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MODULE NAME: DISSERTATION

MODULE CODE: LCMB7020

**TITLE OF DISSERTATION: THE ROLE OF RELATIONSHIP
MARKETING IN IMPROVING BRAND LOYALTY IN THE UK
RETAIL INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF TESCO**

Abstract

The aim of the current research is to analyse the relationship marketing tactics to enhance brand loyalty and improve stable customer relationships for long-term corporate enrichment, focusing on the case study Tesco. The main issues are identified to be the change in consumer behaviour and preference. This issues have affected the choice of marketing strategy for majority of FMCG companies across the globe. Additionally, the most ideal relationship marketing strategy based on the consumer preferences can be a challenging aspect for the FMCG companies. The research work is focused on a secondary qualitative research approach which is an effective way to gather a wide range of information from previously done research papers, journals, and articles. This is an effective way to analyse the relationship between marketing management brand loyalty and customer engagement. Interpretivism research philosophy, inductive research approach, and descriptive research design are used to conduct the research work. The findings of this report have shown that the relationship marketing strategies of Tesco positively influence the brand in engaging their customers. Club card loyalty programs of Tesco also significantly influence the overall brand loyalty of the company. The experiential marketing strategy of Tesco has been instrumental in increasing brand awareness and ensuring a long-term association with customers. Tesco must be focused on experiential marketing, loyalty initiatives communication strategy by enabling technological support and appreciating the customer feedback strategy. Training and development are required to increase employee's awareness and implement rewarding strategies to engage them for the long term.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In the present business environment, the worth of brand loyalty is important for long-term success. Relationship marketing depends on the endeavour of businesses to attract probable customers and to maintain and set up long-term relationships with customers. This study focuses on whether relationship marketing has an impact on improving brand loyalty, with a special emphasis on Tesco, which is a renowned retail brand in the UK retail industry. This chapter will provide the motivation behind the research by providing a background and rationale of the research context. Besides that, this chapter will also present the aim, objective, research questions, significance, and structure of the entire dissertation as well.

1.2 Background of research

Customers are really important for any business and in terms of making money in the long run, companies like Tesco need to make sure their customers keep coming back. According to Alzaubi *et al.* (2022), to make customers happy, retail companies need to be more imaginative and involved with them to earn their loyalty. For Tesco, customer satisfaction is the happiness of customers with the company's products, services, and capabilities. However, the primary indicator of repurchasing the products, keeping customers happy is found to be increased by 63% of the chance of them purchasing from the same brand again (Ibrahim and Aljarah, 2023).



Figure 1.1: Relationship Marketing

(Source: Gradecmedia.com, 2024)

In order to build and maintain customer loyalty, brands should invest in loyalty programs that offer benefits such as priority access to products, free delivery, and exceptional experiences. This strategy is more likely to ensure customer loyalty and satisfaction in the long run. In order to improve this dynamic, marketing departments employ various strategies to build and maintain brand loyalty, including monitoring purchase trends, analysing consumption data, and designing advertising campaigns targeted at their existing loyal and likely-to-be-loyal customer segments.

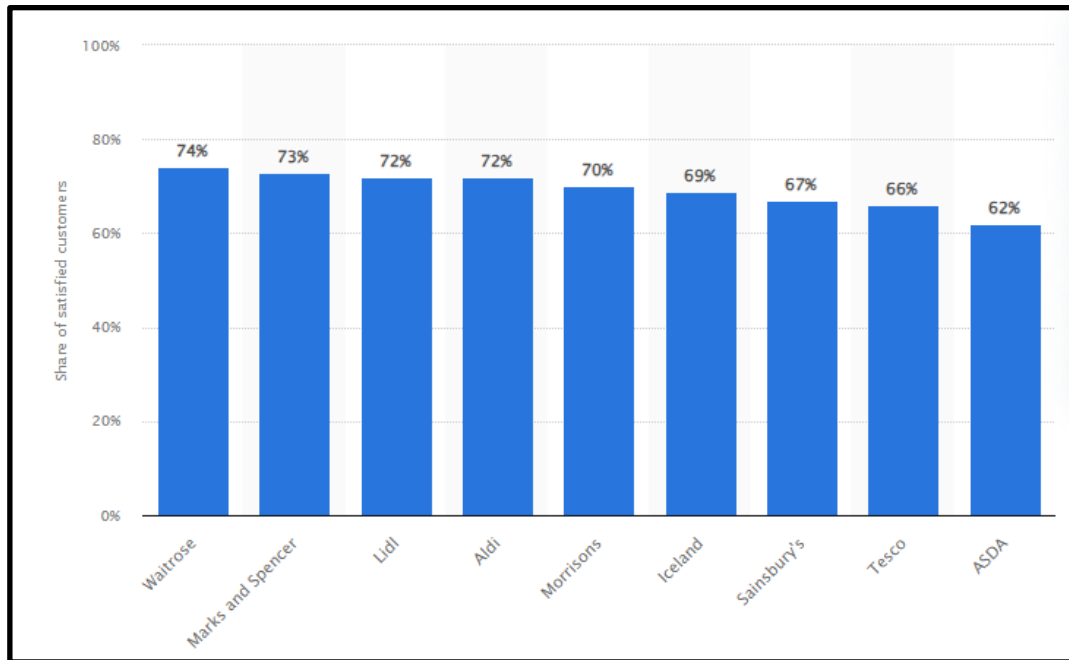


Figure 1.2: Customer loyalty in Tesco (2022)

(Source: Statista.com, 2023)

Tesco is the leading retail chain that has more than 27% of the UK retail market share (Tesco plc.com, 2024). However, the company's current customer loyalty rate measured by its Clubcard loyalty program is only 66% (Statista.com, 2023). This indicates that the company needs to take action to improve its customer loyalty through strategic relationship management programs. Therefore, this paper discusses improving brand loyalty and relationship marketing of the company with an aim to enhance brand loyalty, customer relationships, and the long-term prosperity of Tesco in the UK retail market.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

Aim

The aim of the current research is to evaluate and find the role of relation marketing tactics to enhance brand loyalty and improve stable customer relationships for long-term corporate enrichment, focusing on Tesco.

Objectives

- To analyse the factors affecting customised communication on consumer satisfaction in improving brand loyalty in the UK retail industry, especially in Tesco.
- To assess the efficacy of loyalty programs in Tesco in cultivating emotional attachments and encouraging repeated patronage, hence augmenting total brand loyalty.
- To evaluate the significance of customer feedback and response in establishing trust and enhancing brand loyalty over some time in Tesco.
- To examine the relationship between experimental marketing efforts and the establishment of long-lasting customer brand connections in the UK retail industry to ensure continued loyalty to Tesco.

1.4 Research Questions

RQ1: What are the factors affecting brand loyalty in the UK retail industry, especially in Tesco?

RQ2: What is the efficacy of loyalty programs in Tesco in cultivating emotional attachments and encouraging repeated patronage, hence augmenting total brand loyalty?

RQ3: What is the importance of customer feedback and response in establishing trust and enhancing brand loyalty over some time in Tesco?

RQ4: How does experiential marketing help to make long-term relationships with consumers?

RQ5: What are the ways to establish a long-lasting customer brand connection in companies like Tesco in the UK retail industry to ensure continued loyalty?

1.5 Rationale

The issue is the dynamic changes in between consumer expectations and brands' failure to meet the changing expectations. According to YEĞİN (2020), in the initial purchase, the buying experience of a consumer depends on the satisfaction experience. Regarding this, whether the customer is unsatisfied with the initial purchase can hamper the relationship with the business in nearly 43.6% of cases (Ibrahim and Aljarah, 2023). In the initial stage, the consumer is satisfied with the purchase in this case the consumer is expected to purchase again which helps in building

brand loyalty. Relationship marketing maintains a stronger impassioned connection between brands and consumers. Therefore, brands like Tesco may need to raise the trust and loyalty of consumers by discussing directly with them, listening to their concerns, and giving the proper solutions. As a result, the consumer's opinion about the brand boosts towards long-term loyalty.

This is an issue because of the paradigm changes and changing consumer preferences, which pose a significant challenge to the historical reliance of retail businesses on the transactional model. According to Tanveer (2021), appreciating and valuing consumers are continuing engagement and trust with business. In the present competitive scenario, relationship marketing has an individualised advantage formed by binding with emotions and relationships, where services and goods are often easily replicable. Due to these reasons, it is difficult for brands like Tesco to strengthen the market position of the brand in the UK retail industry (Tesco plc.com, 2024). According to Mostafa (2021), the crucial part of relationship marketing is meeting and fixing consumer's needs. Whether brands listen to consumers and resolve their problems helps to increase the consumer's satisfaction. Furthermore, satisfied and loyal customers are expressing their experiences and become brand representatives through sharing experiences with family, friends, and co-workers.

The current issue is associated with the dynamic nature of the market and growing market competition. As a result, companies like Tesco are grappling with the challenge of implementing a consistent strategy to sustain brand loyalty and improve consumer retention (Azan and Karimah, 2022). Relationship marketing is a great concept and it does not look like an easy thing all the time. According to Arslan (2020), many organisation owners make the mistake of focusing on gathering new customers and forgetting the relationship with old customers due to these existing customers feeling ignored and switching loyalties. However, according to Le (2021), through relationship-making techniques, brands can gather consumer's necessary feedback. Brands can create and develop better services, products, and experiences by properly listening to the customer's preferences, comments, and suggestions. Therefore, it is crucial for Tesco to identify that there are so many challenges in implementing, such as costly implementations, resource and time intensive, biases, cultural differences, and geographic obstructions in current aspects.

This research sheds light on the impact of relationship marketing on emphasising brand loyalty with a focus on Tesco's current strategies for managing customer relationships. This research wants to understand how happy customers are related to their staying loyal to Tesco and the stores they buy from. According to Ilyas (2021), businesses need to be more mindful of adapting strategies to fulfil cultural tastes and nuances, otherwise, brands fail to gather probable consumers instead of pulling them in. Furthermore, this research also looks at what makes customers stay loyal and studies the programs that reward loyal customers through a research study. In relationship marketing trust is an important element, it helps to get customer's dependence on the brand's honesty, reliability, and competence.

1.6 Significance of the research

This research has significance for understanding the influence of relationship marketing techniques on brand loyalty in the UK retail industry. This research focuses on Tesco's relationship management techniques and challenges to share strategies for better performance of the company in the long run. This is crucial as relationship marketing is an important influence which helps organisations acquire competitive aspects over other competitors in the market (Azan and Karimah, 2022). Besides that, relationship management also helps in sustainability towards the growth of the business. It strengthens the communication with consumers and leads to enhanced better understandability with them. Therefore, the research has significance both in terms of academic and business point-of-views. This means that the research can be used as a valuable resource to understand the basic and modern aspects of relationship management with its impact on brand loyalty and related theories. In addition, the findings may offer the customer management teams valuable information that can be used to make proper decisions and sustain a competitive edge.

1.7 Dissertation structure

Chapter 1: Introduction

Through identifying the aim and objectives of the research this research will focus on highlighting key issues along with finding the significance for researching this topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review	This paper reviews all the articles and journals about the research topic. Through comparing and contrasting opinions of different published articles this chapter will be focused on the key synthesis of literature along with highlighting gaps from the previous research.
Chapter 3: Methodology	This part of the research will be focused on the process of data collection and the type of data that will be used for this research.
Chapter 4: Findings & Analysis and Discussion	The process of gathering data is conducting thematic analysis using tables, charts, and graphs, and relating them to the literature reviewed in the chapter along with linking with theories and literature in the discussion part.
Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations	The key findings and the synthesis of the topic, highlighting the key arguments and summarising the answer to the topic question. Reinforce the main theme of the topic along with providing recommendations for this research issue.

Table 1.1: Dissertation structure

(Source: Self-developed)

1.8 Summary

In summary, relationship marketing techniques help to decrease client turnover and strengthen loyalty, such as loyalty programs, personalised communication, and attractive offers. The

research aims to understand the impact of relationship marketing in brand loyalty management for making bonds strongly with consumers giving a competitive aspect for Tesco. The research scope includes the UK retail industry and its prominent contributor Tesco and the findings may improve the business's current approach to managing relationships with customers while providing a sustainable competitive advantage.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Relationship marketing is an important strategy for businesses that want to keep their brand loyalty and build strong relationships with them over time. In today's competitive marketplace, brands need to create and keep strong relationships with customers and stakeholders. This helps them to stand out from the competition, this chapter will critically explain improving the marketed relationship and the importance of improving and building brand loyalty by reviewing different literatures. This review will also discuss the impact of customised communication on increasing customer loyalty to a brand. Impact of loyalty programs on making customers more loyal to a brand, Customer feedback, and response, experiential marketing making people more loyal to a brand. Similar to the early development of consumer behaviour, relationship marketing is growing in popularity as more individuals get interested in the subject and try to comprehend its fundamental concepts. In this section, the opinions of different authors will be critically evaluated in an argumentative way to gain insight to evaluate relationship marketing and brand loyalty.

2.2 Theoretical Overview

2.2.1 Berry's relationship marketing theory

Relationship marketing's fundamental concepts are still in the early stages of development for the retail companies. These require a wide range of perspectives in order to comprehend this expanding phenomenon. Each study offers a unique perspective that can aid in our understanding of relationship marketing (Caliskan and Esmer, 2020).

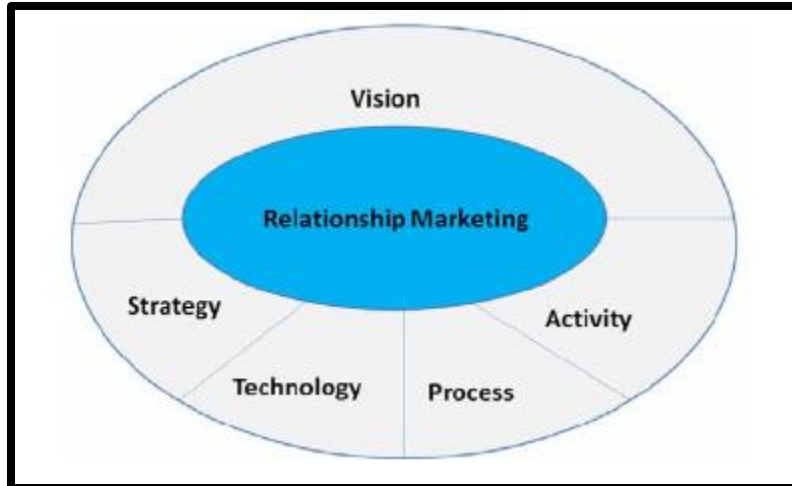


Figure 2.1: Berry's relationship marketing theory

(Source: Yadav and Singh, 2014)

As an illustration, database marketing is one limited viewpoint on relationships in marketing, focusing on the promotional elements of marketing related to database initiatives. Another limited but pertinent perspective is to define relationship marketing as client retention when a range of after-marketing strategies are employed to foster customer loyalty or maintain contact with customers beyond the point of sale.

2.2.2 5 E's of relationship marketing

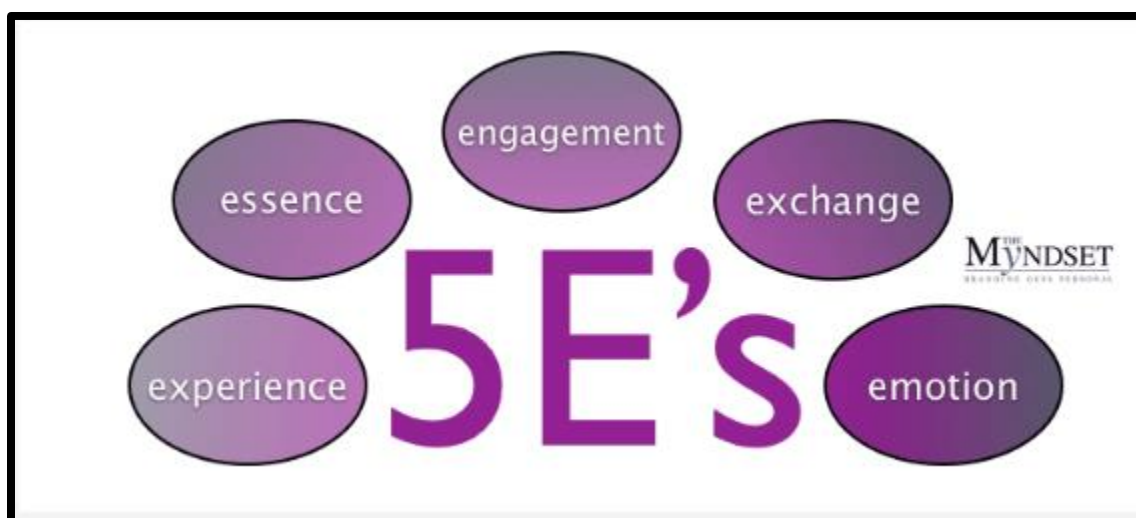


Figure 2.2: 5 E's Relationship of marketing

(Source: Minterdial.com 2024)

The above figure demonstrates the relationship marketing's five phases for enhancing brand loyalty. Engagement, essence, experience, exchange, and emotion are the five E's Strategies for interacting with the clientele via goods and services. According to the views of Azan and Karimah (2022), businesses like Tesco are able to offer reliable information about their goods and services. A seamless, painless method of communicating with customer assistance. Consumers can interact with the brand and the business, and they are given the chance to offer feedback on how well the product is working. an online store that inspires discovery and offers pleasant surprises and feelings. For example, if the traditional retail marketing strategies is meant to be transactional, then the checkout process needs to be faultless, uncomplicated, and clear. The final, and perhaps most difficult, is the restriction of brand stands for your brand message to resonate on the website.

2.2.3 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) cycle

The initial stages of the CRM cycle are essentially product, support, sales, and marketing. The main goals of the CRM cycle's marketing stage are to find customers by launching different marketing efforts, building an account and contact database, and then producing leads by assessing the customer data that has been obtained. According to Patel and Swamy (2023), CRM provides an option to turn leads into chances to do additional sales activities. This indicates that more customers might keep coming back to buying products again, and tell others good things about the products in the retail market (Habib *et al.* 2021). CRM provides product management technology that records information about the product, including its price, vendor, and description, among other things. At this product stage, the primary focus is on product delivery. Resolving customer problems and offering customer help continue to be the key priorities during the support stage.

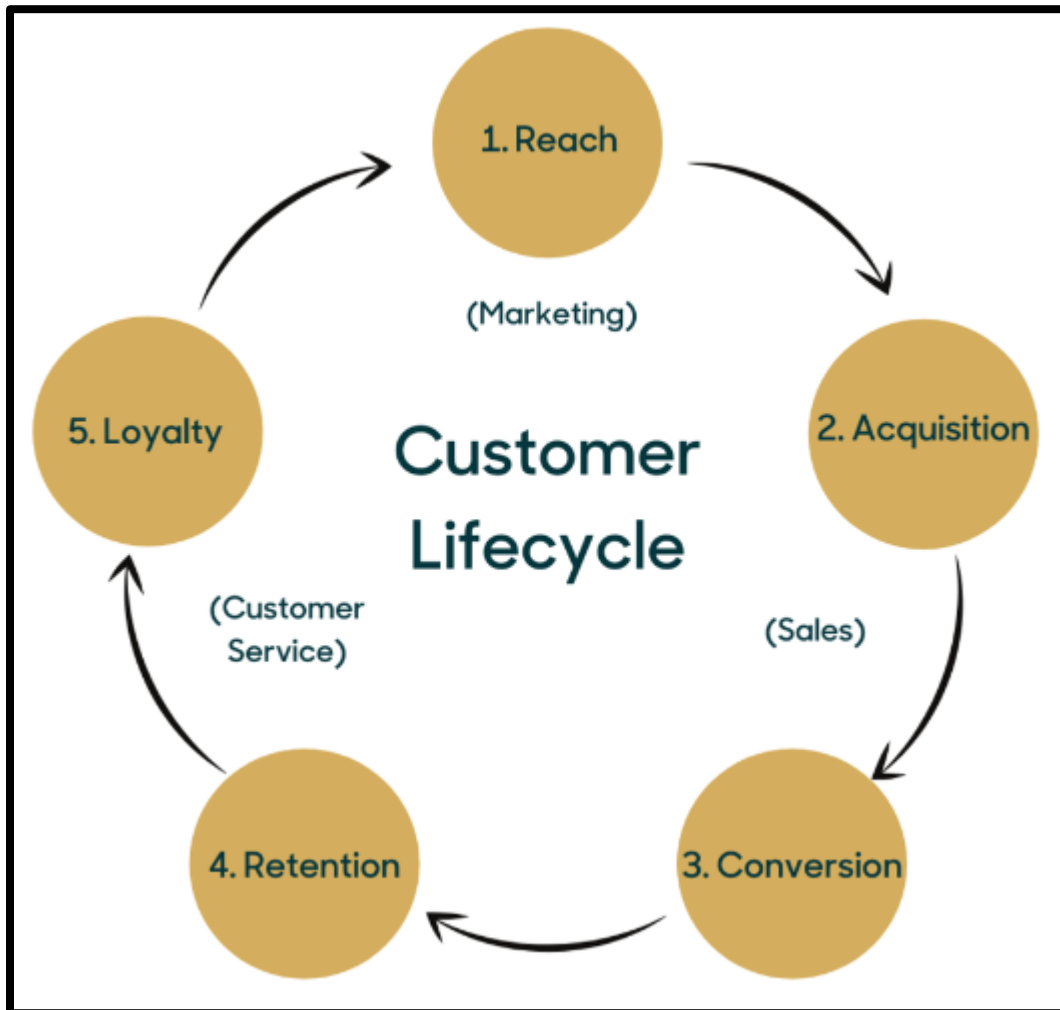


Figure 2.3: CRM cycle

(Source: Demeterict.com, 2020)

2.3 Different factors of relationship marketing influence brand loyalty in the retail sector

Constructing a strong relationship marketing to grow a business highly depends on customer loyalty. Regarding this, various factors such as customised communication, loyalty programs, customer response, and experimental marketing are important for building customer-focused marketing in the UK retail industry (Sharma and Gupta, 2022). Customised communication

between stakeholders or customers. Developing a loyalty program increases customer loyalty toward marketing (Podium.com. 2020). For example, Tesco's loyalty program the Clubcard program is an excellent example growing loyalty in the UK retail industry (Tesco plc.com, 2024).

2.4 Influence of customised communication for improving brand loyalty

Customised communication for improving brand loyalty is an important part of the business. A more artistic approach is needed to satisfy customers and increase brand loyalty due to globalisation. For example, Tesco has changed and modified itself to gain a large space in the market, with a focus on innovation to increase brand loyalty (Alzoubi *et al.* 2022). However, personalise communication with the help of customer segmentation by dividing the customers according to behaviours, customer's preference, and promoting each segment, based on relevant and personalised content in the retail industry. The use of apps and websites that are user-friendly helps with important features like the dashboard, and the browsing personalised experience and makes it simple for customers to find what they want. For loyal customers providing bumper discounts and early access to seal the product helps to increase brand loyalty. The brand needs to do this in the prospect of locality increasing engagement with customers through feedback, messages, and addressing the customer's queries related to the product (Linkedin. 2024).

In trust and satisfaction issues brand loyalty can be seen as two of the key relationship-marking components- that have a direct impact on brand attachment in the retail customer management. According to Keller (2020), in psychological connection brand resonance is an important part that customers have with the brand generated by this loyalty and it has four dimensions that comprise brand loyalty. Customers become loyal to the business or brand when service providers resolve their disputes in an effective and timely manner (Habib *et al.* 2021). According to Keller's studies, empathy not only helps with dispute resolution but also fosters consumer loyalty. With many benefits, a firm like Tesco may employ brand resonance to acquire a competitive edge. Regarding this, social media marketing and digital communication tools monitor customer communication, therefore collaboration and engagement in between customers and marketing channels need to be enhanced. It also helps to find out and describe the retail customer's point of the brand's different marketing activities on social media platforms. Besides

that, social media gives various benefits and options for successful brand management (Ebrahim, 2020). A positive relationship between brand loyalty and conflict handling through trust and relationship quality. eWOM and effective relationship marketing help organisations to minimise the risk related to brand loyalty (Tandfonline.com, 2020). Conversely, brand loyalty is viewed as an intangible and valuable asset and an employee's behaviour that supports the brand, which is a crucial component of brand performance and can be managers' primary focus for gaining a competitive edge and the success of their organizations, particularly service organizations (Soleimani *et al.* 2023).

Theory regarding brand loyalty such as self-presentation theory considers that it depends on social motivation such as self-promotion and gives a vision of customer behaviours and transmits information about oneself to others. Self-presentation theory plays an important role in manipulating consumers in social action to create an identity as cool individually (Jimenez-Barreto *et al.* 2022). On the other hand, Oliver's theory suggested four stages of the loyalty model such as belief, affect, intentions, and actions (Acrwebsite.org, 2024) This model also gives a suggestion on empirical examination analysing switching barriers by moderating effects. The development of different stages of brand loyalty is suggested by this theory and exerts some influence (Acrwebsite.org, 2024). In social media communication, UGC and FGC play an important role, and online purchasing behaviour is infused. The emergency and expansion of e-commerce have increased the significance of cultivating brand loyalty. To generate corporate profit through the customer's lifetime value of each devoted client, the majority of business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce models rely significantly on a sizable customer base.

According to Moorman (2020), a lot of marketers struggle to gauge how social media communication affects consumer loyalty to their brands. The study of Aobakwe Ledikwe (2020), contributes by providing an improvement literature between brand awareness and brand image to the developing economy of selected apparel brands. Businesses now create social media marketing using different types of tools through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to reach customers which introduces a new type of marketing plan. With the help of different tools tourism and hospitality industrial brands are growing rapidly, applying SMM to make a profit. On the other hand, it gives the perfect platform for customers to find hotels as 50% of the global population uses social network platforms (Ibrahim *et al.* 2021)



Figure 2.4: Customer Loyalty concept

(Source: Portalcfo.com, 2024)

2.5 Influence of loyalty program for improving brand loyalty

A loyalty program is a marketing strategy through which a company or organisation focuses on giving rewards and incentives to its customers for showing loyalty to the company. Through strategic marketing product sales increase and the company can retain a long-time customer for their company. As per Alsurideh *et al.* (2020), companies use marketing campaigns as a tool for increasing a strong relationship between customers and suppliers. In the present in a complex market of different brands, there is a need to increase brand loyalty to compete in this environment. For example, after Tesco has introduced the Clubcard loyalty program, the company had an immediate sales growth of 28% 1995. Nowadays the company has more than 14.8 million, 90% among them belongs to the UK retail industry (Tescopl.com, 2024). Through loyalty programs a company gives rewards to its old customers, free coins to decrease purchase value, additional discounts on purchasing, and other incentives to hold a long-time customer.

The purpose of retail companies is to insist people indirectly for repetitive purchasing and building trust for the company. This means that if the related company can build this trust then consumers do not hesitate to go the distance for purchasing their loved retail products. However,

Kethan and Basha, (2022) opined that in the modern market, the customer is the monarch of the market. In a store, whether a customer does not get beneficial service they instantly change their buying decision. It is not only about the services but it also depends on other factors like the quality of products, less information about the product and the behaviour of the staff. With kind and respectful behaviour, a company attracts the most positive consumers. The company can make details of the customer's needs in a file to give them the best service in the future with an increase in brand loyalty for the retail brand (Diallo *et al.* 2021). This increases the number of customers in the company. Thus a customer experience can be a good marketing strategy of a company (Wibowo *et al.* 2020).

In a company, brand loyalty takes place when a consumer purchases a product from the same company often. For example, some people always buy Schweppes and other Coca-Cola from the same store. For the royalty of the product, people do not search for any substitute for their product. This shows customers become emotionally attached to the product of a particular company. Many times when customers get better alternatives they do not switch over to another company though they give better and cheaper products. This shows the customer's satisfaction with a service or product from a specific company. The loyalty of the customer and brand offers several benefits to a company, Such as lower production and marketing costs, increased profits, and premium price.

According to Kim and Baker, (2020) paid loyalty programs make a sense of grouping. Customers feel that they are part of that group. In paid programs, companies offer extraordinary benefits and these paid programs act as a weapon to increase the loyalty of the brand. These paid programs not only attract new customers but also hold long-term customers, these companies get benefits as customers pay a fee to join the program which in turn reduces the burden of marketing costs. It thus acts as another source of revenue for the company. Liu and Jo, (2020) cited that through value-based loyalty programs, companies connect with consumers at a deeper level. Through this companies donate a percentage of their revenue to welfare programmes and charities. This makes a special place for the company in front of customers.

In this modern era, digital marketing enables companies to make many loyalty programs easily. Companies can easily show their programs on a public website which is a hub of multiple

consumers. At present people spend most of their time with phones or laptops, they browse every day for a long hour. Communication is one of the most important parts of the overall growth of the business, it is not only with the new members but also with the existing members (Sharma and Gupta, 2022). Open communication is only achieved through these websites, it provides a unique experience to the customers and makes them more aware of the specific company. On this website, companies can include the customer's name, their product purchase list, and available content as per their interest. On the other hand, companies can add wish lists and display rewards as per the product of interest of the customer.

This is needed as the consumers have an appetite for this kind of program which offers them rewards, sales, and vast amounts of discounts. These companies need to give some criteria for getting rewards, such that after a particular amount of purchasing they will get this reward. This triggered customer to meet the point (Varadarajan, 2020). These increase the sales of the company and create a brand value in the market. Through digital loyalty programs, a company can easily analyse the transformation of the loyalty of the customer, their expectations from the company with time, and how to meet the criteria as per regional aspects and future prospects. This gives new developments for loyalty platforms and increases brand loyalty (Muniesa and Gimenez, 2020). Thus it can be stated that the loyalty programs positively impact the brand quality. This program creates a strong relationship between customers and companies. Being honest with the product price and quality increases customers' belief in the company and they can be satisfied with the product and services. Thus the loyalty programs for the brand royalty is a good marketing strategy for a company.

2.6 Impact of consumer response and loyalty influencing brand loyalty improvement

Relationship marketing and branding are common elements of relationship sustainability. The sustainability of a relationship greatly depends upon the brand impression over time. This indicates that if the retail customer is satisfied with the product it influences the particular retail brand loyalty. The quality of brand relations with customers is influenced by emotional experience, acquisition experience, cognitive convictions, experience in action, and brand commitment (Tanveer *et al.* 2021). Research on indicator relationship marketing creating

familiarity situations depends on consumer satisfaction again greatly related to personal awareness, and understanding (Mujahidin *et al.* 2022).

Whereas Menurut Lovelock proposed that successful relationship quality is affected by three factors that is communication, loyalty, and commitment (Huang, 2019). According to Parasuraman, loyalty is the context of services made possible by marketing promises, keeping agreements, enhancing connections, and special interests with purchases made by service providers. Furthermore, Keller defines the dimensions of customer loyalty based on purchases of products, negative influence resistance regarding the business, and referencing (Mujahidin *et al.* 2022). Similarly, Griffin indicates various characteristics such as repeat buyers, purchases across product lines, and refers to others (Hatikha, 2020). Customer repurchases influence brand loyalty and depict a positive impression of the product that is consumed regularly. That also influences the customer to consume the services offered by the same organisation.

González-Cruz *et al.* (2019), define that customer satisfaction is a very simple concept and logical for business. If the customers are satisfied it leads to the betterment of the business's future perspective. Shulga (2021), explained that the satisfaction of a customer will affect the company's financial growth. Here, it can be suggested that customer satisfaction is a central concept for marketing practices and theory and also as an essential target for business operations. Marques *et al.* (2018), define satisfaction as a consumer assessment of the product service or features that provide completion of needs at delightful levels that can be above or below expectation. So the satisfaction level is an outcome of expectation and perceived performance difference. Customer satisfaction will increase if the performance meets or exceeds expectations if not, the customer will be disappointed.

One of the most important elements that determines how well a company is doing is its attempts to commit. The capacity of the company to satisfy its clients allows it to stay in the market. Influencing factors of customer satisfaction include quality of product, service quality, price, emotions, and cost. Saraswati (2022), suggests that the ultimate goal for any company is to have loyal customers that are not built in one day. It starts from the potential customer finding to customer advocates developing that is beneficial for any company. Bacile *et al.* (2018), state that loyalty of a customer has an important role in gaining financial growth and maintaining company

performance, this is the reason for attracting and retaining customers. It takes several steps, from identifying possible clients to acquiring partners, to cultivate a devoted consumer base. Client loyalty recognition extends beyond transaction and recurring business.

According to Chan and Gao (2021), loyal buyers include regular purchasers who also buy outside of the service line and also have immunity to refuse negative influences to buy similar products from other companies. However, Biswas *et al.* (2021), defined loyalty as a calculative purchase by decision-making approach over time. This clarifies loyalty directed to behaviours suggested by routine purchases depending on decision-making units. The process of becoming a loyal buyer includes several stages with different attention and emphasis for every characteristic because every company has different needs. Positive brand sentiment indicates brand loyalty and the desire to continue purchasing in the future (Bharadwaj *et al.* 2020). Customers who repeat purchases are considered loyal customers. They are very significant for developing businesses because the cost of making new buyers is higher than maintaining the old ones (Saraswati, 2022).

Higher brand qualities make customers satisfied which increases company profits. Satisfied customers consider a brand as their first choice among others and that product comes first into the mind of the customer during the time of purchase. According to Khoa (2020), consumer loyalty can be considered as a motivation for a company's growth in the retail industry. It creates a connection between customers, products, and the whole business. Agrawal (2020), suggests that maximising the quality is helpful to gain loyalty function. This also includes the indirect relation of company reputation that is connected to customer satisfaction. Some authors argue that brand loyalty is a process that is not accidental, behavioural response, or decision-making (Khoa, 2020). Siripipatthanakul *et al.* (2021), expressed consumer attachment as a conjunction of repetitive purchase habits and positive brand attitude. For example, the customer can prefer the same providers and also may recommend the providers to family and friends. In response to the above perspective, Sosanuy *et al.* (2021) proposed that the loyalty of a customer could be weighed by behavioural intention to reuse or assent to repurchase the product in the future. Emerging competitive environments make service quality an important strategy to retain consumer loyalty to develop a successful business (Kanyama *et al.* 2022). However, it can be suggested that customer responses are important to modify business accommodation to satisfy

the consumer's need for services. Customer satisfaction influences financial growth by creating an attachment to the service provided by the company.

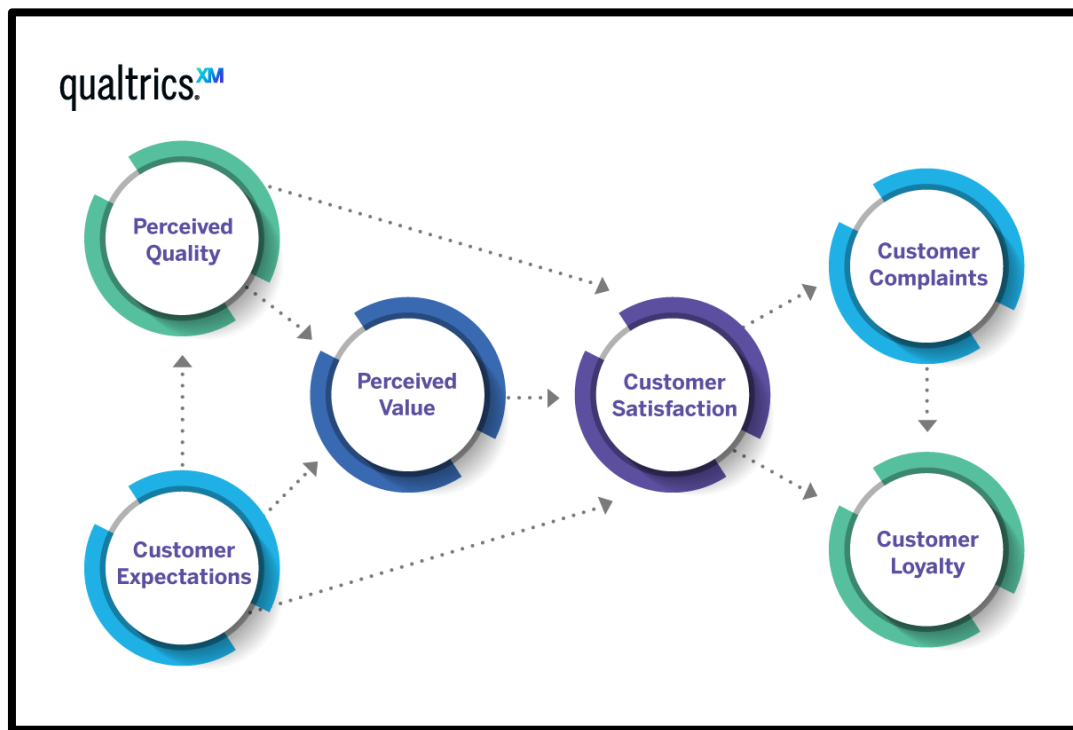


Figure 2.5: Keys for customer satisfaction

(Source: Qualtrics.com. 2024)

2.7 Influence of experiential marketing over brand loyalty

The emergence of multiple brands has led to dynamic business growth that affects consumer loyalty toward different products or services. In the current digital age, acquiring and retaining consumer loyalty has become challenging due to the powerful and direct influence of the media on the knowledge advantages of the trademark community. According to Vikaliana *et al.* (2021), the impact of fake news on marketing is not negative as long as the brand is credible. This happens as credibility is the trust in the brand's position regarding product information, which relies on consumers' perception and the organisation's ability to interact with how consumers assess honesty and skill (Chakraborty *et al.* 2020). Similarly, brand experience directly impacts consumers and gives practical information for managing decision-making by referring to older

studies that highlight credibility, perceived quality, and perceived satisfaction (Dwivedi *et al.* 2021).

Considering the inference theory, it is relatable to find in a better way how consumers respond to store brand cues and emphasise the presence of signals within an organisation. The consumers can use the cues to make perceptions about the summary of the institute (Lude and Prugl, 2019). The individuals create perceptions about the unknown that depend on the data they have, such as customers using environmental signals to find data that is vague. As stated by Baek *et al.* (2020), customers make store decisions and interpret from the store atmosphere. In contrast, Welte *et al.* (2021) stated that exceptional services need to be provided. Sensory cues utilised in stores have been recognized as a type to impact customers' brand experience (Arrigo, 2022). However, the atmosphere of the store tells a type of written interaction between a customer and a brand (Lemon and Verhoef, 2021). Bringing out the hardest feelings such as enjoyment and pleasure have been reported in brand history (Moore *et al.* 2019). However, luxury retail stores have the power to bring out positive feelings.



Figure 2.6: Brand Loyalty

(Source: LinkedIn, 2023)

It has been considered that the retail consumers experience as well as thinking and acting (Diallo *et al.* 2021). Brands intentionally attract heavily busy consumers as consumption is linked to identity. Different brands attract followers as they are deeply engaged with the brand. The brands are integrating it with different perspectives of their lives. Customers' experience has been captivated by ideas such as brand communities. Experimental loyalty towards a brand develops in the synthesis and works the experimental and consumption into brand loyalty. This viewpoint is different from the concentration on repeated buying highlighted in behavioural science. There is a contradiction in attitudinal loyalty as it tries to emphasise mental choice (Obiegbu *et al.* 2019).

As an example, the retail industry faces changes in brand material such as names, slogans, and logos. In this industry, the common term is known as rebranding in the field of marketing and branding. It engages a novel name, word, design, and sign or a combined item of them and creates a new brand. Retail rebranding is a situation limited to skilful retail brands and administrative bodies. An institution's logo is the most naked element of the brand and usually is the vital point of a rebranding strategy. However, the impact of the brand such as brand logo, fan attitudes, and behavioural brand loyalty. Rebranding refers to the process of refreshing, repositioning, and renewing a brand. Thus, scholars have identified different reasons why an institution may opt for rebranding, including the performance of a brand and its product, and negative brand image modifications in the institutional structure such as mergers and acquisitions. In the sports industry, rebranding is often triggered by factors like team relocation, ownership change, merchandise revenues, or a desire to change the brand's image (Williams *et al.* 2020).

Experiential marketing in the retail industry revolves around the idea of identifying the summary of goods and services and linking them to tangible, intangible, and interactive experiences to improve their value (Patel and Swamy, 2023). It is also used to help consumers to decide whether they should buy it or not. There are multiple types of customer experiences, such as sensory experience, and affective experience. The sensory experience encloses artistic delight,

content, and excitement that is generated from audio-visual, olfactory. The effective experience appeals to customers' feelings of intense emotions of pleasure. Supervisors are the key components that contribute to consumers' repeat purchases or visits by considering the determinants of devotion. There are critical brand pictures that are fulfilling as judges in building up customer devotion. The impact of the image and satisfaction in forecasting loyalty based on customers' experiences, with image having a big impact on consumers. However, it can be taken as an example that there is a lack of research in the tourism sector that explores the mediating roles of brand image and satisfaction in the relationship between experience and loyalty. In short, loyalty cannot be alone forecasted by pleasure.

Customer loyalty is a behaviour that is formed from the behaviour of a loyal person in general and needs to be released first. Satisfaction is gauged by evaluating one's performance or perceived outcome about their expectations, leading to varying levels of contentment. The arguments elucidate the positive relationship between equity and brand loyalty. The examined study is the mediating role of brand equity. Brand equity refers to the assessment of a brand as strong, attractive, and unique. According to the reciprocity principle, consumers receive relational advantages as they are exposed to reciprocation. Relationship equity is crucial in enhancing consumers' evaluation of brands and elevating brand equity (Aggarwal, 2021). Studies in service branding have shown that consumers evaluate the quality of their relationship with a brand by considering older experiences that help reduce uncertainty and improve confidence in the brand's credibility, a quantity that positively influences their judgement of the brand's performance. Customer-brand relationships have shown that the nexus between customers and brands is strengthened when the brand's values and personality align with customers' ideas. Action-oriented customers faced a significantly big influence of brand equity on brand loyalty rather than sensorial customers. The strength of the relationship is the base of customers' brand loyalty (Chaudhuri, 2021).

2.8 Conceptual framework

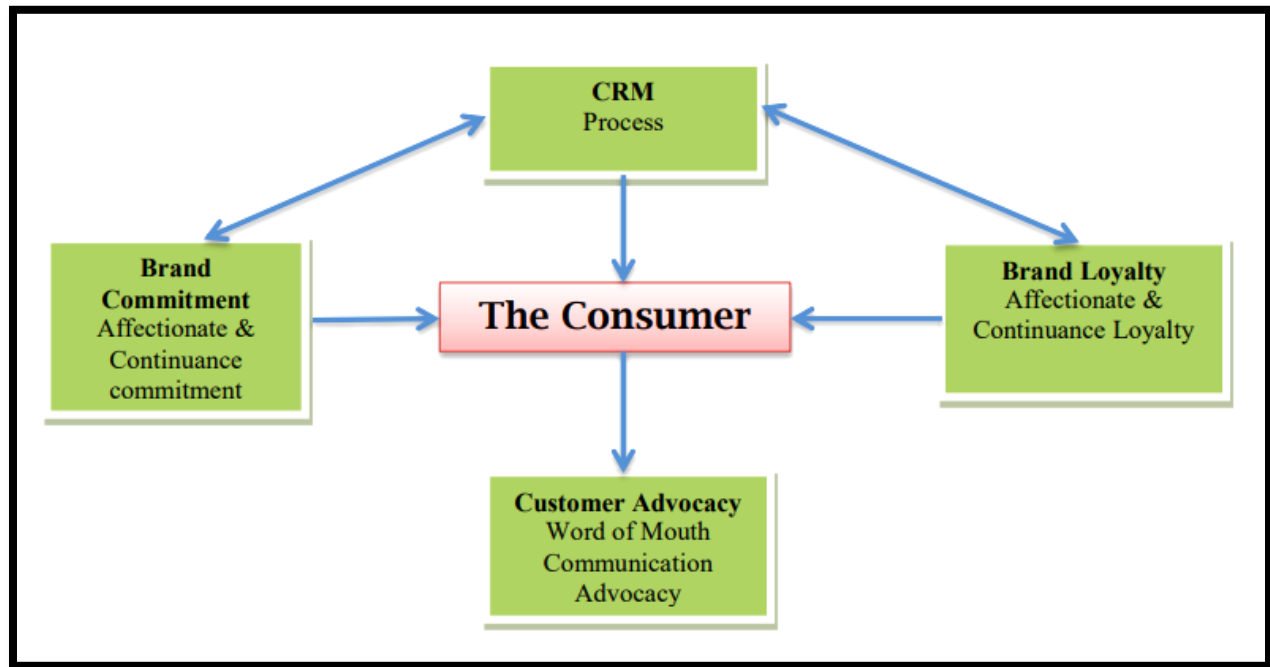


Figure 2.7: Conceptual framework

(Source: Self-developed)

2.9 Literature gap

In the research of Vikaliana *et al.* (2021), the author has analysed brand loyalty by evaluating marketing experiences and consumer attitude however, the author has failed to discover that brand loyalty in the context of global competition can be changed dynamically and radically. Fay and Larkin's (2023) research revealed that it may be difficult to predict how social media communication may affect brand loyalty. Furthermore, there is a dearth of empirical evidence to advise marketers on how to effectively use social media communication to foster brand loyalty (Heng Wei *et al.* 2023). On the other hand, in the research of Kethan and Basha (2022), the author have not analysed ethical conduct for improvising trust, loyalty and commitment within consumers by innovating ideas. This study gives a way in line with a research body that is responsible for developing model concepts and brand loyalty determinations is uncovered. For the implementation of brand awareness, the study gives a guideline and promotes a high level of

brand loyalty. Through analysing the relatable context, the current research intends to bridge the gap in the existing body of literature.

2.10 Summary

The research shows that using relationship-based marketing tactics can make customers more likely to stick with a brand when they shop online. Using these plans will make customers happier, buy from the store again, tell others good things about it, and become loyal to the brand for a long time when shopping online. Previous studies indicate that certain elements related to the quality of consumer-brand connection are necessary to improve the relationship as well as strengthen the moral component and ethical interaction of a business with its customers. Through relationship quality and trust, the study confirmed the strong and positive correlation between dispute resolution and brand loyalty. The previous studies also include some theories like Berry's relationship marketing theory, Keller's theory of customer management, and 5 E's of relationship marketing for evaluating brand loyalty management in retail sector as well.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodology is an important chapter for conducting the role of relationship marketing in improving brand loyalty in the UK retail industry by a case study analysis of Tesco. Appropriate methodology and consideration are effective in producing significant outcomes of the study. Method outline, research onion, research philosophy, research approach, research design, and research strategy are highlighted in this perspective to lead the research work significantly. Data sources, data types, data collection process, data analysis plan, time plan, and ethical considerations are illustrated briefly in this research work to get a clear overview of the research work.

3.2 Method Outline

Research attributes	Selected elements
Research Philosophy	Interpretivism
Research approach	Inductive
Research design	Descriptive
Data source	Secondary
Data collection techniques	Journal Review
Data analysis plan	Thematic

Table 3.1: Method Outline

(Source: Self-developed)

3.3 Research Onion

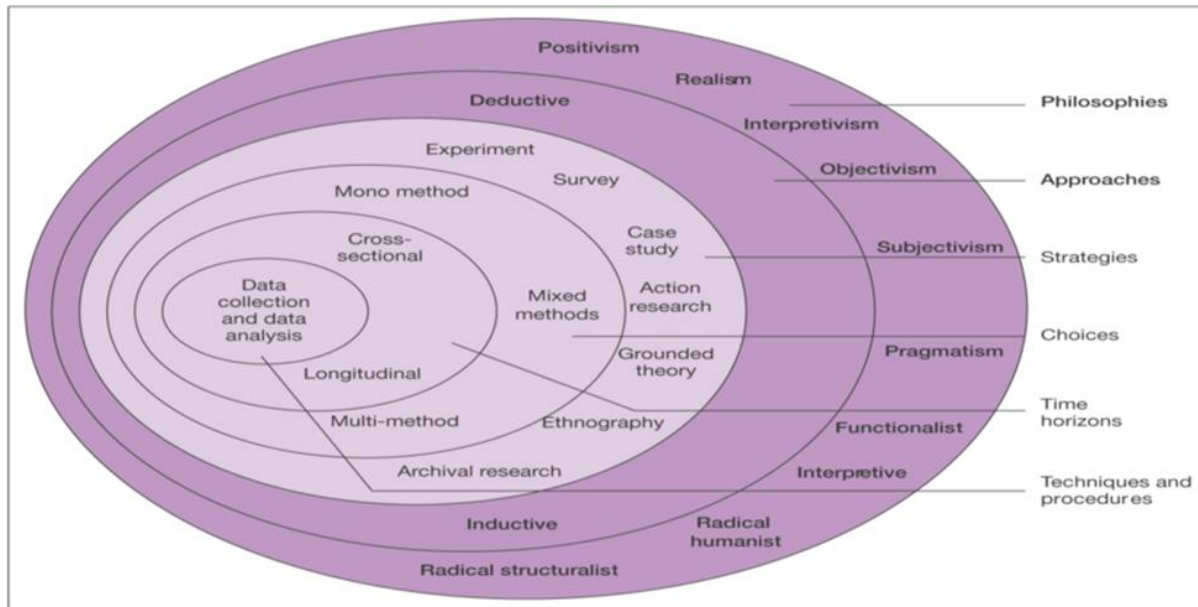


Figure 3.1: Research Onion

(Source: Saunders et al. 2007)

Research Onion is one such effective framework that helps to support the robust research methodology. It supports the researcher in making an effective decision to develop a series that helps to conduct the research work systematically. A researcher has selected an interpretivism research philosophy to develop the research work and it is the first layer of the research onion that supports conducting the further steps (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). The research selected the inductive research approach which is the second last layer of the research onion which supports the researcher extracting the data in terms of meeting the research aim and objectives.

A case study strategy has been utilised in this research work to identify the role of relationship marketing in improving brand loyalty in the UK's retail industry. This research work is focused on the mono method as the researcher selected either qualitative or quantitative. Cross-sectional choice has been implemented in this context as this research is going to choose different types of data collection methods (Zhan, 2021). The research work has illustrated the secondary qualitative data collection plan to conduct the research work successfully.

3.4 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is one of the crucial factors and initial steps to leading the research work successfully. The study is mainly focused on relationship marketing to improve brand loyalty in the UK's retail industry through a case study analysis of Tesco. Generally, there are three types of research philosophy such as realism, interpretivism, and positivism. Hence the factors are as follows

Realism research philosophy: This research philosophy is mainly focused on the key assumptions where a researcher has the liberty to think freely and separately in terms of leading the research work into a new direction (Pandey and Pandey, 2021).

Positivism research philosophy: This research philosophy supports the quantitative way of developing the study with the existing evidence (Stone, 2022). In this context, researchers can easily compare and contrast the different ideas and approaches and can select relevant ones.

Interpretivism research philosophy: Interpretivism research philosophy is concerned with the qualitative aspect which assists the researcher in interpreting different kinds of information significantly.

In this research work, the researcher has selected ***interpretivism research philosophy*** to identify the importance of social phenomena through the view of the research context and subjective interpretivism. Interpretivism research philosophy is generally used to identify different subjective components such as the significance of relationship marketing, and requirements of brand management by reviewing different kinds of literature (Nayak and Singh, 2021). It has provided deeper insights into the research aim and objectives which is important to define different kinds of viewpoints such as loyalty programs, experiential marketing, and personalised communication. Tesco is the largest and leading retail sector in the UK which requires a wide range of information to define the importance of relationship marketing in developing brand loyalty.

3.5 Research approach

The research approach is one of the crucial factors of research methodology which assists the researcher in extracting the information in terms of meeting the research aim and objectives. There are mainly two kinds of research approaches such as inductive and deductive.

Inductive research approach: The inductive research approach is developing new ideas and perspectives that lead the research work into a new direction or way of exploring different kinds of information (Thomas, 2021). This approach is concerned with real-time viewpoints and innovative research work which is supported in most cases.

Deductive research approach: Deductive research approach does not develop new ideas and perspectives as it is focused on conclusive evidence (Fellows and Liu, 2021). A well-defined and established approach is considered here to develop ideas and geometrical concepts.

A researcher has selected an ***inductive research approach*** which allows the patterns and themes to appear organically from the existing information. An inductive approach is the best choice for developing the role of a relation marketing strategy to improve brand loyalty and customer relationships for long-term business deals (Smith and Nizza, 2022). The inductive research approach supports the researcher in gathering diverse perspectives from secondary sources to ensure an effective strategy regarding the importance of relationships among relationship marketing and brand loyalty in the UK's retail sectors. It helps the researcher to develop a holistic approach regarding relation marketing tactics to increase brand loyalty and develop stable customer relationships to reach the peak by analysing the case study of Tesco.

3.6 Research design

In this context, to produce expected outcomes, it is an essential phase for the researcher to select a relevant research design. By following proper protocols and framework, a researcher can easily meet the research aim and objectives which is most important to manage different kinds of opportunities (Dibley *et al.* 2020). Therefore, there are three kinds of research design such as exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive research design.

Exploratory research design: In this way, the researcher can easily explore the information by analysing different factors and developing new hypotheses.

Explanatory research design: The research design explains the predefined attributes by explanation based on the existing approaches and hypotheses (Bell *et al.* 2022).

Descriptive research design: Descriptive research is a rich design that demonstrates the different factors in a significant manner and ensures a topic-based description providing existing evidence.

To conduct this research work successfully, a researcher is focused on the **descriptive research design** to ensure a detailed overview and understanding of the research topic. Descriptive research design describes the different factors significantly by analysing different attributes and information which increases the potentiality of the research work (Mukherji and Albon, 2022). It is a helpful way to understand the features and trends of retail sectors mentioning customer loyalty. This process supports the researcher in extracting the information from the previously fine research paper to get a detailed overview regarding the role of relationship marketing in embracing brand loyalty and engaging the stakeholder for the long term (Jones, 2022). It also assists in getting a detailed overview of the connection between loyalty programs, personalised communication, customer feedback strategy, and experimentation learning with brand loyalty.

3.7 Research Strategy

Research strategy refers to a process that is followed by the researcher in developing research work. Therefore, to meet the research aim and objectives, it is crucial to select a proper research strategy to define different perspectives and produce desirable outcomes. In this research work, researchers elected the **case study strategy** to develop the role of relation marketing in maintaining brand loyalty as well as customer engagement (Kellehear, 2020). In this regard, the researcher has chosen a case study of Tesco to analyse the research aim and objectives strategically. Tesco is considered the leading retail sector in the UK which is helpful to evaluate and explore different factual aspects such as the importance of customer feedback strategy, communication and collaboration, experiential marketing, and different kinds of loyalty programs.

3.8 Data sources and data types

Data sources

Therefore, there are two kinds of data sources such as primary and secondary. The primary is focused on real scenarios and secondary data sources are focused on relevant literature. In the context of primary, researchers gather information from the live population (Connaway and Radford, 2021). In the secondary, data has been collected from reliable and trustable sources. Researchers have selected secondary data sources to gather information from previously done research papers, journals, and articles. However, this is an effective method to conduct further analysis that supports the study. Researchers gather ideas from theoretical concepts and well-defined perspectives that support the development of conclusive evidence.

Data types

There are two kinds of data types such as qualitative and quantitative, where qualitative is focused on the verbal form of data, and quantitative is focused on the numerical form of data. Qualitative data types have been followed in this regard to review the journals and articles and extract the information from the predefined factors that are relevant to the study (Mello, 2021). Reliable sources are considered in this prospect to define different factors.

The researcher has selected ***secondary qualitative data to obtain*** the data from reliable sources such as pre-existing published literature, journals, and articles (Connaway and Radford, 2021). This research technique has been selected by the researcher to gather a wide range of information and define diverse factors regarding relationship marketing and brand loyalty.

3.9 Data collection

Data collection is the most important part of the methodology chapter as the future success of this research work highly depends on the data collection method. By gathering effective data, researchers can easily describe the different factual aspects which increase the potentiality of the research outcomes. However, the role of relation marketing tactics to enhance brand loyalty and improve stable customer relationships is a demanding topic nowadays to maintain competitive advantages (Smith and Nizza, 2022). In this regard, researchers collected data from reliable and

trustworthy sources such as Google Scholar and ProQuest. Journals have been chosen here to the relevance of the research topic to extract authentic information (Fellows and Liu, 2021). Researchers maintained their awareness while selecting journals and articles from these trustable sources, they must be from a recent publication date, relevant to the topic and sources were authentic enough.

3.10 Data Analysis Plan

Thematic analysis has been done by developing themes in terms of meeting research aims and objectives. It is an important part for the researcher to analyse data significantly to produce estimated findings. Analysis of themes has been performed by gathering information from authentic and reliable journals and articles (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). Keyword searching and abstract screening were used while gathering data to develop the themes which is essential to align the themes with the research aim and objectives. However, thematic analysis props up to get detailed information about customised communication, loyalty initiatives, customer feedback strategy and experiential learning.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

Proper ethics and rules should be followed in every research work to avoid legal allegations and failure by maintaining GDPR Act. This research maintained proper ethics and protocols while undertaking the research work. Journals were chosen with sincerity by the researcher to conduct thematic analysis successfully. However, authentic, reliable, and trustworthy sources have been considered to avoid misinterpretation of data (Stone, 2022). The Copyright Act has been considered in this context to ignore data breaches and lead the research work in a successful manner. Proper referencing and acknowledgment have been done to maintain the accuracy and authenticity of the research paper (Zhan, 2021). Hence, all data has been removed after the completion of the research. It is considered that researchers cannot use those data for their personal use.

3.12 Time Plan

		Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors
1		Introduction	15 days?	11/6/23 8:00 AM	11/24/23 5:00 PM	
2		Topic selection	3 days?	11/6/23 8:00 AM	11/8/23 5:00 PM	
3		Aim and objectives	4 days?	11/9/23 8:00 AM	11/14/23 5:00 PM	2
4		Research question	4 days?	11/15/23 8:00 AM	11/20/23 5:00 PM	2;3
5		Rationale	4 days?	11/21/23 8:00 AM	11/24/23 5:00 PM	3;4
6		Literature Review	12 days?	11/27/23 8:00 AM	12/12/23 5:00 PM	
7		Introduction	2 days?	11/27/23 8:00 AM	11/28/23 5:00 PM	4;5
8		Theoretical concept	5 days?	11/29/23 8:00 AM	12/5/23 5:00 PM	5;7
9		Conceptual framework	3 days?	12/6/23 8:00 AM	12/8/23 5:00 PM	7;8
10		Summary	2 days?	12/11/23 8:00 AM	12/12/23 5:00 PM	8;9
11		Methodology	19 days?	12/11/23 8:00 AM	1/4/24 5:00 PM	
12		Research philosophy	3 days?	12/11/23 8:00 AM	12/13/23 5:00 PM	3;8;9
13		Research approach	4 days?	12/14/23 8:00 AM	12/19/23 5:00 PM	3;12
14		Research design	3 days?	12/20/23 8:00 AM	12/22/23 5:00 PM	12;13
15		Data source	5 days?	12/25/23 8:00 AM	12/29/23 5:00 PM	13;14
16		Data types	4 days?	1/1/24 8:00 AM	1/4/24 5:00 PM	14;15
17		Findings and analysis	14 days?	1/5/24 8:00 AM	1/24/24 5:00 PM	
18		Developing themes	5 days?	1/5/24 8:00 AM	1/11/24 5:00 PM	15;16
19		Critical analysis of themes	6 days?	1/12/24 8:00 AM	1/19/24 5:00 PM	16;18
20		Linking with objectives	3 days?	1/22/24 8:00 AM	1/24/24 5:00 PM	18;19
21		Discussion	11 days?	1/22/24 8:00 AM	2/5/24 5:00 PM	
22		Analysis of themes	9 days?	1/22/24 8:00 AM	2/1/24 5:00 PM	18;19
23		Discussion of the results	8 days?	1/25/24 8:00 AM	2/5/24 5:00 PM	19;20
24		Conclusion and Recomm	4 days?	2/6/24 8:00 AM	2/9/24 5:00 PM	
25		Future scope	3 days?	2/6/24 8:00 AM	2/8/24 5:00 PM	3;9;20
26		Research limitation	1 day?	2/9/24 8:00 AM	2/9/24 5:00 PM	16;25

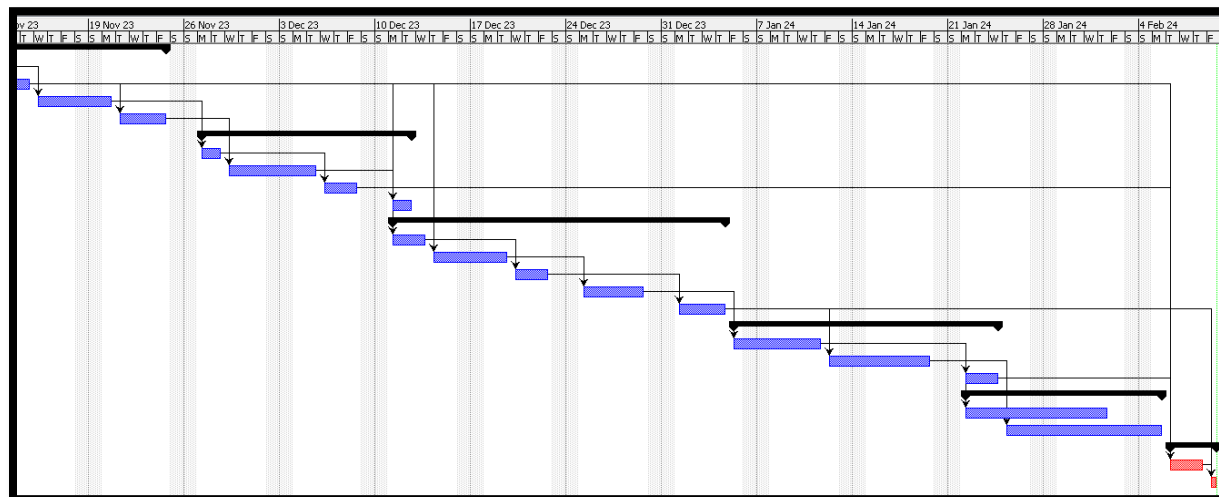


Figure 3.2: Time Plan

(Source: Self-developed)

3.13 Summary

The methodology chapter is responsible for the success of research work as it supports the researcher in collecting information from reliable sources to develop desirable outcomes. In this context, a researcher has selected interpretivism research philosophy, inductive research approach, and descriptive design to develop a significant outcome. The secondary qualitative research approach has been taken to gather information from the predefined factors in terms of analysing the research aim and objectives. The chosen data collection process supports the researcher in finding relevant information regarding the relationship between marketing tactics and enhancing brand loyalty. It also illustrated the importance of stable customer relationships by improving marketing management.

Chapter 4: Findings and analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter of the thesis is going to present information that is extracted from the data sources. This chapter is going to provide in-depth insights into the topic with key concepts and information. The collected information is going to be presented in a way that it can answer the research questions that is developed in the introduction chapter. The analysis section of the chapter is crucial to developing unexpected discoveries and insight. In this chapter, the thematic analysis approach is going to be incorporated to develop themes and meet the research objectives. The themes are going to be aligned with the research objectives and Literature review of the thesis.

4.2 Findings

<i>SL No</i>	<i>Themes</i>	<i>Sub-themes</i>	<i>Keywords</i>
Theme 1	Customised communication positively influenced customer satisfaction and brand loyalty of Tesco	• Customised communication can be empathetic that solve problems of customers and boost satisfaction • Customised communication is directly proportional to increased customer engagement	Customised communication, boosting customer satisfaction, customer engagement, customer profiling
Theme	Loyalty programs of	• Loyalty programs perks	Loyalty programs,

2	Tesco increased overall brand loyalty and customer service within the UK retail sector	instant attention from customers and provide value to them Loyalty programs ensure more customers are loyal to the brand and foster long-term association	value for money, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction
Theme 3	Customer-centric relationship marketing strategies and strong engagement with customers improve brand loyalty of Tesco and helps in managing leading position in UK retail	- Customer-centric relationship marketing strategy helps provide a positive customer experience and drive business growth - A strong engagement with customers can ensure the development of a long-lasting relationship that can provide long-term benefits	Customer-centric relationship marketing, business growth, customer experience, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty
Theme 4	Experiential marketing strategies and strong customer engagement helps in long-term customer retention for	Experiential marketing strategy is capable of connecting consumers of different segment and foster a positive	Experiential marketing strategy, customer engagement, strong brand image, customer segment

	Tesco	brand image Strong customer engagement ensure long-term customer retention with assistance from word-of-mouth marketing	
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Table 4.1: Thematic coding table

(Source: Self-developed)

4.3 Analysis of themes

Theme 1: Customised communication positively influenced customer satisfaction and brand loyalty of Tesco

Tesco has emphasized heavily on customised communication in recent years to have a positive influence on customer satisfaction. Customised communication has assisted the company in understanding and meet even the most unique needs of customers (Patel and Swamy, 2023). Tesco has leveraged customised communication to understand the preferences of customers and increase satisfaction among them. It has also helped in developing a positive brand perception in front of customers to achieve a competitive advantage. With the help of customised communication, Tesco sends very personalised product recommendations that can improve the customer experience (Azan, and Karimah, 2022). However, the purchasing history of customers is analysed by Tesco before leveraging customised communication on that particular customer. From the perspective of Tesco, customised communication has drastically improved the shopping experience of customers and develop a much better impression in front of customers.

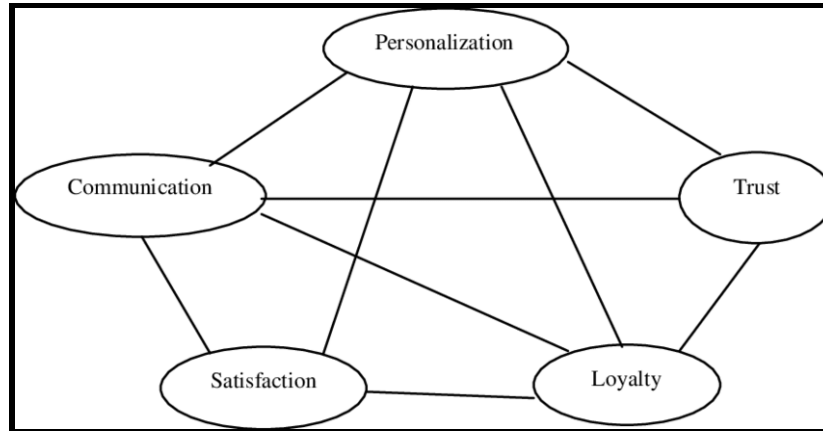


Figure 4.1: Relationship between customised communication and customer satisfaction

(Source: Yawson and Yamoah, 2022)

The customised communication strategy incorporated by Tesco has provided considerable success to them. For instance, it has increased the customer retention rate in several regions (Yawson and Yamoah, 2022). With customised communication, customers feel more valued and are more likely to stay loyal for a long period of time. Those customers are likely to form a long-term association with the company for mutual benefits. It has provided an additional cushion to the company in terms of earning the loyalty of customers. Customised communication has also driven customer engagement, which has a positive impact on the response rate. It has become a key factor for customers to consider buying products from the company and achieve a much better outcome (Al-Suraihi *et al.* 2020). With customised communication, customers have paid more attention to the products of Tesco that are tailored based on their best interests. Other than increasing customer engagement, customised communication has ensured long-term association with customers for Tesco.

From the point of view of brand loyalty and revenue, customised communication has driven brand loyalty due to a more personalised message being sent to the customers. The increase in brand loyalty has helped in increasing revenue and profitability (Kumar, 2021). The strategy of Tesco to send personalised offers to customers is considered to be a masterstroke as it has improved product purchases. It has played a huge role in improving repeat purchases and ensuring a higher-order value. By leveraging customised communication, Tesco has delivered personalised services to its customers, which has improved brand loyalty to a large extent

(Alsaud, 2021). Overall, the customised communication has boosted the customer experience and it has resulted in a higher customer satisfaction and retention rate.

Theme 2: Loyalty programs of Tesco increased overall brand loyalty and customer service within the UK retail sector

The loyalty program incorporated by Tesco has helped in fostering a long-term relationship with customers. The company provides rewards and coupons that ensure customers feel more inclined towards the brand (Sharma, and Gupta, 2022). It has helped them to generate huge revenue from the business operations. By providing discount offers and coupons, Tesco influences customers to buy products from the retail outlet and has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. It is considered to be an effective strategy for Tesco to get more customers to the retail stores and increase sales. The club-card loyalty programs of Tesco ensure customers stay for a longer period with customers. Other than providing rewards and coupons, special deals are provided to several customers who have been part of the company for more than five years (Mohanty, 2022). The discount offers play a crucial role in improving sales of the company. Additionally, it has helped Tesco to develop a very loyal customer base who have the willingness to stay with the company for a bit longer.



Figure 4.2: Benefits of customer loyalty programs

(Source: ZXhang *et al.* 2023)

The loyalty programs of Tesco have been instrumental in providing great deals and offers to customers (ZXhang *et al.* 2023). This has improved the brand reputation of Tesco in recent years. However, deals and offers are provided to target customers after segmenting the market. The offers and discounts provided by Tesco have ensured customers feel that they are valued by the company. Although the discount offers are very specific, several customers have considered it as favorable to them and it provides a positive indication to the company. With the help of the discounts and offers, Tesco has developed positive connections by making them feel good about the company. It has helped Tesco to go ahead of its competitors due to having better offers and discounts (Chen, 2022). In recent years, Tesco has started to use reward cards that can have a positive influence on its customers. Thus, it has helped them to gain access to a huge customer base.

The loyalty programs of Tesco are considered to have bettered their consistent marketing strategy. It has helped the company to stay relevant in front of customers by reminding them about the offers and discounts, eligible to them (Krummel, 2022). This has helped Tesco to increase their reach and bring more customers to the retail stores. Tesco has used different tiers for reward members and it has encouraged customers to spend money on the premium products of the company. The main idea behind this strategy to portray that shopping more can save a lot of money for them. Tesco has been very successful in doing so as it can be observed from the customer's willingness to go for bulk purchases (Nyame-Asiamah, and Ghulam, 2020). One of the other things incorporated by Tesco is providing gift cards and freebies for bulk purchases to ensure more sales.

Theme 3: Customer-centric relationship marketing strategies and strong engagement with customers improve brand loyalty of Tesco and help in managing the leading position in UK retail

The customer-centric relationship marketing strategies is one of the areas that must be leveraged by Tesco. This marketing strategy can ensure customers' actions based on the best interest of the company (Chavan *et al.* 2024). For Tesco to achieve more success, it is necessary for them to cultivate trusts and loyalty among its targeted customer base. Trust can be a very vital aspect of building strong relationships with customers. On the other hand, loyalty can ensure those relationships are maintained for a long period of time. Trust and loyalty are considered to be the most important aspects of a company that ensures successful customer relationships. The customer-centric relationship marketing strategies can boost engagement with customers and subsequently improve customer retention rate. This strategy is aimed at developing strong relationships with customers and ensuring they return to the retail stores (Alharbi, 2020). With the help of this strategy, customers are likely to feel more valued due to the excellent services.

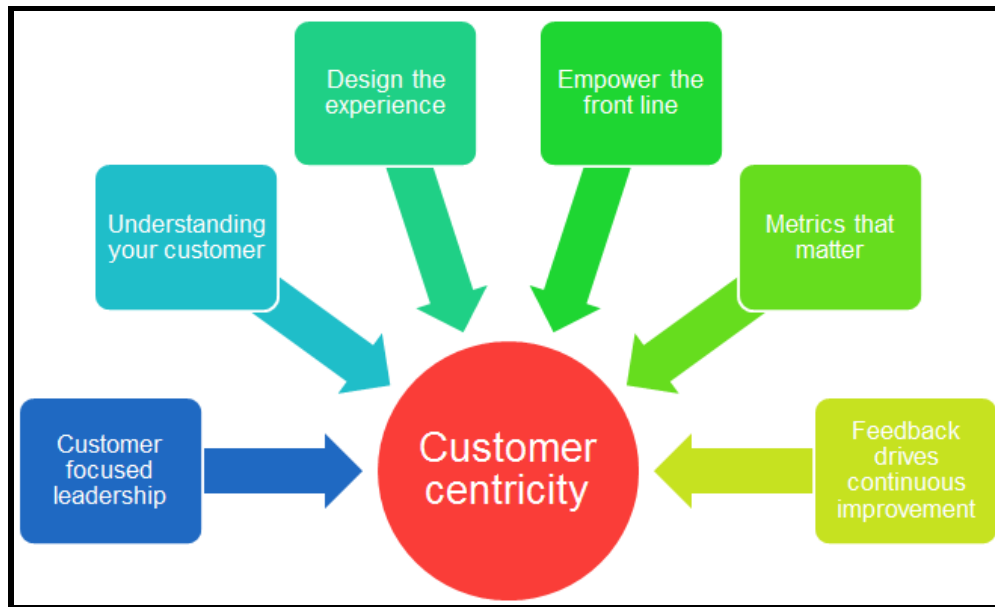


Figure 4.3: Key aspects of customer-centric relationship marketing strategy

(Source: Alexander, 2020)

With the development of a customer-centric relationship marketing strategy, Tesco can achieve a competitive advantage over competitors. Customers who share a good relationship with a company are less likely to switch to another company (Gan and Yan, 2023). Even if competitors provide much better offers or lower prices, customers are not likely to switch. Building a strong relationship with customers has become a very vital aspect that can increase competitiveness of the company. As customers have more choices than before, relationships with customers become much more inevitable to retain them. This can help Tesco to maintain its strong position within the market and foster growth at a rapid pace. Achieving customer satisfaction becomes crucial in this competitive environment and it can be achieved with the help of a robust customer-centric relationship marketing strategy (Alexander, 2020). This marketing strategy also help Tesco to resolve problems of customers as early as possible.

Theme 4: Experiential marketing strategies and strong customer engagement helps in long-term customer retention for Tesco

Experiential marketing strategies have become one of the effective marketing strategies that can build emotional connections with customers and foster a long-term association (Adefulu *et al.*

2020). For Tesco, experiential marketing strategy helps easily connect with targeted customers and experience the benefits of the brand. Customers are more likely to develop a positive feeling towards the company and become loyal. The experiential marketing strategies incorporated by Tesco are very effective in promoting a positive brand image in front of customers. Even it can boost brand awareness as well to a large extent (Channuwong *et al.* 2022). With the help of experiential marketing strategies, a lasting impression can be provided and create a strong relationship. experiential marketing strategy is all about immersing customers in the products that are sold by the company. It provides an ideal opportunity to make a lasting impression in front of customers.

Tesco needs to overcome its traditional marketing strategies and emphasize on experiential marketing strategy to have a better impact on the mindset of customers. The focus must be on providing a unique customer experience and boosting the overall brand image (Sharmaa *et al.* 2022). With the help of an experiential marketing strategy, Tesco interacts with customers in a better way that can foster long-term relationships. The company has created awareness among customers and it has led to the development of a loyal customer base. The experiential marketing strategies of Tesco tend to provide a memorable customer experience and ensure the brand remains on the customer's mind for a long time. Customers are more likely to interact and engage with the company as they feel more valued (Chatterjee *et al.* 2022). Thus, it leads to a higher customer retention rate that provides long-term benefits. Overall, the experiential marketing strategy has been very fruitful for Tesco in terms of engaging more customers with the services and products.

4.4 Summary

This chapter of the thesis provides several insights that are developed from the thematic analysis approach. For instance, this chapter provides details of the loyalty programs that are incorporated by Tesco to foster long-term relationships with customers. From this chapter, it is identified that the presence of a loyal customer base is one of the main reasons behind the success of the company. The company experiences a very strong position within the market due to its huge customer base and implements effective marketing strategies to maintain its customer base. The loyalty programs of Tesco have been very beneficial and it has helped them to maintain trusts

with its customers. On the other hand, the experiential marketing strategy of Tesco has been crucial in boosting brand awareness and bringing more customers to the retail stores.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The discussion chapter of this dissertation is going to discuss the main findings of this research. The results of secondary qualitative data are going to be discussed in this chapter. Findings of the collected secondary data are also going to be linked with the literature review chapter to meet the research objectives properly. Additionally, existing theories such as Berry's relationship marketing theory, 5 E's of relationship marketing and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) cycle will be used in this chapter for analysing the themes. This can help in improving the overall quality and validity of the findings related to the research on relationship marketing and its role in the brand loyalty of Tesco.

5.2 Discussion on Themes

Theme 1: Customised communication positively influenced customer satisfaction and brand loyalty at Tesco

Linking with Literature Review

Customised communication is the process of promoting relationship marketing of a brand with the help of consumer data. According to Keller (2020), customised communication marketing strategies are helpful for a brand to increase its brand loyalty by engaging its targeted consumers. Focusing on customer satisfaction is beneficial for a brand to improve the loyalty and trust of consumers. In this type of marketing strategy, a brand can improve its performance to meet the demands of consumers (Ebrahim, 2020). A company that promotes better communication with consumers is increasing their brand loyalty. In this process of marketing, different social media platforms, applications, and websites were used to engage the target customers. However, Habib *et al.* (2021) have stated that by focusing on the personalised experience of customers, a retail brand can increase its brand awareness, loyalty and reputation within the industry. Communication with customers can be increased by using suitable social media platforms and proper marketing channels.

A retail brand that uses proper relationship marketing, can improve its social presence also. Customers buying decisions and demand management are helpful for a retail brand to increase communication. As stated by Jimenez-Barreto *et al.* (2022), digital communication channels are helpful in managing customers' issues and queries. However, Soleimani *et al.* (2023) have stated that social media marketing is useful in increasing the relationship between a retail brand and consumers. A brand with a high reputation and loyalty can attract a wide range of customers. In this process of relationship marketing, retail brands are increasing their market presence and brand value to improve their communication with consumers. Promotion of proper communication in different marketing channels is beneficial for a retail brand to increase its brand loyalty within an industry (Moorman, 2020). Customers are preferred companies whose loyalty and brand value are higher which can help in meeting the demand of consumers.

Linking with Theory

Customised communication marketing strategies of a brand are linked with Berry's relationship marketing theory. As stated by Azan and Karimah (2022), proper vision related to marketing, use of suitable strategy, technology and others is considered as important for retail business. However, Alagarsamy *et al.* (2021) have stated that after-sales services and customer satisfaction are helpful for a retail brand to increase brand loyalty. The retail brand Tesco uses relationship marketing to improve its communication with consumers and keep them engaged with the brand. A higher engagement with consumers is helpful for a retail company to increase brand awareness and brand loyalty. Tesco is focusing on proper customer service along with after-sales service. The relationship marketing theory of Berry has described that attracting consumers, demand management and focusing on proper services are important for a retail company to improve customer relationships (Azan and Karimah, 2022). Tesco prioritises different services to its customers by offering a wide range of products, offers and discounts to keep their consumers engaged. This can help the company to improve its performance related to relationship marketing and brand loyalty. Tesco has increased its brand value and loyalty within the UK retail market and meets the demand of consumers with its different services.

Justification

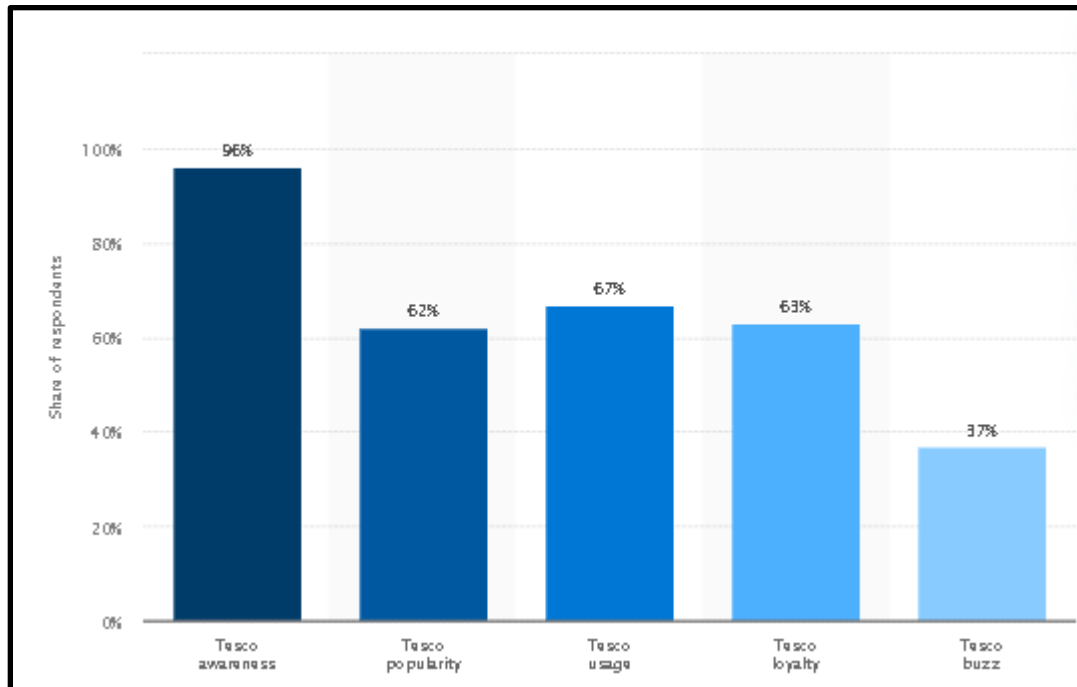


Figure 5.1: Brand loyalty of Tesco

(Source: Statista.com, 2023a)

Figure 5.1 shows the overall brand loyalty of Tesco in the UK retail market. The statistical data has shown that the overall brand loyalty of Tesco is around 63% in 2023 within the UK retail industry (Statista.com, 2023a). Apart from that, Tesco is achieving a high brand awareness of 96%, brand popularity of 62% and usage of 67% (Statistac.com, 2023a). Proper use of relationship marketing has helped Tesco to increase its brand loyalty within the UK retail market. As stated by Ibrahim *et al.* (2021), the use of suitable communication channels by a retail brand is helpful for the brand to improve its marketing communications with consumers. Following a suitable customer-centric marketing communication is useful for developing strong brand loyalty with specific marketing communication in all communication channels. However, Ebrahim, (2020) has stated that proper services related to retail business, low prices of products, and Clubcard discounts are identified as key factors in marketing strategies that helped the brand to improve its brand loyalty within the industry.

A variety of products is helpful for Tesco to include them in their marketing communications channels and increase brand awareness. As stated by AobakweLedikwe (2020), a strong presence

in different social media platforms is beneficial for a retail brand to improve customer acquisition and retention for a long time. In relationship marketing strategies, Tesco uses skilled and experienced people to manage the queries of customers along meet their demands. For example, Sainsbury's is also using suitable relationship marketing strategies in their business operations to increase their brand loyalty among consumers. Proper use of customer data, market trends and customer behaviour related to retail products are also considered by Tesco in their relationship marketing and marketing communication (Patel and Swamy, 2023). This has helped the retail brand to develop a strong brand positioning within the industry. This has helped Tesco to position itself in a leading position within the UK retail sector.

Theme 2: Loyalty programs of Tesco increased overall brand loyalty and customer service within the UK retail sector

Linking with Literature Review

Loyalty programs are becoming important for a retail brand to improve brand loyalty and customer service. In relationship marketing strategies, loyalty programs help develop strong connections between brands and consumers (Alsurideh *et al.* 2020). This can be done by promotion of different offers and discounts to the regular customers. A retail brand that provides products and services related to customer preferences can increase their brand loyalty which helps in better business performance. In contradiction, Kethan and Basha (2022) have stated that offering a wide range of products is helpful for a retail company to improve the shopping experience of customers. A highly satisfied customer can become a loyal customer to a retail brand further helps in better management of the relationship between a brand and customers. Proper development of marketing related to content is helpful for a brand to increase brand loyalty and attract a large group of customers.

Clubcard is the main loyalty program of Tesco that helps Tesco to increase its existing customer base, brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. According to Diallo *et al.* (2021), loyalty programs are helpful for a retail company to retain their customers for a long time. A customer can recommend a brand to others when they receive proper services and facilities from a retail brand. This can also influence the overall relationship between a retail brand and its customers. However, Wibowo *et al.* (2020) have stated that the use of customer data is important for

developing suitable relationship marketing strategies for a retail brand to attract a large group of customers. The Clubcard loyalty programs of Tesco are beneficial for the company to increase their brand loyalty within the UK retail market (Kim and Baker, 2020). These relationship marketing and loyalty programs are also useful for the retail brand to get competitive advantages.

Linking with Theory

The loyalty programs of Tesco in their relationship marketing are linked with the 5 E's Relationship of Marketing. It has been identified that the Clubcard loyalty programs of Tesco are helpful in increasing the overall experience of customers related to retail shopping (Tanveer *et al.* 2021). This is also helpful in improving personalised services and marketing and reduces the impact on their stores. However, the loyalty programs are also helpful for Tesco to maintain their brand essence. Focusing on high levels of customer service helps in better customer engagement for Tesco which includes relationship marketing of a retail brand (Mostafa and Kasamani, 2021). A retail brand such as Tesco is focused on developing emotional connections with customers, which also helps improve brand loyalty. On the other hand, Tesco is focusing on its Clubcard loyalty programs in the UK retail market business operations that help the company exchange value with its customers. The 5 Es related to relationship marketing need to be followed by a retail company to increase its brand awareness and reputation into a wider consumer base. Tesco aims to increase brand loyalty in the UK retail market with the help of proper relationship management with the target customers.

Justification

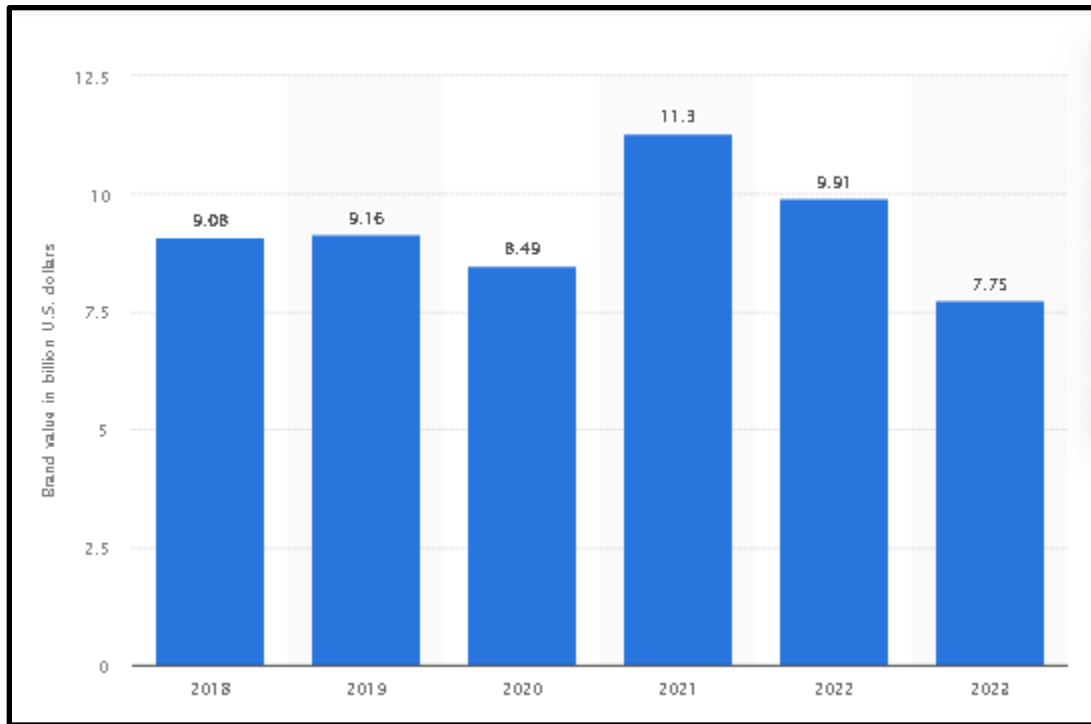


Figure 5.2: The brand value of Tesco

(Source: Statista.com, 2023b)

Figure 5.2 shows the overall brand value of Tesco from 2018 to 2023. The statistical data shows that the brand value of Tesco has decreased in 2023 as compared to 2022 and 2022. In 2023, Tesco was reported as valued at around 7.75 billion U.S. dollars (Statista.com, 2023b). However, the overall brand value of Tesco was identified as 9.91 billion US dollars in 2022 and 11.3 billion U.S. dollars in 2021 (Statista.com, 2023b). As stated by Azan and Karimah (2022), a lack of a customer-centric business approach and poor customer attraction negatively impacted a retail brand and its relationship marketing. In the UK retail sector, the relationship marketing and loyalty programs of Tesco have been negatively affected due to the increase in demand for e-commerce business. As stated by Patel and Swamy (2023), the increase in demand for e-commerce business in the retail sector and services of online retailers has negatively impacted customer demand management and engagement by Tesco. Tesco has failed to fulfil the demand of consumers for low-quality products, timely delivery and proper logistics (Yawson and Yamoah, 2022). The increase of market presence and brand reputation of Amazon and other online retailers have negatively impacted the overall brand loyalty in the UK retail sector. Poorly

engaged marketing strategies and relationship management have also affected customer attraction to a retail brand such as Tesco.

Theme 3: Customer-centric relationship marketing strategies and strong engagement with customers improve brand loyalty of Tesco and help in managing the leading position in UK retail

Linking with Literature Review

As stated by Arrigo (2022), customer satisfaction is the primary factor for improving brand loyalty with the help of relationship marketing. However, customer engagement with business operations and marketing also helps a retail brand to improve its brand positioning in an industry. In contradiction, Mujahidin *et al.* (2022) have stated that proper customer service is helpful in developing a positive brand image among customers. This can be done in relationship marketing by sharing customer-generated marketing content. Content marketing is also helpful in relationship marketing where a retail brand can increase its brand loyalty and engage customers by sharing engaged content.

The use of different social media and digital marketing strategies is a key part of relationship marketing for a brand. According to Hatikha (2020), digital marketing can help a company express its marketing initiatives on different social media platforms that develop strong brand loyalty. As argued by González-Cruz *et al.* (2019), the lack of proper use of omnichannel marketing affects the overall performance of a brand to establish a strong connection among its target audience. Additionally, adding value in customer services and increasing customer shopping experience are also key factors to increase relationships between brands and their customers. However, Bacile *et al.* (2018) identified that maintaining high-quality services and proper quality in services are necessary for a retail brand to promote customer-centric marketing. As opined by Chan and Gao (2021), customer-centric brand marketing about managing customer relationships is beneficial for a retail brand to increase brand loyalty within their industry.

Linking with Theory

The customer-centric marketing of Tesco has been considered linked with the principle of Berry's relationship marketing theory. As opined by Azan and Karimah (2022), focusing on

proper customer service and meeting the demands of customers is helpful for a company to increase brand loyalty. Tesco is currently focusing on engaging the maximum number of consumers to improve its brand loyalty and compete with online retailers. However, Alagarsamy *et al.* (2021) have identified that changes in consumer preferences and behaviours have affected the overall relationship marketing strategies of a retail brand. Tesco can use the principle of this theory to increase their engagement with customers and retain them for a long time. This can be done by focusing on adding value to their products and services that can increase customer experience and satisfaction. Tesco can introduce new programs for their customers by offering discounts and others. As stated by Baek *et al.* (2020), customer loyalty can be increased by increasing the engagement of internal and external stakeholders of a brand including employees, customers, suppliers and others. However, Tesco can increase its relationship marketing by focusing on better customer service and customer engagement on its different social media pages.

Justification

Tesco has successfully maintained brand loyalty in the UK retail sector by understanding customer needs. As stated by Alsaud (2021), focusing on community engagement by offering jobs to locals is beneficial for a retail company to increase its brand loyalty and reputation within an industry. Tesco is focusing on its relationship marketing by keeping its customers first and aiming to meet their demand. Value-for-money products and different types of product marketing are key parts of Tesco's current relationship marketing strategies to increase customer engagement with its brand (ZXhang *et al.* 2023).

The commitment of a brand is an important factor in the retail business to increase the brand's relationship with its customers. According to Vikaliana *et al.* (2021), maintaining ethical business operations and sustainability practices is helpful for a retail company to increase brand loyalty and reputation. With the increase in customers' knowledge and concern about environmental sustainability, a brand that is committed to maintaining sustainability is preferred by consumers. Tesco is focusing on increasing its sustainability practices and offering proper customer services. This is beneficial for Tesco to increase customer experience in retail shopping. For instance, the total number of Tesco stores has increased in the UK during the last

few years. It has been identified that Tesco is currently operating its business in the UK with around 4169 stores in the UK in 2023 which was higher than 4074 stores in 2022 [*Refer to Appendix C*]. An increase in retail stores is helpful for Tesco to offer better convenience to their customers regarding their retail shopping experience.

Theme 4: Experimental marketing strategies and strong customer engagement helps in long-term customer retention for Tesco

Linking with Literature Review

A company that uses experiential marketing can influence their target customers significantly. As opined by Chakraborty *et al.* (2020), experiential marketing strategies by focus on customer satisfaction and better experience are beneficial for a retail brand to increase brand loyalty and awareness among a large group of customers. In relationship marketing, experiments related to providing better experience to customers, providing special discounts, offers and others are positively influenced by customers related to a particular brand. Tesco is using different experiments in their marketing strategies that include awards events, ceremonies, loyalty programs and others that help them to engage their customers. However, Dwivedi *et al.* (2021) have stated that experiential marketing strategies that are not aligned with a company's values negatively impact the overall loyalty of a brand. Additionally, poor relationship marketing strategies and customer retention strategies also negatively impacted a brand's experiments related to engaging their targeted consumers and improving brand loyalty. Tesco needs to analyse its target customers, preferences, decisions, and perceptions regarding its products before starting any type of experiential marketing strategy in its business operations.

Linking with Theory

The experiential marketing strategies that are used by Tesco are closely associated with the 5 E's Relationship of Marketing. Focusing on better customer experiences and value in products and services is helpful for a retail brand to improve its engagement with its target customers (Tanveer *et al.* 2021). However, focusing on social presence development, use of different social media platforms and digital marketing are also important for improving brand loyalty and proper relationship marketing strategies of a company (Mostafa and Kasamani, 2021). In the UK retail

industry, Tesco is currently facing challenges in managing its relationship marketing strategies due to the increase in market share of online retailers. Therefore, Tesco needs to focus on the principles of 5 E's Relationship of Marketing. Experimental marketing strategy and effective customer engagement support the retail sectors mentioning long-term business deals with active functionalities. Hence, an experiential marketing strategy supports the customers to create immersive, hands-on experiences that allow customers to interact with the brand at a personal level. The customer Relationship Management (CRM) cycle is focused on four major steps such as marketing, sales, product, and support (Adiyanto, 2021). This theoretical framework supports an organisation to ensure a personalised customer experience to maintain a strong bonding with the customers as well as different stakeholders. Acquisition, conversion, retention, and loyalty are the major stages that support the company in identifying its active customers. It is an effective way to reach potential customers and identify their needs to increase brand engagement in the long term (Erdil, 2020). This relationship management cycle supports an organisation to maintain communication which is an easy way to ensure competitive advantages within the firm. Hence, this theoretical infrastructure supports the retail company Tesco to increase awareness of management regarding brand loyalty (Czopek and Kazusek, 2020). Tesco should implement an experiential marketing strategy where they can provide 24*7 horse customer services, ensure great delivery, and return options, and offer diversified products at affordable prices.

Justification

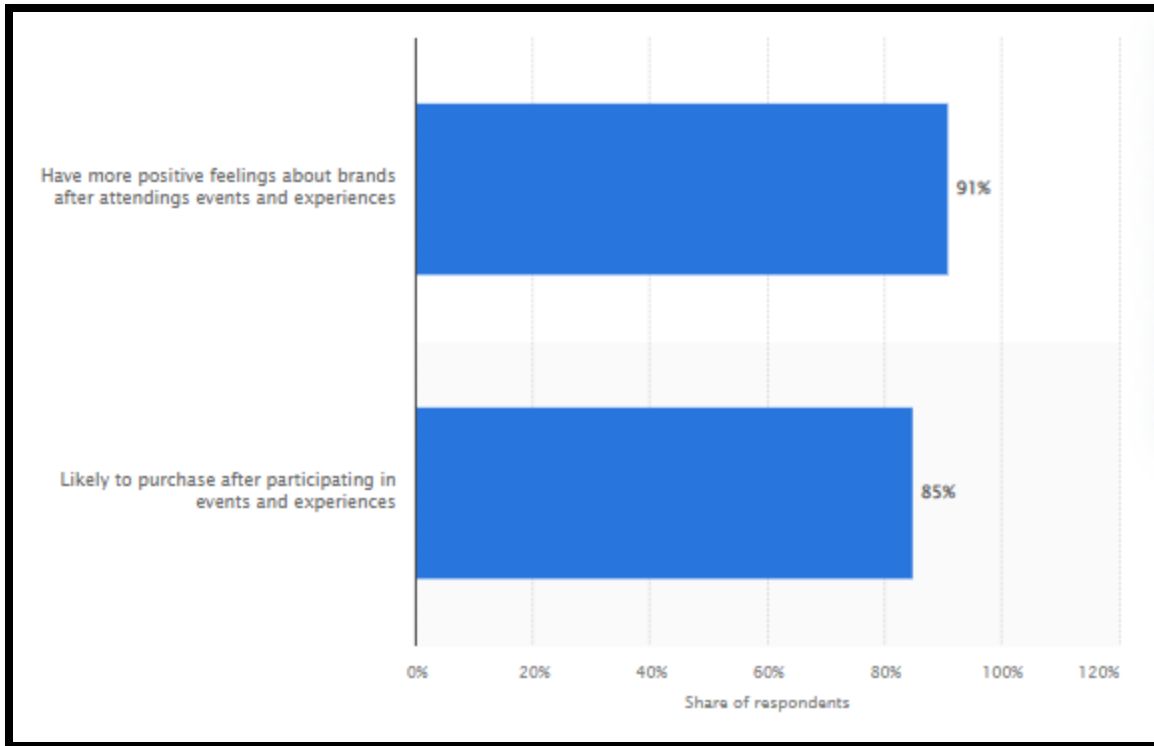


Figure 5.3: Impact of retail events and experiential marketing on consumer attitudes

(Source: Statista.com, 2022)

From the above image it is estimated that in 2018, 85% of respondents stated that they were more interested in the specific brand after attending or participating in a brand's events and experiences (Statista.com, 2022). In this context, it is estimated that an organisation must be focused on a personalised brand experience strategy where people are attracted by the brand due to thinner reliable products and services. This marketing strategy is also helpful for the management of an organisation to identify potential customers.

Experiential marketing is a creative strategy that supports an organisation to ensure competitive advantages by engaging customers for the long term. Relationship marketing is most important to manage different kinds of opportunities such as people engagement within the brand, increased annual revenue of an organisation, enhanced employee engagement and influenced innovation management (Erdil, 2020). This strategy provides hands-on experiences to their customers to increase their interaction with the brand at a personal level. Effective products and

services increase brand awareness by allowing emotional relationships (Czopek and Kazusek, 2020). By implementing these techniques an organisation must be focused on customer satisfaction which is important to conduct long-term business deals in the market and hold the reputed position.

Tesco must be influenced by its digital literacy to engage customers and provide on-time services as well as delivery. The company should increase the loyalty programs, new marketing initiatives, and personalised brand experience at the offering price which will ensure a stable and long brand engagement (Adiyanto, 2021). Effective marketing strategy and relationships support an organisation in maintaining stakeholder engagement.

5.3 Summary

The discussion chapter of this dissertation has properly summarised all the major findings of collected secondary qualitative data. Four key themes were discussed in this chapter that address the four research questions of this research. The four themes have been linked with the previous literature review chapter and existing theories that were mentioned in previous chapters. Four themes have covered the key relationship marketing strategies of Tesco and their role in the brand loyalty of the retail company. This discussion has helped to increase the overall quality of the research by meeting the four objectives of this research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1 Conclusion

Conclusively, this study highlights key aspects of Tesco related to its relationship marketing strategy. From the findings of the research, it is identified that Tesco has emphasized heavily on customised communication in recent years that has provided a positive customer experience. This communication strategy has helped the company to meet even the most unique needs of customers and develop a positive brand perception among customers. It has helped the company to provide a very personalised experience to its customers and drive customer engagement. Customised communication has driven brand loyalty for Tesco by sending a personalised message to its customer base. On the other hand, Tesco has experienced a massive rise in profitability due to the personalised services.

The loyalty programs incorporated by Tesco have been instrumental in building a long-term relationship with its customer base. Tesco provides several offers and benefits that no other competitor is able to provide to its customers. Due to this benefit, Tesco has been able to maintain its customer base within the market. The company also provides several discounts and benefits that tend to have a positive impact on customer satisfaction. The loyalty programs incorporated by Tesco have also ensured customers do not consider switching to other companies or brands. The discount offers of Tesco have played a huge role in boosting sales of the company and increasing profits.

From the findings, it is also identified that Tesco is required to focus on customer-centric relationship marketing strategy to improve brand loyalty. This marketing strategy can boost trusts and loyalty with customers for Tesco and ensure customers return to the physical stores of Tesco. Customers are more likely to feel valued due to the relationship marketing strategy. The relationship marketing strategy can help Tesco to get ahead of its competitors and achieve a competitive advantage. It can be a very vital addition to the company in terms of ensuring strong position within the market.

The success of Tesco has a lot to do with its experiential marketing strategy. This strategy has helped the company to connect with its customers in a better way that is certain to be a long-term

association. Customers develop a positive feeling towards the brand and it can be considered as a crucial part of the growth and development of Tesco. With the help of this marketing strategy, Tesco has been able to provide a lasting impression in front of customers. It has increased awareness among customers and ensured development of a very loyal customer base.

6.2 Linking with objectives

Objective 1

This objective is associated with the 2.4 section of the Literature Review in which the influence of customised communication for improving brand loyalty is analysed. This objective is associated with the 2.3 section as well as highlighting the different factors of relationship marketing that influence brand loyalty. The objective is followed to develop Theme 1 in the findings chapter.

Objective 2

This objective is aligned with the 2.5 section of the Literature Review in which the influence of loyalty programs on improving brand loyalty is identified. The alignment continues in the findings chapter as well and Theme 2 is developed by following this particular objective.

Objective 3

This objective is linked with the 2.6 section of the Literature Review in which the impact of the consumer response and its influence on brand loyalty is analysed. This objective is also followed for the development of Theme 3 to provide more details regarding brand loyalty.

Objective 4

This objective is linked with the 2.7 section of the Literature Review in which the influence of experiential marketing on brand loyalty is analysed. The alignment of this objective continues in the findings chapter as Theme 4 is developed by following this objective.

6.3 Limitations of the research

This research covers the majority of aspects related to Tesco and its relationship marketing, yet it has some limitations as well. This research is considered to be more descriptive research and lacks critical parts to a large extent. The information extracted from the secondary sources contains more positive aspects and thus, a very limited critical analysis is conducted in this research. The lack of accuracy of the extracted information is also one of the limitations of the research. A broad view of the relationship marketing strategy is not developed with the collected information.

6.4 Future scope of the study

Future research can be developed by focusing on more accurate data and information. This can be achieved by collecting data and information from primary data sources. A survey or interview can be conducted to gather all the information since it can provide more accurate information. The participants can be in the form of marketing managers of Tesco who can provide the most accurate information related to key aspects of Tesco. Thus, it is recommended to develop future research by taking primary data sources into consideration for the betterment of the research.

6.5 Recommendations

Relationship management is important to ensure brand loyalty and engage the stakeholders for the long term. An organisation needs to maintain an effective relationship with its consumers to enable brand loyalty (Jung *et al.* 2021). Tesco must be focused on some specific management and strategy to stay competitive and build a strong emotional relationship with its stakeholders. Here are some recommendations to improve future opportunities in UK retail sectors by focusing on Tesco.

- Implemented a loyalty program in Tesco to cultivate emotional attachments and encourage consumers for long-term engagement. Brand loyalty can be improved by including a loyalty program that allows the consumers to buy their product at an offer price and discounts (Jung *et al.* 2021). Therefore, rewards and special incentive supports an organisation in retaining its customers. It is an effective marketing strategy that

engages people for the long term and motivates them with overwhelming rewards, discounts, product quality, and services.

- The company must implement advanced tools and technology to increase its future opportunities. Big data analytics is an effective tool to manage customer satisfaction and supports an organisation in identifying its target customers. Hence, this tool customised the potential feedback of customers which is effective in managing different types of customer requirements (Dewnarain *et al.* 2021). By implementing advanced technology an organisation can easily increase annual revenue through ensuring customer satisfaction.
- The company should approach the customers for further feedback which is an effective way to manage changes and identify internal problems (Lasrado *et al.* 2023). Through the feedback strategy management also knew the customer requirements which is important for long-term consumer engagement.
- The retail industry must focus on experiential marketing which allows the customers to personalise brand experience at a higher level. It ensures an emotional engagement which is necessary to manage long-term relationships with the stakeholders (Hasan, 2021). Product sampling, building authentic relationships, and brand activation are the major strategic approaches to managing future opportunities.
- Training and development must be implemented within the organisation to increase brand awareness and enhance awareness among the employees. Therefore, it also supports maintaining a diverse culture within an organisation to reach global consumers (Lasrado *et al.* 2023). By providing effective training and development, a company can easily maintain a positive work infrastructure and diversified culture. An effective employee management strategy supports a company in reaching global customers and generating high annual revenue.
- Rewards, promotional strategies, and incentives can motivate employees to maintain their responsibility in a better way. Tesco can implement a promotional strategy for the employees to engage stakeholders for the long term. Employee satisfaction drives the

company toward growth and it also encourages customer satisfaction (Zaid and Patwayati, 2021). However, the company must focus on its employee management to ensure a positive internal infrastructure.

- The Retail industry should focus on a sustainable business strategy to reduce waste, increase the quality of the product, and enable great delivery services (Hasan, 2021). Sustainability reduces additional costs and increases the profit margin rate which supports the company to produce a high annual revenue.

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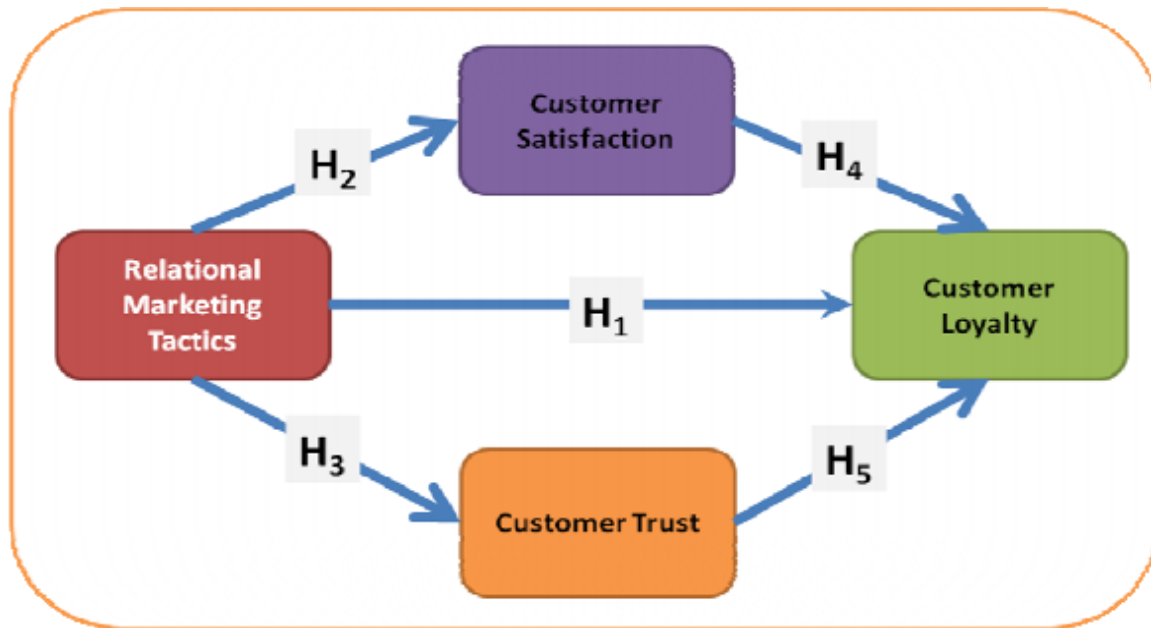
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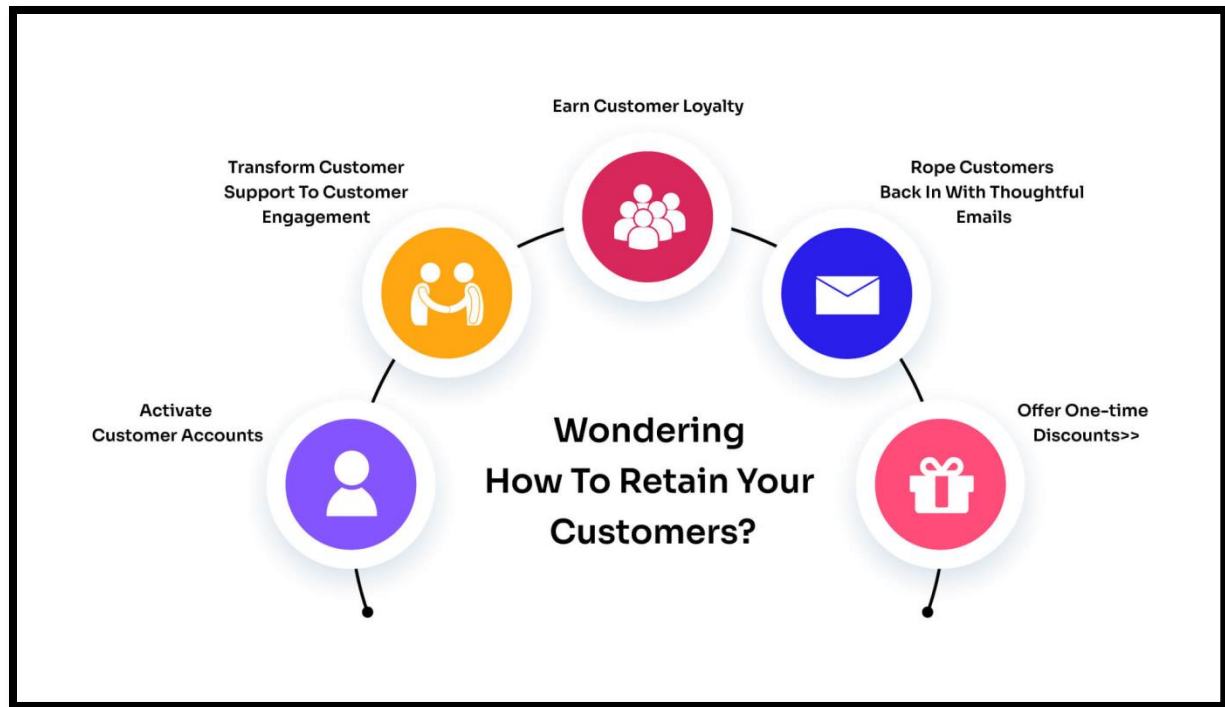
Appendices

Appendix A: Relationship with brand loyalty



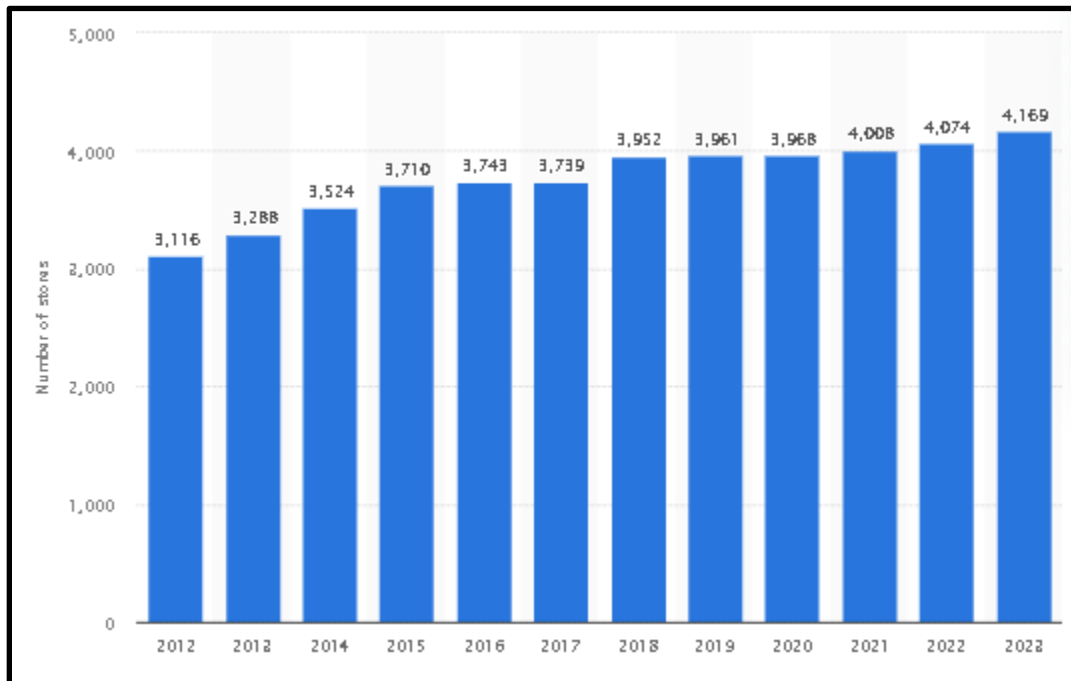
(Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Research-Model-of-Relationship-Marketing-and-Customer-Loyalty_fig1_267569932)

Appendix B: Five customer retention strategies



(Source: <https://www.lifesight.io/blog/proven-retention-marketing-strategies>)

Appendix C: Total stores of Tesco in the UK



(Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/490947/tesco-group-stores-united-kingdom-uk/>)