

Emotional Bonding and Diner's Loyalty to Restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State

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ABSTRACT: *The study focused on emotional bonding affect diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The specific objectives of the study are; to examine the influence of quality, price, response time, accessibility and trust on diner's loyalty among restaurant in Umuahia metropolis, Abia state. To achieve the objectives of the study, survey research design was adopted. Convenient sampling was used to select 196 diner's from the selected restaurants in Umuahia metropolis. The data collection involves primary data through the use of structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using frequencies, percentages and mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that quality, price, response time, accessibility and trust have a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. Therefore, the study concludes that emotional bonding plays a significant role in enhancing diner's loyalty in restaurant business. Based on the findings, the study recommends that restaurant managers to become aware of the strategic role of quality and to set up expansions and improvement plans aiming at attracting consumers' satisfaction. It is also important to know how to better manage relationship marketing by using technological tools like customer relationship management (CRM). Consumers are certainly attached to products and they become loyal. Also, it is recommended that products be offered at reasonable prices, good quality and attractive packaging, thereby providing a pleasant experience for consumers. Additionally, product managers need to pay special attention to generating persuasive content on social media in particular. It is important to make sure that the content of ads is in line with the long-term goals and strategies of the business.*

KEYWORDS: emotional bonding, satisfaction, product, price, responds time, trust and diner's loyalty and restaurants

INTRODUCTION

In the world of marketing study, customer loyalty is one of the most important element because the for-ward or retreat of a company depends on the company's ability to get customers. There are two main approaches to loyalty: (Mowen, & Minor, 2018), behavior-based loyalty, meaning that loyal customers are customers who re-purchase and a fixed proportion of purchases, (Assael, 2018) attitude-based loyalty, meaning that the customer is psychologically committed to the object (Mowen, & Minor, 2018). If you look at the current phenomenon, in order to maintain customers' loyalty, it is not enough to only conduct behavioral loyalty approach, because customer tend to continue to seek satisfaction from a product that the company has to offer. In accordance to Mowen, & Minor (2018), the loyalty interpretation as purchase made does not provide an idea of actual loyalty because purchase made in the past are not considered indicators of true loyalty. According to Griffin (2015), a loyal customer is one who makes regular repeat purchase, purchase across product and service line, refers others and demonstrates an immunity to the pull of the competition.

Meanwhile, according to Kumar & Srivastav (2013), customer loyalty is a psychological character that is formed from continuous customers' satisfaction and has a strong emotional bond and is then formed from service excellence for consumers consistently to connect with products, prefer products, make repeat purchases, and purchase premium. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, (2018), defines consumer loyalty in the context of service marketing as a response that is closely related to pledges or promises to uphold the commitments underlying continuity of relations, and is usually reflected in the ongoing purchase of the same service provider on the basis of pragmatic dedication and constraints.

Therefore loyalty approach based on attitude has been done by many companies in marketing programs to get loyal customers. One of them by paying attention to the psychological aspects of customer through the bond (bonding). Bowlby (2019), defines bonding / bonds is an emotional-laden target specific bond between a person and a specific object. bonding varies greatly in degree of strength and bonding is closely related to strong feelings of connection, love, love and passion. Then, Thomson (2005,) defines customers emotional bond is a critical construct in the marketing literature as it describes the strength of the bond customers's have with the product. This bond subsequently affects their behaviour and in turn fosters firm profitability and diner's lifetime value. Previous studies have shown that customers's loyalty will be rapidly formed through ties between customers's and companies or products (Fitzgibbon & White, 2015). Loyalty can be formed quickly if it involves the psychological aspect of an emotional bond between the customer and the company or product. Previous research gap on (Theng So, Grant Parsons, and Yap, 2013) reveal the results of this study indicate the unexpectedly limited effectiveness of corporate producing on customer's emotional bonding. Although the findings show that customer's' emotional bonds

positively drive their product loyalty, the results do not fully support the hypothesis that corporate producing effectively enhances a customers's emotional bonds.

Grailot (2018), emotion is an affective, subjective, experimental, temporary, multidimensional phenomenon and a source of motivation caused by exogenous factors to the individual that interact with the process of treatment of the collected information for the purpose of experience of consumption. As for Goleman (2017), an emotion is a combination of feelings and thoughts, a particularly psychological and biological condition, and a range of tendencies to action it inspires. For Amine (2018), emotion is a conscious occurrence caused by the combination of cognitive changes that can be (good, bad, pleasant, unpleasant, harmful, desirable, etc.) and the physiological assessment.

Cristau (2016) defines the emotional attraction of a product as a holistic perception of a power of seduction in the product that gives it an important aesthetic value. Any contact with this product brings a great pleasure. This attraction can be caused by a marvellous design, credibility with the product components as well as several other elements that make the product touch some senses and arouse certain emotions among consumers as they get into contact with it.

Emotional bonding is critical in marketing as customer's emotional bonding towards a product such as feelings of sympathy, sadness, pride, and anger results in distinct meaning of the individual's environment and therefore has unique motivational implications towards the choice and decision making. Marketers use tactics such as a young child or an animal to capture the hearts of the audience. This bond between the customer's and the product affects the behavior of the customer's, which in turn can foster the firm's profitability and the customer's value to the firm. It is a basic human need to form a bonding. Customers can form emotional bondings to an array of objects such as collectibles, gifts and of course products. Despite the fact that an emotional bonding to an object is unlikely to be similar in strength as an bonding between two humans, the fundamental properties and behavioral effects of emotional bonding are similar. Emotional bonding to a product is underpinned by love, affection and connection towards the product. These components of emotional bonding convey that a customer with a stronger emotional bonding is likely to be more committed and emotionally attached to a product. Emotional bonding at a higher level is likely to increase a customer's emotional need for the product. As the customer's becomes more united with a product, they are likely to stay relatively close with the product as the presence of the product offers feelings of enjoyment, delight, and security. This concludes that a customer's with higher levels of bonding to a product is more likely to commit to being in a long-term relationship with the product. Marketers need to ensure they are reaching the right kind of emotions within the consumer, which correlate with the product.

Some of the factors of these emotional values includes but not limited to quality product/service, price of the product/service, accesibility derived by diner's on the product or service purchased,

trust on the product and the performance of the product. These factors have every tendency of enhancing diner's loyalty. Therefore, quality, price, response time, accessibility and trust are the major determinants of diner's loyalty with respect to emotional bonding. Therefore this study aimed at examining the relationship between emotional bonding and diner's loyalty among restaurants.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine how emotional bonding affect diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The specific objectives are:

- (i) To examine the influence of quality on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (ii) To determine the influence of price on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (iii) To ascertain the influence of response time on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (iv) To examine the influence of accessibility on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (v) To examine the influence of trust on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Concept of Emotion

For Graillet (2018), emotion is an affective, subjective, experimental, temporary, multidimensional phenomenon and a source of motivation caused by exogenous factors to the individual that interact with the process of treatment of the collected information for the purpose of experience of consumption. As for Goleman (2017), an emotion is a combination of feelings and thoughts, a particularly psychological and biological condition, and a range of tendencies to action it inspires. For Amine (2018), emotion is a conscious occurrence caused by the combination of cognitive changes that can be (good, bad, pleasant, unpleasant, harmful, desirable, etc.) and the physiological assessment. All these components constitute the experience of emotion. We can say that for some researchers there are more than a thousand dimensions of emotion whereas for others there are only a few. In the context of relational approach, the special relationship between the consumer and the product involves a new dimension that is the emotional dimension (Filser, 1996; Graillet, 2018; Gobé, 2021). Actually, the fact of eliciting emotions of consumers and affecting their minds becomes a major concern for any product and a key success factor for developing long-term relationship (Lacoeuilhe, 2017; Cristau, 2021).

The promoters of the emotions of diner's for a product

The emotional pull of the product

Cristau (2016) defines the emotional attraction of a product as a holistic perception of a power of seduction in the product that gives it an important aesthetic value. Any contact with this product brings a great pleasure. This attraction can be caused by a marvellous design,ibility with the product components as well as several other elements that make the product touch some senses and arouse certain emotions among consumers as they get into contact with it.

Thus, the experience of consumption of a product must be rich in emotion and all the senses must be provided by the products to capture the attention of consumers, enrich their emotions, and involve them in a memorable diner's experience (Hirschman et al., 2012). Even according to these researchers, the main motive for the actual purchase could well be some feelings and emotions of all kinds, no matter of what intensity they can be, even unsustainable.

In this relational perspective, recent work on the relationship between the consumer and the product shows that the product should go more to the heart than to the mind. It should be rich in emotional value (Gobé, 2021; Cristau, 2021, 2016). Thus, through this emotional value, the product can become more interactive with the consumer, more humane because it relies on the values of a greater truth and a real exchange (Filser, 2016). It provides content to the products by highlighting their personalities and by providing specific and special features (Gobé, 2021). It gives life to products by creating a deep and durable connection between the consumer and the product. These products are the first products that we love. They transmit joy and happiness, and that make us feel close, almost as if it were a friend (Cristau, 2021).

The emotional sensitivity to the product

For Kapferer and Laurent (2012) sensitivity to products is a psychological variable which brings the focus to the product in the process of purchase decision, the value of the product compared to other product characteristics, the interest that the diner's gives to the product in finding information, the order of acquisition of the product. Gharbi et al. (2013) use the definition of D'Astous et al. (2013) to define the sensitivity to the product. They see it as "the great importance of commitment to product names when choosing and buying". This sensitivity to the product varies according to the belief in the difference between the products for the diner's, his perception of their competitiveness at the level of choice and its involvement in the product (Kapferer and Laurent, 2012).

Thus, Fazio (2016) "giving a very important value to the product name that we like, is essential in the process of choosing and buying". It may thus trigger diverse and intense emotions (Goûteron, 2016). Undeniably, when purchasing, decision making of the consumer may be influenced by various positive emotions triggered by emotional sensitivity to the product to the extent that the

consumer feels more attracted, more affected and more attached to a product that has a very important name for him (Gharbi et al., 2013; Lacoeuilhe, 2020).

So, in this new relational and particularly emotional approach, we can speak of a relationship full of emotions that must be developed between a diner's and a product so that the feels as a close friend (Morgan et al., 2014). On the one hand these emotions are stimulating the emotional attraction of a product and on the other the emotional sensitivity to the product. Throughout our research, we are going to distinguish three specific emotional dimensions that are connection, passion and affection because their importance and their role in developing the relationship with the product are well verified by (Mathew et al.. 2015).

- (i)The affection: it consists in developing a relationship of love, serenity, friendship: this type of emotion represents the warm feelings that a consumer can bring to a product.
- (ii)Passion: it is about being passionate, enchanted and captivated. This emotion reflects the positive and intense feelings aroused by a product. It refers to the attraction and bonding between the consumer and the product. This creates a certain melancholy in case of separation. Thus, the inseparability preserved by passion is a symptom of the strong relationship.
- (iii) Connection: It is about being connected, attached and linked to a product. These emotions describe the feelings experienced by a consumer who feels bound to the product.

Diner's Emotional Bonding

In the marketing literature, diner's emotional bonding has been a crucial construct which describe the power and vigor which bond diners constitute with the product. Consequently, this bond influences the behavior of the diner's thus increases the firm' profitability and productivity (Thomson et al., 2015). Thomson et al. (2015) offers foundational research describing emotional bonding towards products. The construct has been taken from psychology's bonding theory originating with Bowlby (2012). Constituting on Bowlby's work, researchers have confirmed that diners can develop emotional bondings to a variety of objects such as gifts, collectibles (Slater, 2021), and – significantly for the current study products (Patwardhan, 2011).

Even though a diner's's bonding found in a human human relationship is more powerful than an object, the basic properties and behavioral outcomes of emotional bonding remains quite similar. Thomsan et al. (2015) argue that diner's loyalty, product connection and product affection strengthens a diner's's emotional bonding. Above said characteristics suggests that diner's having strong emotional bonding are expected to be loyal with the product and remain in long term relationship with the firm (thomsan et al. 2015). Park et al. (2010) has recently reveal the practical value of emotional bonding in marketing where emotional bonding was setup to be enhanced forecaster of product purchase share, actual purchase and product need than product attitude.

Emotional bonding, Diner's satisfaction and Diner's Loyalty

In the traditional perspective, researchers like Cardozo (2015) and Oliver (2019) maintained that satisfaction was an indicator of loyalty, and doubtlessly, loyalty was created after satisfaction with a product or service. The question is, however, “Does this perspective still hold true in an age that according to Roberts (2016), intense competition exists among products and products and the products and products might trigger a switching behavior by focusing merely on satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the consumer? Surely the answer to this question is negative as nowadays companies and marketers have come to realize that mere consumer satisfaction with a product is not sufficient to establish a continuous relationship with a product. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an emotional bond beyond satisfaction to provide consumer loyalty. To establish such emotional bonds, “zero separation” and undivided product loyalty have to be provided (Unal and Aydin, 2013). It should, therefore, seek to create and build a new form of relationships between satisfaction and loyalty. The review of the existing literature reveals a gap of the role of emotional constructs that can begin in a regular and rational sequence of satisfaction and ultimately lead to the formation of consumer loyalty. For example, Oliver (2019) states that satisfaction and loyalty have an irregular relationship, although loyal diner's are often satisfied, but satisfaction does not always result in loyalty. In one of the six scenarios examining the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty, he argues that satisfaction is the first step in a transition sequence that ultimately leads to loyalty (sixth scenario), where loyalty can be independent of satisfaction. In addition to Oliver (2019), other researchers have emphasized that consumer satisfaction by itself is not a good predictor of product loyalty, so consumer emotional bonding should also be considered (Jones and Sasser, 2015; Kotler, 2017). If we consider satisfaction at the lowest level of the consumer–product relationship chain, it can be realized in a one-time consumer–product interaction (Aurier et al., 2021; Guillard and Roux, 2014; Unal and Aydin, 2013) . Emotional aspects such as emotional bonding and diner's loyalty can be sought at higher levels of satisfaction that are realized in consumers' interaction with the product for several times (Carrol and Ahuvia, 2016; Thomson et al., 2015). Certainly, the fact that higher levels of satisfaction can be a basis for the formation of strong emotions (such as emotional bonding and love) to the product, and in turn lead to product loyalty, has been proven by several researchers. For example, Kotler (2017) argues that high satisfaction not only creates rational preferences but also creates a kind of emotional bonding to a product that results from this emotional bond, leading to a high level of consumer loyalty. In addition, Carrol and Ahuvia's (2016) study empirically demonstrates that emotional and passionate love for a product is a predictor of product loyalty; therefore, emotional bonding and diner's loyalty (not merely satisfaction) are a drive to loyalty.

Diner's Loyalty

Diner's Loyalty has been defined as a type of cognition as well as the result of the experience of a purchase, or of a specific consumption. Additionally, it entails an evaluation process during which the consumer compares the performance expected with what was received (Johnson et al., 2015; Mano and Oliver, 2013). In another definition, Bloemer and Kasper (2015) define diner's Loyalty

as the outcome of the subjective evaluation that the chosen alternative (the product) meets or exceeds the expectations. This definition is in line with the many definitions of Loyalty based on the expectations–disconfirmation paradigm (Oliver, 2010) found in the literature. The notion that is prominent in every definition of Loyalty is, in fact, a comparison between expectations and diner's Loyalty. In addition, our understanding of Loyalty was enriched by the integration of the emotional dimension into the conceptualization of the term. Thomson et al. (2015) propound that satisfaction was the basis of emotional bonding, noting that: “A consumer that attached to a product is generally satisfied with it.” In a theoretical exploration of the consumer’s relationship with Loyalty assumes a cumulative character that also relates to the consumer experience (Andrew, 2013). Therefore, the effect of loyalty in the long term is implicitly considered in developing bonding to the product (Bahri-Ammari et al., 2016). Looking through extant types of Loyalty, research has shared a core idea for satisfaction: a psychological notion about consumers’ emotional evaluation of or the pleasurable degree of the experience associated with specific products or services (Giebelhausen et al., 2016; Mohammed and Rashid, 2018; Oliver, 2019; Saleem and Raja, 2014). In summary, in this study, Loyalty is regarded as the cumulative experience of the product that has evolved over time and leads to consumers’ emotional evaluation of the product.

Diner's satisfaction and emotional bonding

As a key managerial variable, satisfaction is a subjective evaluation, cognitive judgment or an emotional response to consumption. diner's satisfaction with a product could evolve into bonding with the product (Oliver, 2019). Additionally, Thomson et al. (2015) declared that satisfaction might provide a basis for emotional bonding. Nevertheless, satisfaction and bonding are not synonymous, and there are some differences between them. For example, satisfaction can occur immediately and in one-time interaction with the product, while emotional bonding tend to develop over time with multiple interactions and/or satisfaction is an evaluative judgment and hence different from the emotionally laden bonding construct (Thomson et al., 2015).

The relationship between emotional bonding and satisfaction has been inconclusive. Three major branches of thought have been identified in product bonding research. The first branch perceives product bonding as a predictor of diner's loyalty (Belaid and Behi, 2011; levy and Hino, 2016), while the second views it as the consequence of satisfaction (Bahri-Ammari et al., 2016; Japutra et al., 2014; Lam and Shankar, 2014). The third branch considers the mediating role of product bonding between satisfaction and other outcomes, including loyalty. Bahri-Ammari et al. (2016), for instance, found that satisfied consumers became emotionally attached to the restaurant product, and later developed a sense of loyalty to it. Although emotional product bonding has been studied both as the antecedent to and outcome of satisfaction, this study regards the emotional product bonding, an emotional bond generated from the accumulated experience, as an outcome of satisfaction, being consistent with the second branch of study.

Emotional satisfaction and Diner's loyalty

Satisfaction is one of the cores of marketing theories, and it has been considered the key objective of the marketing strategy for more than 60 years (Al-Haddad, 2019; Hsu and Chen, 2018). As we stated, satisfaction developed owing to the accumulation of consumer experiences with the product over time (Drennan et al., 2015). Satisfaction has been considered one of the most important constructs and one of the main goals in marketing. As the main outcome of marketing activities, satisfaction transforms the accumulated experiences long-term relational behaviors such as emotional bonding (Thomson et al., 2015), diner's loyalty (Drennan et al., 2015; Correia Loureiro and Kaufmann, 2012) and product loyalty (Belaid and Behi, 2011; Song et al., 2019). However, previous findings suggested that purely satisfying consumers might not be enough to maintain success in the competitive marketplace nowadays (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2016). Research has shown that diner's loyalty predicts consumer behavior better than traditional models related to satisfaction (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2016). Emotional satisfaction is a relatively new marketing construct helping to explain and predict variation in long-term relational behaviors among satisfied consumers (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2016). Carroll and Ahuvia (2016) defined diner's loyalty as "the degree of passionate emotional bonding a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name."

As Carroll and Ahuvia (2016) discussed, diner's loyalty differs from the satisfaction construct. Consistent with the idea of Carroll and Ahuvia (2016), we conceptualized diner's loyalty as consumers' emotional response to the product, which has been formed over time and in multiple interactions. Diner's loyalty is different from the satisfaction construct in several parts. First, satisfaction is a cognitive judgment, while diner's loyalty has a much stronger affective focus. Second, satisfaction is perceived as a transaction-specific outcome, but diner's loyalty is the consequence of a consumer's long-term relationship with the product. Third, satisfaction is often related to the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm, but diner's loyalty requires neither expectancy nor disconfirmation (e.g. the consumer experiences this emotional response to the product in the absence of cognition; the consumer knows what to expect from the product, so little, if any, disconfirmation occurs). Finally, diner's loyalty contains a willingness to express love (e.g. "I love this product!") and involves the integration of the product into the consumer's identity, neither of which is requisite in satisfaction (Hsu and Chen, 2018).

As we review the literature, we find that satisfaction is considered a prerequisite for diner's loyalty (Al-Haddad, 2019; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Drennan et al., 2015; Correia Loureiro and Kaufmann, 2012; Roy et al., 2013). Although, not all satisfied consumers feel diner's loyalty and only a percentage of satisfied diner's tend to love a product (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2016; Roy et al., 2013). Hence, we propose that a kind of satisfaction leads to diner's loyalty that is the result of satisfying accumulated experiences and can generate positive emotional responses from the consumer, over a period of time and multiple interactions. Previous studies (Albert et al., 2013; Al-Haddad, 2019; Aro et al., 2018; Correia Loureiro and Kaufmann, 2012; Drennan et al., 2015; Roy et al., 2013) showed that consumer satisfaction.

Emotional bonding and Diner's Loyalty

To be loyal to a product, consumers need to be attached to it, that feels that the product is irreplaceable and miss it when they do not have the product (Loureiro et al., 2012). Although bonding is a widely accepted element of diner's loyalty among researchers (Thomson et al., 2015; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2016; Albert et al., 2018; Batra et al., 2012; Loureiro et al., 2012), little research has been conducted to show that emotional bonding is an antecedent to diner's loyalty. For example, Kaufmann et al. (2016) propose that product bonding promotes diner's loyalty. At the same time, based on the model proposed by Loureiro et al. (2012), product bonding is an antecedent of diner's loyalty. Therefore, it can be stated that consumers who are satisfied with the product, this satisfaction, if continued, will cause emotional bonding to the product and, after becoming attached to the product, they will develop a deeper emotional bond with the product in the path of product loyalty that is diner's loyalty.

Emotional bonding and product loyalty

product loyalty shows the diner's long term commitment with product (Reichheld, 2016) and emotional bonding shows consumer's feelings, affection and passion for products (Thomson, MacInnis, and Park, 2015). Emotional bonding has three forces named as self-connection of consumers with products, feelings of warmth for products, and diner's's likings for products (Thomson, 2015). Therefore, diner's's higher level of emotional bonding will increase emotional dependency of diner's on product. When diner's are connected with product this connection provides comfort, happiness and security (Park W. M., 2010).

Diner's Emotions and Diner's Loyalty

Emotions have been described as "a mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisals of events or thoughts; has a phenomenological tone; is accompanied by physiological processes; is often expressed physically; and may result in specific actions to affirm or cope with the emotion, depending on its nature and the person having it" (Shammout & Algharabat, 2013). In the business world, studies suggest that emotions are specific to a product (Holbrook, Chestnut & Oliva, 2014), service (Price, Arnould & Tierney, 2015, as cited in Shammout & Algharabat, 2013), consumption experience (Richins, 2017), advertisement (Batra & Holbrook, 2010), or the relationship between buyer and seller (Barnes, 2017; Ruth, Brunel & Otens, 2012).

A research by Shaw (2017) reveals that emotions are often seen as antecedents that can influence the outcomes of a diner's experience (diner's retention, diner's loyalty, satisfaction). Both practitioners and academicians suggest that companies that want to deliver great experiences need to take into account the emotional component as well as functional component (Claeys & Roozen, 2012). Few studies have examined the role of emotions on diner's loyalty (Claeys & Roozen, 2012). According to Ferreira and Teixeira (2013), companies do not know the experiences they want to provide or the influence of the different components of those experiences on their diner's; neither do they know the exact type of resources needed to create the most effective positive

experiences to achieve sustained financial success, satisfaction and diner's retention. More research that is empirical is necessary to examine the relative contribution of emotional clues in a service encounter to (Ferreira & Teixeira, 2013). The study filled this gap by including diner's emotions in the model. The rationale is that if companies want their diner's to become true advocates, they need to offer both a positive emotional and a positive functional experience. Their joint presence leads to a high level of satisfaction, resulting in positive word-of-mouth (recommendation) and loyalty. Companies offering utilitarian services are more prone to elicit destructive emotions with their diner's when they fail to deliver the expected (Claeys & Roozen, 2012).

According to Zorfas and Deemon (2016), emotionally connected diner's are more than twice as valuable as highly satisfied diner's. The emotionally connected diner's buys more products and services, visits more often, exhibits less price sensitivity, pays more to the company's communications, follows the company's advice, and recommends the company more to other diner's. Companies deploying emotional connection, strategies and metrics and measure diner's experience increase diner's' emotional connection which drives financial outcomes (Zorfar & Deemon, 2016). They further state that, the best way to maximize diner's value is to delight by connecting with the diner's emotions. This will helping in meeting their unknown needs.

A research by Lee, Comer, Dubinsky and Schafer (2011) explored the effect of feelings in the interplay between clients and automobile sales persons. The study found that diner's were more satisfied with their relationship with the salesperson when they experience a higher level of positive emotion. diner's who feel negative emotions will be less satisfied and may even discontinue maintaining the relationship. Lee *et al.* used the recall method to assess diner's emotions. They recommended future studies to be carried using face-to-face interviews to collect data about diner's' emotion and satisfaction. The present study, however, bridged this gap by investigating the role of consumer emotions on their loyalty in star-rated hotels. The emotions of the diner's were evaluated based on the interaction and the experience they had while consuming the service. Self-administered questionnaires were used as the research instrument instead of recall method.

Boxer and Rekettye (2010) looked into the impact of perceived emotional intelligence on the perceived service value and consumer Loyalty. The study revealed that service providers could influence diner's' impression and emotional experience they get during the service provision interaction. Further, it revealed that if this impression is positive, diner's perceive added value to the service interaction and tend to develop a long-lasting commitment to the organization which can develop into loyalty. The study offered a unique and important role that emotion plays in business; it shows that emotion is the basis through which organizations should interact with diner's as leverage to creating diner's loyalty.

Tronvoll (2011) conducted a study on negative emotions and their effects on diner's complaint behaviour. The study utilized a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The results of the study revealed that the negative emotion of frustration is the best predictor of complaint behaviour towards the service provider. Further, strong negative emotions were generated by negative critical incidents and these influence future behaviours against the service provider. Finally, the study found that other-attributed negative emotions, such as frustration, were the main drivers of complaint behaviour to the service provider.

Consumer behaviour is driven by emotions in both the supermarkets and banking context. Therefore, in order to better predict diner's loyalty intentions, the emotional component is crucial and should be included along with other cognitive components (Razzag, Yousaf & Hong, 2017). Razzag *et al.* (2017), used emotions as a moderating variable between diner's equity drivers and loyalty intentions. The present study adopts the work of Razzag *et al.* by examining the direct impact of emotions using hotel features as the intervening force. While the study by Razzag *et al.* (2017), was done on supermarkets and banking industry, this study was done in hotel industry a key hospitality sector. An emotions construct has been included in the proposed theoretical model for the following two reasons. First, although emotions have previously been considered as an important component in relationship marketing, further empirical investigation into their effect within this context is needed (Andersen & Kumar, 2016; Bagozzi, 2016). Second, the importance of investigating the role of emotions has not been emphasized within the long-term relationship literature, but has also been strongly suggested within the hospitality literature as an issue that requires more exploration (Barsky & Nash, 2012; Pullman & Gross, 2014).

Researchers in relationship marketing have used different scales to investigate the role of emotions. For example, in an attempt to assess the closeness of relationships, Barnes (2017) acknowledges that these cannot exist without emotional content. He adopted ten different emotions (five positives and five negatives) to focus on the concept of emotional tone (which is the difference between total positive and total negative emotions, it is positive if positive emotions are stronger than negative emotions). Liljandar and Strandvik (2017) included seven emotions constructs (three positive and four negative) and argued that emotions could be presented in all interactions between the diner's and service provider. As a result, past experiences may affect perceived emotions either positively or negatively. Similarly, Ruth *et al.* (2002) maintain that once positive or negative emotions are experienced, the overall preconceptions of the recipients to their relationship are also positive or negative. In their examination of other relational results, Guerrero, Anderson and Trost (2018) posit that recipients undergo numerous emotions that may gradually match with relationship outcomes.

Liang and Wang (2005, as cited in Shammout & Algharabat, 2013) posit a positive relationship between emotion and trust. However, the effect of experienced emotions in diner's relationships, considered a factor of an affective and cognitive structure influencing outcome, has not been

explored in-depth in marketing related research (Sanchez-Franco & Rondan-Catalun, 2010, as cited in Shammout & Algharabat, 2013). This study operationalized emotions as consciousness of the occurrence of some physiological arousal followed by a behavioural response along with appraised meaning of both (Sheth *et al.*, 2019). The diner's emotions were measured by use of both positive and negative emotions constructs.

Determinants of Emotional bonding and Diner's loyalty

(i) Quality

The ability of a product or service to meet the required specification of the diner's and the organization such that it satisfies the diner's and at the same time improves the profitability of the organization. The quality of product plays an important role in product preferences of shops. The consumers often judge the product or product by the perceived quality (Sheau-Fen, Sun-May, & Yu-Ghee, 2012). Perceived product quality can be identified as the consumer's general subjective judgment on the advantage or superiority of a product which is derived from the evaluation process of its different features (Beristain&Zorrilla, 2011). The chance of success for products of higher perceived quality is more than products of lower perceived quality (Sheena et al., 2012).

(ii) Price

Price is the value of a product offered by a marketer, and its often expressed in monetary terms. Price is an income-making factor while other marketing mix factors are costly. Price as a marketing tool is a key factor in selling product to diner's. Following this, pricing can be effectively used to indicate the position of a product in proportion to other competitors and this can provide reliable information regarding the different sections of the market. Moreover, price is a quality index and products must be analyzed in terms of the advantages they offer (KhazaeiPool & Baloe Jam Khaneh, 2011). In consumable markets, price is an external indication of product quality and high-price products are considered as high-quality products (Kim & Hyun, 2011). On the other hand, since the quality of a product is a norm and can be easily proved, higher price may have negative effect on product loyalty; because it may lack the indication of higher quality and it just highlights the more money that must be paid (Cretu & Brodie, 2017).

(iii) Response Time

Response time is an essential metric to measure diner's service effectiveness, determining how quickly diner's inquiries are answered. Response times should be fast enough to keep diner's satisfied without sacrificing the quality of the response. Improving response time to diner's can lead to better diner's relationships and increased sales. diner's feel valued and listened to, which leads them to repeat business and recommendations. Restaurants can reap numerous benefits from having rapid response times, these include

1. Happy diner's/ diner's satisfaction
2. Faster Resolution
3. Better Sales Conversions

4. Improved employee engagement and productivity
5. Increased sales and revenue
6. Boost diner's loyalty
7. Higher net promoter scores (this is a way to measure your diner's's overall perception of your product).

Happy diner's are essential for any restaurant to succeed and remain successful. All restaurants need to invest in diner's retention and acquisition strategies if they want their income stream to remain steady and their business to thrive. Establishing strong diner's relationships is key to long-term success.

Providing excellent diner's service is key to keeping your diner's coming back and attracting new ones. Additionally, creating a welcoming environment for new clients is also essential to maintain success. Consumers today have high expectations when it comes to diner's service, especially in the digital age. They want their queries to be addressed quickly and accurately. If they feel as though their issues are ignored, they won't hesitate to visit somewhere else. That's why providing timely responses is an essential part of delivering excellent diner's service. Studies have shown that up to 46% of diner's expect restaurants to respond within 30 minutes! Yet, the average response time is 2 hours! Examples of how quick response times can increase diner's satisfaction

Time is of the essence when it comes to responding to potential diner's. According to research conducted by Zendesk, restaurants that respond quickly and first typically win between 35-50% of their diners loyalty. What is the impact of slow response times on diner's satisfaction?

Any waiting time for diner's can be detrimental to your business. Not only does it risk them changing their mind, but they may also abandon or even return their purchase and take their business elsewhere. They improve diner's satisfaction by providing consistent and helpful answers quickly. Furthermore, automated responses can be tailored to each diner's's needs, providing an individualised experience.

Improve team collaboration

Team collaboration is vital for quick diner's service response times. With effective collaboration, issues are resolved easier, thus improving diner's satisfaction.

By using shared teamwork tools, information sharing is instant, thus allowing different areas of the restaurant to respond to diner's concerns. – Without the need to wait on colleague responses to queries to feedback information to the diner's.

Prepare diner's service response templates

As you operate you'll gain an idea of common requests over time. Preparation for these requests can help you unify and give consistent responses to these requests. Create team templates that can

be used in response to common diner's requests. This helps to save time and creates a consistent product voice. However, be sure to edit templates properly with who you address your template response and any additional information the diner's is asking for. You can find some common email template responses [here](#).

Use a document management tool: When signing up new diner's, typical processes follow. Automate the documentation of these processes with a document management system. Tools such as [DocFlite](#) allow you to automate document sending to diner's at each stage of the buying process. Simplicity is the name of the game in automation. Just fill in the essential credentials such as name and address, and each document will be sent out to the diner's with all the relevant areas automatically filled out. This reduces human error where it can be easy to forget to fill in a name or delete a template example name.

Use live chat support for faster response

Using [live chat](#) service is a great way for diner's to get an instant response. This will instantly give a higher level of diner's satisfaction and experience with a company. A better way to improve the live chat service is to display an average wait time on the screen. This helps manage the expectations of your diner's. Preventing frustration and uncertainty.

Respond and engage with Social media

Responding to diner's on social media is an efficient way to reduce wait times. Having a social media presence and an active, responsive engagement will dramatically improve the product image and reputation of an organisation.

Importance of response time in diner's service

To attract and retain diner's, providing top-notch diner's service is an absolute must. Response time is an integral part of that equation, as a quick response can make or break the diner's service experience. diner's have come to expect quick answers and if your business is unable to meet those standards, they may look for somewhere else that can. Response time is how quickly you respond to diner's inquiries or requests. It reflects your commitment to diner's satisfaction while demonstrating you value their time. When diner's receive timely responses, they feel valued and appreciated. This helps build trust and loyalty with your product. Decreasing the time it takes for diner's to receive a response can increase the quality of diner's service they receive, resulting in increased diner's satisfaction and more sales for the business.

Accessibility

Accessibility to diner's loyalty through diner's satisfaction: Accessibility between these two places is high if a place adjacent to other. However, when a remote place means the accessibility between both is low. In addition to time and distance, cost is also a determining factor of accessibility. Low transport costs to get to a place means high accessibility (Tamin, Ofyar Z., 2000). The ease

accessibility to mall can create diner's satisfaction because it can reduce transportation costs and time. Research of Ernawati and Laksono (2008) show that health centers accessibility and equity services create fairly high level of satisfaction, exceeding the expected level of satisfaction in JPKMB by 70%. The findings were reinforced by Jannang (2010) that accessibility can enhance diner's satisfaction. Satisfied consumers can encourage diner's loyalty as explained by Ryu et al. (2008); Huang et al. (2009); Udo et al. (2010); Paul et al. (2011); Rong and Jun (2011). Accessibility is one aspect of tourism incentives, because tourism industry players certainly pay attention to the comfort of tourists when visiting their tourist destinations. Accessibility is whether it is easy for tourists to get to their destination which is supported by existing infrastructure (Yamco, 2019). There are four dimensions of accessibility according to Sopalatu et al., (2021) dan Deviana, (2019) that's the distance traveled to a place or the distance in units of length (meters or kilometers) needed to reach the destination of the tourist object that is the visitor's destination, directions to the location or a sign indicating the way to the tourist object, usually in the form of a column, travel time to the place, travel time measured in units of time to reach the tourist destination, as well as the condition of the road taken to reach the tourist object.

Trust:

Diner's Trust arising from a long process. If the trust has existed between the diner and the restaurant, then the effort to foster cooperative relationships will be easier. Trust arising indicated by an earned credibility of the other party because it has the desired expertise to perform a task. Confidence can also be obtained by doing something the best thing to another party through a relationship. Level of confidence can be measured by several factors, among others, honesty in transactions, corporate responsibility towards the consumer and much more. Trust in question in this research is diner's awareness of the expectations of the performance of the product based on the experience and confidence embodied in the form of an attitude (Utami, 2015). Where the use of dimensions that have been adapted to laptop diner's in Aceh that expectations, beliefs and attitudes. The definition of loyalty in this study is the response that reflected buyers continuously from purchasing behavior to buy back, hang on the same product and convey positive things (Utami, 2015). While the dimensions used in this variable is repurchasing, resilience and communication by word of mouth. Trust is defined here as the attainment of a level of satisfaction and resulting loyalty at which diner's are comfortable forgoing problem solving behavior. Rather, they repurchase a particular product or set of products in a routinized or habitual fashion. Amine (as cited in Sahin et al., 2011) stated that the trust in the purchased product may be viewed as leverage of its credibility, which in return may reinforce the consumers' repeat buying behavior. product trust is determined as the desire and eagerness of the average consumer to count on the capability of the product to implement its stated function (Sahin, et al., 2011). product trust in costumers' view is a psychological variable which is established through a set of hypotheses or assumptions regarding reliability, trust, safety, honesty, and generosity to product by costumers (Gurviez & Korchia, 2012; Zehir et al., 2011).product trust is derived from the experience of using previous products of the product and is established through various variables such as

company advertisement, word-to-mouth advertising, using the products of the product, and satisfaction (Ashley & Leonard, 2019).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Place bonding Theory

Place bonding theory was propounded by Altman & Low (1992). Place bonding theory has consistently been used to describe the phenomenon whereby people form emotional bonds to physical environments, despite the high variability of conceptualisations of place bonding across various disciplines of the social sciences (e.g., Lewicka, 2011). Indicative of this variability is the range of labels that has been used to refer to the emotional bond between person and place, such as place bonding, rootedness, sense of place, and urban bonding. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the subject, various epistemological and theoretical influences have been drawn on, leading to disagreement on how to define, conceptualise, and assess place bonding. For example, definitions of place bonding vary by the focus; either the focus is on the quality of the people place bond, on the outcome associated with those bonds (e.g., state of psychological well-being; psychological and behavioural investment), or on related constructs, such as place identity. As a result, no accepted overarching theoretical framework has been agreed on to date.

Regardless of theoretical disagreements, the significance of the research on people place bonds becomes apparent by its popularity in various social science disciplines and its application in numerous research contexts, such as ‘social housing policy’, neighbourhood design, health and well-being, natural resource management, tourism, regional planning, and pro-environmental engagement.

Explanatory Response Time Models

There is a tradition in cognitive psychology to decompose response times based on hypothesized sequential processes (Donders, 1869; Sternberg, 1969). The most extensive work is conducted by Sternberg (1977b, 1985). He started his work with analogy items (Sternberg, 1977a,b) and later extended it to other cognitive problems, such as deductive reasoning problems (Sternberg, 1980, 1986). His theory, models, and analyses are briefly described here. Suppose an analogy problem “Son is to aunt as daughter is to ?..” (A:B :: C:? ..), with D as the correct response. The hypothesized processes are: encoding, inference, mapping, and application. First, there are three terms to be encoded (“son,” “aunt,” and “daughter”). Second, an inference needs to be made, based on a comparison of A and B (“son” and “aunt”) which implies two differences (sex and generation). Third, mapping consists of comparing A and C (“son” and “daughter”), which implies one difference (sex). Finally, application consists of applying the A:B relationship to C to find D, which implies two differences (sex and generation). A basic assumption in the model is that a difference between terms takes time. To differentiate the number of feature differences to be processed for inference and application and to vary the number of terms to be encoded, one can

present the respondents with A and B before the response time is recorded, so that the task requires only the encoding of one term (C), and the feature differences relevant for mapping and application (assuming A and B have already been encoded and an inference is made).

When a person is presented with a large set of problems with different values for the different X-variables, regression analyses can be conducted, one per respondent, which is what Sternberg (1977a) did at a time when mixed models were not yet common practice. Based on this approach, he was able to estimate the time each hypothesized process takes per person. Around the same time as Robert Sternberg did his research, Susan Embretson (Whitely, 1976, 1977) was doing very similar work but with binary accuracy as the dependent variable, using item response (IRT) models. In fact, Fischer (1973) had formulated an IRT model with the potential to do just that. His Q-matrix contains the X-variables from the above equations. Within IRT this has further led to the test design idea (Embretson, 1985), cognitive diagnosis modeling (CDM) (Rupp et al., 2010) and explanatory item response models (De Boeck and Wilson, 2004). An important difference between CDM and the other approaches is that process inferences are discrete (often binary) and refer to mastery of skills that may be related to hypothesized processes; but see Zhan et al. (2018c) for mastery in probabilistic terms. However, because response times are not involved in these approaches, we will not follow up on these developments here.

Explanatory response time models have also been embedded in models discussed elsewhere in this article. For example, Maris (1993) has used item covariates in his gamma model, Klein Entink et al. (2009b) have used item covariates in the hierarchical model of van der Linden (2007) to be discussed in Section Distribution Models for Response Times, and van Breukelen (2005) did the same in a related model. However, such applications with the possibility for process inferences are rather rare, whereas they have clear potential for the study of response times, just as they have for response accuracy. Possibly, the extension of CDM with response time data (Zhan et al., 2017) can lead to a further interest in this approach.

Empirical Review

Ghorbanzadeh and Rahehagh (2020), carried out a study on emotional product bonding and diner's loyalty. Satisfaction and loyalty as vital and strategic concepts in the marketing literature are highly important to companies and marketers. The review of the existing literature reveals a gap of the role of emotional constructs that can begin in a regular and rational sequence of satisfaction and ultimately lead to the formation of consumer loyalty. Hence, this study aims to answer the question of whether emotional constructs such as emotional bonding and love play a mediating role in the process of transitioning from satisfaction to loyalty in the correct sequence. A total of 300 valid questionnaires on smartphone and apparel products were collected from respondents and analyzed using the partial least squares method. The results showed that diner's loyalty is the strongest antecedent of product loyalty and is the only variable that directly influences product loyalty in comparison to satisfaction and emotional product bonding. Moreover, the examination of indirect

effects revealed that our assumption based on that the emotional structures such as emotional bonding and diner's loyalty play a mediating role in the process of transitioning from satisfaction to loyalty in a correct sequence is supported. Generalizability needs to be established with a wider range of consumer groups. The survey was conducted in Iran, and future research should assess the same product categories in other cultural settings as well as consider other product categories to assess the external validity of these results. The insights on consumers' product relationships help product managers devise effective product management strategies.

Mafalda and Teresa (2019), carried out a study on the relationship bonds and diner's loyalty: a study across different service contexts. The benefits of diner's relationship strategies are well known and somewhat established nowadays. diner's loyalty emerges as the crucial glue in developing a relational approach. However, relational bonds, which relate to diner's loyalty, have not yet been fully explored. Also, there is little research that takes into account the effect of service types on diner's relationships and bonding. This paper develops a conceptual framework based on previous literature with a complete set of different relational bonds and examines its influence on diner's loyalty across search, experience and credence services through a survey-based empirical study, with a sample of 233 consumers. The results provide guidance to managers to differentiate diner's relationship strategies according to each specific service context.

Imamai and Mwaura (2019), determined the relationship between diner's emotions and consumer loyalty among star-rated hotels in North Rift, Kenya. The research adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population for the study was made of 1416 loyal diner's from the fifteen (15) star-rated hotels in North Rift region of Kenya. The sample size was 455 guests obtained using a stratified random sampling method. Data was collected using a questionnaire. Structural Equation Model (SEM) was applied with R-value being estimated to analyse and test hypotheses. The results of the study showed that diner's emotions played a significant role in achieving diner's loyalty among star-rated hotels in the study area ($p < 0.05$). Specifically, variables like felt comfortable, welcomed, contented, secure, important, entertained, relaxed, elegant, cool, excited, sophisticated and respected among others were found to enhance the loyalty of diner's. On the other hand, negative emotions such as my request were nullified, felt displeased, ignored, angry, anxious, discontent, worried, sad, and ashamed among others were found to discourage diner's loyalty. Therefore, the study recommends that hotels should pursue positive diner's emotions in order to enhance the loyalty of their diner's.

Loureiro (2012) investigated that product bonding as an antecedent of diner's loyalty and both, affective commitment and product trust as mediators between diner's loyalty and loyalty. It is also the first time that differences between male and female consumers' perceptions on this topic have been compared in literature. On the basis of previous research, a model was developed and validated using consumers who bought one of three car products: Toyota, Ford and Renault. Living in three regions of Portugal, the sample consisted of consumers who bought a new car 2 years

before the research and had declared being satisfied with the purchase. The model is tested in the context of a non-hedonic product, differing from the common perspective that focuses on hedonic products. Hypotheses were tested by employing multi-group structural equation modeling. Findings suggest that product bonding is positively related to diner's loyalty. diner's loyalty reinforces the trust, interest in continuing a relationship and faith in the future of the product. Women exhibited trust and placed more importance on dyadic relationships than did men. Men, however, desired to identify socially with the product.

Mula, Sufyan, Fahad, Hafiz, and Muhammad (2016) investigate the impact of corporate producing on product loyalty with the mediating effect of emotional bonding in the luxury fashion market. Cross-sectional data were collected from 132 diners who purchased luxury products. Regression was used to test the hypotheses of the framework developed for the study and correlation matrix used to see the relationship among the variables. Finding shows that functional and symbolic benefits have significant impact on product loyalty, whereas other variables are found not to be significant. This study offers new empirical support for the proposition that corporate producing efforts have a role, thought limited, in building diner's emotional bonding and loyalty towards luxury products. As such, findings from this study can provide managers with a guide to managing their producing strategies so that diner's emotional bonding and product loyalty can be built in the most cost-effective manner.

Ghali (2011), highlighted the contribution of the role of emotions in the formation and preservation of the relationship between the consumer and the product. In fact, now, a firm that wants to conquer and keep its diner's' base is expected to invest at the level of the emotional value that it has to give to its product. Thus, the fact of eliciting the emotions of consumers has become a challenge to develop a close emotional and behavioral resistance to change. An experimental phase was conducted for a sample of 400 consumer product of mobile phones. The results show that certain emotions can develop a relationship of loyalty to a product.

METHODOLOGY

Philosophical Assumption

This research aims to explain the relationship between two variables (service quality and customer patronage relating to staff remuneration), evaluate the variables, and draw conclusions based on the findings. The positivist paradigm is used. During this research work, a deductive approach was adopted. The quantitative research method was used to gather and analyze data in this study. Because this research involved testing hypotheses and the data acquired was tested using statistical techniques, quantitative research was used.

Research Approach and Strategy.

A positivistic method to quantitative research typically posits that hypotheses/assumptions are derived from some theoretical or imaginary concept, making it deductive in nature, which is occasionally referred to as theory testing. Because the goal is to see if current theoretical frameworks can be applied to our empirical study data, deductive research approach was adopted on this article titled “emotional bonding and dinner’s loyalty.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were be tested in the course of this study

H0₁: Quality has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

H0₂: Price has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State

H0₃: Response time has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State

H0₄: Accessibility has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State

H0₅: Trust has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State

Data Collection

The survey research design was used in this study. To generate data from respondents, closed ended questions on a four -point scale were used to create the questionnaire. In addition, the questions are well-structured. The close ended includes; Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4, Agreed (A) = 3, Disagreed (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD) =1.

Sample Size

The sample size of the study are 196 selected staff of selected hotels in Umuahia, Abia State, Nigeria. Only available staff were evaluated, and convenient sampling method were used.

Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures

Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the gathered data in a clear and understandable manner using a numerical technique. To test hypotheses, multiple regression analysis was used.

Regression model

$$CP_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 QUE_{it} + \beta_1 PRI_{it} + \beta_1 RET_{it} + \beta_1 ACCE_{it} + \beta_1 TRU_{it} + u_{it} \dots\dots\dots(i)$$

Where:

DL= Dinners Loyalty

QUE = Quality

PRI = Price

RET = Response Time

ACCE = Accessibility

TRU = Trust

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS

Data Presentation and Analysis

Analysis of Data Based on Research Questions

Table 4.2: Research Question one

No	OPINIONS	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Remark
	What is the influence of quality on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State?							
1	Quality influences diner's loyalty among restaurants	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.50	Accept
2	Quality influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting dinner loyalty among restaurants	70 44%	80 50%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.35	Accept
3	Quality influences dinner choice of restaurant	55 34%	75 47%	8 5%	8 5%	14 9%	3.93	Accept
4	Quality influences emotional bonding	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.50	Accept
5	Quality influences emotional satisfaction.	70 44%	80 50%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.35	Accept
	Grand Mean						4.33	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Question one in table 4.2 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent both strongly agree and agree that quality influences diner's loyalty among restaurants. Question one also have the mean value of 4.50. Responses from question two shows that 44 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that quality influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants, 4 percent undecided while 2 percent disagree. Question two also have the mean value of 4.35. Also, responses from question three shows that 34 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 47 percent agree that quality influences diner's choice of restaurant, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 9 percent strongly disagree. Question three also have the mean value of 3.93. Question four in table 4.9 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent

both strongly agree and agree that quality influences diner's loyalty. Question four also have the mean value of 4.50. Finally, Responses from question five shows that 44 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that Quality influences product bonding, 4 percent undecided while 2 percent disagree. This is evidenced to the fact that all the items have mean values 4.33 greater than 2.5 which is the criterion mean. The grand mean value of 4.33 implies that quality influences diner's loyalty of restaurants.

Table 4.3: Research Question two

No	OPINIONS	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Remark
	What is the influence of price on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State?							
1	Price influences diner's loyalty among restaurants	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.5	Accept
2	Price influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants	64 40%	86 54%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.31	Accept
3	Price influences diner's choice of restaurant	60 37.5%	80 50%	8 5%	8 5%	4 2.5%	4.15	Accept
4	Price influences emotional bonding	64 40%	86 54%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.31	Accept
5	Price influences emotional satisfaction	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.5	Accept
	Grand Mean						4.35	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Question one in table 4.3 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent both strongly agree and agree that price influences diner's loyalty among restaurants. Question one also have the mean value of 4.50. Responses from question two shows that 40 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 54 percent agree that Price influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants, 4 percent undecided while 2 percent disagree. Question two also have the mean value of 4.31. Responses from question three shows that 37.5 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that price influences diner's choice of restaurant, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 2.5 percent strongly disagree. Question three also have the mean value of 4.15. Responses from question four shows that 40 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 54 percent agree that Price influences diner's loyalty, 4 percent undecided while

2 percent disagree. Question four also have the mean value of 4.31. Finally, responses from question five in table 4.3 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent both strongly agree and agree that price influences product bonding. Question five also have the mean value of 4.50. This is evidenced to the fact that all the items have mean values 4.35 greater than 2.5 which is the criterion mean. The grand mean value of 4.35 implies that price influence diner's loyalty of restaurants.

Table 4.4: Research Question three

No	OPINIONS	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Remark
	What is the influence of Response Time on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State?							
1	Response Time influences diner's loyalty among restaurants	80 50%	60 37.5%	8 5%	8 5%	4 2.5%	4.28	Accept
2	Response Time influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants	70 44%	70 44%	10 6%	10 6%	Nil	4.25	Accept
3	Response Time influences diner's choice of restaurant	60 37.5 %	80 50%	8 5%	8 5%	4 2.5%	4.15	Accept
4	Response Time influences emotional bonding	80 50%	60 37.5%	8 5%	8 5%	4 2.5%	4.28	Accept
5	Response Time influences emotional satisfaction	60 37.5 %	80 50%	8 5%	8 5%	4 2.5%	4.15	Accept
	Grand mean						4.22	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Question one in table 4.4 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 37.5 percent agree that Response Time influences diner's loyalty among restaurants, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 2.5 percent strongly disagree. Question one also have the mean value of 4.28. Question two shows that 44 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and another 44 percent agree that Response Time influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants, while 6 percent both undecided and disagree on the subject matter. Question two also have the mean value of 4.25. Responses from question three shows that 37.5 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that Response Time

influences diner's choice of restaurant, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 2.5 percent strongly disagree. Question three also have the mean value of 4.15. Question four in table 4.6 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 37.5 percent agree that Response Time influences diner's loyalty, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 2.5 percent strongly disagree. Question four also has the mean value of 4.28. Responses from question five shows that 37.5 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that Response Time influences product bonding, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 2.5 percent strongly disagree. This is evidenced to the fact that all the items have mean values 4.22 greater than 2.5 which is the criterion mean. The grand mean value of 4.22 implies that response time influences diner's loyalty of restaurants.

Analysis of Data Based on Research Questions

Table 4.5: Research Question four

No	OPINIONS	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Remark
	What is the influence of accessibility on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State?							
1	Accessibility influences diner's loyalty among restaurants	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.50	Accept
2	Accessibility influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants	70 44%	80 50%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.35	Accept
3	Accessibility influences diner's choice of restaurant	55 34%	75 47%	8 5%	8 5%	14 9%	3.93	Accept
4	Accessibility influences emotional bonding	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.50	Accept
5	Accessibility influences emotional satisfaction	70 44%	80 50%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.35	Accept
	Grand Mean						4.33	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Question one in table 4.2 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent both strongly agree and agree that Accessibility influences diner's loyalty among restaurants. Question one also have the mean value of 4.50. Responses from question two shows that 44 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that Accessibility influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants, 4 percent undecided while 2 percent disagree. Question

two also have the mean value of 4.35. Also, responses from question three shows that 34 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 47 percent agree that Accessibility influences diner's choice of restaurant, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 9 percent strongly disagree. Question three also have the mean value of 3.93. Question four in table 4.9 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent both strongly agree and agree that Accessibility influences diner's loyalty. Question four also have the mean value of 4.50. Finally, Responses from question five shows that 44 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that Accessibility influences product bonding, 4 percent undecided while 2 percent disagree. This is evidenced to the fact that all the items have mean values 4.33 greater than 2.5 which is the criterion mean. The grand mean value of 4.33 implies that accessibility influence diner's loyalty of restaurants.

Table 4.6: Research Question five

No	OPINIONS	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Remark
What is the influence of Trust on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State?								
1	Trust influences diner's loyalty among restaurants	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.5	Accept
2	Trust influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants	64 40%	86 54%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.31	Accept
3	Trust influences diner's choice of restaurant	60 37.5%	80 50%	8 5%	8 5%	4 2.5%	4.15	Accept
4	Trust influences emotional bonding	64 40%	86 54%	6 4%	4 2%	Nil	4.31	Accept
5	Trust influences emotional satisfaction	80 50%	80 50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	4.5	Accept
Grand Mean							4.35	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Question one in table 4.6 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent both strongly agree and agree that Trust influences diner's loyalty among restaurants. Question one also have the mean value of 4.50. Responses from question two shows that 40 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 54 percent agree that Trust influences diner's satisfaction thereby affecting diner's loyalty among restaurants, 4 percent undecided while 2 percent disagree. Question two also have the mean value of 4.31. Responses from question three shows that 37.5 percent of the total

respondent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that Trust influences diner's choice of restaurant, 5 percent undecided, 5 percent disagree while 2.5 percent strongly disagree. Question three also have the mean value of 4.15. Responses from question four shows that 40 percent of the total respondent strongly agree and 54 percent agree that Trust influences diner's loyalty, 4 percent undecided while 2 percent disagree. Question four also have the mean value of 4.31. Finally, responses from question five in table 4.3 shows that 50 percent of the total respondent both strongly agree and agree that Trust influences product bonding. This is evidenced to the fact that all the items have mean values 4.35 greater than 2.5 which is the criterion mean.

The grand mean value of 4.35 implies that trust influence diner's loyalty of restaurants.

Test of Hypotheses

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.974 ^a	.949	.948	.18028

a. Predictors: (Constant), QUALITY, PRICE, RESPONSE TIME, ACCESSIBILTY & TRUST

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	94.905	3	31.635	973.410	.000 ^b
	Residual	5.070	156	.032		
	Total	99.975	159			

a. Dependent Variable: diner's LOYALTY

b. Predictors: (Constant), QUALITY, PRICE, RESPONSE TIME, ACCESSIBILTY & TRUST

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.079	.136		-7.927	.000
	QUALITY	.015	.148	-.011	2.103	.018
	PRICE	.673	.135	.537	4.979	.000
	RESPONSE TIME	.321	.090	.238	3.560	.000
	ACCESSIBILTY	.213	.140	.162	3.519	.031
	TRUST	.061	.128	.050	3.479	.033

a. Dependent Variable: diner's PATRONAGE

The results of the multiple regression analysis using ordinary least squares showed the impact of emotional bonding (quality, price and response time, accessibility and trust) on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The R-square measured the amount of variation of the dependent variable's as a result of the independent factors. This R-square has the value of 0.949. The amount of variation in the dependent variable (diner's loyalty) that can be accounted for by

the independent or explanatory variables (quality, price and response time, accessibility and trust) is represented by the R^2 , also known as the coefficient of determination. Accordingly, the R^2 value of around 0.949 suggests that 94.9% of the variance in the diner's loyalty may be explained by a variation in the emotional bonding, while the remaining 5.1% might be accounted for by other factors not taken into consideration in this model.

The adjusted R-Square of around 0.948 implies that this result will depart from the model by just 0.001 (i.e., 0.949 - 0.948) if additional factors are taken into account. This outcome indicates that there will be an additional 1.0% variance in the variation brought on by the independent variables. Finally, the result shows that there is a significant variation of Fisher's statistics (973.410) at 0.000 which means the model as a whole is statistically significant.

Hypothesis one

H0₁: Quality has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The T-statistic with 11.782 has probability of 0.000% level of significance. Since the probability of the T-statistics is below 5% level of significance, we would reject the null hypothesis, H_0 and therefore conclude that quality has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

Hypothesis two

H0₂: Price has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The T-statistic with 9.881 has probability of 0.022% level of significance. Since the probability of the T-statistics is below 5% level of significance, we would reject the null hypothesis, H_0 and therefore conclude that price has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

Hypothesis three

H0₃: Response Time has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The T-statistic with 7.150 has probability of 0.031% level of significance. Since the probability of the T-statistics is below 5% level of significance, we would reject the null hypothesis, H_0 and therefore conclude that Response Time has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

Hypothesis four

H0₄: Accessibility has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The T-statistic with 11.782 has probability of 0.000% level of significance. Since the probability of the T-statistics is below 5% level of significance, we would reject the null hypothesis, H_0 and therefore conclude that Accessibility has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

Hypothesis five

H0₂: Trust has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The T-statistic with 9.881 has probability of 0.022% level of significance. Since the probability of the T-statistics is below 5% level of significance, we would reject the null hypothesis, H₀ and therefore conclude that Trust has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Hypothesis one was tested that quality has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. It was tested using regression analysis (SPSS, 22) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This means that quality has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The results is consistent to some previous results from different researchers. Earlier studies on emotional bonding have shown that consumers with strong emotional bonds to a product report greater product loyalty (Hwang and Kandampully, 2012; Theng So et al., 2013), which promotes long-term-oriented consumer-product relationships. The finding is also consistent to the findings of Busacca and Castaldo, (2013); Fetscherin et al., (2014); Ha and Perks, (2015) Albert et al., (2018); Batra et al., (2012); Kotler, (2017). They carried out a study on the influence of emotional bonds on diner's loyalty. Their findings revealed that quality as one of the measures of emotional bonding is one the major determinants of diner's loyalty.

Hypothesis two was tested that price has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. It was tested using regression analysis (SPSS, 22) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This means that price has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The finding is consistent to the findings of Imamai and Mwaura (2019), who investigated the relationship between diner's emotions and consumer loyalty among star-rated hotels in North Rift, Kenya. Data was collected using a questionnaire. Structural Equation Model (SEM) was applied with R-value being estimated to analyse and test hypotheses. The results of the study showed that diner's emotions played a significant role in achieving diner's loyalty among star-rated hotels in the study area ($p < 0.05$). Specifically, variables like quality, price felt comfortable, entertained, relaxed, elegant, cool, excited, sophisticated and respected among others were found to enhance the loyalty of diner's.

Hypothesis three was tested that response time has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State, it was tested using regression analysis (SPSS 22) at 5% level of significant. The null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted, this implies that response time has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among

restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The result is consistent to the result of Ghali (2011), who highlighted the contribution of the role of emotions in the formation and preservation of the relationship between the consumer and the product. In fact, now, a firm that wants to conquer and keep its diner's' base is expected to invest at the level of the emotional value that it has to give to its product. In other words, the results showed that emotional bonds can develop a relationship of loyalty to a product.

Hypothesis four was tested that Accessibility has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. It was tested using regression analysis (SPSS, 22) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This means that Accessibility has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The results is consistent to some previous results from different researchers. Earlier studies on emotional bonding have shown that consumers with strong emotional bonds to a product report greater product loyalty (Hwang and Kandampully, 2012; Theng So et al., 2013), which promotes long-term-oriented consumer–product relationships. The finding is also consistent to the findings of Busacca and Castaldo, (2013); Fetscherin et al., (2014); Ha and Perks, (2015) Albert et al., (2018); Batra et al., (2012); Kotler, (2017). They carried out a study on the influence of emotional bonds on diner's loyalty. Their findings revealed that Accessibility as one of the measures of emotional bonding is one the major determinants of diner's loyalty.

Hypothesis five was tested that Trust has no significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. It was tested using regression analysis (SPSS, 22) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This means that Trust has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State. The finding is consistent to the findings of Imamai and Mwaura (2019), who investigated the relationship between diner's emotions and consumer loyalty among star-rated hotels in North Rift, Kenya. Data was collected using a questionnaire. Structural Equation Model (SEM) was applied with R-value being estimated to analyse and test hypotheses. The results of the study showed that diner's emotions played a significant role in achieving diner's loyalty among star-rated hotels in the study area ($p < 0.05$). Specifically, variables like quality, price felt comfortable, entertained, relaxed, elegant, cool, excited, sophisticated and respected among others were found to enhance the loyalty of diner's.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Emotional bonding is critical in marketing as diner's emotional bonding towards a product such as feelings of sympathy, sadness, pride, and anger results in distinct meaning of the individual's environment and therefore has unique motivational implications towards the choice and decision making. Marketers use tactics such as a young child or an animal to capture the hearts of the

audience. This bond between the diner's and the product affects the behavior of the diner's, which in turn can foster the firm's profitability and the diner's's value to the firm. It is a basic human need to want to form an bonding. diner's can form emotional bondings to an array of objects such as collectibles, gifts and of course products. In the traditional perspective. Studies have shown that satisfaction was an indicator of loyalty, and doubtlessly, loyalty was created after satisfaction with a product or service. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an emotional bond beyond satisfaction to provide consumer loyalty. To establish such emotional bonds, "zero separation" and undivided product loyalty have to be provided. It should, therefore, seek to create and build a new form of relationships between satisfaction and loyalty. Some of the factors that determine this emotional bonding are quality, price, response time, accessibility and trust. These factors determine the level of diner's satisfaction which in turn leads to diner's loyalty. Therefore the study concludes that:

- (i) Quality has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (ii) Price has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (iii) Response Time has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (iv) Accessibility has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.
- (v) Trust has a significant influence on diner's loyalty among restaurants in Umuahia, Abia State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. The results demonstrate that quality plays an important role in explaining how consumers are attached to products. It is, therefore, important for restaurant managers to become aware of the strategic role of quality and to set up expansions and improvement plans aiming at attracting consumers' satisfaction. It is also important to know how to better manage relationship marketing by using technological tools like consumer's relationship management (CRM). Consumers are certainly attached to products and they become loyal.
- ii. Given the positive impact of quality, price, response time, accessibility and trust trust on diner's loyalty, it is recommended that products be offered at reasonable prices, good quality and attractive packaging, thereby providing a pleasant experience for consumers. Additionally, product managers need to pay special attention to generating persuasive content on social media in particular. It is important to make sure that the content of ads is in line with the long-term goals and strategies of the firm.
- iii. Additionally, consumers' emotional bonding to the product leads to their love for the product. Therefore, restaurant managers need to keep in mind that when a consumer buys a product, they relate their personality to the product. Thus, the product should be promoted in such a way that it can distinguish its consumers from those of other products. It is also

recommended that marketers identify the factors that can help to form such relationships (emotional bonding and love). For example, it is suggested more efforts be made at unique product design, attractive packaging and product quality improvement.

- iv. Finally, the results show that diner's loyalty is the most important antecedent of consumer product loyalty. Given this finding, product managers can strengthen the consumer-product relationship by designing appropriate loyalty communications and programs as well as paying attention to consumer preferences, thereby preventing consumer product switching.

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