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The Influence of Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effects of Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty among consumers of Babi Panggang Karo (BPK) at several BPK restaurants in Medan City. The study employed a quantitative approach with a causal-associative research design. Data were collected through a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire from 120 respondents selected using purposive sampling. Each respondent evaluated local food authenticity, perceived value, and loyalty with reference to the same BPK restaurant, so loyalty in this study refers to loyalty to the BPK restaurant evaluated. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the assistance of SPSS, including classical assumption tests, t-test, F-test, coefficient of determination, and variable contribution analysis.The results indicate that Local Food Authenticity has a positive and significant effect on Traditional Local Food Loyalty, with a t-value of 5.017 and a significance level of 0.000. Perceived Value also has a positive and significant effect, with a t-value of 3.790 and a significance level of 0.000. The overall regression model containing both variables is also statistically significant, as indicated by an F-value of 18.609 and a significance level of 0.000. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.241 indicates that the two variables explain 24.1% of the variation in consumer loyalty. In this sample, Local Food Authenticity shows a numerically larger standardized coefficient and contribution than Perceived Value.These findings highlight the importance of maintaining the authenticity of Babi Panggang Karo while simultaneously enhancing the value perceived by consumers in fostering consumer loyalty to BPK restaurants.

Keywords: *Consumer Loyalty; Local Food Authenticity; Perceived Value; Traditional Food; Traditional Local Food Loyalty*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's food and beverage sector has become crowded, and consumers can switch between eating places with little effort. Loyalty is central to the survival of culinary businesses, yet repeat purchases do not always signal a firm preference for one outlet. The problem is sharper for traditional food, whose value lies not only in taste but also in the cultural identity and heritage it carries across generations. Babi Panggang Karo (BPK), a dish closely tied to the traditions of the Karo people and now sold through many restaurants, illustrates this tension well.

Medan, with its ethnically diverse culinary scene, offers a clear setting. BPK is served there by many restaurants, among them RM BPK Tesalonika, RM BPK Haleluya, RM BPK Ingetenta, RM BPK Sembiring, RM BPK Rika, and RM BPK Olakisat. RM BPK Tesalonika has operated since 2001 with a family recipe that, according to its owner, has not fundamentally changed. Because these restaurants compete for a largely similar customer base, loyalty is a pressing practical issue.

Owners report that visits and sales nonetheless fluctuate, which they attribute to competition and to consumers tiring of similar menus. A preliminary survey of 30 consumers at RM BPK Tesalonika points in the same direction. Sixty percent of respondents expressed a strong intention to eat BPK there again, but when asked whether they would still prefer this restaurant if BPK from other outlets were available, 66.7% chose the neutral option. Frequent visits did not translate into a clear preference over competitors, so loyalty to a BPK restaurant cannot be assumed to be uniform across its dimensions.

Loyalty theory anticipates this gap. Oliver (1999) describes loyalty as a deeply held commitment to rebuy a preferred product despite situational influences and competitors' efforts to induce switching. Dick & Basu (1994) add that true loyalty combines a favorable relative attitude with repeat patronage, rather than repetition driven by habit or limited options. Loyalty to BPK restaurants therefore has to be examined through attitudes and resistance to alternatives, not visit frequency alone.

Two consumer evaluations may explain why this commitment is uneven. The first is Local Food Authenticity, the perception that a food genuinely reflects the characteristics of its origin and traditions (Zhang et al., 2019). In the preliminary survey, responses on ingredients, preparation, and taste varied, but 86% and 90% of respondents strongly disagreed with two statements linking BPK to Karo culinary culture. Many consumers apparently do not yet connect the dish strongly with the culture from which it emerged. The literature is also unsettled: Zhang et al. (2019) found no direct effect of authenticity on the loyalty of gastronomic tourists in China, only an effect through satisfaction.

The second evaluation is Perceived Value, which Zeithaml (1988) defines as the consumer's overall judgment of a product's utility based on what is received relative to what is given up. Half of the preliminary respondents (50%) felt that BPK was worth the money paid, yet only 13.3% agreed that its benefits made the purchase worthwhile overall, while 56.7% remained neutral. Evidence on the value and loyalty link is also mixed. Grewal et al. (2003) see perceived value as the bridge between price perceptions and long-term loyalty, whereas Renaldi et al. (2024) found that price and emotional value, but not quality value, affected the loyalty of Indonesian food delivery users.

These studies leave several distinct gaps. The first is contextual and concerns the population studied. Research on local food authenticity has mostly involved tourists, such as Zhang et al. (2019) in China and Hardjanti (2019) with Western tourists in Indonesian ethnic restaurants, while local consumers who eat traditional food routinely have received far less attention. Loyalty studies in Indonesia also rely on other antecedents: product and service quality in East Java's traditional restaurants (Susanti, 2014), and, in the IBEC proceedings, CRM and product quality in a coffee shop (Roseline et al., 2025), digital marketing and customer experience (Killiam & Lazuardi, 2024), and financial technology and green marketing at a Starbucks outlet in Medan (Lie & Manik, 2025). None treats cultural authenticity as a driver of loyalty. The second gap comes from contradictory findings, as the direct effects of authenticity and perceived value on loyalty vary with the dimension and context examined (Renaldi et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2019). The third is methodological, since earlier studies were often confined to one location or one dish.

This study tests Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value together as predictors of Traditional Local Food Loyalty among routine BPK consumers. Its contribution does not rest on a new location alone. It moves the authenticity question from tourists to local consumers, so the unresolved direct path reported by Zhang et al. (2019) can be re-examined in a different consumption context. It measures loyalty as a multidimensional construct that includes resistance to alternatives, the dimension behind the preference

problem in the preliminary data, and it draws respondents from several restaurants rather than one. The study aims to analyze the partial and simultaneous effects of the two predictors on Traditional Local Food Loyalty among BPK consumers in Medan City, extending traditional food loyalty research beyond tourism and giving BPK operators evidence on whether authenticity and perceived value are worth pursuing together.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditional Local Food Loyalty

Loyalty has been approached from behavioral and attitudinal perspectives. Backman & Crompton (1991) treat it as a combination of repeat behavior and a positive attitude, Oliver (1999) stresses commitment to rebuy despite switching pressures, and Dick & Basu (1994) relate relative attitude to repeat patronage, with resistance to competing offers as one of its signs. Zeithaml et al. (1996) view loyalty through its behavioral consequences, especially positive word of mouth and continued use. This study defines Traditional Local Food Loyalty as a consumer's commitment to keep eating a particular traditional food at a specific restaurant, together with a favorable attitude shown in resistance to alternatives and willingness to spread positive information.

Empirical work shows that loyalty in food settings has varied antecedents. Zhang et al. (2019) found that tourists' loyalty toward local food depended on satisfaction rather than directly on authenticity, and Susanti (2014) found that product and service quality shaped loyalty to traditional restaurants in East Java through satisfaction. In the IBEC proceedings, Roseline et al. (2025) reported that CRM and product quality influenced loyalty to Nou Coffee, whereas Aurelia & Manik (2025) found that brand image, but not rational content marketing, affected loyalty to a local soap brand in Medan. Not every plausible antecedent translates into loyalty.

The loyalty construct is measured with four indicators. Re-patronage intention (Y1), positive word of mouth (Y2), and recommendation (Y3) are adapted from Zhang et al. (2019), while resistance to alternatives (Y4) follows Dick and Basu's (1994) idea that loyal consumers resist the pull of competing products. Together they cover behavioral intention, advocacy, and resistance to competitors.

Local Food Authenticity

Research on food authenticity grows out of tourism studies. MacCannell (1973) introduced staged authenticity, and Wang (1999) distinguished objective, constructive, and existential authenticity, the last arising from the consumption experience itself. Sims (2009) argues that local food is regarded as authentic when it represents the place and culture of a destination, and Zhang et al. (2019) define Local Food Authenticity as the perception that a food reflects the genuine characteristics of its origin and traditions. Here it refers to consumers' perception that BPK and its preparation genuinely represent Karo culinary traditions, rather than being a claim made by the seller.

Zhang et al. (2019) found that authenticity shaped perceptions of food quality, service quality, and the physical environment, but not loyalty directly. Briliana (2018) reported that the authenticity of traditional Yogyakarta cuisine raised perceived value and, in turn, behavioral intention, and Hardjanti (2019) found that food quality, service quality, and atmosphere in Indonesian ethnic restaurants influenced tourists' perceived value. Authenticity thus works reliably on evaluations of quality and value, while its direct link to loyalty remains open.

Of the nine authenticity items used by Zhang et al. (2019), five were judged relevant to BPK: local ingredients (X1.1), authentic preparation methods (X1.2), local taste (X1.3),

local culinary culture (X1.4), and time-honored culinary tradition (X1.5). Items on special utensils, generic recognition as local food, and dining with local residents fit poorly with a restaurant setting and were dropped. The local eating habits item from the preliminary survey was replaced by time-honored tradition to capture the heritage of family recipes.

Perceived Value

Perceived Value rests on exchange theory, in which consumers weigh benefits against sacrifices. Zeithaml (1988) defines it as an overall assessment of utility based on what is received and given, Woodruff (1997) links it to attribute performance and the consequences of use, and Sweeney & Soutar (2001) treat it as multidimensional. Here it is consumers' overall judgment of whether the functional and emotional benefits of BPK match the money spent.

Renaldi et al. (2024) found that price and emotional value, but not quality value, affected loyalty among food delivery users. Clauss et al. (2019) showed that value proposition, co-creation, and value capture on sharing economy platforms shaped perceived value, and Grewal et al. (2003) identified value as the link between price perceptions and loyalty.

Following the PERVAL scale of Sweeney & Soutar (2001) and its later adaptations by Walsh et al. (2014), Clauss et al. (2019), and Renaldi et al. (2024), this study uses three dimensions: perceived quality value (X2.1), perceived price value (X2.2), and perceived emotional value (X2.3). They capture both the functional side of BPK consumption, namely quality and price fairness, and its affective side.

Relationships Between Variables and Hypothesis Development

The Effect of Local Food Authenticity on Traditional Local Food Loyalty

Authenticity can strengthen trust and emotional attachment because consumers see the product as carrying cultural meaning that competitors cannot easily copy, and this may encourage them to stay with their choice. Zhang et al. (2019), however, found no direct effect of authenticity on loyalty among tourists. The difference in consumption context may matter. Tourists eat local food as part of a trip, often only once, whereas local consumers eat BPK repeatedly. For them, authenticity is less a novelty sought on a journey and more a standard against which a familiar dish is judged, so its influence on loyalty may be more direct.

H1. Local Food Authenticity has a positive effect on Traditional Local Food Loyalty.

The Effect of Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty

Perceived value reflects a consumer's overall judgment of whether a product is worth buying again (Grewal et al., 2003). Renaldi et al. (2024) showed that loyalty is driven not only by perceived quality but also by price fairness and emotional satisfaction. In this study the three dimensions form one Perceived Value construct, so the hypothesis is stated at the construct level.

H2. Perceived Value has a positive effect on Traditional Local Food Loyalty.

The Simultaneous Effect of Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty

Authenticity and perceived value represent two different kinds of evaluation, one cultural and the other utilitarian. Testing them together shows how far they jointly explain variation in loyalty to BPK restaurants.

H3. Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value simultaneously have an effect on Traditional Local Food Loyalty.

The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1.

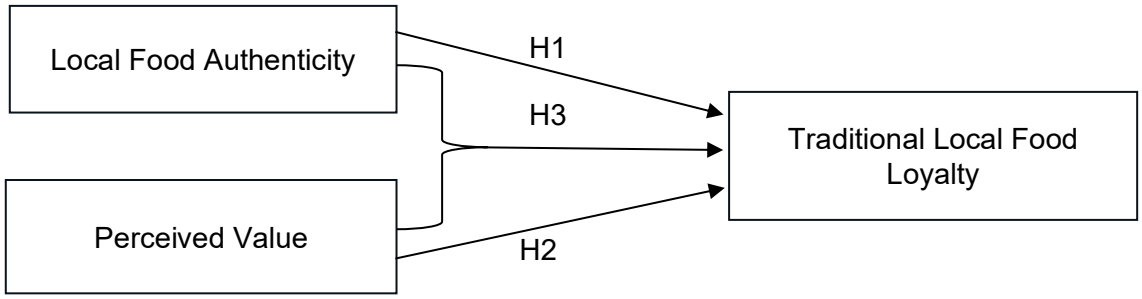


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of the Influence of Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty*

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative, causal-associative design to test the partial and simultaneous effects of Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty. Primary data were collected with a closed questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The population consists of consumers who have eaten BPK at the restaurants named earlier and at other BPK restaurants in Medan meeting the research criteria. Its size is unknown because the restaurants keep no systematic customer records. Respondents were selected purposively: they had to be at least 17 years old and to have eaten BPK at one of the study restaurants at least twice in the past six months. Following Hair et al. (2022), the sample was set at ten times the twelve indicators (five for authenticity, three for perceived value, and four for loyalty), giving 120 respondents. Killiam & Lazuardi (2024) likewise determined a sample of 120 with the Hair et al. guideline. The questionnaire contained 24 statements (Table 2).

Each respondent answered every item with reference to the restaurant where they were surveyed, so loyalty here means loyalty to that BPK restaurant rather than to BPK in general. Instruments were adapted from Zhang et al. (2019) for authenticity, from Sweeney & Soutar (2001), Walsh et al. (2014), and Renaldi et al. (2024) for perceived value, and from Zhang et al. (2019) and Dick & Basu (1994) for loyalty (Table 1).

Table 1.
Operationalization of Research Variables

Variable	Code	Indicators	Source
Local Food Authenticity (X1)	X1.1	Local ingredients	Zhang et al., (2019)
	X1.2	Authentic/unique cooking methods	
	X1.3	Local taste	
	X1.4	Local food culture	
	X1.5	Time-honored culinary tradition	
Perceived Value (X2)	X2.1	Perceived quality value	Renaldi et al., (2024; Sweeney & Soutar, (2001)
	X2.2	Perceived price value	
	X2.3	Perceived emotional value	
Traditional Local Food Loyalty (Y)	Y1	Re-patronage intention	Dick & Basu, (1994; Zhang et al., (2019)
	Y2	Positive word of mouth	

Y3	Recommendation
Y4	Resistance to alternatives

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2026.

Validity was tested with Pearson product-moment correlations between each item and the total score, and an item was considered valid when its r-count exceeded the r-table value at the 5% level. Reliability was assessed with Cronbach's Alpha, using 0.60 as the minimum (Ghozali, 2018). Both tests were run on 30 respondents at the instrument testing stage.

The main data were then collected from 120 eligible respondents across the BPK restaurants listed above, each of whom answered screening questions before completing the questionnaire.

Normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests were carried out to check the ordinary least squares assumptions (Ghozali, 2018). Hypotheses were tested by multiple linear regression in SPSS. H1 and H2 were tested with the t-test and accepted when $p < 0.05$ and the coefficient was positive, while H3 was tested with the F-test at the same threshold. The coefficient of determination (R^2) and a contribution analysis were then used to assess how much of the variation in loyalty the two predictors explain, jointly and individually.

RESULTS

Validity and Reliability Testing

Each item's r-count was compared with an r-table value of 0.361, which corresponds to 30 respondents (df = 28) at the 5% level. Reliability required a Cronbach's Alpha of at least 0.60.

Table 2.
Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variables	r-count	r-table	Validity	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
X1.1	0.365	0.3610	Valid	0.695	Reliable
X1.2	0.513	0.3610			
X1.3	0.714	0.3610			
X1.4	0.391	0.3610			
X1.5	0.389	0.3610			
X1.6	0.515	0.3610			
X1.7	0.713	0.3610			
X1.8	0.557	0.3610			
X1.9	0.498	0.3610			
X1.10	0.527	0.3610			
X2.1	0.632	0.3610	Valid	0.725	Reliable
X2.2	0.527	0.3610			
X2.3	0.710	0.3610			
X2.4	0.685	0.3610			
X2.5	0.698	0.3610			
X2.6	0.634	0.3610			
Y1.1	0.577	0.3610	Valid	0.688	Reliable
Y1.2	0.370	0.3610			
Y1.3	0.542	0.3610			
Y1.4	0.567	0.3610			
Y1.5	0.363	0.3610			
Y1.6	0.592	0.3610			
Y1.7	0.705	0.3610			
Y1.8	0.716	0.3610			

Source: SPSS data processing results,2026

All 24 items have r-count values above 0.361 and are therefore valid. Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.695 for Local Food Authenticity, 0.725 for Perceived Value, and 0.688 for Traditional Local Food Loyalty exceed 0.60, so the three instruments are reliable.

Normality Test

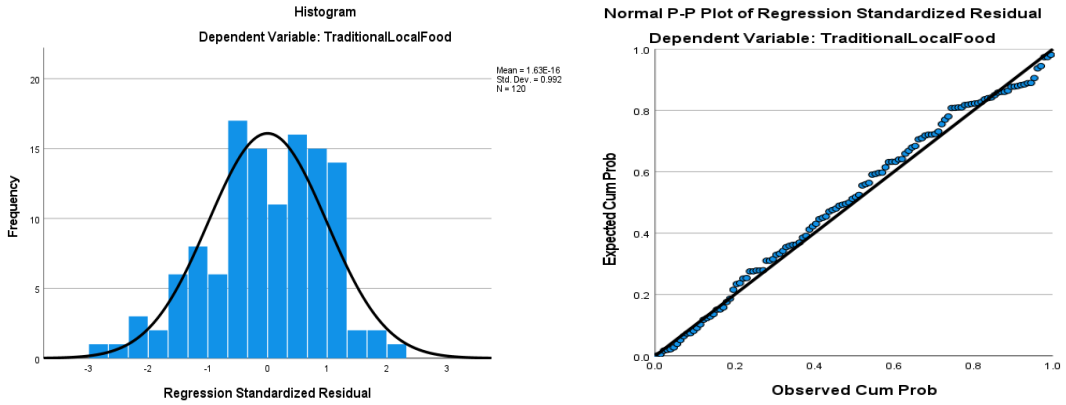
Normality of the regression residuals was examined with the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, where a significance value above 0.05 indicates normally distributed residuals.

Table 3.
Normality Test Results

Testing Method	N	Test Statistic	Sig.	Result
One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov	120	0.068	0.200	Normal

Source: SPSS data processing results,2026

As Table 3 shows, the significance value is 0.200, which is above 0.05, so the residuals meet the normality assumption.



Source: SPSS data processing results,2026

Figure 2. Normality Test Results: Histogram and P-P Plot

Figure 2 supports this result. The histogram approximates a normal curve, and the points in the Normal P-P Plot lie close to the diagonal line.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity was assessed through the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values of each predictor.

Table 4.
Multicollinearity Test Results

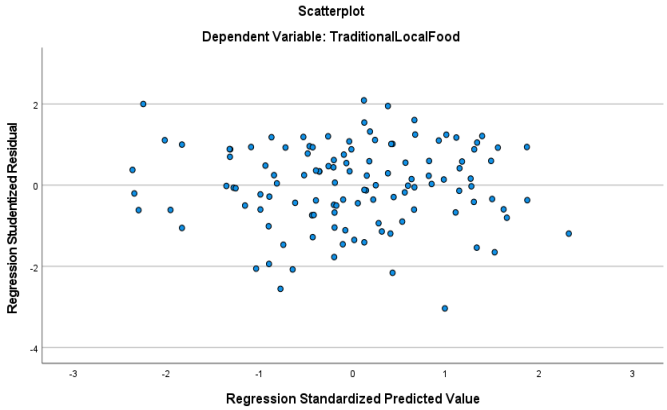
Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Result
Local Food Authenticity	0.996	1.004	No Multicollinearity
Perceived Value	0.996	1.004	No Multicollinearity

Source: SPSS data processing results,2026

Both predictors have a Tolerance of 0.996 and a VIF of 1.004 (Table 4), so there is no multicollinearity and both can enter the same model.

Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity was examined with a scatterplot of the studentized residuals against the standardized predicted values.



Source: SPSS data processing results,2026

Figure 3. Heteroscedasticity Test Result

In Figure 3 the residuals scatter randomly above and below zero without any systematic pattern, indicating that the model is free of heteroscedasticity.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 5 reports the regression estimates and partial t-tests used to assess the direction and size of each effect.

Table 5.
Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis and t-Test (Partial)

Variable	Regression Coefficient (B)	t-count	t-table	Sig.	Result
Constanta	9.973	3.235	–	0.002	–
Local Food Authenticity	0.294	5.017	1.980	< 0.001	Significant
Perceived Value	0.388	3.790	1.980	< 0.001	Significant

Source: SPSS data processing results,2026

The coefficient for Local Food Authenticity is 0.294, meaning that a one-unit increase in authenticity is associated with a 0.294-unit increase in loyalty when Perceived Value is held constant. With t = 5.017, above the t-table value of 1.980, and p < 0.001, the effect is positive and significant.

Perceived Value has a coefficient of 0.388, with t = 3.790 > 1.980 and p < 0.001, so its effect on loyalty is also positive and significant when authenticity is held constant.

F-Test (Simultaneous)

The F-test gives F = 18.609, above the F-table value of 3.07, with p < 0.001. The model containing both predictors is therefore significant, and H3 is supported. The F-test only shows that the predictors jointly explain a significant share of the variance; the positive direction of each effect comes from the coefficients in Table 5.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The R Square value is 0.241. Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value together explain 24.1% of the variation in Traditional Local Food Loyalty, leaving 75.9% to factors outside the model.

Variable Contribution

The contribution of each predictor was calculated by multiplying its standardized beta by its correlation with loyalty.

Table 6.
Contribution of Each Variable to Traditional Local Food Loyalty

Variable	Standardized Beta	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Contribution
Local Food Authenticity (X1)	0.405	0.385	0.155925
Perceived Value (X2)	0.306	0.279	0.085374
Total Contribution			0.241299

Source: SPSS data processing results,2026

Local Food Authenticity contributes 0.155925 (about 15.59%) and Perceived Value 0.085374 (about 8.54%), summing to 0.241299, consistent with the R^2 of 0.241. Authenticity also has the larger standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.405$ against $\beta = 0.306$); the larger unstandardized coefficient of Perceived Value reflects the different spreads of the two variables. This comparison is descriptive, not a test of the difference between the effects.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Local Food Authenticity on Traditional Local Food Loyalty

H1 is accepted. Local Food Authenticity has a positive and significant effect on Traditional Local Food Loyalty ($B = 0.294$, $t = 5.017$, $p < 0.001$), so consumers who see BPK as faithful to its ingredients, preparation, taste, and tradition are more inclined to return to, recommend, and stay with the restaurant they evaluated. This differs from Zhang et al. (2019), who found no direct effect among gastronomic tourists. A tourist's encounter with local food is brief and filtered through satisfaction with the trip, whereas a local consumer who eats BPK repeatedly judges restaurants against a familiar standard of how the dish should taste, and authenticity becomes a basis for choosing between outlets. Since many preliminary respondents did not link BPK closely to Karo culture, the effect may rest more on taste and preparation than on cultural meaning, an interpretation that still needs testing at the indicator level.

The Effect of Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty

H2 is also accepted. Perceived Value has a positive and significant effect on loyalty ($B = 0.388$, $t = 3.790$, $p < 0.001$). The result agrees with Grewal et al. (2003), who placed perceived value between price perceptions and long-term loyalty, and with Renaldi et al. (2024), who found that price and emotional value drove loyalty to food delivery services. It also fits Clauss et al. (2019), where value perceptions on sharing economy platforms underpinned user loyalty. Because value is treated here as a single construct, the study cannot show which dimension matters most to BPK consumers. The preliminary survey hints at a tension, since many respondents accepted the price yet were neutral about overall worth, and future studies could test the three dimensions separately.

The Simultaneous Effect of Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value on Traditional Local Food Loyalty

H3 is supported. The model with both predictors is significant ($F = 18.609$, $p < 0.001$) and explains 24.1% of the variation in loyalty, indicating that loyalty to a traditional food restaurant draws on both cultural and utilitarian evaluations. Still, 24.1% is modest. IBEC studies of loyalty with other predictors reported 58.9% for digital marketing and customer experience (Killiam & Lazuardi, 2024) and 42.4% for rational content marketing and brand image (Aurelia & Manik, 2025). These figures involve different products and are not direct benchmarks, but together with the role of product quality and CRM reported by Roseline et al. (2025), they suggest that experiential and relational factors and satisfaction belong in future models of BPK restaurant loyalty.

CONCLUSION

Local Food Authenticity and Perceived Value each have a positive and significant effect on loyalty to the BPK restaurants evaluated by consumers in Medan City, and the model containing both is significant ($F = 18.609$, $p < 0.001$). Together they explain 24.1% of the variation in Traditional Local Food Loyalty. In this sample, authenticity has the larger standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.405$ against $\beta = 0.306$) and contribution (about 15.59% against 8.54%), although the difference was not tested statistically. For BPK restaurants, the practical message is that keeping the dish true to its ingredients, preparation, and tradition matters, and so does making customers feel that what they receive is worth what they pay. The study is limited to purposively sampled consumers in one city and to a model with two predictors, which leaves most of the variance in loyalty unexplained.

RECOMMENDATION

BPK business operators are advised to maintain the authenticity of the taste, ingredients, preparation methods, and traditional characteristics as part of the product identity, while simultaneously enhancing the value perceived by consumers through product quality, price fairness, and consumption experience. The larger contribution of Local Food Authenticity observed in this sample supports attention to product authenticity, alongside efforts to improve consumers' perceived value. Future research may expand the number and scope of respondents and consider other variables that have not been included in the model, given that the R^2 of the study is only 24.1%. Factors such as consumer satisfaction, customer experience, perceived cultural value, or destination/food image may be considered to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the formation of consumer loyalty toward traditional food restaurants.

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