

CUSTOMER LOYALTY AND PATRONAGE OF QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This paper assessed the product and seller factors including menu quality, price fairness, personnel quality, restaurant image, restaurant's atmosphere, customer trust, and customer loyalty that drive customer loyalty and patronage in quick service restaurants in Nigeria, using Awka capital territory of Anambra State as a case. Survey research design was adopted in which 399 patrons were sampled. The questionnaire was used to source the primary data for the study. Frequency tables, percentages correlation were applied in the data analyses. The study found a significant positive relationship between price fairness, food quality, firm's personnel quality, customer trust, restaurant image, and restaurant's atmosphere and customer loyalty. Positive relationship was also found between customer loyalty and customer patronage. The study recommended that managers should constantly re-strategize by re-inventing their firm with novel programs that will excite the beliefs system and emotion of the patrons so as to ensure continued patronage and, firm's profitability.*

KEYWORDS: customer loyalty, patronage, restaurant, Awka, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Competition in the markets is getting stiffer as the working environment is constantly changing in complexity. Various organizations seem to realize their customers are seeking better products and value from competing brands to obtain satisfaction, and more value for their money. Hyun (2010) posits that the issue of loyalty came to the fore when marketers realize that many unsatisfied customers do not necessarily return to purchase their services and products and which subsequently affects revenue generated from sales.

The research by Hyun showed that customer loyalty is an important and integral factor for increasing patronage and profitability thereby ensuring that firms remain in business for a long time. In the same vein, researches by Lee, Huang and Hsu, (2007), Gerpott, Rams and Schindler (2001) highlighted that comparatively, it is more profitable to retain existing customers than seeking to win new ones. This has also been found to be true in other services sectors such as educational (Balina & Paulins, 2015), hotel and recreational (Ismail, 2015), banking and financial (Masrek, 2012) and, retailing (Otaibi & Yasmeen, 2014). Heskett (2002) posited some claims too, that, a five percent improvement in retaining customers could lead to an increase in profitability from twenty five percent up to eighty five percent.

In the recent past in Nigeria, it appears that employment of married women outside their homes is on the rise. This development may have encouraged the patronage of quick service restaurants such as Crunches, Tetraxini, Nourisha, Thillers, Diamond Pizza, Chicken Republic, among others. With the increasing competition between these outlets, there is need to depart from the norm of attracting new customers as it no longer guarantees profits and success, but rather to strategize more to retaining existing customers as it will enhance patronage and subsequent long-run profitability (Egan, 2008). Anderson and Narus (1999) has also shown belief that in order to gain customer loyalty, retaining existing customers is a much effective strategy for the organization than attempting to attract new customers to replace the lost ones. That is to say that achieving customer loyalty and consequent long-term patronage, sustainability, and profitability in the industry is inversely tied customer retention. To this end, Aksu and Kosedag (2006) asserted that organizations and institutions that are successful in gaining customer loyalty have scored a major competitive advantage.

In view of the above, there is the need to study the variables or factors that drive customer loyalty and patronage of quick service restaurant in Awka metropolis of Anambra state. Kotler (2011) posited that in service industry, customers seek a set of benefits with various capabilities for satisfying their needs. It therefore becomes very imperative that the management understands the specific decision-making criteria customers use for restaurant selection so as to be able to influence customers' selection decisions given that if customers view service offering of a particular restaurant as worthwhile they will decide to give it a try.

Marketing literature has shown numerous studies (Aksu & Kosedag, 2006; Javed, Saeed, Lodhi, & Malik, 2013; Petzer & Mackay, 2014) among others done on quick service industry that sought to understand the attributes which consumers perceive as important to purchase and re-purchase product from an outlet. Most of these studies are foreign to Nigerian context in general and Igbo cultural setting in particular. In Nigeria, however, study by Agu, Ndu, and Chimaobi (2017) found that restaurant image is one of the key drivers customer loyalty to the business. Hence, the observed gap in literature including other customer loyalty drivers – product price, quality of menu, personnel quality, shop image, shop atmosphere, customer trust are propositioned for investigation in the present effort to empirically determine their influence on the patrons of restaurants in Anambra State of Nigeria. Consequent on the foregoing, the study hypothesizes that:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between fair pricing and customer loyalty to restaurants in Awka, Anambra State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between menu quality and customer loyalty.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between firm's personnel quality and customer loyalty.
- Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty.
- Ho₅: There is no significant relationship between restaurant's atmosphere and customer loyalty.
- Ho₆: No significant relationship exist between customer trust and loyalty.
- Ho₇: There is no significant relationship between customer loyalty and customer patronage of restaurants in Awka, Anambra State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Customer Loyalty

Contextually, loyalty is a behaviour of likeness of something that consumers may exhibit to show preference to brands, service, store, product categories and activities. Marketing literature has shown a myriad of definition of customer loyalty. Few examples that suggest consensus of opinion given their agreement with the attitudinal and psychological position of the concept will suffice here. Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) definition holds that customer loyalty is a biased behavioral response that is expressed overtime by some individuals with respect to one or more alternatives out of a set of alternatives. This is indicative customer loyalty is a psychological process. Oliver (1999) could not agree less and posited that the concept defines the customer's strong commitment to repurchase or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, regardless of situational and/or marketing influences that potentially could stimulate switching behaviour.

Slightly deviating, Dick and Basu (1994) believe customer loyalty to be a consistently favourable set beliefs of the consumer towards the brand purchased. These beliefs are measurable by the extent of customer positive beliefs and feelings towards a product in relation to the competing brands in the market; how committed he/she is to the product; and his/her readiness to recommend the product to others. Further, Terblanche and Boshoff (2006) citing empirical and anecdotal evidences supported the idea that loyalty is both a long term attitude and a long-term behavioral pattern which is reinforced by multiple experiences overtime.

Customer Patronage

In the context of marketing, patronage is an exchange process where one receives a service or goods in exchange for money or other considerations. Customer patronage is therefore, the purchase of goods and service from a vendor by a customer or a business. The customer purchases and expects to derive benefits or satisfaction from the goods or services as consideration for the exchange for money paid.

According to Anderson and Sullivan (1993), customer expectations of satisfaction leads to an increase in tendencies to purchasing a particular brand. They reiterated that firms that provide high quality products and services on a regular basis will have more satisfied customers and these customers will likely re-patronize the service and products next time. These assertions are supported by Kivela, Inbakaran and Reece (1999) when indicating that comparatively, firms that offer service of superior quality is bound to get their customers satisfied as well as get higher economic returns more than their competitors.

Oftentimes managers use customer satisfaction to forecast brand loyalty that ultimately lead to repurchase. On this basis it is expected that customers of restaurants will opt for the sources that meet their quality and value expectations over those that do not; and ignorant will experience customer traffic decline as guests support competing restaurants (Stevens, Knutson and Patton, 1995). Thus, a customer's loyalty is founded not only on firm's remarkable but may also be influenced by other factors such as restaurant image, personnel

quality, food quality, restaurant atmosphere, and products' price, that is pivotal in the delivery process.

Drivers of Customer Loyalty in Quick Service Restaurant

• Restaurant Image

Image in this context describes the overall impression a restaurant and its offerings give to its patrons and other publics. Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) believes that a favourable corporate image can boost sales, through increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. Some identifiable key elements of corporate identity that can influence the customer's perception of company's image include company name, logo, price charged for services, level and quality of advertising placed in the media (Nguyen & LeBlanc 2001). Inclusive is reputation which is the consistency of an organization's actions over time created through the guarantee of reliable service at zero defects tolerance. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) posits that reliability is very important to customers when they evaluate the quality of services offered.

In the same vein, physical environmental cues also communicate and project mission and image to the consumer (Bitner, 1990; 1992); so also do behaviour and attitudes of source personnel in indicating the level and quality of services offered by the service firm as they have considerable influence on the customer's satisfaction (Crosby, Evans & Cowles, 1990). Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) posited that when determining the mix of services to offer its customers, management must ensure that services are offered in a responsive and timely manner so that customers do not wait for service. Consequently, Taylor (1994), stated that waiting for service can have negative effects on service evaluations and company image.

Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) demonstrate that corporate image is positively associated with customer loyalty in telecommunication, education and retailing industries. Similar relationship is demonstrated by Juhl, Kristensen, Eskildsen and Ostergaard (2002), for the Danish food retailing sector. Therefore, the existence of a positive relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty is hypothesized in the present study.

• Food Quality

According to Namkung and Jang (2007), the quality of menu - food offering is considered the highest driver or otherwise of a dining experience. Studies (e.g. Clark & Wood, 1999; Susskind & Chan, 2000) have shown that food quality is the major influencer of customer choice, patronage of a restaurant, and ultimately his loyalty enforcer. Sulek and Hensley (2004) maintained that when food quality is compared with other aspects of a restaurant, including service quality and environmental components, it remains a key element of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Namkung and Jang (2007) tested the influence of food quality on customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions and found a positive correlation between the two variables.

Kivela, Inbakaran, & Reece, (1999). considered tastiness of food, nutrition and menu variety aspects of food quality in measuring the effect of excellent food on customer satisfaction and return patronage. Raajpoot (2002) on his part deployed menu design, variety, food presentation, and serving size, to measure the impact of product quality in the restaurant

industry. Thus, a positive relationship between food quality and customer loyalty is hypothesized to be tested in this study.

Personnel quality

A firm's personnel are the employees who work for the company. Their attitudes to work and how professional or pleasant they interact with or attend to customers of the firm suggests their quality level. Brown and Swarty (1989) point that interaction with the service employee is the most important influence on customer service quality assessment and overall service satisfaction. Heung-Thurau (2004) suggested that the behavior of service employees, when serving the needs and wishes of existing customers create impression which either increases customer satisfaction or subsequent continuous patronage or cause dissatisfaction and less patronage.

Heung-Thurau (2004) outlined four essential skills needed by service delivery personnel in the discharge of his duties towards satisfying the customers. They include technical skills - the knowledge and skills that the employee should have in order to serve and fulfill the customer's needs; social skills - the ability of the service employee to understand the customers' perception in terms of thoughts and feelings. An understanding of the customer's perspective is important for proper and timely understanding of his/her needs. Motivation - employee motivation leads the employee to exert technical skill and social skills in carrying out their duties. The employee's feeling of authority to make decisions on issues that concern customers' interest and need subsequently promotes the business.

Given therefore that perceived quality levels of service in restaurants are based on the relationship between patrons and the provider, Nikolich and Sparks (1995) has suggested that customer's perceptions and evaluation of service quality may be strongly dependent on the service provider's performance in delivery. Therefore, a positive relationship between restaurant's personnel quality and customer loyalty is postulated for this research.

Restaurant's Atmosphere

Atmosphere is the air surrounding the sphere of a business house. Contextually, it signifies the quality of the surrounding of the restaurant. Words as "good", "busy" or "depressing" are used to describe atmospheric situation of a given location. The research by Namkung and Jang (2008) showed that atmosphere of a restaurant evokes a number of feeling, such as excitement, pleasure or relaxation, quality, aura and character. This may be as a result of neatness, display of assorted foods in neat warmers, arrangement of flowers, arrangement of tables, the lighting, the music and color displays on the interior. Barber and Scarcelli (2009), suggested that the decoration, the music, the lighting affect restaurant quality perception among customers and subsequently influence product patronage. Therefore, a hypothesized positive relationship between restaurant's atmosphere and customer loyalty will also be tested in this investigation.

Price fairness

Price represents the perceived value of product/service at which the seller and buyer are ready to do business. From the perspective of the consumer, it is what the customer pays in exchange for a product or service. Price as an important marketing factor has been noted to be a serious influencer of consumer behaviour. Sinha and Batra (1999) highlighted that

consumers tend to search for products and services that are fairly priced that which would deliver maximum of desired value.

As indicated by Xia, Monroe, and Cox (2004), the consumer perceives the offered price to be fair when it is sufficiently reasonable, can be accepted or justified. Bolton, Warlop and Alba, (2003) suggested that it is likely that customers will rely on certain standards reference sources such as cost of goods sold, previous prices, and rivals' to make better judgments when evaluating price fairness in order to form comparisons. For instance, customers usually benchmark or reference pricing by recalling past transactions, checking on competitors' prices, seller's costs, or through observing the prices paid by other customers.

According to Anderson, Fornell, and Lehmann, (1994), the prices of a product/service can affect the degree of patronage among customers, because whenever they assess the given value of a purchased product or service, they tend to consider its price. Similarly, Campbell (1999) considered price as a key factor that influences brand image such that perceived price unfairness may lead to negative customer outward communication, switching behaviour, disloyalty and loss of patronage. Unfair price may also lead to outcomes including heightened customer dissatisfaction, drop in repurchase, and increased customers' complaints (Rothenberger, 2015). Kaura (2012) however, established in his study that price fairness significant positive influence on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and patronage. Therefore, a hypothesized positive relationship between price fairness and customer loyalty will be tested in this study.

Customer Trust

Trust has been viewed as one of the critical elements in the creation of successful relationships, whether for business-to-business market or business-to-consumer market. Researchers (Aydin & Ozer, 2005; Lau & Lee, 1999) have posited trust to be behavioural and seen form of reliance of a partner which results mainly in positive outcomes. The work of Moorman & Rust (1999) evidences support for the notion that trust is essential for relationship building. Moorman, Zaltman & Deshpand (1992) sees trust as to whether one is willing to rely on another party in whom he/her confidence in. Trust was conceptualized by Morgan and Hunt (1994) as existing only when one partner has confidence in other partner's integrity and reliability. These definitions have highlighted the importance of confidence during the course of exchange as the trustworthiness actually results from the other party's expertise, reliability or intentionality.

Aydin and Ozer, (2005) have, however, argued that credibility status of a firm affects the long-term orientation of a customer by reducing the perception of risk associated with opportunistic behaviours by the firm. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) supporting trust, holds that it will help to reduce dissonance in consumers if they are convinced of their trusted brand. Therefore, service provider that manages to reduce the doubt and feeling of uncertainty will be able to increase the perceived switching cost in the consumer and ultimately increase his/her loyalty towards the brand. Hence, a hypothesized positive relationship between customer trust and customer loyalty will be tested in this research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the theoretical model of customer loyalty developed by Haghghi, Dorosti, Rahnama and Hoseinpour (2012) that identified seven determinants of customer loyalty in the fast food restaurants namely food quality; price; service quality; restaurant location; products' price; restaurant atmosphere; and customer satisfaction, given its relevance to objectives of the study. Secondly, the model was applied in a developing economy (Iran) similar to that of Nigeria. Based on the hypotheses of the present study therefore, the hereunder modified model is proposed:

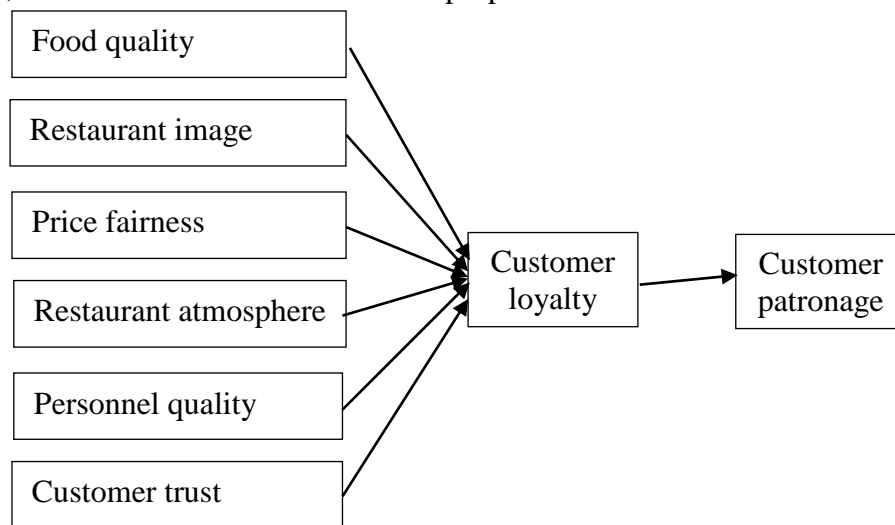


Figure 1: Model of customer loyalty proposition by researcher

Empirical Review

In a study conducted by Haghghi et al (2012) in Tehran using 268 fast food restaurant customers, the findings show that food quality, price, service quality, restaurant atmosphere and customer satisfaction have positive significant effect on loyalty. But product's price and restaurant location do not have a significant effect on loyalty. The study used structured equation modeling to analyze the data and test the hypotheses.

Also, in a study conducted by Sefian, Jami, Sharudin and Abdullah (2013) in Malaysia, on the patrons' local home grown fast food restaurant, they found that food quality and service quality are the most important determinants of re-patronizing any fast food restaurant.

Tan, Oriade and Fallon, in 2014, investigated Chinese customers' perception of fast food restaurants level of service quality in relationship to customer satisfaction. The study, in both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, using analyzable 205 questionnaires found that service quality variables have positive influence on customer satisfaction.

In South Africa, Chinomona and Sandada (2013) examined the extent customer satisfaction, trust and loyalty are predictors of customer intention to re-purchase in the country's retailing Industry. 151 athletes from Ganteng province were investigated. The results revealed a

relationship between customer satisfaction and their trust and, loyalty, as well as significantly positive relationship between customer loyalty and their repurchase intention.

Agu, Kalu and Agaeze (2017) investigated the relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty during period of economic recession using four restaurants in Umuahia of Abia State of Nigeria. 170 patrons of food restaurants were sampled. The findings indicate that environment, convenience, merchandize and personnel attributes of the study firms are significantly positive predictors of customer loyalty.

Also, Olise, Okoli and Ekeke (2015) investigated the factors influencing customers' patronage of fast food restaurants in Anambra state, Nigeria. 240 respondent customers were studied. The study results showed that service quality, atmospheric quality, perceived value, environment, consumer demographics and modernity are the significant factors that influence the patronage behaviour of food restaurants in the state.

It is clear from the foregoing few studies that there is common agreement about the positive influence of almost all the variables of the present study, the position of which will be established shortly.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive survey method in investigating customers of quick service restaurant located in Awka. Awka is the headquarters of the State of Anambra of Nigeria. The city is part of Awka-south local government area of the state. Anambra state, in the south-east geopolitical of Nigeria is the core of Igbo tribe.

Study Sample and Sampling

The population of Awka-South Local Government Area is 189,654 (Population and Housing Census, 2010). The population of this study site was projected at 262,484 for year 2018, the period of the study, using the population projection equation:

$$N_t = P * e^{r * t}$$

N_t = number of people at future date

P = present population

e = natural logarithm base (2.7182)

r = rate of increase (2.5) divided by 100

t = time period

Here:

$$N_t = P * e^{r * t}$$

$$P = 189,654; \quad r = 2.5/100; \quad t = 13; \quad e = 2.7182$$

Therefore:

$$N_t = 189,654 * 2.7182^{(2.5/100 * 13)}$$

$$N_t = 262,484.$$

The economically active population that may possibly patronize the quick service restaurant was projected at 48.4% = 127,042, i.e.

$$\underline{48.4} \times 262,484$$

100

N \approx 127,042

Sample size derived from the above population was 399 with the aid of Yamane (1964) formula for determining sample size. The sample was evenly distributed at 100 par Thrillers, Nourisher and Crunchies restaurants. Only Destiny Pot restaurant was one respondent short (i.e. 99).

Measuring Instrument and Administration

A 5-point Likert-type questionnaire scaled: strongly agree = 5; agree = 4; undecided = 3; strongly disagree = 2; disagree = 1) was employed in gathering primary data for the study. The instrument was tested for internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha the results of which reliability at 0.72 coefficient.

Purposive convenience sampling technique was applied during the administration of the questionnaire given that no records exist on the number of customers that patronize the restaurants. Only customers found on the spot who are knowledgeable enough to understand the content of the questionnaire were issued. Completed questionnaire copies were retrieved on the spot to avoid contamination through referral.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Data collected were analyzed in descriptive statistics – tables and percentage for respondents' demographics, and inferential statistics - Pearson Correlation coefficient (r) for testing the significance of the study hypotheses. 361 questionnaire copies of the distributed 399 were properly filled and found usable for the study.

Respondents' Demographic Data

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	215	59.6
Married	113	31.3
Divorced	15	4.2
Separated	12	3.3
Celibate	6	1.6
Total	361	100

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

The table above shows 215 respondents representing 60.3% are single; 113 respondents representing 31.3% are married; 15 representing 4.2% are divorced; 12(3.3%) are separated; while six (1.6%) respondents are celibate. This indicates that the customers who do not have spouses are greater in number.

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	8	2.2
WAEC	137	38
NCE/OND	50	13.8
HND/B.SC	121	33.4
Masters	30	8.3
Ph.D	16	4.3
Total	361	100

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Attainment

It is clear from the above table that all the respondents are educated at various levels. Those who possess WAEC certificate (post-primary education) is highest in number (137: 38%), seconded by holders of higher diploma/baccalaureate qualifications (121: 33.4%). The least are the primary school leavers, eight representing 2.2% of the respondents.

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18-21 years	52	14.4
22-30 years	122	33.8
31-40 years	96	26.6
41-50 years	65	18.0
51 and above years	26	7.2
Total	361	100

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Two major age groupings are discernible from the above table: young adults (18-40 years of age) and matured adults (41-51/above years of age). The young adult group is the dominant restaurant patrons with 75% (270), while the matured adults trail at 25% (91) respondents. Within the young adult grouping, those within the age grouping of 22-30 years are the most prominent.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Civil/public servant	68	18.8
Private firm	64	17.7
Self employed	60	16.6
Student	147	40.7
Others	22	6.2
Total	361	100

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

From the above table 4, it can be seen that 18.8%(68) of the respondents are employees in the public sector establishments; (64) respondents representing 17.7% work in the private or organized sector of the economy; while 60(16.6%) of the respondents are self-employed. 147(40.7%) and 22(6.2%) of respondents are students, and the unspecified respectively. This results indicate that the working class who feed outside the home slightly outnumbered the students. Between the classes however, the numerical superiority of the former over the latter is not so significant.

RESULTS ON THE STUDY OBJECTIVES

Price fairness	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
The price of the food is reasonable	75 (20.8)	211 (58.4)	34 (9.4)	31 (8.6)	10 (2.8)	361 (100)
The price of the menu seem appropriate to what I get	52 (14.4)	158 (43.8)	70 (19.4)	66 (18.3)	15 (4.2)	361 (100)
The price that I paid for food encourages repeat purchase	42 (11.6)	169 (46.9)	50 (13.9)	80 (22.2)	20 (5.5)	361 (100)

Table 5: Respondents' degree of agreement on price fairness driving customer loyalty in quick service restaurant

Table 4.5 revealed the opinion of the respondents. The aggregated responses over the three constructs of price fairness (reasonability, appropriateness and encouraging) indicate that those who just agree are greater in number than those who strongly agree, so do the 'disagree' over strongly disagree. On overall general agreement or disagreement, greater number of the respondents agree that price fairness drive loyalty of restaurant patrons.

Food quality	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
This quick service restaurant has good food presentation	96 (26)	213 (59)	33 (9.1)	13 (3.6)	6 (1.7)	361 (100)
This food served by this quick service restaurant is very tasty	82 (22.7)	228 (60.1)	36 (10)	15 (4.2)	11 (3.0)	361 (100)
I like the menu variety/design offer by this quick service restaurant	97 (26.9)	214 (59.3)	26 (7.2)	13 (3.6)	11 (3.0)	361 (100)

Table 6: Respondents' degree of agreement on food quality driving customer loyalty in quick service restaurant

Table 6 shows the level of agreement or otherwise among the sample customers on food presentation, food tastiness, and menu variety as driving restaurant loyalty. The results as shown in the above indicate that while greater percentage of the patrons agree to positive influence of the variables of food quality, very insignificant number of them, (very much lower than those that have no opinion) disagree with that position.

Firm's personnel quality	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
The staff of this quick service restaurant are very responsiveness to my order or need.	81 (22.4)	217 (60.1)	33 (9.1)	25 (6.9)	5 (1.4)	361 (100)
This quick service restaurant guarantees me assurance of my money through the service rendered.	48 (13.3)	237 (65.7)	55 (15.2)	17 (4.7)	4 (1.1)	361 (100)

Table 7: Respondents' degree of agreement on personnel quality driving customer loyalty in quick service restaurant

Table 7 revealed that majority of the respondents averaging 63% agreed with the staff responsive to customer orders and the quality of service rendered. While average of 18% of

them strongly agree; the overall disagreement is 3.3% on the average. The respondent who are undecided in their opinion (12% average) outnumber those that disagree.

Restaurant image	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
This quick service restaurant is stable and firmly established	79 (21.9)	219 (60.7)	30 (8.3)	25 (6.9)	8 (2.2)	361 (100)
This quick service restaurant has social contribution	76 (21.1)	212 (58.7)	33 (9.1)	26 (7.2)	14 (3.9)	361 (100)
This quick service restaurant has positive image	93 (25.8)	209 (57.9)	50 (13.9)	7 (1.9)	2 (0.6)	361 (100)
This quick service restaurant is innovative and forward looking	88 (24.4)	190 (52.6)	52 (14.4)	16 (4.4)	15 (4.2)	361 (100)

Table 8: Respondents' degree of agreement on restaurant image driving customer loyalty in quick service restaurant

The cumulative average percentages of the results on Table 8 as pertains to influence of the dimensions of source image show: strongly agree (23%); agree (57%); undecided (11%); disagree (6); and strongly disagree (3%). Overall, the greatest number of the respondents agreed that restaurant image drives customer loyalty and patronage.

Restaurant atmosphere	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
I like the decoration and lighting	102 (28.3)	217 (60.1)	27 (7.5)	10 (2.8)	5 (1.4)	361 (100)
I like the music	111 (30.7)	187 (51.8)	21 (5.8)	24 (6.6)	18 (5.0)	361 (100)
I like the parking space	121 (33.5)	195 (54.0)	31 (8.6)	9 (2.5)	5 (1.4)	361 (100)

Table 9: Respondents' degree of agreement on restaurant atmosphere driving customer loyalty in quick service restaurant

The cumulative average percentages of the results on Table 9 as pertains to influence of decoration and lighting, music, and parking space (of restaurant atmosphere as employed in this study) show: strongly agree (31%); agree (55%); undecided (7%); disagree (4); and strongly disagree (3%). It is clear from the foregoing that most of the respondents agreed that restaurant atmosphere influence customer loyalty and patronage.

Customer trust	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
I trust this quick service restaurant	54 (15)	193 (53.5)	71 (19.7)	33 (9.1)	10 (2.8)	361 (100)
I feel I can rely on this quick service restaurant readiness to serve well	66 (18.3)	230 (63.7)	51 (14.1)	10 (2.8)	4 (1.1)	361 (100)
I trust the billing system of this quick service restaurant	54 (15)	185 (51.2)	66 (18.3)	50 (13.9)	6 (1.7)	361 (100)
I believe this quick service restaurant will not try to cheat	59 (16.3)	158 (43.8)	75 (20.8)	63 (17.5)	6 (1.7)	361 (100)

Table 10: Respondents' extent of agreement on customer trust driving customer loyalty in quick service restaurant

Following the same pattern, the cumulative average percentages of the results on Table 10 pertaining to the four variables of customer trust, as employed in this study, showed: strongly agree (16%); agree (53%); undecided (18%); disagree (11); and strongly disagree (2%). Given the above, most of the respondents agreed that customer trust drive customer loyalty and patronage of restaurants.

Customer loyalty	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
I consider this quick service restaurant as my first choice.	80 (22.2)	228 (63.2)	37 (10.2)	15 (4.2)	1 (0.3)	361 (100)
I recommend this quick service restaurant to someone who seeks my advice.	121 (33.5)	195 (54.0)	31 (8.6)	9 (2.5)	5 (1.4)	361 (100)
I say positive things about this quick service restaurant.	103 (28.5)	179 (49.6)	45 (12.5)	28 (7.8)	6 (1.6)	361 (100)
I encourage friends and relatives to eat in this quick service restaurant.	118 (32.7)	172 (47.6)	28 (7.8)	25 (6.9)	18 (5.0)	361 (100)

Table 11: Respondents' extent of agreement on customer loyalty driving patronage in quick service restaurant

Table 11 revealed similar pattern of respondents' level of agreement and disagreement. Those who are agree are highest in number, the 'disagreed' are lowest; those who are so sure occupy the intermediate position. Further, respondents who just agreed are higher than those strongly agreed.

Customer patronage	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
I buy food products from this quick service restaurant regularly	127 (35.2)	146 (40.4)	43 (11.9)	36 (10.0)	9 (2.5)	361 (100)
I like to patronize the quick service restaurant	108 (29.9)	203 (56.2)	33 (9.1)	11 (3.0)	6 (1.7)	361 (100)
The service I receive makes me to repurchase more.	99 (27.4)	214 (59.3)	21 (5.8)	17 (4.7)	10 (2.8)	361 (100)

Table 12: Respondents opinion on customer patronage in quick service restaurant.

The cumulative average percentages of the results on the Table 12 above pertaining to customers' opinion on their reason(s) for patronizing a quick food service outlet follows similar pattern of agreement (high), undecided (mid); and disagreement (low). This indicates that most are in agreement that they patronize the outlets regularly because they like it given the quality of service they receive.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one

Ho: There is no significant relationship between price fairness and customer loyalty.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between price fairness and customer loyalty.

		Customer loyalty	Fair price
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.285**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	361	361
Fair price	Pearson Correlation	.285**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	361	361

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 13: Pearson Correlation results for hypothesis one

The results in table 13 above shows correlation coefficient of 0.285 indicating a significant positive relationship between fair price and customer loyalty. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant positive relationship between fair price and customer loyalty.

Hypothesis two

Ho: There is no significant relationship between food quality and customer loyalty.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between food quality and customer loyalty.

		Customer loyalty	Food quality
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.327**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	361	361
Food quality	Pearson Correlation	.327**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	361	361

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 14: Pearson Correlation results for hypothesis two

The above results for correlation coefficient between food quality and customer loyalty at value 0.327 indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the variables at 0.05 levels and 0.01 levels. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between food quality and customer loyalty.

Hypothesis three

Ho: There is no significant relationship between personnel quality and customer loyalty.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between personnel quality and customer loyalty.

		Customer loyalty	Personnel quality
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.120*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.022
	N	361	361
Personnel quality	Pearson Correlation	.120*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	
	N	361	361

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

Table 15: Pearson Correlation results for hypothesis three

The correlation coefficient between customer loyalty and personnel quality above showing value 0.120 indicates that there is a weak but significant positive relationship between personnel quality and customer loyalty at 0.05 level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, we accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between personnel quality and customer loyalty.

Hypothesis four

Ho: There is no significant relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty.

		Customer loyalty	Restaurant image
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.125*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.018
	N	361	361
Restaurant image	Pearson Correlation	.125*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	
	N	361	361

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

Table 16: Correlation results for hypothesis four

Based on the correlation between customer loyalty and restaurant image, value 0.125, indicates that there is a weak significant positive relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty at 0.05 level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, and accept the alternate hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty.

Hypothesis five

Ho: There is no significant relationship between restaurant's atmosphere and customer loyalty.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between restaurant's atmosphere and customer loyalty.

		Customer loyalty	Restaurant atmosphere
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.293**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	361	361
Restaurant atmosphere	Pearson Correlation	.293**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	361	361

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 17: Correlation results for hypothesis five

Based on the correlation between customer loyalty and restaurant atmosphere, the value 0.293, indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the variables at 0.05 levels and 0.01 level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty.

Hypothesis six

Ho: There is no significant relationship between customer trust and customer loyalty.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between customer trust and customer loyalty.

		Customer loyalty	Customer trust
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.313**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	361	361
Customer trust	Pearson Correlation	.313**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	361	361

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 18: Correlation result for hypothesis six

Based on the correlation between customer loyalty and customer trust, the value 0.313, indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the variables at 0.05 and 0.01. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between customer trust and customer loyalty.

Hypothesis seven

Ho: There is no significant relationship between customer patronage and customer loyalty.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between customer patronage and customer loyalty.

		Customer loyalty	Customer patronage
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.235**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	361	361
Customer patronage	Pearson Correlation	.235**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	361	361

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 18: Correlation result for hypothesis seven

Based on the correlation between customer loyalty and customer trust, the value 0.235 indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the variables at 0.05 and 0.01. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between customer trust and customer loyalty.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that price fairness have significant relationship with customer loyalty. This this findings correlate with the works of Ehsan (2012) and Kaura (2012) that price fairness had a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and patronage. The study also showed that restaurant image, have significant positive relationship with customer loyalty. This results is supported by Juhl, Kristensen, Eskildsen and Ostergaard (2002) who discovered that the total image management of a firm enhances and increases customer loyalty and concomitantly increases customer patronage.

The findings of the study equally showed that food quality has a strong significant positive relationship with customer loyalty. This results found support in Namkung and Jang (2007) that food quality is the primary factor that influences customer loyalty. The significant positive relationship found to exist between the firm's personnel quality and customer loyalty by the present study corroborates the findings of Ahmad, Ahmed, Nawaz, Usman, Shaukat & Ahmad (2010) that an excellent service offered by the personnel to a customer enhances customer loyalty, customer retention, and patronage.

Further, the significant positive relationship between restaurant's atmosphere and customer loyalty established in this study agrees with results of Oktay (2016) that restaurant atmosphere has strong positive relationship with customer loyalty. The study also revealed that customer trust has a strong significant positive relationship with customer loyalty. This findings is supported by Haghighi, Dorosti, Rahnama and Hoseinpour (2012) which results indicate that customer trust is a factor to enhancing and maintaining customer loyalty towards a firm.

Lastly, the present study established that overall, customer loyalty strongly and significantly drives customer patronage in the positive direction. This results receives support in the work of Olise, Okoli, and Ekeke (2015) that customer loyalty increases the customer patronage of the restaurant and which, in consequence, increases the profitability of the firm.

IMPLICATIONS TO RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The present study revealed the current situation on the issues investigated, given that similar studies have been done in that area in the past. In which case, researchers and interest publics are presented with current empirical background information which can be relied on in future studies or decision making. Essentially, the study produced a framework and theoretical model that researchers can apply to replicate the study or related studies in other locations of the country or beyond.

In terms of practice, the findings of the study reaffirms that this model can increase the profit base of any regulated quick service restaurant in Nigeria, if meticulously applied. Managerially, the results provide some insights and feedbacks for operators in quick service in drafting various loyalty strategies on the predictable to enhance customer patronage geared towards increasing firm's profitability.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study statistically showed positive relationship between price fairness, food/menu quality, firm's personnel quality, customer trust, restaurant image, and restaurant's atmosphere with customer loyalty. So also positive relationship is found to exist between customer loyalty and customer patronage. On the basis of this findings therefore, the study concluded that price fairness, food quality, firm's personnel quality, customer trust, restaurant image, and restaurant's atmosphere have significant positive influence on customer loyalty.

FUTURE RESEARCH

In the light of the results of this study, there is need for further investigations to:

1. Ascertain the attitudes of the women and men, and family as a group towards patronizing food restaurants, given that they were not articulated in the study and, given again, the culture of the study area that seems to frown at eating outside the home.
2. Reveal the consumer-person centered factors that drive their attitudes to patronizing restaurants, noting that sellers-centered factors (as employed alone in this study) could not have singularly proven strong driver of attitudes.
3. Further deconstruct the key variables of the study into their minute elements/dimensions and analyse their respective direction and weight of influence on consumer patronage.

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