

**The importance of a good relationship between brand
and customers in coffee shop industry**

Dissertation Proposal

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Introduction

Background

Businesses need to have an effective management system to communicate with their customers to build good relationships with them. Brands are more likely to impact their customers with their beliefs, values, innovations, and personality if they have a significant bond with their customers (Lin, and Shuang-Shii, 2018). Brands can regulate their customer's emotions and memories associated with the experiences of the customers and sustain their product quality. Therefore, the brands must have critical observations of their customers and plan according to their needs (Kim, and Chao, 2019).

Relationships with the customers bring customer loyalty. Loyal customers are regarded as important assets for any business. Therefore, coffee shop managers need to develop a sense of togetherness and engagement with their customers to increase the number of repeated customers and responses customer base (Carranza, Díaz, and Martín-Consuegra, 2018). Coffee shop businesses are very close to the consumer market. People tend to visit these shops daily and even more than one time a day. The managers of such shops need to have interactions with their customers to have a good relationship with them and engage them with regular purchases (Park, and Kim, 2019).

Research significance

This research is since customer relationship is very important for the success of businesses, especially in the coffee shop industry. The research will bring significant insights into the matter of the importance of customer relationships and will highlight the core needs for coffee shops to consider the importance of a wide and regular customer base. The research will also help the academic community to solidify the importance of customer relationship building in the sector of coffee shop industry. It will also assist other business owners in the same industry to understand the effects of customer relationships on their businesses.

Research rational

The marketplace places are crowded with competition and competitors are vigorously operating to overtake their competitors. Businesses need to have distinctive planning and offering to their customers to enjoy any competitive advantage (Soniewicki, and Paliszkievicz, 2019). For the coffee shop industry, customer base and customer relationship are considered a vital opportunity for the business owners to create a significant edge over their competitors. Customers in this industry are seen to engage in purchasing from the places where they feel a sense of belongingness (Lee, Moon, and Song, 2018). This research will help to explain the importance of customer relationships in the context of the coffee shop industry. Many researchers are conducted to answer a similar question; however, a limitation in the

academic community can be seen regarding the qualitative research to endure the importance of customer relationships in the coffee shop industry. There is a need for subjective empirical research evidence to express the significance of customer base and customer relationship in the context of the coffee shop industry.

Aims and objectives

This research will aim to signify the importance of a good customer relationship between the customers and coffee shop owners. The following are the objectives of the research

1. To investigate the importance of the brand image of coffee shops and to evaluate the significance of customer loyalty in the context to the coffee shop industry
2. To find out the key aspects of customer relationship building in relevance to the coffee shop business

Research questions

Following are the research questions for this research proposal

1. What is the importance of brand image for coffee shop business?
2. What is the role of customer loyalty to sustain customer purchases and what are the major players to regulate the customer relationship in the coffee shop industry?
3. What businesses can do to build their customer base and enhance their customer relationship?

Literature Review

Brand Image

Businesses are always working to create a brand for their operations. A brand can progress a positive impression of the business towards the customers and boost its product recognition (Plumeyer, et al., 2019). An important concept in the development of a brand is the brand image. Brand image is the associated perception and experience in the minds of the customers for the specific brand. Brand image can be described as the perception of the business, its product, operations, and the value it provides to the customers, in the minds of the end-user. The concept of the brand image signifies the importance of relationship-building between customers and brands as the perception of the customers associated with the brands plays a pivotal role in the consumer behaviour of a person. If the brand image is positive, the customer will incline towards regular and consistent purchasing (Ramesh, et al., 2019).

Customer Loyalty

Customers are likely to behave according to the brand image of the brand. Consumer behaviour reflects if the customer is loyal or not to the brand or company. Customer loyalty is described as the attitude

and action of the customer that portrays its preference for one brand over another brand (Arora, and Narula, 2018). If a customer is loyal to a brand, it will purchase consistently from that brand. This will also imply that the brand may charge premium pricing (Larsson, and Broström, 2019). It is important to note that customer loyalty is achieved when the customers believe that they are entertained with the value against which they are paying the amount. If the customer is happy and satisfied to pay the brand and acknowledges the value it is getting against its payments, then the customer can be said to be a loyal customer (Juanamasta, et al., 2019). Customer loyalty is a significant competitive advantage that companies can utilize against their competitors. When a brand has a wide customer base that is loyal to its product and overall brand, the brand can use this as a competitive advantage and supply its products regardless of what other competitors are doing (DAM, and DAM, 2021).

Research Methodology

Research Philosophy

The research philosophy highlights the convictions and presumptions that direct the research. The first layer of the onion demonstrates the starting portion of the research strategy process highlights the investigation logic (Žukauskas, Vveinhardt, and Andriukaitienė, 2018). There are two diverse shapes of research philosophy: positivism and interpretivism. In positivist philosophy, common science techniques are utilized to reveal social sciences by examining quantitative information.

Interpretivism philosophy will be followed in this research process as it complements the gathering and investigation of qualitative research evidence. This research is based on the collection of subjective data to demonstrate the significance of good customer relationships in the coffee shop industry which drives the need to choose an interpretivism philosophy (Hürlimann, 2019).

Research Approach

Methodologies and strategies to perform study have been said to research approaches, that present anything from common explanations to the collection of data, presentation strategies, and assessment. There are two approaches naming inductive and deductive.

this research is based on the inductive approach or bottom-up approach. Sandberg, (2021) proposed that the hypothesis proposed in the study should be conceptualized using an inductive approach when qualitative research is conducted as it facilitates the research purpose and incorporates large and relevant subjective data.

Research Method

Research methods are said to be the choice of type or nature of empirical research evidence used in the research process. Research methods can be mainly categorized into 2 types, quantitative method and qualitative (Taylor, Bogdan, and DeVault, 2015).

The qualitative research method will be considered for this research as it will provide subjective data for the research which will be clear from biasness. Qualitative data collection will take time and maybe cost-ineffective however, the results from its collection will provide relevant evidence in context to the coffee shop industry which will improve its credibility and authenticity.

Research Strategy

Research strategy is explained as the real action plan that guides the researcher in the research process regarding data collection processes and sampling. There are many strategies counted for social researchers naming as survey, strategy ethnographic strategy, desk-based strategy etc.

This study is based on a primary research strategy. The primary strategy was chosen for the research as the researcher can accumulate the responses of the sample population to have first-hand data on the impact of the variables on each other. It is also used to have both objective and subjective results for the research to have in-depth insights on the topic and to keep the reliability and validity of the research.

Sampling Method

The target population of every research conducted is very large which limits the induction of the whole population. This brings the concept of sampling. The sample population is considered as the population segregated from the target population that contains similar attributes, values, and characteristics. This helps researchers to study the sample population and on the bases of the results, claim the behaviour of the whole target population (Taherdoost, 2016).

For this research, 15 industrial experts will be interviewed to gather the subjective data relevant to the research. This industrial expertise will be selected by defined criteria. Each expert must be running their coffee shop and should have an experience of 5 years of running such a business. The expert must have an employee base of at least 10 people.

Data Collection Technique

A data collection instrument is described as a tool from which researchers can collect empirical research evidence from the target sample population. Collection of data can be done by numerous tools in social sciences namely questionnaires, observations, interviews, focus groups, etc. questionnaires are primarily used for the collection of quantitative data process (Mellinger and Hanson, 2016).

For this research, interviews will be conducted with the industrial experts chosen on the bases of the standards mentioned above. Interviews will provide sufficient time for the collection of relevant subjective data that will encompass the experiences, observations, and perceptions of the industrial experts.

Data Analyses

For the formulation of empirical research evidence and deriving aimed results and collusion of the study, data analysis techniques are used. There are several data analysis techniques used in the social research community where techniques are chosen on the bases of research methods (Assarroudi, et al., 2018) one of such techniques is content analysis where qualitative data is assessed for its empirical research evidence by analysis of the content written in the research. It provides an in-depth analysis of accumulating subjectivity in the empirical research evidence which helps to derive results for qualitative method aimed research (Hammarberg, Kirkman, and de Lacey, 2016).

For this research, the study will use a thematic analysis. The use of thematic analysis will provide subjective outcomes based on the social phenomenon and will help to identify the themes involved. Another advantage to using thematic analysis is that it will help to interpret the qualitative results in a manner that will improve the understanding of the relations of the variables with each other.

Ethnical Consideration

Considerations that encompass the principles and values to reflect integrity and prevention of alchemic and ethical offences are called ethical considerations which are considered by researchers while forming their study evidence (Arifin, 2018). This research will consider many ethical considerations during its research process. For this research, Harvard referencing system will be chosen to pay adequate credits to the researchers that have done the previous research and their research is used in this research paper (Mirdula, 2019). Research also considers the ethical consideration of pilgrims. It is highly prioritised by the research process that the content of the research should not be copied from any source. The work done in the research is all on its own (Queirós, Faria, and Almeida, 2017). The research will also comply with the guidelines of taking consensus from the participants of the research. People who are taking part in interviews will be asked first for their consent and then they will be involved in the study. It will also be made sure that the participant's information is not leaked to any other sort of use and is only restricted to use for academic purposes.

Conclusion

This research will provide empirical research evidence and suggest the importance of good customer relationships in the context of the coffee shop industry. The research is aimed to justify the concepts of

customer loyalty and brand image and will recommend certain practices to improve customer relationships. The research will utilize interpretivism philosophy along with an inductive approach to conduct research. Qualitative primary data will be collected by having interviews with 15 industrial experts that are chosen on the bases of certain criteria. The data gathered will then be analysed by using thematic analyses.

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