customers at the "RASA" Snack Market

The flow chat above is a process of changing stages from consumer to customer which is based on the theory of behavior change, namely SOR. The flow chat above is a process of changing stages from consumer to customer which is based on the theory of behavior change, namely SOR. At the first impression stage (first meeting) between "RASA" sellers and consumers try to always give a positive

impression. First impressions in interpersonal communication are the initial key to the continuation of good and bad interactions between sellers and buyers. This can be shown by the frequency of the number of customers who purchase food there. The previous month I never bought food there, after the following month I often bought food at RASA. The data can be seen over the following three month period:

Table 1.

Number of Customers for "RASA" Market Snacks for the Period of June, July, August 2022

Time	Number of New Consumers	Number of Customers
June 2022	69	57
July 2022	75	72
August 2022	88	83

Then stimulus in the form of friendliness, trust and product quality that is carried out consistently can change a person's attitude, in this context the change from consumer to customer.

DISCUSSION

Customer loyalty is the loyalty of customers to a product or service at a company because of good quality and service, so that buyers will only use and choose that company's products (Anggraini et al., 2022). Consumers with high loyalty will be loyal to one brand regardless of products or services from competitors (Yuana & Sutarso, 2021). One way to get loyal customers is to implement good communication. Communication plays an important role in building relationships between companies and customers and influencing purchasing decisions (Salim et al., 2022). So in communication, the message conveyed must be relevant, interesting, clear and consistent with the brand and product identity (Dhifa et al., 2023). Marketing communications aims to inform and convince the target market about the value, benefits and superiority of the products or services offered. Through this communication, companies try to build a strong brand image, expand market share and encourage purchasing actions (Santoso & Ardiyansyah, 2023).

The interpersonal communication model at the "RASA" Snack Market is implemented as best as possible for business development. This was conveyed by Agus S. Handoyo as sales manager of "RASA". Interpersonal communication or interpersonal communication is communication that occurs between two or more people, which is usually not formally arranged. In interpersonal communication, each participant uses all elements of the communication process (Aestetika, 2018). One step that is believed to attract customers is the first impression. Therefore, the first impression at the "RASA" Snack Market is the main concern. The first impression is part of the stimulus produced by the "RASA" seller to consumers. The form is to provide friendliness which is manifested by smiling at consumers and greeting consumers in smooth Javanese language. This is also included in the communication aspect. In this research, employees used one language, namely Javanese, to serve buyers. This is used considering that Javanese is the language of everyday communication for consumers. Examples of Javanese language used are as follows: *pripun Ibu Kabaripun, Monggo Badhe Tumbas Menopokulo Saged Bantu*. After providing hospitality to consumers, consumers are given trust. The form is that consumers can immediately pick up the food they buy themselves. Then they just report what they bought without having to count or check them one by one with "RASA".

Apart from that, it also maintains the quality of the market snack products sold. By collaborating on the three things above, namely: friendliness, trust and consistent product standards, this is a strategy in shaping consumer behavior to become loyal (permanent) customers. This is in line with the stimulus-organism-response theory, if consumers are given a stimulus (stimulus)-organism (friendliness and trust)-response (change in attitude). Therefore, the mechanism used by the "RASA" Snack Market in forming loyal customers is in accordance with the S-O-R theory. The S-O-R theory stands for Stimulus (message) – Organism (communicant/recipient) – Response. In this theory, the meaning of O is the role of cognition in which individuals through reasoning or mental processes acquire, store,

obtain and change knowledge about needs and products. In this theory, if an organism is given a certain stimulus, it will cause certain behavior, just as a special reaction will be obtained from a special stimulus, so that someone can expect and estimate the suitability between the message and the recipient's reaction. In reviewing information, individuals will go through new attitudes which are called three important variables, namely attention, understanding and acceptance. Next, the individual will respond or change attitudes depending on the process towards the individual. Stimulus is information given to the communicant that can be accepted or rejected based on the response to the stimulus that has been delivered. From the processing of this information, there will be an understanding and acceptance of the opposite possibility. Attitude changes can occur in the form of cognitive, affective and conative changes (Ohorella et al., 2022). Based on the S-O-R model, it can be assumed that if the stimulus has received the attention of the organism (accepted), it will understand this stimulus and proceed to the next process. After that, the organism processes the stimulus so that there is a willingness to act for the stimulus it has received (behave). So that it creates an action effect based on the response to the stimulus that has been given to the recipient (Rahmadanti et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of the research, it can be concluded that interpersonal communication has a strategic role in business development, especially businesses that are person to person (serving individuals). Interpersonal communication is an effective means of changing the attitude of someone who started as a consumer and continues to become a customer. The stimulus organism response (SOR) communication theory can be used as a strategy in implementing communication to change attitudes from consumers to customers. Apart from that, a friendly attitude, trust and product quality that is carried out consistently to consumers will provide a positive response to the seller and the first impression is the initial key in forming the consumer's initial perception of the seller. Therefore, first impressions are the first and foremost thing in running a business venture.

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