

**An Analysis of Impact of Customer Experience on Brand Loyalty in Hotel and Restaurant**

**Industry of UK; Case Study of KFC**

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**ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this research was to find the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty in restaurant and hotel industry of UK. The company selected for study is KFC in UK. Primary information is utilized for collection of data. Customer experience in this study was treated as an independent variable while brand loyalty was treated as dependent variable. The independent variable of customer experience was further broken down into four sub variables that define customer experience. These were quality, price, availability and convenience. Quantitative method was used for research and data was collected through questionnaire from 100 respondents that were customers of KFC UK. Correlation and regression analysis is used to check the impact of independent on dependent variable. The correlation analysis shows the relationship between variables of study in order to achieve aim of study and regression analysis is a statistical technique used to evaluate impact of independent variable on dependent variable. The results from study show that a significant and positive relationship is found between customer experience and brand loyalty in KFC, UK. Moreover, the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty in KFC, UK is significant. This shows that for creating loyal customers for a brand, the organization must seek to enhance customer experience in order to get loyal customers.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### *1.1. Introduction*

Brand loyalty is creating many advantages for business organizations and beyond generating repeated sales, the actual brand loyalty generates stronger image of firm in market and making it easy to attract more customers. Considering these advantages, business organizations are striving for improving customer experience and engagement strategies. The interaction between customers and brands has significant impact on firm's brand loyalty. According to Financial Times Advisor reports (2015), it is customer experience which determines customers' retention rates. This study therefore investigates the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty in hotel and restaurant industry of UK.

Previously conducted studies like Arthur et. al., (2016); Hans et. al., (2016); Imran et. al., (2016) Jing et al., (2013) and Kim Ngoc and Nabil, (2016) evaluated the impact of customer experiences on firm's performance and the brand loyalty, and identified the positive impact of customer experience on brand loyalty among different industries and sectors in different markets (Jing et al., 2013). This study therefore has tried to test this relationship in UK markets and for this Hotel and Restaurant industry is selected with special reference of KFC, plc.

### *1.2. Background of Research*

The concept of customer experience has been studied across the range of different businesses and business scenarios, for instance including services delivery, online businesses, retailing and tourism and so forth (Bonnin, 2006; Wang 2006; Arnold et. al., 2005; Tsai, 2005). The customer experience refers to the subjective and internal response, that customers of business organizations may have to indirect or direct contact with the business organization

(Meyer and Schwager, 2007). Academicians and marketers, over past few years have shown the interest in the assessment and measurement of customer experiences.

Customer experience in literature is considered as psychological concept which is subjective, comprehensive response, developed from the contact of customers with business organization. This concept is comprised of different participation levels of customers (Lemeke et. al., 2011). Pine and Gilmore, (1998) summarized that the customer experience is used for enhancing the competitive advantage, hard to imitate by the competitors. Therefore it is important for the marketers to develop outstanding customer experiences in order to compete in modern global marketplace and resulted into brand awareness, gaining customer loyalty and resulted into increased profitability (Gruen et. al., 2006).

There has been identified dynamic growth in studying and managing the customer interaction and customer experience within the hotel and restaurant industry (Gruen et. al., 2006; Watt and Nambisan, 2011), it is important for the marketers and researchers in understanding different customer experience dimensions of interaction in hotel and restaurant industry and how the perception of customers regarding their interaction experience in online community could influence their level of loyalty.

There are number of different studies having factors influencing loyalty of customers for example, product quality, services quality, information quality, price and commitment, corporate image and so forth (Lee and Kim, 2005; Devaraj et. el., 2001; Nguyen and Leblanc, 2001). Nevertheless, there is little work which combines the brand loyalty with hotel and restaurant industry in UK. This study is therefore aimed to address the gap in literature, concerned with this area of research by empirically testing and developing the model for experience dimensions of interaction experience of customers in hotel and restaurant industry. In addition, this study is also

aimed to identify and pointed out the impact of different dimensions of customer experience on brand loyalty. In other words, the statement of problem under this study is to identify different dimensions of customer experience and their impact on brand loyalty of customers. Finally, studies conducted in past have identified number of different dimensions and sub-dimensions associated with the customer experiences. However this study may provide benefits in considering the dimensions for example customer experience.

### ***1.3. Research Significance***

This research is mainly focusing on how customer experience of KFC is influencing its brand loyalty among its customers. This study will be beneficial for the business organization to influence the customer experience of their customers and enhance their brand loyalty among customers. Any genre of goods and services can be benefitted from findings of this study. In addition, this study will be beneficial for students at the same time as it is providing clear connection between customer experience and the brand loyalty. This study will also be beneficial for further research studies in future as providing base and ground for future and advance research. Finally, this study will be good addition in existing literature in field of customer experience and brand loyalty and findings of this study will be useful for KFC to develop its future strategies specifically in target audience researched.

### ***1.4. Rationale of Research***

Brand loyalty is important for the business organizations specifically in modern business era as it creates the image of organizations and which due to the intense competition is source of competitiveness for businesses. Different previously conducted studies have identified that customer experience has significant positive impact on the brand loyalty of business organization but results of these studies are ambiguous and unclear. Therefore identifying the impact of

customer experience on brand loyalty is important specifically for services sector industry in UK due to intensified competition in world's services markets.

In modern era of business, the increased competition specifically due to the emergence of globalization has increased the significance of creating strong brand loyalty and among number of different factors and variables influencing the brand loyalty, the customer experience is significantly important factor as identified by number of different studies for instance including like Arthur et. al., (2016); Hans et. al., (2016); Imran et. al., (2016) and Kim Ngoc and Nabil, (2016). These studies have identified the importance of customer experience in generating brand loyalty and results of these studies are found mixed and confusing. Secondly, none of these identified studies are done in hotel and restaurant industry of UK. Therefore, this study is aimed to examine the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty in hotel and restaurant industry of UK by conducting primary data based research.

### ***1.5. Research Aim and Objectives***

This research is aimed to identify and investigate the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty among hotel and restaurant industry of UK. The study investigates the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty based on the data collected from customers of KFC, UK. Following are objectives that are achieved during course of this study.

- To understand the concept of customer experience and brand loyalty in context of hotel and restaurant industry of UK.
- To assess the factors that affect experience of customers in context of hotel and restaurant industry of UK.
- To analyse the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty for KFC in UK.

- To provide recommendations to improve customer experience and enhance brand loyalty for KFC in UK.

### ***1.6. Research Questions***

The research aims to answer the question regarding ‘what is the impact of customer loyalty on their experience’, proceeding are the questions which are derived through the main question;

- What is concept of customer experience and brand loyalty in context of hotel and restaurant industry of UK?
- What are the factors that affect experience of customers in context of hotel and restaurant industry of UK?
- How customer experience impacts brand loyalty of customers for KFC in UK?

### ***1.7. Research Hypothesis***

As mentioned by Kaplan and Haenlien (2010), the research hypothesis refers to the educated prediction, providing the explanation for observed events. During course of this study and based on the literature researched and reviewed, following hypotheses were developed and formed.

H<sub>0</sub>: Customer experience does not have significant positive impact on brand loyalty

H<sub>1</sub>: Customer experience has significant positive impact on brand loyalty

### ***1.8. Structure of Study***

**Introduction** – This section of subject study is aimed to discuss and summarize the research background, rational of study, significance of research and also summarizing the research objectives and aim, research questions, research hypotheses and so forth.

**Literature Review** – This section of subject study summarized the existing literature in field or area of interest and existing studies related to the objectives and topic have been identified and reviewed in this section.

**Research Methodology** – This section of study has identified and summarized the research approach used, research design and research strategy and summarized the data collection, sampling methods, data analysis, ethical considerations and accessibility and limitation of research.

**Data Analysis, Results, and Data Interpretation** – This section of subject study is aimed to analyze the data collected, tools used to analyze the data collected, and interpretation of results and findings.

**Conclusion and Recommendations** – This section of subject study is aimed to summarize the results of analysis and conclusion drawn and linking the conclusions with realization of objectives. This section also summarized the recommendations suggested by the researcher with justifications and finally the research limitations and suggestions for further study have also been discussed in this section.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of subject study has identified previously conducted studies in field, identified relationship between customer experience and brand loyalty, and summarizes the ways in which customer experience and brand loyalty are associated with each other (Caru & Cova, 2003).

### *2.1. Customer Experience*

The customer experience concept is not new and during last decade, interest of scholars, researchers, marketers and individuals in other field has been increased in concept of customer experience. Some strong brands for instance including Google, Starbucks, IKEA and Netflix have become powerful brands not only by the help of advertising companies but more on compelling the customers' experience (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Kimpakorn and Tocquer, (2010) mentioned that in modern era of business and new perspective, the customer experience is considered as driver of brand equity. There is, although wide range agreement of scholars on relevance of customer experience with the brand loyalty but there are different views on the ways of defining customer experience and ways of measuring it (Brakus et. al., 2009; Patricio L, Fisk R, Cunha J, 2008). It is therefore clear that customer experience is very important aspect resulted into increased repeated purchases, increased customer base, positive word of mouth and number of different aspects for firm.

These definitions are mainly focusing on the delivery process of services and have stressed on the fact that customer experience is refers to individual interpretation of services processes as well as touch point and its interactions that influence customer feelings and experience (Ding et. al., 2010). Customer experience is therefore is the outcome of interaction between customers and the business organization Brakus et. al., (2009). According to Braunsberg

and Munch, (1998) Customer means the degree to which an individual is familiar or having some form of exposure of brand. Marketing researchers identified and pointed out that experiences related to the consumption of brands take place in three different situations including searching the products, shopping of products and receiving them and finally consuming them (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998). Therefore the firm experience related to the product is happened when the consumers are searching and assessing the relevant information through virtual or physical contract for instance the media advertisement.

Secondly the shopping and services experience are happened when customers are involved directly with store environment and atmosphere, employees of business organization and its practices and policies (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998). Third component is the consumption experience which involves the hedonic aspects of consuming the product including impression and feelings, fantasies and fun and so forth. Customer experience in brief is happened when buy, receive, shop and consume the products directly and indirectly when interacting with the media like electronic media, internet, and print etc (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006).

There are found different dimensions of customer experience as identified in previous studies including affective, sensory, behavioral and intellectual dimensions. Sensory dimension include the auditory, visual, gustative and tactile stimulations of brands. Effective dimensions in this regards involve the brand related feelings, as well as the emotional tie with the customers. Intellectual dimension similarly reflecting the convergence and divergent thinking of customers related to the brands. The behavioral dimensions are explaining the bodily experience, interaction with the brand and lifestyles. Finally the intensity of customer experience is determined by one or more than one dimensions described above.

In the contemporary business environment, companies have continually competed against their competitors on the basis of loyal and satisfied customers. However, companies have found it significantly difficult to develop a relationship with the customers (Schmitt, 2010). In this regards, companies have focused extensively upon satisfying the demands and requirements of the customers to ensure the development of positive customer experience. The term customer experience, in simpler words, can be defined as the art of interacting with the customers for the development of positive business relationship (Lemke et al., 2011, p. 861). Interaction can be further categorised as discovery, purchase and services, and awareness etc.

Over the years, customer experience has been regarded as an integral part of customer relationship management, and has been prioritised by the companies to ensure that customers develop positive experience with the company, which would ultimately influence them to frequently purchase the goods and services offered (Rose et al., 2012, p. 309). Moreover, it has been indicated that positive experience of the customers result in customer loyalty. In this regards, a study revealed that 76 percent of the customers are more inclined to increase their willingness to purchase the goods and services offered by the company by becoming a loyal advocate (Johnston and Kong, 2011, p. 7).

### *2.2.1. Importance of Customer Experience*

In the intensely competitive business environment, it has been indicated that companies cannot survive and thrive without its customers, which is why companies have focused extensively upon winning the new customers while retaining the existing customers of the company (Teixeira et al., 2012, p. 367). Considering this, a study conducted by Bloomberg Businessweek indicated that delivering the customers with optimal level of experience has become the foremost priority of the strategic objectives.

### *2.2.2. Factors affecting Customer Experience*

Following are some of the factors that affect the experience of the customer, which ultimately affects the brand loyalty;

#### *2.2.2.1. Price*

As mentioned in the earlier section, customers have become price-sensitive in the intensely competitive business environment. In fact, they are interested in purchasing goods and services available in the market at lower price to satisfy their needs and requirements, and have developed certain experience with respect to the purchased goods and services (Palmer, 2010, p. 197). In this regards, it has been highlighted that price is amongst the key factors to determine the experience of the customer based on the value derived from the product. For instance, the customers shopping at Wal-Mart indicates that the customers value low-priced products; whereas the customers shopping at Neiman Marcus prefer quality products at premium price. The price being paid and the value being derived results in the development of their overall experience with respect to the brand, which ultimately influences them towards the development of brand loyalty (Palmer, 2010, p. 206).

#### *2.2.2.2. Availability*

In the intensely competitive business environment, customers are more inclined towards the companies that offer them the right product at the right time and place. Though, the companies are operating in an intensely competitive business environment, they have often overlooked the importance of product availability, which has resulted in the failure of the brand as a whole (Ramanathan, 2011, p. 255). In this regards, it has been suggested that customers tend to develop positive experience with the brand, if they are offered with the products when they are

required and needed the most. Since customers use the products and services for satisfying their needs and demands, the failure to offer the product results in bad customer experience.

#### 2.2.2.3. Convenience

The factor of convenience represents the ease in terms of using the products offered by the company. In majority of the cases, it has been found that customers are offered complex products and services, which negatively affects the customers in terms of their experience (Ramanathan, 2011, p. 255). For instance, IKEA offer its customers with products that are quite difficult in terms of installation. As a result, the customers tend to have developed a negative experience with respect to the company and its offerings.

#### 2.2.2.4. Quality

Quality is amongst the most important factors affecting the experience of the customers. In this regards, it has been suggested that customers have continually searched for quality products and services, irrespective of their prices (Bergman and Klesfsjo, 2010). Quality is amongst the most important aspect that can affect the overall image and reputation of the brand.

### **2.2. Brand Loyalty**

Brakus et. al., (2009) mentioned and described that brand loyalty is playing significantly vital role in brand equity processes which are producing some marketing benefits and advantages for example marketing cost, increased customer base, increased trade leverage and so forth. The success of business organization is depending on firm's abilities of attracting and making up loyal customers. This is to develop the business organization to have abilities of keeping its customers and making these customers loyal to the brand for longer period of time (Caru & Cova, 2003). Customers similarly have different degree of loyalty with the brands and loyalty means the customers are purchasing its products and services again and again over period of

time. Brand loyalty is the positive attitude and commitment of purchasing same brand and product in durable manners aimed to attain the future purchase situations (Brakus et. al., 2009).

Chestnut and Jacoby (1978) is conceptually defined the concept of brand loyalty as biased behavioral response and is expressed over period of time by making certain decisions with respect to one or more than one brands and it is the function of different psychological processes. Brand loyalty therefore can be estimated with respect to three different forms including composite, attitudinal and behavioral approaches (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Behavioral loyalty approach has been described and operationalized as repeat purchase frequencies, or promoting the purchase of same brands over period of time (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998). Attitudinal brand loyalty is considered as preferences mentioned, purchase intentions and commitment of customers toward particular products or services. There are lot of research related to the antecedents and outcomes of customers' attitudes regarding brand. Consumers' attitudes however are considered as outcome of brand experience has got little attention in the literature.

Over the last four decades, the concept of brand loyalty has gained exceptional important in the marketing literature (Laroche et al., 2013, p. 77). In this regards, it has been found that brand loyalty has offered the companies with a variety of benefits and opportunities, where the most important benefit included positive word of mouth marketing, significant reduction in the marketing costs, business profitability, competitive advantage, and increased market share of the company in comparison to its competitors and closest rivals (Nam et al., 2011, p. 1019). In light of the literature, the aforementioned benefits are quite difficult in terms of achievement, but the companies that have worked towards the development of brand loyalty have experienced all of the benefits in most profitable manner (Lin, 2010, p. 9). With the concept of brand loyalty into consideration, it has been unveiled that brand loyalty can be defined as the unconditional

commitment of the customer with respect to the offered brand, which the competitors cannot influence or change under normal circumstances (Iglesias et al., 2011, p. 575).

Though, brand loyalty has remained the centre of attention for both the local and multinational companies, scholars have yet to agree upon the definition of brand loyalty (Sahin et al., 2011, p. 1289). Considering this, the literature has offered some of the most commonly agreed upon denominators with respect to brand loyalty. According to Iglesias et al. (2011), the spurious loyalty of the customers are driven on the basis of situational circumstances like convenience and price; meanwhile true loyalty is based on the previous experience and attachment of the customers with respect to the brand (Lin, 2010). In light of the literature, there are some other dimensions of brand loyalty that have been highlighted by the scholars and professionals over the years.

Furthermore, the concept of brand loyalty has been argued as the commitment of the customers towards the products and services offered by the company that induces them into repurchasing the offered products, irrespective of the marketing attempts of the competitors (Hur et al., 2011, p. 1210). This implies that brand loyalty has become a source of leverage for the companies to influence the customers into purchasing the goods and services, rather than looking for similar products and services offered by the competitors (Yuksel et al., 2010, p. 279). With this into consideration, it has been highlighted that brand loyalty has played an influential role in increasing the brand value, and has significant contribution with respect to the brand meaning as a resource for the company (Kassim and Asiah, 2010, p. 352). Over the years, different approaches have been proposed to understand the concept of brand loyalty, which has ultimately resulted in the confusion amongst scholars and professionals. For instance, brand loyalty has been considered as the emotional relationship between the brand and the consumers; whereas the

another approach focuses upon the loyal behaviour of the consumers with respect to the products and services offered by the brand that ultimately influences the consumers to frequently purchase the goods and services, while resisting the competitive promotions (Eid, 2011, p. 78).

Furthermore, Oliver (1999) presented the most comprehensive approach to define the concept of brand loyalty. In particular, Oliver (1999) argued that brand loyalty increases the commitment of the consumers to repurchase the goods and services offered by the company, while causing the consumers to purchase positive association with the brand (p. 33).

### *2.1.1. Benefits of Brand Loyalty*

In the contemporary business environment, attracting potential customers has been argued to be quite problematic for companies; therefore they tend to focus on the existing customers to ensure that they continually purchase the offered goods and services, while ensuring that they remain commitment and loyal to the company and its offering (Chaudhuri, 2001, p. 89). In this regards, Edvardsson et al. (2000) argued that brand loyalty influences the customers to remain with the organisation for long-term, which ultimately increases the level of sales and revenue generation. Likewise, brand loyalty influences the loyal customers to spread positive word of mouth marketing, which significantly reduces the company's costs associated with promotion and advertisement (Holland and Baker, 2001, p. 36). Additionally, the positive word of mouth marketing influences the potential customers to try the products and services offered by the company, irrespective of the fact that almost identical goods and services are being offered by the competitors (Lau and Lee, 1999, p. 351). Since the loyal customers influences the potential customers, this in return increases the sales and profitability of the company in the intensely competitive business environment.

Furthermore, it has been found that loyal customers are more inclined to purchase the goods and services offered by the company for long-term, and are more likely to purchase other goods and services associated with the brand (Shugan, 2005). With this into consideration, following are some of the most commonly found benefits associated with brand loyalty;

#### 2.1.1.1. Brand Advocacy

In the globalised environment, loyal customers act as a brand advocate in the society and the community. In this regards, it has been unveiled that the loyal customers of the brand tend to promote the brand without being concerned about the compensation (He et al., 2012, p. 649). Over the years, loyal customers have taken the social media by storm, and have continually posted about the benefits associated with the usage of brand, which has ultimately allowed the companies with an opportunity to build larger customer followings without any additional efforts (Stokburger et al., 2012, p. 409).

#### 2.1.1.2. Price Insensitivity

In the globalised environment, customers have become price-sensitive. They tend to search for the cheapest products and services, available in the marketplace, to satisfy their demands and needs (Goldsmith et al., 2010, p. 331). Considering this, companies have relied upon the concept of brand loyalty to influence the consumers and customers to purchase the goods and services offered by the brand irrespective of the price. Furthermore, it has been indicated that loyal customers overlook the price of the brand, and would still purchase the product based on their trust (Goldsmith et al., 2010, p. 347). The most prominent example is of Apple, which has continually priced their products and services higher based on the fact that their loyal customers are price insensitive. Considering this, the customers of Apple products would prefer MacBook Pro over other laptops, though it is quite expensive, based on their

experience and perception that they are paying more to get superior quality products and services.

#### 2.1.1.3. Customer Recognition

Over the years, brands have relied on building loyalty amongst the customers considering the fact that loyalty helps in building customer recognition (Hollebeek, 2011, p. 789). In simpler words, customers are more inclined to select a particular product or brand over others available in the marketplace, and in return they tend to recognise the company for its superior quality products and services. Moreover, they tend to select the same brand over and over again rather than recognising something unfamiliar (Esteves, 2010, p. 675).

#### 2.1.1.4. Enhanced Credibility

In the technologically advanced era, customers are offered with almost identical goods and services; however companies have distinguished their brand over others by relying extensively upon brand loyalty (Herbig and Milewicz, 2012). In this regards, it has been indicated that brand loyalty increases the company and its product's credibility, which ultimately helps in the development of recognition and competitiveness (Spry et al., 2011, p. 893). This implies that companies have developed competitive advantage, over the years, by enhancing their credibility through brand loyalty.

#### 2.1.2. *Antecedents of Brand Loyalty*

According to Rundle-Theile and Bennet (2001), the most commonly found drivers of brand loyalty includes; involvement, inertia, relationship, satisfaction, habit, and perceived risks. On the other hand, Hellier et al. (2003) argued that brand loyalty has continually helped the companies to increase the trust, commitment, satisfaction, and continuity in the intensely competitive business environment (p. 1777). With this into consideration, it has been suggested

that companies can only avail the benefits associated with brand loyalty by offering them quality products and services.

Some of the antecedents of brand loyalty are as follows;

#### 2.1.2.1. Quality of Service

According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), the concept of service quality has been defined as the assessment of the offered service by the company with respect to the general expectation of the customers (p. 12). In this regards, Jamal and Anastasiadou (2007) argued that service quality has become one of the prominent aspects to increase the loyalty and satisfaction of the customers (p. 419). Furthermore, they argued that brand loyalty can significantly increase the satisfaction of the customers, if they are offered with superior quality services in comparison to the competitors operating in the same industry. On the other hand, Cody and Hope (1999) indicated that the construct of service quality is quite difficult to be measured based on the characteristics of services (p. 207).

#### 2.1.2.2. Customer Satisfaction

In light of the literature, it has been indicated that customer satisfaction increases the purchase intention of the customers with respect to loyalty towards the brand. Furthermore, the findings of Bloemer and Kasper (1995) indicated that companies have relied upon offering the customers with superior quality products and services to ensure that their requirements and needs are satisfied in optimal manner, which is why companies have relied upon the concept of brand loyalty in the strategic marketing process (p. 314).

On the other hand, Soloman (1994) argued that the purchase decision of the customers can be significantly influenced by the companies by offering them products and services that satisfy their needs. In this regards, Jamal and Anastasiadou (2007) have concluded that customer

satisfaction is amongst the most important driver of customer and brand loyalty in the contemporary business environment. On the other hand, the findings of Bontis et al. (2007) indicated customer satisfaction has helped the companies to improve its reputation and credibility in the service sector, which is quite difficult in terms of achievement (p. 1436).

#### 2.1.2.3. Commitment

According to the findings of Kelley et al. (1990), organisational commitment has served as an indicative of the likelihood of the organisation in terms of maintaining the identification of the customers with respect to the values and goals of the organisation (p. 315). Furthermore, Tax et al. (1998) argued that commitment of the customers can only be increased if their complaints and feedbacks are taken seriously by the management in the service sector (p. 66). In this regards, it has been suggested that both local and multinational companies have developed a perception that handling the complaints and grievances of the customers, in most effective and efficient manner, results in the development of brand loyalty and commitment. This implies that effectively handling the complaints of the customers drastically increases the retention rate of the customers, while ensuring that the service quality offered to the customers is improved as well (Jang et al., 2008, p. 61).

#### 2.1.2.4. Trust

The last antecedent of brand loyalty is the trust, which has been argued as an important factor that has helped an organisation to develop effective relationship with the customers (Matzler et al., 2008, p. 155). Furthermore, it has been unveiled that companies have relied on building trust to increase the reliability and integrity of its offerings to the customers, which would ultimately influence the customers to develop positive association with the brand (Gommans et al., 2001, p. 48). In light of the findings of Ballester and Aleman (2001), it has

been indicated that satisfaction and trust are connected, which implies that if the company succeed in developing a connection with customers based on trust, the customers would eventually influence them to increase their satisfaction level with respect to the company (p. 1255).

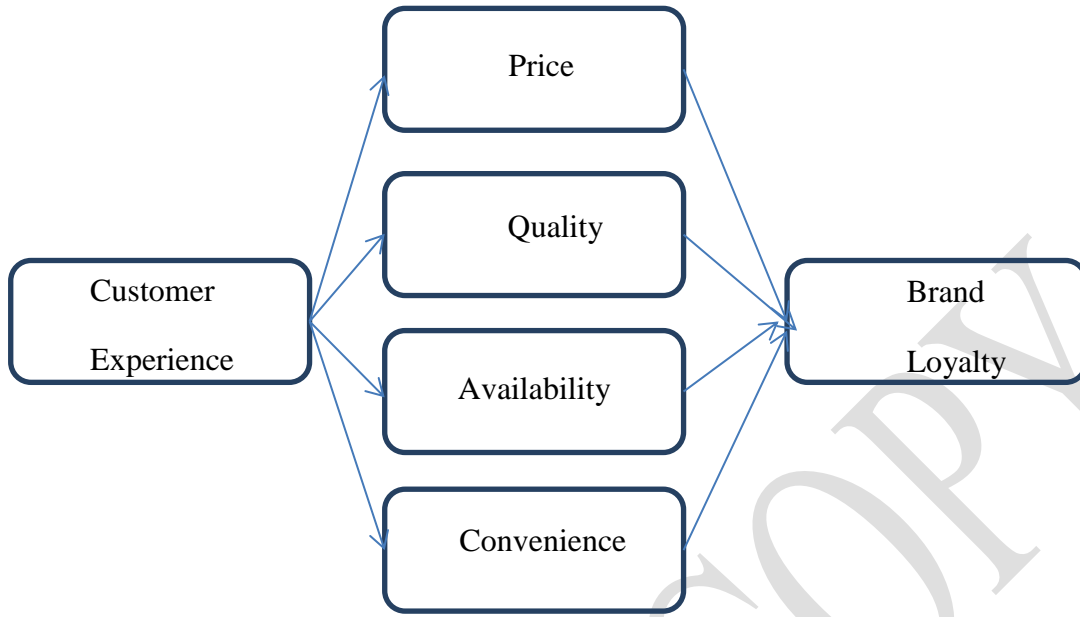
On the other hand, Anderson and Sullivan (1993) indicated that trust results when the customers' believe that the products and services would result in positive effects. With respect to the brand, customers develop a relationship based on trust if they perceived the products and services, offered by the company, to be of superior quality (p. 129).

### ***2.3. Brand Loyalty and Customer Experience***

The literature available suggested that there is direct linkage between brand loyalty and customer experience. Deming (2007) mentioned that the branding processes are involved in creating authentic, emotional and unique experiences that producer believes. Nonetheless, experiences are complex aspects and including four different dimensions including affective, sensory, behavioral and intellectual (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Brand managers are considering not only the traditional brand building techniques but also the unique brand experiences in order to manage the brands. Consumers with the positive brand experiences toward some particular brands are behaving as loyal consumers to the brands. Past accumulation of positive experiences is contributing to affect the brand loyalty driving the attitudinal loyalty. Therefore customer experience significantly influences the brand loyalty and positive customer experience resulted into increased brand loyalty.

### ***2.4. Conceptual Framework***

The conceptual framework for the research study is as follows;



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## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### ***3.1. Introduction***

This chapter of subject study summarized the methodological aspects of study. According to Smith et. al., (2012), research methodology refers to the process, comprised of different scientific techniques, facilitating the researcher to conduct and execute the research in effective, efficient and proper manners. This research is explanatory in nature, investigating the relationship between different defined variables of interest. In addition, the case study approach has been employed with quantitative approach to collect required data through self-administered questionnaire. These aspects have been explained in details in sections below, also with the sampling techniques, and other aspects related to the research methodology.

### ***3.2. Research Opinion***

The research methodology is playing significant and important role in research studies as it facilitates to build up research framework. Under this study, the researcher has adopted the concept of research onion, building up the research framework and conducting research logically.

### ***3.3. Research Philosophy***

According to Saunders et. al., (2009) the research philosophy is comprised of different vital and important assumptions regarding the ways in which world is viewed. The objective of research philosophy is to determine and identify different methods which a research may choose in order to develop and execute his research strategy. Theoretical discussion is foundation and basis for any sort of scientific and social research. Theory provides basic idea regarding research

problem, providing directions for solving the issue and problem under investigation (Gamage, 2013).

### *3.3.1. Justification*

In general, the research philosophies can be categorized into three different types that the researcher can use in order to develop research framework for instance including the positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism. The philosophy of interpretivism involves the researcher's perception and understanding regarding the phenomenon which is being studied which helps the researcher using positivism in developing the hypotheses for research. However, interpretivism philosophy is not used for this study to develop the research framework since this study is comprised of and based on top-down approach. Data under this study cannot be observable in generating the creditable data. The pragmatism similarly is not included as part of this study due to the complexity of research (Asante-nnuro, 2015).

For this study, the positivism philosophy is chosen and employed by the researcher. Positivism holds an objective viewpoint and reality as stable can be described by this. The positivist researcher takes structural and controlled approach while conducting the research and for this, identifies initially the topic of research, and construction of appropriate research hypothesis and questions, through adoption of suitable research methodology. This study is comprised of identifying and investigating the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty among hotel and restaurant industry of UK, it can be concluded that the positivism is most suitable and appropriate technique and philosophy of subject study.

### *3.4. Research Approach*

Yin (2003) described that there are two different approaches, can be used to conduct the research including inductive approach of research and secondly the deductive approach. Mainly, both approaches are differentiated based on general procedure like deductive approach is aimed and testing theory while the inductive approach is mainly concerned with the new theory and idea generation emerging from the data.

#### *3.4.1. Selection of Research Approach – Justification*

The deductive approach is working from relatively general to the specific. According to Yin (2003), the deductive approach is top-down approach, initiated with the theory regarding topic under investigation and then narrows down into specific hypotheses, can be tested. Therefore while considering the hypothesis, theory, confirmation and observation, the researcher under this study has adopted deductive approach of research while on the other hand the inductive approach is requiring the researcher to reach to relatively more generalization and developed new theories. This approach is to more general from specific, seems irrelevant for this research. Through deductive approach and positivism philosophy the hypothesis for research study are easily developed since the information is based on facts which targets specifically towards a specific phenomenon.

#### **3.5. Research Design**

Research design refers to the tool, facilitating the researcher to draw the research outline by using different specific approaches and techniques. Gamage (2013) described that research designed can be categorized into three different categories including descriptive, explanatory and exploratory. Exploratory research design requires the research to explore setting, social

phenomenon. Descriptive research design on the other hand requires designing the study to provide systematic information regarding social phenomenon.

### *3.5.1. Selection of Research Design for Subject Study – Justification*

Studies with the causal relationship among variables of interest are explanatory research studies. The emphasis of this study is to investigate the problem and situation, aimed to explain the relationship between variables of interest instead simply describing the phenomenon under study. This study, as having clear and developed cause and effective relationship among independent variable and dependent variables, therefore this study is explanatory research study. Additionally, explanatory researches ensure the ability of adopted research design, allowing the researchers to develop association and linkage among variables, aimed to rule out alternative explanation and making inferences regarding causalities.

### *3.6. Research Strategy*

The research strategy adopted under research is aimed to provide the directions to implement the research. Survey questionnaires method as a research strategy is adopted under this study and as Yin (2003) mentioned that survey questionnaires seems to be effective and efficient strategies to answer why and how questions, when researchers have little or no control over events and when the research is focusing on contemporary phenomenon within the context of real life. In these settings, the research would be explanatory research, depending on the types of questions set under research, the extent to which investigator has over actual behavioural events and degree of focusing on contemporary events contrary to the historical events, also there are descriptive and exploratory cases studies. The research strategy as Survey questionnaires is comprised of all the methods encompasses for instance including the number of

methods that can be used i.e. quantitative or qualitative or both. Under this study, the researcher has utilized the quantitative approach in order to address the related research questions during different phases of research.

### ***3.8. Data Collection Methods***

Even if the researchers have chosen accurate data set and right sample, even if the perfect research investigation is not ensured until and unless determining the methods to be used in order to collect data for research investigation and it is identified that there are two major methods of data collection including primary methods and secondary methods collected respectively from primary data sources and secondary data sources. Under primary data collection, the data is collected and gathered under fresh set of data, never collected earlier and secondary data collection methods are used to collect data already collected and used but can also be used for further investigation and analysis of research data. In each of the above identified methods of data collection, there are some data collection tools (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Primary data collection tools include interview, questionnaire, and observation and secondary data collection tools and methods include annual reports, articles and reports and so forth. For subject study, there researcher used quantitative approach through which the data is collected in numerical and factual form, after which the collected data through survey questionnaires is analysed with appropriate tools in order to derive the outcomes of the research study. Primary data will be collected from selected customers of KFC by using self-administered structured questionnaire

while the secondary data will be collected from secondary sources i.e. the online databases, university data based and portals and other research journals.

### ***3.9. Sampling Methods***

Exclusively important components of investigation under research are sample and based on the samples the data is collected. If there is no sample, importance and significance of research would also be reduced. Overall results and outcomes of research investigations are directly associated with the data collection based on sample. As identified by Gillham (2008), it is important for the collection of data through accurate and reliable ways in order to validate the outcomes of research investigation. Similarly, the sampling techniques and sample both should be determined by the researcher. There are different ways and methods of getting sample from population for example probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is done through simple random sampling, systematic random, stratified random and cluster sampling while non-probability sampling is done through convenience sampling, quota sampling, judgemental sampling and so forth. Due to limited scope and time for this study, sample of 100 customers will be selected by using convenience sampling at random on day of interview.

### ***3.10. Accessibility Issues***

During data collection from the customers, research would face issues of accessing customers as there are hundreds of different customers of KFC all over the UK. In order to resolve the accessibility issue, the KFC outlet will be accessed and customers visiting KFC outlet during day of interview will be accessed, if are willing or otherwise will be replaced with others (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Furthermore, the second issue was related to the data available on

secondary sources since most of the relevant data on the internet and research paper was accessible through paying certain amount which increased the cost of conducting the study. In order to eliminate the hurdle related to secondary data, the researcher mainly relied content that was available free of cost.

### ***3.11. Ethical Issues***

For the purpose of executing the research on ethical grounds, the researcher made sure that all the procedures, methods and data which has been collected for the study depicts ethical responsibility. First and foremost, the researcher ensured that the respondents or customers from whom the data was collected were not forced to provide information and data regarding the cause of study. Therefore, a consent form was provided to the customers to give them the authority to provide information and also the power to withdraw from the study at any time. Moreover, customers were ensured that their personal information will be kept confidential and only used for the purpose of research. On the other hand, the researcher provided authentic citations and references within the study to acknowledge the work of authors and researchers who have conducted such studies previously and whose work has been used for completing this research.

### ***3.12. Data Analysis Plan***

The data collected for the study was analysed through statistical software SPSS, since the nature of study is quantitative and the data collection tool was survey questionnaire. Therefore, the data that was collected was numerical and factual in nature which was gathered in response

to the variables that were chosen for the research study. Through the software of SPSS different test were applied including frequency analysis, correlation and regression.

The test of frequency distribution separates the responses of customers on the basis of Likert scale, the test of correlation was applied on both dependent and independent variables to check the strength of relationship among the variables and lastly the test of regression was applied to analyses the impact of independent variable of dependent variable. The outcomes of all these tests have numeric values which are then interpreted by the researcher into meaningful understandings.

### ***3.13. Research Limitations***

While conducting the research, there were many limitations which the researcher faced in order to execute the study. These limitations are present in almost every research studies that are executed since they are present on very basic levels. The first limitation was related to the time that was allotted for the study since the time was short and the researcher had to cover various components which are essential for the execution of appropriate and ethical research study. On the other hand, the capital required for the execution of research study was limited and the researcher had to perform all the activities in the given amount. Moreover, the research was limited to different methods and procedures through which data was collected and the research was aligned with its objectives and questions.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

### *4.1 Introduction*

The following chapter is associated with presentation of findings from data analysis process of collected data in meaningful and understandable form. Along with this, the discussion of findings from this study is also connected to objectives in order to measure that the objectives have been achieved or not. Moreover, the findings are related to literature in order to consolidate the findings of this study and justify that findings from this study are also present in studies conducted by other authors. Main aim of study is to investigate the impact of customer experience on brand loyalty in hotel and restaurant industry of United Kingdom. The specific firm selected for study is KFC that is fast food chain and falls under restaurant category. Specific objectives of study that are related to results are to evaluate impact of customer experience on brand loyalty in KFC, UK.

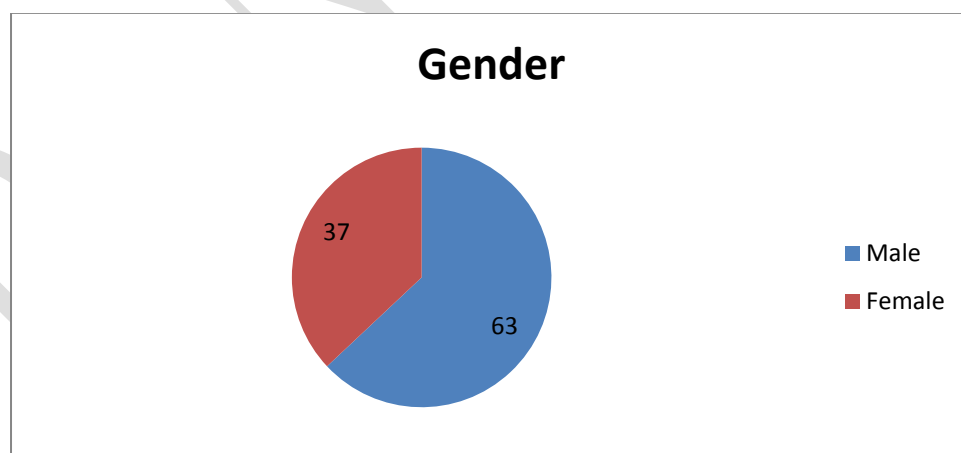
Research design selected for study is quantitative design where data is collected from 100 respondents that are customers of KFC, UK and data is collected through primary method with structured questionnaire distributed to respondents. Data received in form of feedback from customers as their responses through questionnaire has been analysed by using appropriate statistical tools. For the analysis of independent and dependent variable, statistical tool selected for study is Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in which descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis are applied to get useful results. Along with this, the demographics data is analysed by using Microsoft Excel and presented in form of tables and charts.

## 4.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis process is conducted by applying different statistical technique in order to analyse results that are used in this study to attain main aim and key objectives of study. The study has first analysed demographics of respondents with help of Microsoft Excel and presented in chart form while second part shows the descriptive analysis that is conducted through SPSS and shows frequency distribution of each respondent based on their answers to statements asked from them. Moreover, third part of analysis shows correlation analysis in which the relationship between customer experience and brand loyalty is shown in context of KFC, UK. Here, the independent variable that is customer experience is broken down into four sub variables that are price, availability, convenience and quality associated with KFC in UK. The last part of data analysis has illustrated regression analysis in order to evaluate impact of customer experience on brand loyalty in UK.

### 4.2.1 Demographics Analysis

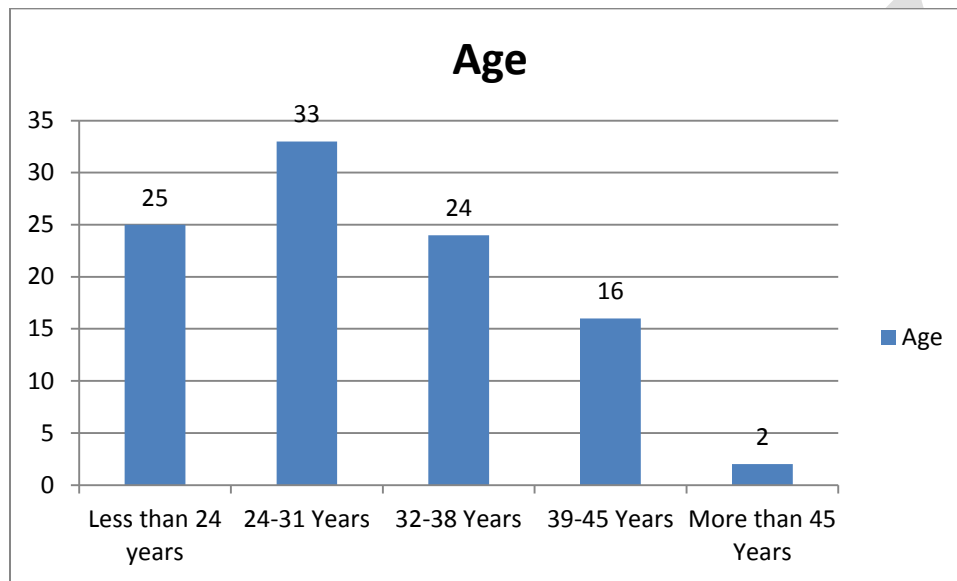
#### Gender



**Figure 1 Gender of Respondents**

The above chart has been generated through MS excel and shown classification of respondents as per gender that took part in study. Chart shows that 63 males were part of study while 37 respondents were females.

### Age



**Figure 2: Age of Respondents**

The above figure illustrates age of respondents that took part in study. The age brackets present in questionnaire have been identified on horizontal axis while number of respondents has been taken on vertical axis. Results show that most respondents were 24 to 31 years of age while there was very nominal different between respondents in age less than 24 and 32 to 38 years. Least number of respondents was more than 45 years who are keenly health conscious and tend to avoid fast food.

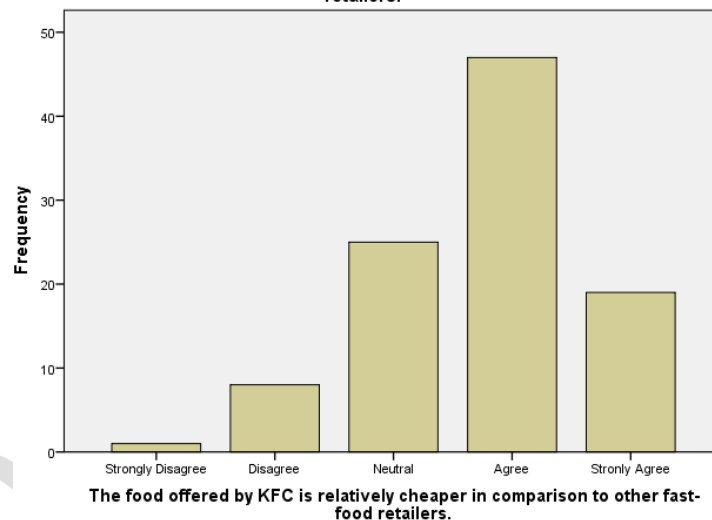
#### 4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis

The following section illustrates results from descriptive analysis and determines the results for studying showing the frequency of answers from all respondents according to statements.

**The food offered by KFC is relatively cheaper in comparison to other fast-food retailers.**

|                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly Disagree | 1         | 1.0     | 1.0           | 1.0                |
| Disagree                | 8         | 8.0     | 8.0           | 9.0                |
| Neutral                 | 25        | 25.0    | 25.0          | 34.0               |
| Agree                   | 47        | 47.0    | 47.0          | 81.0               |
| Stronly Agree           | 19        | 19.0    | 19.0          | 100.0              |
| Total                   | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**The food offered by KFC is relatively cheaper in comparison to other fast-food retailers.**

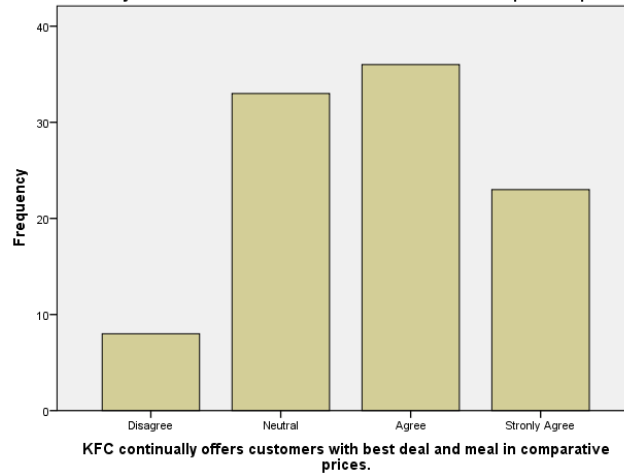


The first statement that sought customer's response on their experience was based on price and customers were asked that whether food offered by KFC is cheaper as compared to other fast food businesses that are operating in this industry. Results from analysis show that most of customers agreed that KFC offers relatively cheaper food as compared to other retailers that is liked by customers. However, one respondent disagreed to this statement.

**KFC continually offers customers with best deal and meal in comparative prices.**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Disagree | 8         | 8.0     | 8.0           | 8.0                |
| Neutral        | 33        | 33.0    | 33.0          | 41.0               |
| Agree          | 36        | 36.0    | 36.0          | 77.0               |
| Stronly Agree  | 23        | 23.0    | 23.0          | 100.0              |
| Total          | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

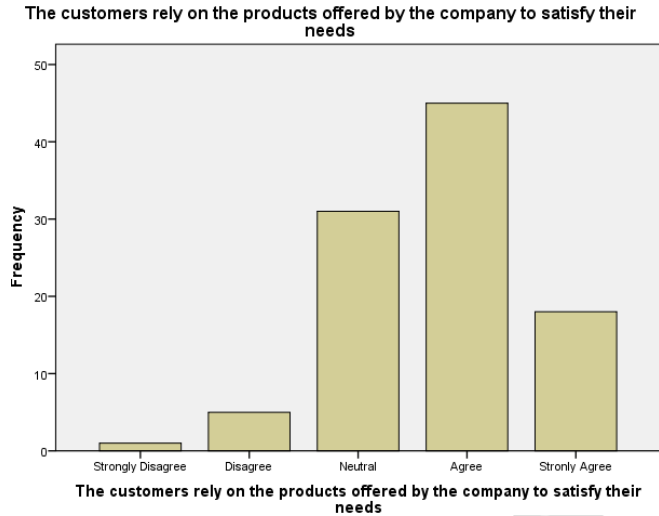
**KFC continually offers customers with best deal and meal in comparative prices.**



Next statement was also regarding price in association with customer’s experience with KFC in London. It was asked that whether KFC continually offers best deals and meal price to customers as compared to its rival brands. Most of respondents were on agreement or positive side stating that KFC has been offering cheaper deals and combined meals to its customers that also enhance customer’s experience with a particular brand. However, some respondents also disagreed that other brands are offering better prices than KFC and also some stayed neutral in comparison of KFC to other brands.

**The customers rely on the products offered by the company to satisfy their needs**

|                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly Disagree | 1         | 1.0     | 1.0           | 1.0                |
| Disagree                | 5         | 5.0     | 5.0           | 6.0                |
| Neutral                 | 31        | 31.0    | 31.0          | 37.0               |
| Agree                   | 45        | 45.0    | 45.0          | 82.0               |
| Stronly Agree           | 18        | 18.0    | 18.0          | 100.0              |
| Total                   | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

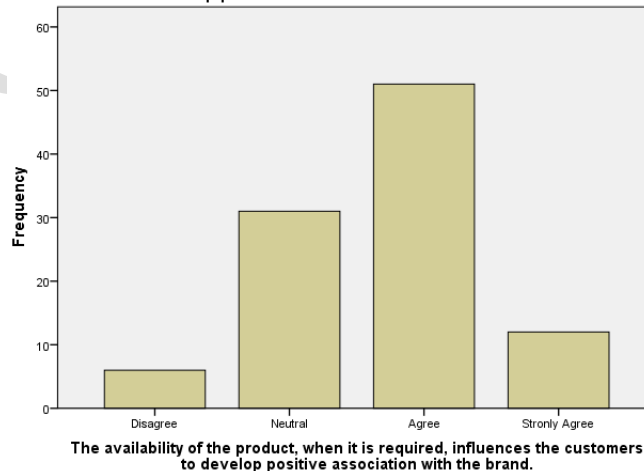


Next statements were regarding availability of products to customers. The respondents were asked that whether customers are relied upon the products and services offered by KFC in order to satisfy their needs and wants. Through table and figure above, it has been demonstrated that customers agreed that they rely on products and services offered to satisfy their needs with products offered by KFC to its customers.

The availability of the product, when it is required, influences the customers to develop positive association with the brand.

|       |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Disagree       | 6         | 6.0     | 6.0           | 6.0                |
|       | Neutral        | 31        | 31.0    | 31.0          | 37.0               |
|       | Agree          | 51        | 51.0    | 51.0          | 88.0               |
|       | Strongly Agree | 12        | 12.0    | 12.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total          | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

The availability of the product, when it is required, influences the customers to develop positive association with the brand.

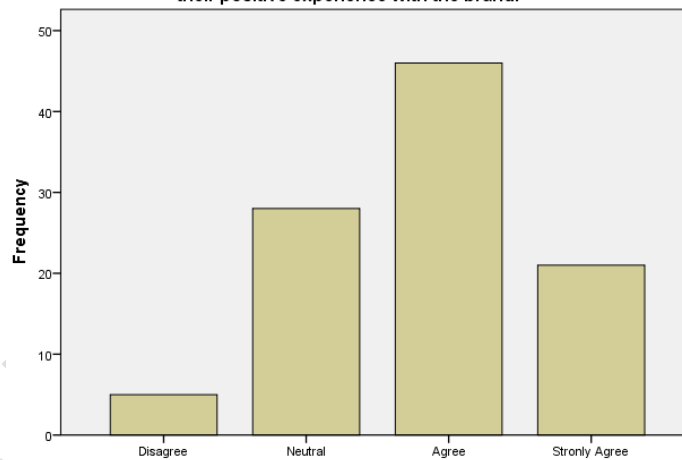


The above statement illustrated with table and figure was also related to availability of products. The statement asked customers that whether availability of product when it is required influences the customer’s positive association with a particular brand. Customers agreed and strongly agreed to this statement by responding that availability of product at right requirement time is likely to trigger customer’s positive association with brand in context of KFC in UK.

**Offering the customers with right products at the right time and place increases their positive experience with the brand.**

|       |               | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Disagree      | 5         | 5.0     | 5.0           | 5.0                |
|       | Neutral       | 28        | 28.0    | 28.0          | 33.0               |
|       | Agree         | 46        | 46.0    | 46.0          | 79.0               |
|       | Stronly Agree | 21        | 21.0    | 21.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total         | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Offering the customers with right products at the right time and place increases their positive experience with the brand.**



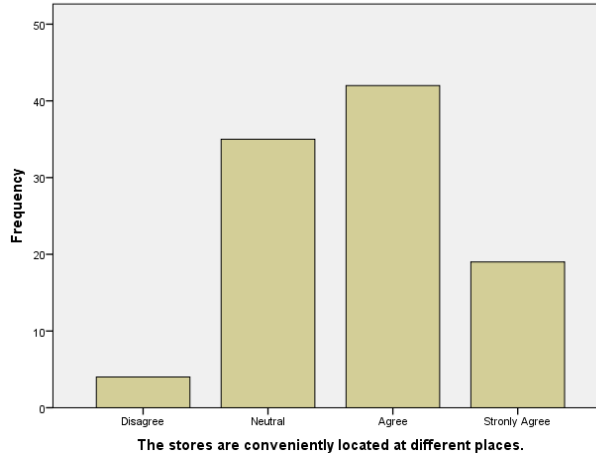
**Offering the customers with right products at the right time and place increases their positive experience with the brand.**

Another statement that sought respondent’s opinion was also related to availability of product and was asked from customer in association with positive customer experience. The customers were asked that whether delivery of right product at right time in right place improves the customer’s positive experience with a brand. Most respondents agreed that positive customer experience is shaped through availability of right product in right place at the right time and tends to enhance customer experience.

**The stores are conveniently located at different places.**

|       |               | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Disagree      | 4         | 4.0     | 4.0           | 4.0                |
|       | Neutral       | 35        | 35.0    | 35.0          | 39.0               |
|       | Agree         | 42        | 42.0    | 42.0          | 81.0               |
|       | Stronly Agree | 19        | 19.0    | 19.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total         | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**The stores are conveniently located at different places.**

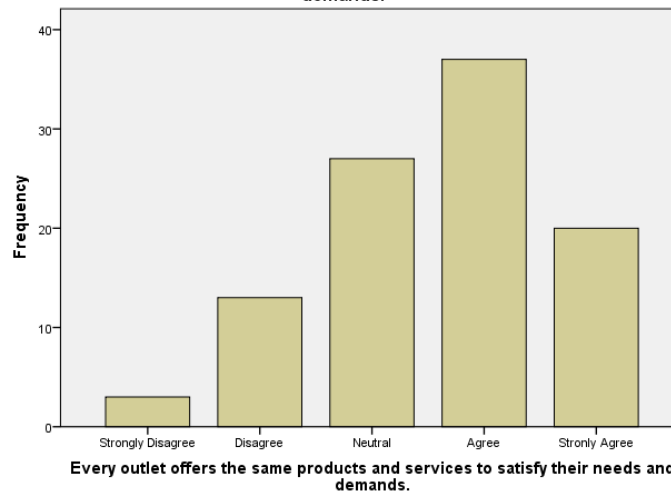


The independent variable of study that is customer experience was broken down into four variables among with one variable was convenience. Next statement asked from customers was regarding the convenience to customers in terms of store or outlet location. Mostly respondents fell on agreement side of scale stating that most stores that are opened, operated and managed by KFC are at convenient locations in different places that makes it easy for customers to visit a store, buy a product and consume it to satisfy his demand and need.

**Every outlet offers the same products and services to satisfy their needs and demands.**

|       |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly Disagree | 3         | 3.0     | 3.0           | 3.0                |
|       | Disagree          | 13        | 13.0    | 13.0          | 16.0               |
|       | Neutral           | 27        | 27.0    | 27.0          | 43.0               |
|       | Agree             | 37        | 37.0    | 37.0          | 80.0               |
|       | Stronly Agree     | 20        | 20.0    | 20.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total             | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

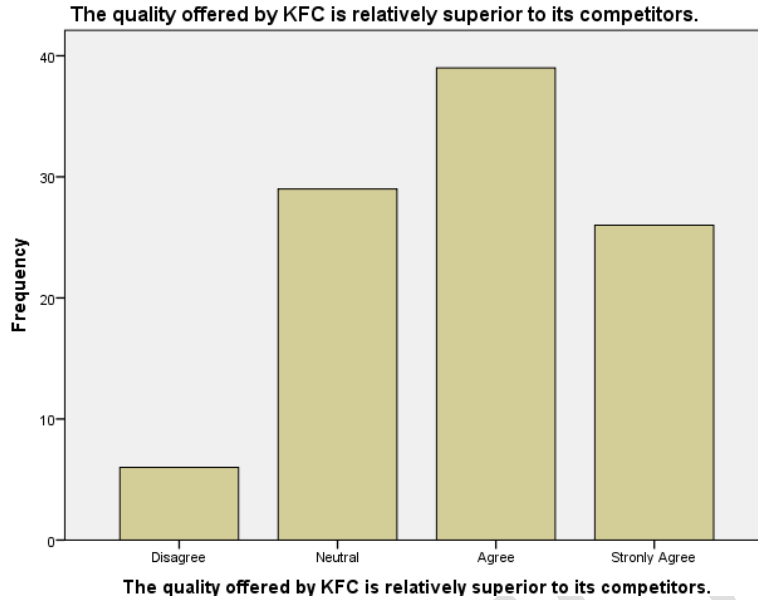
Every outlet offers the same products and services to satisfy their needs and demands.



Another statement that was aimed at gathering respondent’s insights on convenience was asked from customers that stated that there is not difference in different outlets of KFC and that all the outlets offer same kind of products and service no matter what location the outlet is opened in and tend to satisfy demands of customers and their needs as well. Customers that were respondents in this study answered in agreement to statement that regardless of locations of outlet, the services and products offered at every KFC outlet are same and does not alter products and services based on location providing customers with great experiences that persuades customers to revisit.

The quality offered by KFC is relatively superior to its competitors.

|       |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Disagree       | 6         | 6.0     | 6.0           | 6.0                |
|       | Neutral        | 29        | 29.0    | 29.0          | 35.0               |
|       | Agree          | 39        | 39.0    | 39.0          | 74.0               |
|       | Strongly Agree | 26        | 26.0    | 26.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total          | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

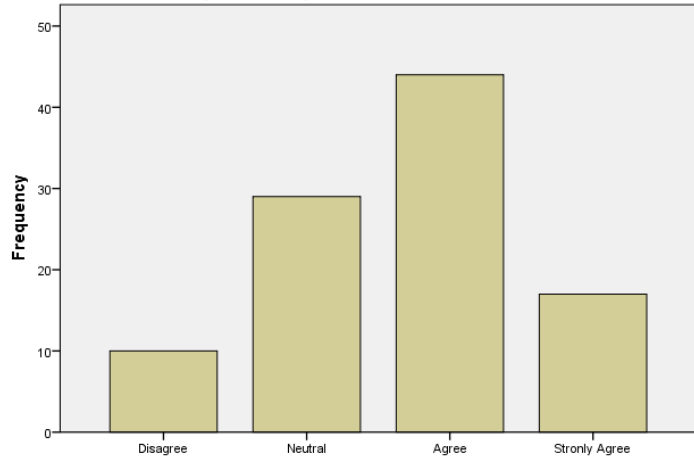


After the convenience variable, another sub variable that determines customer experience in general is quality of products and services offered at outlet. The statement sought customer response regarding quality of products and service that whether quality that is offered by KFC is comparatively superior to its rivals. Customers agreed and strongly agreed to statements opining that quality of food and service at KFC is superior as compared to their competitor that shows that KFC has maintained its high quality standards in association with affordable prices that helps in shaping customer experience.

**Though, the prices are relatively lower, the quality of food at KFC outlets are beyond the expectations of customers.**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Disagree | 10        | 10.0    | 10.0          | 10.0               |
| Neutral        | 29        | 29.0    | 29.0          | 39.0               |
| Agree          | 44        | 44.0    | 44.0          | 83.0               |
| Strongly Agree | 17        | 17.0    | 17.0          | 100.0              |
| Total          | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Though, the prices are relatively lower, the quality of food at KFC outlets are beyond the expectations of customers.



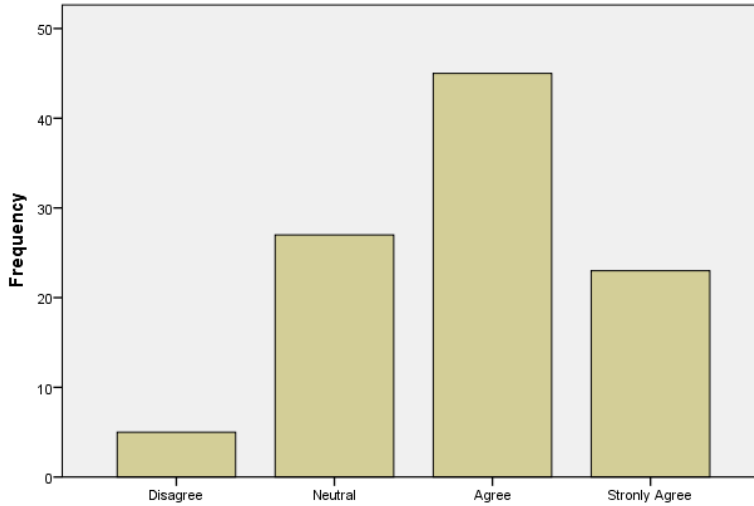
Though, the prices are relatively lower, the quality of food at KFC outlets are beyond the expectations of customers.

Another statement regarding quality of food and services offered at KFC asked from customers that was in relation to price of products charged by KFC. The statement investigated customer’s experience that does the prices set by KFC that are relative cheaper than rival products affects the quality of food served at KFC outlets. Most of consumers opined in agreement to statement that although prices charged by KFC for its food and services are relatively lower as compared to competitor brands, the quality of food served by KFC is exceptional and is beyond customers expectation that helps in shaping positive customer experience that increases customer satisfaction and revisit intentions.

Offering the customers with superior quality food at competitive prices increases the loyalty of the customers.

|                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Disagree | 5         | 5.0     | 5.0           | 5.0                |
| Neutral        | 27        | 27.0    | 27.0          | 32.0               |
| Agree          | 45        | 45.0    | 45.0          | 77.0               |
| Stronly Agree  | 23        | 23.0    | 23.0          | 100.0              |
| Total          | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Offering the customers with superior quality food at competitive prices increases the loyalty of the customers.**



**Offering the customers with superior quality food at competitive prices increases the loyalty of the customers.**

The statements starting from here and onwards asked customer’s opinion regarding customer’s experience and its relative effect on brand loyalty of customers that is dependent variable of study. The statement asked from customers stated that whether the superior quality of food and services offered by customers helps in increasing customer loyalty. Most of customers opined that offering exceptional services to customers along with quality food is a significant contributor to brand loyalty that makes customers attached to brand for long term.

**Offering the customers with quality products increases their frequency of purchase and results in positive experience of the customers.**

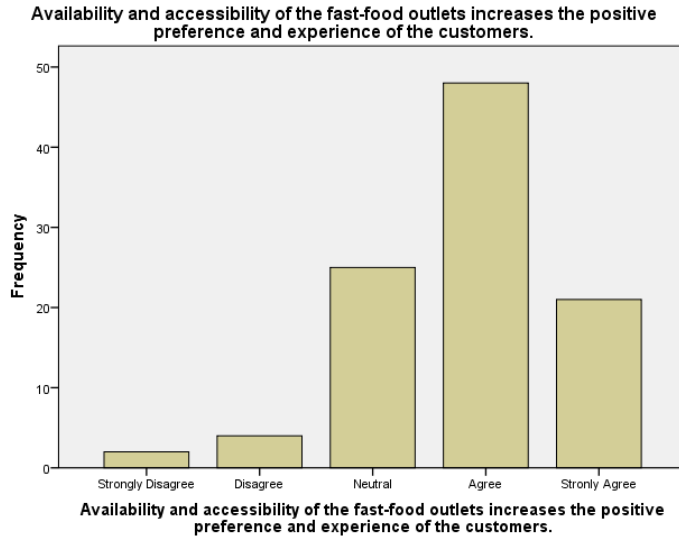
|       |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Disagree       | 5         | 5.0     | 5.0           | 5.0                |
|       | Neutral        | 23        | 23.0    | 23.0          | 28.0               |
|       | Agree          | 42        | 42.0    | 42.0          | 70.0               |
|       | Strongly Agree | 30        | 30.0    | 30.0          | 100.0              |
|       | Total          | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |



The above table and chart illustrates the customer’s responses regarding statement that quality of products and service if it is above beyond their expectation, it is likely to increase the frequency of purchases that customers make from a KFC outlet and also helps in enhancing positive customer experience. The customers were mostly on agreement and strongly agree side stating that quality products offered to customers are likely to increase repurchasing frequency from same brand and shaping positive customer experience and it is likely to increase brand loyalty for customers towards KFC.

**Availability and accessibility of the fast-food outlets increases the positive preference and experience of the customers.**

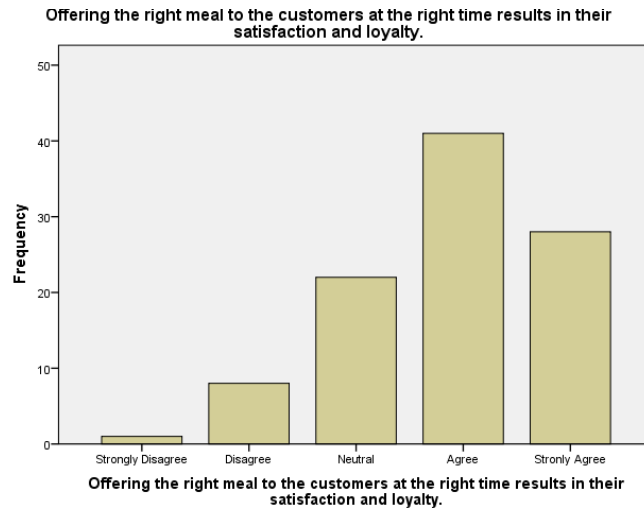
|                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly Disagree | 2         | 2.0     | 2.0           | 2.0                |
| Disagree                | 4         | 4.0     | 4.0           | 6.0                |
| Neutral                 | 25        | 25.0    | 25.0          | 31.0               |
| Agree                   | 48        | 48.0    | 48.0          | 79.0               |
| Strongly Agree          | 21        | 21.0    | 21.0          | 100.0              |
| Total                   | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |



The above table and graph show responses of customers regarding statement whether customer experience and positive customer preference based on the fact that availability and accessibility of fast-food outlets contribute to it. The customers were in agreement to the fact that availability and accessibility to fast food outlets in terms of convenience for customer is likely to enhance customer preference for a particular brand and enhance customer experience that makes a customer loyal to a brand. In case of this study, convenience of KFC outlets and availability of food at different outlets with same quality and price is likely to build loyal customers to KFC through enhancement of customer experience.

**Offering the right meal to the customers at the right time results in their satisfaction and loyalty.**

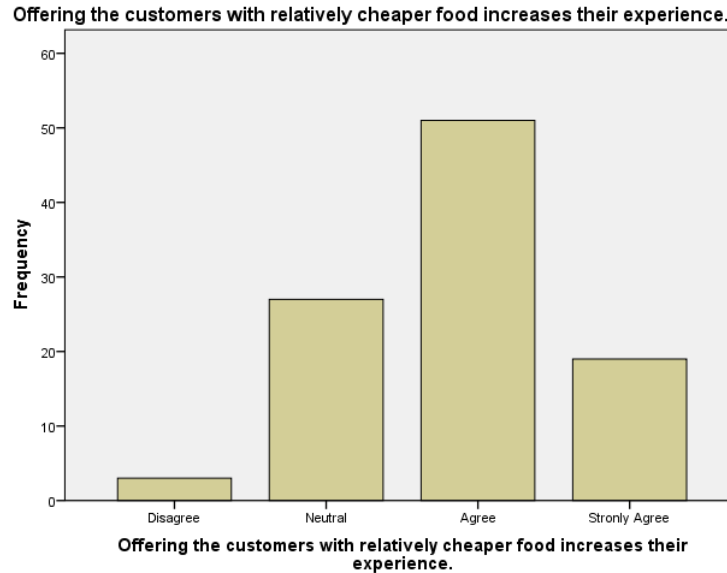
|                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly Disagree | 1         | 1.0     | 1.0           | 1.0                |
| Disagree                | 8         | 8.0     | 8.0           | 9.0                |
| Neutral                 | 22        | 22.0    | 22.0          | 31.0               |
| Agree                   | 41        | 41.0    | 41.0          | 72.0               |
| Strongly Agree          | 28        | 28.0    | 28.0          | 100.0              |
| Total                   | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |



Another statement based on positive customer experience that enhances and improves brand loyalty in a customer for a particular brand was asked from customers and their response was sought. The statement asked that whether offering right meal to customers at right time in turn returns the satisfaction and loyalty from customers that eventually helps organisation in achieving organisational goal of maximising profit. Customers answered in agreement to the statement that offering right meal to customers at right time that determines the availability factor in customer experience tends to satisfy customers and makes them loyal towards a brand that is beneficial for organisation.

**Offering the customers with relatively cheaper food increases their experience.**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Disagree | 3         | 3.0     | 3.0           | 3.0                |
| Neutral        | 27        | 27.0    | 27.0          | 30.0               |
| Agree          | 51        | 51.0    | 51.0          | 81.0               |
| Strongly Agree | 19        | 19.0    | 19.0          | 100.0              |
| Total          | 100       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |



The last statement that asked for customer's response in relation to building of brand loyalty through positive customer experience was asked from customers through the above statement mentioned in chart and table above. Customers agreed that offering customers a relatively cheaper food as compared to rival products and brand is likely to contribute towards positive customer experience and in turn, makes customers loyal to a brand.

#### 4.2.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is a statistical technique that is used to analyse relationship between two or more variables that are selected for analysis in a particular study. The correlation analysis is best applied through SPSS software in order to evaluate interdependence of two or more upon another. In this study, it is selected for attaining aim of study. The results from study are illustrated in table below in which customer experience that is independent variable in this study is broken into sub variables that are availability, price, quality and convenience and brand loyalty is picked as dependent variable in study that is conducted in hotel and restaurant industry of United Kingdom and firm selected for study specifically is KFC in UK.

Correlations

|               |                     | Price | Availability | Convenience | Quality | Brand_Loyalty |
|---------------|---------------------|-------|--------------|-------------|---------|---------------|
| Price         | Pearson Correlation | 1     | .378*        | .441        | .462    | .879          |
|               | Sig. (2-tailed)     |       | .030         | .001        | .020    | .000          |
|               | N                   | 100   | 100          | 100         | 100     | 100           |
| Availability  | Pearson Correlation | .378* | 1            | .551        | .377    | .775          |
|               | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .030  |              | .030        | .001    | .000          |
|               | N                   | 100   | 100          | 100         | 100     | 100           |
| Convenience   | Pearson Correlation | .441  | .551         | 1           | .458    | .723          |
|               | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .001  | .030         |             | .040    | .000          |
|               | N                   | 100   | 100          | 100         | 100     | 100           |
| Quality       | Pearson Correlation | .462  | .377         | .458        | 1       | .853          |
|               | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .020  | .001         | .040        |         | .000          |
|               | N                   | 100   | 100          | 100         | 100     | 100           |
| Brand_Loyalty | Pearson Correlation | .879  | .775         | .723        | .853    | 1             |
|               | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000  | .000         | .000        | .000    |               |
|               | N                   | 100   | 100          | 100         | 100     | 100           |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 1 Correlation Analysis**

The correlation table above shows relationship between all variables that are studied in this study. The correlation table illustrates a mirror image as the values above and below diagonals are same where diagonals represent perfect correlation of variable with itself so it is not studied while other variables are studied in order to identify interrelationship between these variables. The values to consider in correlation table are Pearson correlation coefficient 'R' that shows strength and direction of relationship while sig value is significance value that shows significance of relationship between variables. Here, the main relationship to study is relationship of all independent variables that are price, availability, quality and convenience with brand loyalty that are shown in last column in vertically and last row horizontally.

The results show that all independent variable have a significant relationship with brand loyalty and also shows a strong relationship because the value for Pearson correlation is greater than 0.7 indicating a strong relationship. Yet, it is analysed that price and quality are two

variables having strongest relationship with brand loyalty. This shows overall, that customer experience has strong, positive and significant relationship with brand loyalty. The findings in this study are similar to findings of Deming (2007) stating that there is positive and significant relationship between customer experience and brand loyalty.

#### 4.2.4 Regression Analysis

**Model Summary**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .805 <sup>a</sup> | .668     | .627              | .41359                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality, Availability, Convenience, Price

**Table 2 Model Summary**

The model summary table shows two things that is interrelationship between all variable of study through 'R' value and prediction of dependent variable by independent variable through value of 'R square'. Here, 'R' value shows that among all variables of study combined altogether possess a strong relationship having value of 0.805 or 80.5%. The other value of 'R square' shows that all the independent variable cumulatively predict dependent variable of brand loyalty by 66.8% while rest of dependent variable is predicted by unknown variables that are not considered in this study.

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | .372           | 4  | .093        | 55.613 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 16.250         | 95 | .171        |        |                   |
|       | Total      | 16.622         | 99 |             |        |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Brand\_Loyalty

b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality, Availability, Convenience, Price

**Table 3 ANOVA Table**

ANOVA or Analysis of Variance table shows the model fitness for study. This is illustrated through 'F-statistics' and significance value. Higher the F value, better the model fit and similarly, significance value in relation to F values shows model significance. A value of 55.613 and sig value of 0.000 shows that model used for this study for studying independent and dependent variable is fit for this study and is also significant.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model |              | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t     | Sig. |
|-------|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|       |              | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1     | (Constant)   | 2.770                       | .380       |                           | 7.288 | .000 |
|       | Price        | .604                        | .048       | .131                      | 1.260 | .000 |
|       | Availability | .512                        | .101       | .013                      | .125  | .000 |
|       | Convenience  | .551                        | .060       | .020                      | .194  | .000 |
|       | Quality      | .638                        | .069       | .068                      | .660  | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Brand\_Loyalty

**Table 4 Coefficients Table**

The coefficient table serves the purpose of study as it identifies the impact of independent variable on dependent variable separately and cumulatively. In above table, sig value shows the significant of impact of independent variable on dependent variable. Results show that price, availability, convenience and quality all have significant impact on brand loyalty and overall, customer experience has a significant impact on brand loyalty. The beta values in unstandardized coefficient shows the change in independent variable with 1 unit change in dependent variable. This shows that 1 unit change in brand loyalty will bring .604 changes in price, .512 changes in availability, .551 changes in convenience and .638 changes in quality respectively. The findings of this study are similar to findings of Carroll & Ahuvia (2006) stating that customer experience has significant impact on brand loyalty.

### **4.3 Discussion**

#### *Objective 1: Customer Experience and Brand Loyalty*

The first objective of the study was regarding the customer experience and brand loyalty in the hotel and restaurant industry in United Kingdom. In this regards, it was found that brand loyalty and customer experience have been the foremost priority in the hospitality industry. Customer experience, as defined by authors and scholars, is the art and science of interacting with the customers to ensure the development of positive association and relationship between the consumers and the company. On the other hand, the term brand loyalty refers to the process of increasing the willingness of the customers to increase their frequency of purchase with respect to the goods and services offered by the company. In the case of hospitality industry, especially KFC, it was found that the company has continually interacted with the customers to ensure that their requirements and demands are satisfied in optimal manner to develop positive experience of the customers, which ultimately results in the development of brand loyalty.

#### *Objective 2: Factors affecting Customer Experience*

In the case of hospitality industry, the most important factors that have continually affected the customer experience include; price, availability of the product, convenience, and quality. With respect to KFC, it was found that the company has continually prioritised offering the customers with superior quality products and services at comparatively lower price. This has eventually increased the willingness and motivation of the customers to develop positive experience with the brand. As a result of quality and price, the customers have frequently encouraged and motivated potential customers to try the food available at KFC, rather than trying the meals offered by the fast-food competitors in United Kingdom.

Moreover, the other factors affecting the customer experience in the hospitality industry were convenience and availability. In this regards, it was revealed that KFC is located almost everywhere in United Kingdom, which implies that the customer can easily avail the products and services offered by the company to satisfy their needs and requirements. The company has effective and efficient workforce, which has continually worked towards the elimination of queues within the fast-food chain to ensure the factor of convenience. As a result, the company has continually observed that the customers tend to prefer KFC over others in the marketplace based on the availability and convenience.

Overall, the research study found that the factors affecting the customer experience in the fast-food industry in United Kingdom were price, quality, availability and convenience. Each of the factors holds significant influence and impact on the overall customer experience, which eventually shapes the brand loyalty amongst the customers.

### *Objective 3: Impact of Customer Experience on Brand Loyalty*

The research study found that customer experience has positive impact on the brand loyalty, in the case of KFC. In particular, the correlation analysis revealed that the strength of association between the variables of customer experience was strong. The most important variable was price, which showed that price has highly strong association with brand loyalty, which implies that brand loyalty can significantly be influenced by offering the customers with low-priced meals. On the other hand, the regression analysis helped in evaluating the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. In particular, it was found that availability, price, quality, and convenience had positive impact on the brand loyalty. In simpler words, offering the customers with sub-standard quality meals could result in the significant

reduction in customer experience, which negatively affects the overall brand loyalty of the customers based on quality.

Moreover, the researcher found that KFC has frequently been preferred by customers in United Kingdom based on quality and price. The company has continually offered its customers with superior quality food and services at comparatively lower price, which has ultimately influenced the customers to increase their frequency of purchase with the brand. The overall satisfaction of purchasing superior quality food at relatively lower price has motivated and encouraged the customers to prefer the brand over others, which implies the concept of brand loyalty.

Lastly, it was found in the research study that changes in the price and quality can significantly affect the brand loyalty. This implies that customers were willing to overlook convenience and availability for quality and price; therefore KFC must focus on offering the customers with internationally acceptable quality food and services. The correlation and regression analysis also unveiled that KFC has gained exceptional positive customer experience, which can be argued as the source of company's competitive advantage, which is why the customers are more inclined to purchase KFC over others available in the hospitality industry in United Kingdom.

#### *Objective 4: Recommendations to KFC*

Considering the findings of the research study, KFC has been presented with a variety of recommendations to ensure optimal level of customer experience, which could ultimately lead to positive brand loyalty. Following are some of the recommendations proposed to the company;

- KFC has been proposed to enhance the experience of customers by offering meals at attractive prices without compromising on the quality of product and the services they provide.
- Even though, the offerings of the company are somewhat similar to its competitors, the company can differentiate its products and services by standardising the offerings in their outlets which are located in different destinations
- Lastly, the company should focus on finding convenient locations for their outlets to ensure that the customers can satisfy their needs and requirements by visiting the outlets in most convenient manner.

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## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

### *5.1. Introduction*

This chapter includes the conclusion which is derived on the basis of the findings that are interpreted in chapter four. Furthermore, the chapter includes summarised findings and the outcomes of this research are justified with appropriate literature that has been gathered from secondary sources. Moreover, the chapter also includes the recommendations which are also based on the findings regarding the effects of customers experience towards brand loyalty and in addition future implications are also provided which shows that how this can be extended in future by incorporating different elements.

### *5.2. Summarised Findings*

The research was aimed towards analysing the impact and effects of experience of customers towards their brand loyalty in case of KFC in UK. The sub objectives of research study were to study the concept of customer experience and brand loyalty, the factors which affect customer experience and brand loyalty and lastly the impact between the independent and dependent variable. The research study found out that the concept of customer experience is not new and during past decade, researchers, interest of scholars, individuals and marketers in other domains have contributed towards the increase in concept of customer experience. According to Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001), brands like including Starbucks, Google, Netflix and IKEA have become influential brands not only by the help of advertising companies but more on convincing the customers' experience. In contemporary business era and new perspective, the customer experience is reflected as driver of brand loyalty and as well as brand equity. However, an

extensive variety of agreements by different scholars on relationship of customer experience with the brand loyalty since there are diverse opinions of defining the experience of customers and methods and techniques of measuring it (Kimpakorn and Tocquer, 2010). Therefore, it is evident that customer experience is a significant aspect which results in improved repeated purchases from customers, enlarged customer base, positive word of mouth and number of different aspects for business.

Through the analysis of literature significant factors of brand experience were identifies which includes price, quality, availability and convenience through which the experience of customers is enhanced. These factors are of key importance for any business that wants to succeed in the market at a rapid pace. As stated in the previously in research study that in an extremely competitive business environment, customers have become price-sensitive. As stated by Palmer (2010, p. 197), they have been observed by the marketers by displaying their interest in buying goods and services available in the market at lower price to satisfy their desires and needs, and have developed certain experience with respect to the purchased goods and services. On the other hand, Ramanathan (2011, p. 255) stated that customers are more motivated towards the businesses that offers the right product at the right time and place.

However, the businesses today are operating in a competitive environment; they have often disregarded the significance of the availability of product, which has resulted towards the failure of brand and business as a whole. Similarly, convenience is also one of the factors that represent the facilitation of customers towards consuming or utilising the products and services offered by the business. However, mostly is has been observed that customers are offered with products and services which are complex in nature and can adversely affects the experience of customers. Lastly, as stated by Bergman and Klesfsjo (2010), quality of the product and service

is the most important factor which affects the experience of customers. In this regards, it has been proposed that customers, irrespective of their prices, continually search for products and services that are high in quality. These factors of customer experience have been observed in many different studies through which it is evident that in order to enhance customers' experience, brands need to focus the factors which identified.

The study also identified different benefits of brand loyalty through which brands can enable themselves to operate on next levels by developing trust among the customers. In the domain of marketing, many researches have been conducted in the past which displays the importance of brand loyalty and its effects on different variables. The benefits that this study identified are the advocacy of brand, insensitivity of price, recognition of customers and lastly the enhanced credibility. According to He, et al., (2012, p. 649), loyal customers act as a brand advocate in the community and as well as the society. Therefore, it has been disclosed that the loyal customers of the brand tend to promote the brand without being concerned about the compensation. On the other hand, Goldsmith, et al., (2010, p. 331) stated that consumers now a days search for products and services that are low in price since there is too much competition in the market and there are many brands available.

Moreover, Herbig and Milewicz (2012) stated that customers are offered with almost similar goods and services and businesses are focused towards distinguishing their brand over others by enhancing the brand loyalty among customers, and lastly study conducted by Esteves (2010, p. 675) showed that customers are more prone towards selecting a particular brand or product over the offerings available of competitors in the marketplace, and in return they tend to recognise the company for its superior quality products and services. Moreover, they tend to select the same brand over and over again rather than recognising something unfamiliar.

The findings of research study also shows that the variables selected for this research which are customer experience and brand loyalty have positive relationship among themselves and that the independent variables which customer experience have a significant impact of dependent variable which is brand loyalty. The values that have been derived by the application of correlation and regression show similar outcomes with respect to the studies that have been conducted in the past.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

The recommendations provided below are generated through the outcomes of research regarding customer experience and brand loyalty in hotel and restaurant industry of UK, specifically for KFC.

- It is recommended for KFC that in order to enhance the experience of customers, the brand must provide attractive prices to customers without compromising on the quality of product and the services they provide. The prices must be lower than the competition and product quality must be greater so that customers can easily satisfy their need and enhance their experience.
- Secondly, it is important for KFC to provide all their offerings that are similar in their outlets which are located in different destinations, since a slight change in product or service in different outlets can significantly affect the experience of customers in a negative way. The availability of products in every outlet must be synchronised.
- Furthermore, it also recommended for KFC that it should locate their outlets in convenient locations so that customers do not find any difficulty to satisfy their needs

related hunger. The availability of outlets in convenient locations enhances the experience of customers and develops brand loyalty.

- Quality of the product and service is the key to success of any organisation through which brand loyalty and customer experience is enhanced. Therefore, KFC should focus on providing best quality to its customers as opposed to their competitors.
- For enhancing the brand loyalty, KFC should focus to satisfy the needs and wants of customers of greater level as compared to competitors since brand loyalty ensures repeat purchases by influencing the purchase behaviours and decisions of customers.

#### ***5.4. Future Implications***

The study which have been conducted can be enhanced in future by incorporating different elements through which the scope of the study will be enhanced and the research will address the issues related to customer experience and brand loyalty on broad levels. There are several ways that can be adopted for expanding and enhancing the study in future which includes the adaptation of different research design. This research is executed through quantitative analysis; however incorporating a qualitative research design may generate different outcomes due to the observance of researcher. Secondly, the research collected primary data through survey questionnaire whereas adopting the approach of interviews can significantly change the outcomes of research. Moreover, this study is focused towards KFC in UK, however conducted the same research in different region and with different sample size can provide different outcomes.

#### ***5.5. Conclusion***

The findings of this research study signifies that customer experience significantly affects the loyalty of customers towards the brand since a positive association with a brand influences the behaviours customers through which they stay attached with the brand over a longer period of time. Moreover, customers who are loyal with a brand help the business to generate more profit and through their personal influence they also attract the customers who are not exclusively targeted by the brand. Moreover, the study also reveals that the main factors which enhance the experience of customers are price, availability, convenience and quality.

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