

Customer Relationship Management, Brand Positioning, and After-Sales Service of Selected Philippine Automotive Dealership Sector: Inputs to Consumer Loyalty Programs

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100700935>

Received: 06 August 2026; Accepted: 12 August 2026; Published: 18 August 2026

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the Customer Relationship Management, Brand Positioning, and After-Sales Service of selected Philippine automotive dealerships as a basis for developing Inputs to a Consumer Loyalty Program. Specifically, it examined how managers, sales employees, and clients evaluated these areas in terms of customer relationship management dimensions—personalization of services, customer data analytics, communication channels, loyalty programs, complaint handling systems, and financing support; brand positioning factors—brand image and identity, pricing strategies, market segmentation, advertising and promotion, product differentiation, and corporate reputation; and after-sales service components—warranty and guarantees, service center availability, spare parts management, technical support quality, customer feedback systems, and service delivery speed. The study also determined significant differences among the three respondent groups, identified the significant relationships among the three variables, analyzed the facilitating and hindering factors encountered, and evaluated the suitability, acceptability, and feasibility of the proposed Inputs to Consumer Loyalty Programs.

Keywords: Customer Relationship Management, Brand Positioning, and After-Sales Service, selected automotive dealerships, Consumer Loyalty Program, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The global automotive industry has become highly competitive and customer-driven, with dealerships increasingly focusing on customer relationship management, brand positioning, and after-sales service as key determinants of long-term business success. Both global and local markets continue to emphasize personalized service, consistent branding, and reliable post-purchase support as essential drivers of customer loyalty. In the Philippines, the automotive dealership sector operates under regulatory frameworks such as the Consumer Act of the Philippines (Republic Act No. 7394), the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), and the policies of the Department of Trade and Industry, which collectively mandate fair trade practices, data protection, and quality service delivery. However, dealerships across the country vary significantly in their implementation of customer relationship management systems, branding strategies, and after-sales services due to differences in resources, technology adoption, and management capabilities. Despite the growing adoption of customer-centric approaches, many dealerships continue to face challenges such as inconsistent service delivery, weak complaint handling, limited spare parts availability, and gaps in brand differentiation, which result in varying levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty. While previous studies have separately examined customer relationship management, branding, and after-sales services, limited research has integrated these three factors within the Philippine automotive dealership context. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive assessment involving managers, sales employees, and clients to identify the facilitating and hindering factors affecting dealership performance and to support the development of effective consumer loyalty programs that enhance competitiveness and long-term customer retention.

LITERATURE-BASED RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The collective findings on Customer Relationship Management (CRM) across numerous local and international researchers emphasize the critical intersection of data analytics, staff behavior, and customer satisfaction. Local operational perspectives and industry insights highlight how modern automotive platforms leverage real-time metrics to capture precise consumer preferences and online behaviors (AutoDeal, 2023; Reyes, 2022). This thematic view aligns directly with global studies demonstrating that systematic tracking across interactive channels significantly optimizes service personalization and mitigates early showroom friction (Bigdeli, 2024; Liao & Wongkumchai, 2025). Furthermore, empirical data from Philippine retail sectors confirms that frontline interpersonal factors, such as staff politeness, function as vital facilitators that lower complaint handling frequencies (Lopez, 2023; Cornelio & Mahusay, 2024). When dealerships integrate digital transparency with automated complaint networks, they successfully transition transactional visits into high-value relationships (Satapathy & Nayak, 2025; Wang, 2024). Conversely, slow processing times during inquiries or data logging serve as primary hindering factors that heavily compromise institutional trust (Cornelio, 2024; Shabankareh & Sarhadi, 2023). Ultimately, the literature proves that a robust CRM framework acts as a foundational engine necessary to anticipate user needs. Therefore, combining digital infrastructure with empathetic frontline personnel establishes an operational baseline capable of securing long-term customer retention.

Subsequently, the structural synthesis of brand positioning highlights that establishing a strong corporate identity requires a deliberate alignment of pricing strategies, product differentiation, and targeted marketing campaigns. Local empirical evidence indicates that leveraging digital platforms for creative advertising significantly enhances top-of-mind brand awareness among modern car buyers (Gepte, Sinio, & Villa, 2024; Scott, 2022). This is strongly supported by international scholars who argue that projecting a unique, socially responsible brand image provides an invaluable asset during intense market contraction (Park & Lim, 2024; Terason, Zhao, & Pattanayanon, 2021). Moreover, the literature underscores that arbitrary pricing or fragmented promotional channels confuse target markets and immediately devalue perceived product quality (Crismundo, 2022; Smith, 2023). Successful dealerships rely on regional expansion and detailed market segmentation to protect their local market share from emerging competitors (Pilapil, 2023; Nguyen & Simkin, 2023). Strategic product differentiation must highlight advanced vehicle technologies and unique features to justify value-based pricing architectures (Inquirer Mobility, 2023; Rai, Singh, & Kumar, 2023). The collective research concludes that corporate reputation remains highly vulnerable to inconsistent branding messages across branch networks. Consequently, clear positioning frameworks serve as an essential marketing shield that converts public interest into deep corporate loyalty.

On the other hand, the cross-examination of after-sales service literature proves that post-purchase technical support quality and workshop logistics dictate long-term client loyalty. Local structural equation modeling demonstrates that service delivery speed and immediate parts availability are the strongest predictors of post-purchase consumer satisfaction (Balinado et al., 2021; Terre & Almario, 2024). Global operational reviews reinforce this by showing that long wait times and poor spare parts management rapidly destroy long-term brand trust (Amro, Rehman, & Ali, 2025; Hernandez, 2023). To mitigate these disruptions, dealerships must expand service center availability and implement automated tracking systems to optimize repair bay workflows (Cruz, 2024; Walker & Chen, 2024). Furthermore, providing comprehensive warranties and clear customer guarantees significantly alleviates buyer anxiety regarding vehicle lifecycle maintenance (Baker & Nguyen, 2024; Harris & Lopez, 2024). Integrating digital customer feedback systems allows workshop managers to identify repair errors and adjust mechanical workflows in real-time (Mendoza, 2023; Hernandez, 2023). The overarching consensus reveals that a purely sales-driven mindset must be replaced by a holistic servitization framework to protect the dealer's long-term asset. Thus, upgrading technical competencies and workshop speed forms the ultimate safeguard for protecting an automotive brand's operational reputation.

Finalizing the structural integration of all core variables culminates in the systematic evaluation of strategic outputs and consumer loyalty program feasibility. The reviewed literature establishes that customer relationship management, brand positioning, and after-sales service function as deeply interrelated organizational pillars (Turco, Juevesa, & Galigao, 2021; Harrison, 2022). A breakdown in any single sub-variable directly undermines the suitability, acceptability, and technical feasibility of future customer retention schemes. Furthermore,

understanding digital engagement metrics provides a valuable baseline for developing modernized consumer loyalty programs that match evolving consumer expectations. For an intervention program to be deemed acceptable by corporate executives and clients, it must offer transparent, easily claimable rewards without creating administrative strain (Ramirez, 2024; Hernandez, 2023). Technical feasibility further mandates that the firm possess the necessary digital assets, data analytics infrastructure, and ongoing staff training capabilities (Kotler, 2022; Singh & Kumar, 2024). When these operational safeguards are properly aligned, the resulting loyalty ecosystem functions as a sustainable engine for continuous corporate growth. Therefore, automotive managers must adopt integrated management approaches to ensure all departmental workflows systematically reinforce overall consumer devotion.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design, which, according to Creswell (2021), is used to systematically describe existing conditions, characteristics, and relationships without manipulating variables. This design was appropriate for the research as it enabled the assessment and comparison of Customer Relationship Management, Brand Positioning, and After-Sales Service in selected Philippine automotive dealerships based on the perceptions of managers, sales employees, and clients. The study involved a total of 401 respondents composed of 75 managers, 165 sales employees, and 161 clients from selected major dealership companies, including Ford, Geely, Honda, Hyundai, Isuzu, Mitsubishi, Morris Garage, Nissan, Subaru, and Toyota, selected through purposive sampling to ensure that all participants had direct experience with dealership operations and customer service transactions. Data were gathered using a validated, researcher-made questionnaire organized into eight parts covering demographic profile, customer relationship management, brand positioning, after-sales service, facilitating and hindering factors, and the evaluation of the proposed consumer loyalty program in terms of suitability, acceptability, and feasibility.

The instrument was validated by academic experts from the Graduate School and industry practitioners from the automotive dealership sector to ensure content relevance and measurement clarity. Data collection was conducted through formally secured permissions, face-to-face distribution and retrieval of questionnaires, and systematic encoding and statistical treatment of responses. Statistical tools employed included frequency and percentage for respondent profiling, weighted mean for measuring levels of assessment, ranking for prioritizing indicators, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for determining significant differences among respondent groups, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation for measuring relationships among variables, and the t-test for testing the significance of correlation coefficients, all interpreted using standardized Likert scales appropriate to each variable category.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The study involved 401 respondents composed of 75 managers, 165 sales employees, and 161 clients from selected Philippine automotive dealership. The selected dealerships included the following branches: Ford Global City, 32nd Street Corner 4th Avenue, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City; Geely North EDSA, 1031 EDSA, Quezon City; Honda Quezon Avenue, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City; Hyundai Commonwealth, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City; Isuzu Manila, United Nations Avenue, Manila; Mitsubishi Motors Pasig, Eulogio Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Pasig City; Morris Garage Greenhills, Ortigas Avenue, San Juan City; Nissan North EDSA, EDSA, Quezon City; Subaru Manila Bay, Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard, Pasay City; and Toyota Cubao, EDSA corner P. Tuazon Boulevard, Quezon City. These respondents were selected because they were directly involved in dealership operations and customer service transactions, making them capable of providing relevant assessments regarding the variables under investigation.

Customer Relationship Management

The respondents generally assessed customer relationship management as highly evident across all dimensions. The assessment of customer relationship management across all sub-variables, namely personalization of services, customer data analytics, communication channels, loyalty programs, complaint handling systems, and

financing support, was rated as Highly Evident. Among the three respondent groups, managers obtained the highest grand mean, followed by sales employees, and clients, all rated as Highly Evident.

The selected Philippine automotive dealerships demonstrated strong and consistently implemented customer relationship management practices across all sub-variables, with financing support identified as the most highly evident dimension, reflecting the dealerships' capacity to provide clear, structured, and customer-oriented financial facilitation. Loyalty programs, while still rated as Highly Evident, emerged as the area requiring further attention and reinforcement.

Brand Positioning

Brand Positioning was likewise assessed as highly evident by the respondents. The assessment of brand positioning across all sub-variables, namely brand image and identity, pricing strategies, market segmentation, advertising and promotion, product differentiation, and corporate reputation, was rated as Highly Evident. Sales employees obtained the highest grand mean, while both managers and clients all rated as Highly Evident.

The assessment of brand positioning across all sub-variables, namely brand image and identity, pricing strategies, market segmentation, advertising and promotion, product differentiation, and corporate reputation, was rated as Highly Evident with a grand mean of 4.44. Sales employees obtained the highest grand mean of 4.48, while both managers and clients obtained a grand mean of 4.41, all rated as Highly Evident. Brand image and identity ranked highest with a composite weighted mean of 4.50, while market segmentation and product differentiation both ranked lowest with a composite weighted mean of 4.37.

Significant Difference in the assessment of the managers, sales employees, and clients

The comparative assessment on customer relationship management of selected Philippine automotive dealership sectors among the three groups of respondents exceeded the critical value of 3.35, indicating significant differences and leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

The comparative assessment of Brand Positioning among managers, sales employees, and clients in selected Philippine automotive dealerships is generally not significant, as all computed F-values were lower than the critical value of 3.35 at the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the failure to reject the null hypothesis across all indicators.

Assessment of the managers, sales employees, and clients as the after-sales services of selected Philippine Automotive Dealership Sector.

The assessment of after-sales services was rated as Highly Evident, with a grand mean of 4.43.

The overall assessment of after-sales services across all sub-variables, namely warranty and guarantees, service center availability, spare parts management, technical support quality, customer feedback systems, and service delivery speed, was rated as Highly Evident with a grand mean of 4.43. Sales employees obtained the highest grand mean of 4.53, followed by managers with 4.39, and clients with 4.36, all rated as Highly Evident. Service center availability and customer feedback systems both ranked highest with a composite weighted mean of 4.45, while spare parts management and service delivery speed both ranked lowest with a composite weighted mean of 4.40.

Relationship between Customer Relationship Management, Brand Positioning, and After Sales Service:

The findings reveal that all computed t-values, ranging from 4.24195 to 4.24247, are higher than the critical value, indicating significant relationships between customer relationship management and after-sales services across all indicators. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected in all areas. Correlation between Customer Relationship Management and After-Sales Service — The correlation analysis conducted at the 0.05 level of significance with $df = 18$ and a critical value of 1.734 revealed that all six CRM sub-variables — personalization of services, customer data analytics, communication channels, loyalty programs, complaint handling systems, and financing support — obtained r-values of 0.99, interpreted as Very Strong Correlation. All computed t-values

ranged from 4.24195 to 4.24247, exceeding the critical value. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected across all indicators, indicating significant relationships between customer relationship management and after-sales service.

The correlation between Brand Positioning and After-Sale Services across six indicators, namely Brand Image and Identity ($r = 0.99$), Pricing Strategies ($r = 1.00$), Market Segmentation ($r = 0.99$), Advertising and Promotion ($r = 0.99$), Product Differentiation ($r = 0.99$), and Corporate Reputation ($r = 0.99$). The analysis was conducted using $df = 18$ at 0.05 level of significance with a critical value of 1.734. The findings reveal that all computed t-values, ranging from 4.24229 to 4.24255, exceed the critical value, indicating significant relationships between brand positioning and after-sales services across all indicators. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected in all areas. The correlation analysis conducted at the 0.05 level of significance with $df = 18$ and a critical value of 1.734 revealed that five brand positioning sub-variables — brand image and identity, market segmentation, advertising and promotion, product differentiation, and corporate reputation — obtained r-values of 0.99, interpreted as Very Strong Correlation, while pricing strategies obtained a Perfect Correlation of $r = 1.00$. All computed t-values ranged from 4.24229 to 4.24255, exceeding the critical value. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected across all indicators, indicating significant relationships between brand positioning and after-sales service.

Facilitating Factors

Facilitating factors Encountered in Customer Relationship Management, Brand Positioning, and After Sales Service

The respondents assessed the facilitating factors encountered in customer relationship management, brand positioning, and after sales service which is interpreted as Highly Facilitating.

The assessment of facilitating factors encountered in customer relationship management was rated as Highly Facilitating with an overall weighted mean of 4.39. Accurate and accessible customer data ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.44, followed by well-trained and customer-oriented staff with 4.41, management support for customer-centric practices with 4.36, and availability of integrated CRM systems with 4.34.

The assessment of facilitating factors encountered on brand positioning was rated as Highly Facilitating, with an overall weighted mean of 4.46. Clear brand values and positioning strategy ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.48, while consistent branding and marketing strategies and effective use of advertising and digital media both ranked second and third, each with a weighted mean of 4.45.

The assessment of facilitating factors encountered on after-sales service was rated as Highly Facilitating with an overall weighted mean of 4.47. Established feedback and service improvement mechanisms ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.49, followed by accessible and well-equipped service centers with 4.48, and availability of genuine spare parts and technical expertise with 4.43.

Hindering Factors

Hindering factors Encountered in Customer Relationship Management, Brand Positioning, and After Sales Service

The assessment of hindering factors encountered in customer relationship management was rated as hindering with an overall weighted mean of 4.00. Incomplete or inaccurate customer data ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.05, followed by inconsistent management support for CRM initiatives with 4.01, limited CRM system capability with 3.98, and inadequate staff training in CRM practices with 3.96.

The assessment of hindering factors encountered on brand positioning was rated as hindering with an overall weighted mean of 3.97. Weak or inconsistent brand communication ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.99, followed by limited market research and competitor analysis with 3.98, and insufficient investment in branding and marketing activities with 3.93.

The assessment of hindering factors encountered in after-sales service was rated as hindering with an overall weighted mean of 4.08. Limited availability of genuine spare parts ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.12, followed by inefficient service delivery and feedback response systems with 4.08, and insufficient technical expertise and workforce capacity with 4.03.

Proposed Inputs to Consumer Loyalty Programs

Based on the findings, The Proposed Inputs to Consumer Loyalty Program were developed and formulated based on the results of the study. The program covers the period 2027–2030 and presents a comprehensive and integrated framework incorporating the following components: key results areas, objectives, strategies, activities, persons involved, sources of funding, implementation timelines, and performance indicators. The proposed program addresses the identified strengths, gaps, and improvement areas in customer relationship management, brand positioning, and after-sales service to strengthen customer retention and long-term loyalty in the Philippine automotive dealership sector.

Suitability, acceptability, and feasibility of the proposed Inputs to Consumer Loyalty Programs

The proposed inputs to consumer loyalty programs were rated as Highly Suitable with an overall weighted mean of 4.38. Sales employees gave the highest assessment with a weighted mean of 4.46, followed by clients with 4.37, and managers with 4.30.

The proposed inputs to consumer loyalty programs were rated as Highly Acceptable with an overall weighted mean of 4.40. Sales employees gave the highest assessment with a weighted mean of 4.48, followed by clients with 4.41, and managers with 4.30.

The proposed inputs to consumer loyalty programs were rated as Highly Feasible with an overall weighted mean of 4.34. Managers gave the highest assessment with a weighted mean of 4.38, followed by clients with 4.35, and sales employees with 4.29.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The selected Philippine automotive dealership sector demonstrated strong customer relationship management and brand positioning practices.
2. The comparative assessments of managers, sales employees, and clients revealed differing perceptions regarding customer relationship management, while relatively similar perceptions were observed in terms of brand positioning.
3. The after-sales services of the selected Philippine automotive dealership sector were assessed as highly existent.
4. There is a significant relationship among customer relationship management, brand positioning, and after-sales services.
5. The facilitating factors related to customer relationship management, brand positioning, and after-sales services were highly contributing, while the hindering factors were assessed as constraining.
6. The proposed inputs to consumer loyalty programs were comprehensively developed based on the findings of the study, incorporating key result areas, objectives, strategies, activities, responsible personnel, funding sources, implementation timelines, and performance indicators.
7. The proposed inputs to consumer loyalty programs were found to be highly appropriate, highly admissible, and highly executable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Automotive dealerships may continuously strengthen customer relationship management practices by enhancing loyalty programs, improving customer communication systems, utilizing customer data analytics, and providing more personalized services to improve customer engagement and long-term loyalty.
2. Dealership management may sustain and further improve brand positioning strategies through stronger brand identity development, strategic advertising and promotion, competitive pricing, product differentiation, and consistent corporate reputation management to maintain competitiveness in the automotive market.
3. Management may conduct regular consultations, coordination meetings, and feedback sessions among managers, sales employees, and clients to address differing perceptions regarding customer relationship management practices and ensure service consistency across dealership operations.
4. Automotive dealerships may continuously improve after-sales services by strengthening warranty management, technical support quality, spare parts availability, service center accessibility, service delivery speed, and customer feedback systems to further enhance customer satisfaction and retention.
5. Dealership administrators may integrate customer relationship management, brand positioning, and after-sales service initiatives into a unified consumer loyalty strategy in order to strengthen customer trust, encourage repeat purchases, and sustain long-term business performance.
6. Management may address the identified hindering factors by allocating adequate resources, improving operational systems, enhancing employee training programs, and implementing continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to minimize operational inefficiencies and service-related concerns. The following are specifically suggested;

Hindering Factors on Customer Relationship Management

- 6.1.1 Automotive dealerships may strengthen data management systems by implementing centralized and automated CRM databases, conducting regular data validation procedures, and ensuring accurate customer information updating to improve data-driven decision-making and personalized customer engagement.
- 6.1.2 Dealership management may provide stronger leadership commitment by establishing clear CRM policies, conducting regular monitoring of CRM implementation, and integrating customer-centered strategies into organizational goals and operational practices.
- 6.1.3 Dealerships may invest in updated and integrated CRM technologies that can efficiently track customer transactions, service histories, communication records, and customer preferences to improve operational efficiency and customer relationship management.
- 6.1.4 Dealerships may continuously conduct employee training programs, workshops, and skills enhancement activities focusing on CRM utilization, customer service excellence, and personalized client engagement.

Hindering Factors on Brand Positioning

- 6.2.1 Dealerships may establish unified branding and communication guidelines across all marketing channels, promotional materials, and customer touchpoints to strengthen brand consistency and improve customer recognition.
- 6.2.2 Dealerships may conduct regular market studies, customer preference analysis, and competitor benchmarking activities to improve strategic brand positioning, market responsiveness, and competitive differentiation.
- 6.2.3 Dealership management may allocate adequate resources and budget for branding campaigns, digital marketing initiatives, promotional activities, and public relations programs to strengthen brand visibility and market presence.

Hindering Factors on After-Sales Services

- 6.3.1 Dealerships may strengthen supplier partnerships, improve inventory forecasting systems, and maintain adequate stock levels of critical spare parts to avoid service delays and improve customer satisfaction.
- 6.3.2 Dealerships may improve operational workflows, establish faster customer response mechanisms, and implement automated service tracking and feedback management systems to enhance service efficiency and customer trust.
- 6.3.3 Dealerships may provide continuous technical training, certification programs, and workforce development initiatives to improve employee competencies, diagnostic accuracy, repair efficiency, and overall service reliability.
7. The proposed inputs to consumer loyalty programs may be adopted and implemented by automotive dealerships as part of their strategic improvement initiatives to strengthen customer satisfaction, operational effectiveness, and long-term consumer loyalty.
8. Future researchers may conduct similar studies focusing on other automotive sectors or additional variables such as digital transformation, customer behavioral analysis, service innovation, and emerging automotive technologies to further enrich the body of knowledge related to consumer loyalty and dealership management practices.

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