

The Relationship Between Service Quality Delivery and Customer Loyalty of Quick Service Restaurants in Bonny Island

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the intricate relationship between service quality delivery and customer loyalty within the quick service restaurant industry in Bonny Island. The study adopted the quasi-experimental research design. The study was carried out on customers of ten (10) quick-service restaurants in Bonny Island. Since the population for the study is unknown, Keyton's table was used to determine the sample size for the study - three hundred and eighty-four (384). The data collection instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire, and the data collected was analysed using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. The study recommended among other things that the management of quick-service restaurants should invest in building and projecting a positive brand reputation.

Keywords:

Service quality
delivery, Customer
loyalty, Quick
service restaurants,
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Background to the Study

The hospitality industry, particularly quick-service restaurants (QSRs), serves as a cornerstone of the global economy, driving significant employment opportunities and revenue generation. Quick-service restaurants have become a staple in the fast-paced society we live in today. With the convenience of quick and affordable meals, customers frequent these establishments for their efficiency and convenience. However, the success of these restaurants relies heavily on the quality-of-service delivery they provide to their customers. Bonny Island, renowned for its economic vibrancy and diverse population, presents a unique backdrop for exploring the intricate relationship between brand reputation and post-purchase behavior in this specific context.

Despite the significance of brand reputation in the hospitality industry, limited attention has been given to this subject within the unique setting of QSRs in Bonny Island. This study seeks to address this gap by delving into the nuanced dynamics of brand reputation and its influence on post-purchase behavior in this locale. By providing valuable insights into both scholarly discourse and practical managerial strategies, the findings aim to guide QSR operators, marketers, and policymakers in fostering favorable post-purchase behaviors among consumers.

Statement of the Problem

QSR operators in Bonny Island face a significant challenge in establishing and sustaining a positive brand reputation amidst intensifying competition. The impact of brand reputation on post-purchase behavior remains inadequately explored, leaving QSRs without strategic insights to enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction in this locale. This knowledge gap impedes the industry's ability to formulate targeted marketing strategies and operational policies conducive to fostering positive post-purchase behaviors. To address these challenges, this research aims to systematically examine the relationship between brand reputation and post-purchase behavior in QSRs on Bonny Island. By identifying the key determinants and outcomes of this relationship, the study will provide a foundation for developing targeted interventions that can optimize brand management strategies and positively influence consumer behaviors within the local QSR industry.

Objective of the Study

This study aims to determine the relationship between service quality delivery and customer loyalty to quick service restaurants in Bonny Island.

Research Question

Is there any significant relationship between service quality and customer loyalty to quick service restaurants in Bonny Island?

Hypothesis

HO: There is no significant relationship between service quality delivery and customer loyalty to quick service restaurants in Bonny Island

Literature Review

Service Quality Delivery

Service Quality Delivery stands as a linchpin in the service industry, embodying the essence of customer experiences and shaping their perceptions of a brand. Rooted in the seminal work of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), the conceptualization of service quality has evolved into a multidimensional construct that captures the intricacies of customer expectations and evaluations. At its core, Service Quality Delivery encompasses the tangible and intangible aspects of the service encounter (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Customers form their perceptions based on a blend of factors, including the responsiveness of staff, the reliability of service, assurance of competence, empathy in customer interactions, and the physical evidence of service, such as the ambiance and cleanliness of the environment. Each dimension contributes uniquely to the overall evaluation of service quality, with customers discerning the harmony or dissonance between their expectations and the actual service received.

The SERVQUAL model, introduced by Parasuraman et al. (1988), has been instrumental in shaping the understanding and measurement of Service Quality Delivery. This model not only identified the five dimensions of service quality but also introduced a methodological framework for assessing customer expectations and perceptions. By quantifying the gaps between these two constructs, the SERVQUAL instrument became a seminal tool for researchers and practitioners alike, facilitating a systematic evaluation of service quality across diverse service industries. The dimension of tangibles within Service Quality Delivery pertains to the physical evidence of the service, encompassing elements such as facilities, equipment, and the appearance of personnel (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The tangible cues act as powerful signals that influence customer perceptions and contribute significantly to the overall service experience. This dimension is particularly salient in the context of Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs), where the visual appeal of the environment and the presentation of food play a crucial role in shaping customer impressions.

Reliability, another dimension of service quality, emphasizes the consistent and accurate provision of services (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In the context of QSRs, reliability translates into the consistent delivery of food and service standards, ensuring that customers can trust the QSR to meet their expectations with each visit. Reliability becomes a cornerstone for fostering customer loyalty, as patrons are more likely to return when they can rely on a consistent and predictable service experience. The assurance dimension centers on the competence, courtesy, credibility, and security conveyed by service providers (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In QSRs, assurance is reflected in the professionalism of staff, their knowledge of menu items, and the trust customers place in the hygiene and safety of food preparation. Assurance becomes a critical determinant in building customer confidence and mitigating uncertainties associated with the service encounter. Empathy, as a dimension of Service Quality Delivery, pertains to the extent to which service providers demonstrate care, individual attention, and an understanding of customer needs (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In the context of QSRs, empathy is manifested

in the responsiveness of staff to customer queries, their attentiveness to individual preferences, and their ability to create a personalized and positive dining experience.

The tangible and intangible dimensions collectively contribute to the perceived quality of service, influencing customer satisfaction and, consequently, post-purchase behaviour. The interplay between these dimensions is dynamic, and their relative importance may vary across different service contexts. Understanding the nuanced nature of Service Quality Delivery is imperative for QSRs seeking to excel in a competitive market, as it directly influences customer perceptions, loyalty, and the overall success of the brand. Service Quality Delivery is multifaceted and of paramount importance in the service industry, especially in the context of QSRs. Rooted in the foundational work of Parasuraman et al. (1988), the understanding of service quality has evolved, providing a comprehensive framework for assessing and enhancing customer experiences. As QSRs navigate the complexities of the service landscape, a keen awareness of the tangible and intangible dimensions of Service Quality Delivery becomes instrumental for not only meeting but exceeding customer expectations, fostering satisfaction, and cultivating lasting relationships.

In the realm of service-oriented industries, the symbiotic relationship between Service Quality Delivery and Brand Reputation emerges as a dynamic force that profoundly influences customer perceptions and, consequently, the success of businesses. Service Quality Delivery, as elucidated by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), acts as a foundational element shaping the essence of customer experiences. This conceptual review explores the intricate interplay between Service Quality Delivery and Brand Reputation, underscoring the pivotal role of the former in sculpting the latter. Service Quality Delivery, with its multidimensional nature encompassing tangibles, reliability, assurance, empathy, and responsiveness (Parasuraman et al., 1988), serves as the bedrock upon which Brand Reputation is built. The tangible dimension, involving the physical evidence of service, holds particular significance in the formation of Brand Reputation. Customers often perceive tangible cues, such as the cleanliness of facilities and the presentation of products, as tangible manifestations of a brand's commitment to quality and excellence. In the Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) context, where visual appeal plays a vital role, the tangible dimension becomes a cornerstone for crafting a positive Brand Reputation.

Reliability, as a dimension of Service Quality Delivery, assumes a critical role in shaping Brand Reputation. The consistent and accurate provision of services fosters a sense of trust and dependability in customers. QSRs that consistently deliver on their promises, ensuring the reliable provision of high-quality food and service standards, cultivate positive perceptions among customers. These perceptions, in turn, contribute to the establishment of a reputable brand image. The assurance dimension of Service Quality Delivery directly aligns with the credibility and professionalism integral to Brand Reputation. Customers, in their assessment of a brand's reputation, consider the competence, courtesy, and security demonstrated by service providers. QSRs that instill

confidence through assurance dimensions, such as knowledgeable staff and a commitment to hygiene, contribute significantly to the cultivation of a positive Brand Reputation. Empathy, as a dimension of Service Quality Delivery, holds profound implications for Brand Reputation. The ability of service providers to understand and cater to individual customer needs, to convey care and attentiveness, directly influences the emotional connection customers form with a brand. In the competitive landscape of QSRs, where customer loyalty is often forged through personalized experiences, the empathetic dimension becomes instrumental in building a favourable Brand Reputation.

The responsiveness dimension of Service Quality Delivery is a dynamic force in shaping Brand Reputation. Customers appreciate swift and effective responses to their needs and concerns, and the responsiveness of QSRs significantly contributes to the brand's overall reputation. Timely and customer-centric responses, be it in addressing complaints or adapting to changing preferences, play a pivotal role in fostering positive perceptions and solidifying Brand Reputation. The synthesis of Service Quality Delivery and Brand Reputation becomes particularly evident in the post-purchase behaviour of customers. Positive experiences with Service Quality Delivery contribute directly to customer satisfaction, and satisfied customers are more likely to become loyal patrons, engaging in positive word-of-mouth and contributing to the positive reputation of the brand (Zeithaml et al., 1996). Rooted in the foundational work of Parasuraman et al. (1988), Service Quality Delivery acts as the architect of customer experiences, laying the groundwork for the formation and sustainability of Brand Reputation. In the context of QSRs, where the customer-brand interaction is swift and tangible, an acute awareness of the dynamic interplay between Service Quality Delivery and Brand Reputation becomes imperative for not only meeting customer expectations but also cultivating a positive and enduring brand image.

Customer Loyalty

In the intricate landscape of consumer behaviour, the concept of Customer Loyalty stands as a beacon, representing the enduring connection between consumers and brands. This conceptual review delves into the multifaceted dimensions of Customer Loyalty, unraveling the foundational principles, key influencers, and broader implications for businesses, with a focus on the research topic. Customer Loyalty, a nuanced and multifaceted construct, encapsulates the degree to which consumers exhibit a consistent preference for a particular brand or product over time (Oliver, 1999). Rooted in a complex interplay of attitudes, behaviours, and emotions, loyalty represents a strategic imperative for businesses seeking to cultivate enduring relationships with their consumer base. The foundational principle of Customer Loyalty lies in customer satisfaction, a construct deeply interwoven with loyalty (Oliver, 1999). Satisfied customers are more likely to exhibit loyalty by making repeat purchases and actively engaging with the brand. The intrinsic link between satisfaction and loyalty underscores the strategic imperative for businesses to prioritize customer satisfaction as a precursor to cultivating enduring loyalty.

Trust, a cornerstone of the consumer-brand relationship, emerges as a critical influencer in the dynamics of Customer Loyalty. Trust fosters a sense of confidence and security in the brand-consumer interaction, influencing the consumer's willingness to commit to the brand over time (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). The symbiotic relationship between trust and loyalty becomes particularly pronounced in industries where consumer decisions involve a degree of risk or long-term commitment. The role of brand reputation in shaping Customer Loyalty cannot be overstated. A positive brand reputation contributes to the establishment of trust and loyalty, as consumers are more inclined to remain committed to a brand they perceive favourably (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). The cumulative impact of brand reputation on loyalty becomes a strategic lever for businesses seeking to differentiate themselves in competitive markets. Emotional attachment, an often-underestimated dimension of consumer behaviour, emerges as a powerful influencer in the context of Customer Loyalty. Consumers who develop emotional connections with a brand are more likely to exhibit loyalty by actively seeking out the brand, advocating for it, and resisting the allure of competitors (Bowlby, 1982). Businesses that understand and nurture the emotional bonds with their consumers stand poised to cultivate enduring loyalty. The advent of the digital era introduces new dynamics to the landscape of Customer Loyalty, with the emergence of online communities, social media, and personalized marketing. The digital realm becomes a platform for businesses to engage with consumers on a more personal level, tailoring experiences and communications to reinforce loyalty (Hollebeek, Srivastava, & Chen, 2020). Businesses adept at leveraging digital channels can deepen customer relationships and foster loyalty in a landscape where consumer choices abound.

Moreover, the concept of customer engagement, characterized by active participation, interaction, and emotional connection with the brand, has become an integral facet of modern Customer Loyalty (Bowden, Dagger, & Elliott, 2018). Engaged customers are not only loyal but also contribute to the brand's success by becoming advocates, providing valuable feedback, and influencing the perceptions of their peers. The implications of Customer Loyalty extend beyond individual transactions to broader market dynamics. Loyal customers, beyond their value, contribute to positive word-of-mouth, act as brand advocates, and resist the lure of competitors (Reichheld, 2003). The cumulative impact of these loyal behaviours becomes a strategic advantage for businesses seeking sustainable success in a competitive landscape. The evolution of loyalty in the digital era and the integration of customer engagement underscores the need for businesses to adapt their strategies to cultivate enduring customer relationships in an ever-changing landscape. The symbiotic dance between customer loyalty and post-purchase behaviour unveils a dynamic interplay that holds profound implications for Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) in Bonny Island. As patrons navigate the landscape of diverse choices in the QSR sector, the relationship between these two concepts becomes a pivotal determinant of sustained success, brand reputation, and overall consumer satisfaction. Post-purchase behaviour, the tangible outcome of a customer's interaction with a QSR, acts as both a mirror and a compass for the establishment. It encompasses a spectrum of actions following a transaction, ranging from the decision to revisit the restaurant, recommend it

to others, or engage in positive word-of-mouth marketing. These behaviours serve as tangible manifestations of customer satisfaction and, by extension, the likelihood of developing customer loyalty (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

In the intricate web of QSR dynamics in Bonny Island, customer loyalty becomes a driving force influencing post-purchase behaviour. A patron loyal to a particular QSR is more likely to exhibit positive post-purchase behaviour, such as choosing to return for subsequent meals and endorsing the establishment to others (Dick & Basu, 1994). The emotional bond formed through positive experiences fosters an ongoing relationship between the consumer and the QSR, translating into actions that contribute to the establishment's success. The nexus between customer loyalty and post-purchase behaviour is further underscored by the role of brand reputation. A positive brand reputation, cultivated through strategic communication and consistently delivering quality service, becomes a catalyst for both customer loyalty and favorable post-purchase behaviour (Fombrun, 1996). In Bonny Island, where consumers are discerning and brand perceptions are influenced by cultural nuances, a reputable brand becomes a trusted choice, fostering loyalty and shaping subsequent actions. Service quality delivery, a critical aspect of QSR operations, acts as a linchpin connecting customer loyalty and post-purchase behaviour. The overall experience, encompassing factors like the friendliness of staff, cleanliness of the restaurant, and the accuracy of orders, significantly influences both the formation of customer loyalty and subsequent actions post-purchase (Parasuraman et al., 1988). A satisfied customer, experiencing high-quality service, is more likely to become a loyal patron and engage in positive post-purchase behaviour.

The digital era introduces new dimensions to the relationship between customer loyalty and post-purchase behaviour. Online interactions, reviews, and social media engagements become integral touchpoints influencing both loyalty and subsequent actions. Positive reviews and online endorsements from loyal customers not only contribute to the brand's reputation but also serve as stimuli for others to engage in similar post-purchase behaviour (Smith et al., 2012). The digital landscape thus amplifies the ripple effect of loyalty, extending its impact on a broader audience. Cultural sensitivity, a nuanced element in the QSR landscape of Bonny Island, further accentuates the link between customer loyalty and post-purchase behaviour. QSRs that tailor their services to align with local tastes, preferences, and cultural values not only cultivate loyalty but also influence post-purchase behaviour within the community (Usunier & Lee, 2009). In a diverse and culturally rich setting, understanding and respecting these nuances contribute to a positive brand image and subsequent actions by customers. Looking ahead, the sustainability of QSRs in Bonny Island relies on a strategic understanding of how customer loyalty and post-purchase behaviour intersect and influence each other. Personalization, data-driven insights, and leveraging technology to enhance both loyalty programs and the overall customer experience become integral in adapting to evolving consumer expectations (Kumar & Reinartz, 2018). As QSRs navigate the changing landscape, the intricate dance between customer loyalty and post-purchase behaviour remains a cornerstone for success, shaping the trajectory of these establishments in Bonny Island.

Willingness to Recommend

In the contemporary landscape of consumer behaviour, the concept of Willingness to Recommend stands as a pivotal indicator, reflecting the extent to which consumers are not only satisfied with a product or service but also willing to endorse it to others. This conceptual review delves into the nuanced dimensions of Willingness to Recommend, unraveling the foundational principles, key influencers, and broader implications for businesses, with a focus on the research topic. Willingness to Recommend, often measured through the Net Promoter Score (NPS), has emerged as a critical metric for gauging customer advocacy and the likelihood of positive word-of-mouth. The foundational principle of this construct lies in customer satisfaction, as satisfied customers are more inclined to actively endorse a product or service to their social circles (Reichheld, 2003). Understanding the factors that influence Willingness to Recommend becomes imperative for businesses seeking to leverage customer advocacy for sustained success. The interplay between Willingness to Recommend and customer satisfaction underscores the integral role of positive experiences in shaping advocacy behaviours. Satisfied customers are not only more likely to make repeat purchases but also become brand advocates, contributing to the organic growth of a customer base (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993). The intrinsic link between satisfaction and advocacy positions businesses to cultivate positive Willingness to Recommend among their consumer base. Trust, a fundamental component of the consumer-brand relationship, surfaces as a key influencer in the dynamics of Willingness to Recommend. Consumers are more likely to recommend a product or service when they trust the brand and believe that their endorsement will enhance the experiences of their peers (Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). Trust becomes a catalyst for turning satisfaction into active advocacy, shaping the willingness of consumers to recommend a brand to others.

The role of brand reputation in influencing Willingness to Recommend cannot be understated. A positive brand reputation not only contributes to the formation of trust but also provides a foundation upon which consumers base their recommendations (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). Consumers are more likely to endorse brands with favorable reputations, reflecting the collective impact of brand perception on advocacy behaviours. In the digital era, the dynamics of Willingness to Recommend are further shaped by the influence of online communities, social media, and user-generated content. Consumers now can share their experiences and recommendations on a global scale, amplifying the impact of positive word-of-mouth (Cheung & Lee, 2012). Businesses that actively engage with digital channels can harness the power of online recommendations and cultivate positive advocacy among their customer bases. Moreover, the concept of customer engagement, characterized by active participation and interaction with the brand, becomes an integral aspect of understanding Willingness to Recommend (Bowden, Dagger, & Elliott, 2018). Engaged customers not only express satisfaction but also actively contribute to the brand narrative by recommending it to others. The fusion of customer engagement and Willingness to Recommend becomes a strategic avenue for businesses to foster organic growth and enhance their market positioning.

The implications of Willingness to Recommend extend beyond individual transactions to broader market dynamics. Positive recommendations contribute to brand awareness, attract new customers, and fortify the loyalty of existing ones (Reichheld, 2003). The cumulative impact of these recommendations becomes a strategic asset for businesses seeking to cultivate a positive brand image and differentiate themselves in competitive markets. The digital era introduces new dimensions to the dynamics of recommendations, emphasizing the strategic imperative for businesses to navigate and leverage Willingness to Recommend for enduring success.

Theoretical Framework

Expectations Confirmation Theory

Expectations confirmation theory (ECT) is a psychological theory that explains how individuals form and maintain beliefs about their experiences based on pre-existing expectations (Oliver, 2014). The theory posits that people create expectations about a particular product or service based on their prior experiences, advertising, word of mouth, and other sources of information. These expectations then influence the individual's perception of their experience when they encounter the product or service. In other words, when people's expectations are met or exceeded, they are more likely to continue using the product or service (Bolton & Drew, 2016). This theory has significant implications for the hospitality industry, particularly concerning guest patronage. In the hospitality industry, guest patronage is a key driver of success. Guests who have positive experiences are more likely to return, recommend the establishment to others, and leave positive reviews, which can attract new customers (Bigne, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2015). ECT suggests that a guest's expectations of their experience at a hospitality establishment will influence their perception of the experience and their likelihood of returning. If the guest's expectations are met or exceeded, they are more likely to patronize the establishment again. Conversely, if their expectations are not met, they are more likely to seek alternative options (Bolton & Drew, 2016).

Several studies have applied ECT to the hospitality industry and found support for the theory. For instance, Bigne et al. (2015) applied ECT to a study of hotel guests and found that the confirmation of expectations significantly influenced guest satisfaction and loyalty. The study found that when guests' expectations were confirmed, they were more satisfied with their experience, more likely to return to the hotel, and more likely to recommend it to others. Similarly, a study by Chi, Yeh, and Yang (2018) found that guests' perceptions of service quality significantly influenced their confirmation of expectations, which in turn influenced their loyalty to a hotel. The study concluded that hotels could improve guest patronage by managing guest expectations and ensuring they are met or exceeded. In conclusion, ECT is a useful framework for understanding how guests form expectations and how these expectations influence their perception of their experience at a hospitality establishment. To encourage guest patronage, hospitality establishments must manage guest expectations and ensure that they are met or exceeded. By doing so, they can increase guest satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth, which can lead to increased patronage and business success.

Methodology

Population for the Study

The research targets the vibrant community of Bonny Island, focusing on customers frequenting the top Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) in the area. The selected QSRs for this study include:

1. The Promise Fast Food
2. Bonny Delight Fast Food
3. Happy Home Fast Foods
4. ENS Catering
5. De Cutlery Fastfood and Chinese Restaurant
6. Chef Nimo Cakes and Snacks
7. Kari Shawarma
8. Fachi Foods
9. Goshen Thrills
10. SJ Abed

These establishments are recognized as prominent players in the QSR industry on Bonny Island, known for their diverse menus, service quality, and brand reputation. The inclusion of these specific QSRs in the study aims to capture a comprehensive representation of customer experiences and perceptions, ensuring a nuanced understanding of the interplay between Brand Reputation and Post-Purchase Behaviour. The selection of these QSRs is informed by their popularity, customer traffic, and influence in shaping the culinary landscape of Bonny Island. By focusing on customers who patronize these establishments, the research seeks to draw insights from a diverse group of consumers, considering variations in preferences, expectations, and post-purchase behaviours. The diverse offerings of The Promise Fastfood, Bonny Delight Fast Food, Happy Home Fastfoods, ENS Catering, De Cutlery Fastfood and Chinese Restaurant, Chef Nimo Cakes and Snacks, Kari Shawarma, Fachi Foods, Goshen Thrills, and SJ Abed span various cuisines and culinary styles, reflecting the dynamic preferences of the Bonny Island community. By concentrating on these top QSRs, the study anticipates capturing a broad spectrum of customer perspectives, enhancing the external validity of the findings. The inclusion of multiple QSRs introduces variability in the data, allowing for a more robust analysis of the factors influencing Post-Purchase Behaviour across different culinary contexts. In summary, the chosen QSRs represent a cross-section of Bonny Island's culinary landscape, and their inclusion in the study ensures a comprehensive examination of the relationship between Brand Reputation and Post-Purchase Behaviour within the dynamic and diverse consumer base of Bonny Island.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

In this research, the sample size is calculated using Keyton's Table formula.

Nature/Sources of Data: Primary Data

Primary data are collected directly from the participants to address the specific objectives of the research. This approach ensures the relevance and freshness of information,

allowing for a deeper understanding of customer perceptions regarding Brand Reputation and Post-Purchase Behaviour in QSRs. Keyton's Table is a tool widely utilized in research methodology for determining sample sizes in survey studies. Unlike formulaic approaches, Keyton's Table offers a systematic and user-friendly method for researchers to select sample sizes based on specific combinations of confidence levels and margins of error. By consulting the table, researchers can identify the recommended sample size that balances the need for statistical precision with practical considerations. The table takes into account the inherent variability in responses, the desired confidence level in the research outcomes, and the size of the population under study. This approach enhances the flexibility and ease of determining sample sizes tailored to the unique requirements of each study, contributing to the reliability and validity of research findings. Researchers often turn to Keyton's Table for its simplicity and effectiveness in achieving optimal precision without the need for complex calculations.

Table 1: Keyton's Table

Population Size	Sample Size				Current Article Risk-Based Formula	
	Sample Table				Risk Probability	
	95% Confidence level		99% Confidence level		0.99	0.75
	5% Error	1% Error	5% Error	1% Error		
75	63	74	67	75	3	2
300	169	291	207	295	8	6
800	260	739	363	763	20	16
2,500	333	1,984	524	2,173	60	47
25,000	378	6,939	646	9,972	593	462
100,000	383	8,762	662	14,227	2,370	1,848
250,000	384	9,248	662	15,555	6,185	4,618
500,000	384	9,423	663	16,055	12,369	9,235
2,500,000	384	9,423	663	16,478	59,216	46,171

Source: Hamid et al., 2014

Keyton's Table takes into account the desired confidence level, margin of error, and population size. Given the following assumptions:

Population size (N): 214,983

Confidence level: 95%

Margin of error: 5%

Referencing Keyton's Table for a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the corresponding value indicates the recommended sample size. This approach ensures a balanced consideration of precision and practicality in the data collection process.

Based on Keyton's Table, the sample size for this research is 384

Methods of Data Collection/Instrumentation: Structured Questionnaire

Data collection is facilitated through the use of structured questionnaires. The questionnaire is designed to gather quantitative responses from participants, focusing on their perceptions of Brand Reputation and their subsequent Post-Purchase Behaviour.

The structured format ensures consistency in data collection, enabling systematic analysis. The questionnaire would be divided into six (6) sections: Demographics, Service Quality, Brand Credibility, Strategic Communication, Customer Loyalty, and Customer Recommendations/Referrals with at least 5 questions under each section. The questionnaire is structured using a 5-point rating scale to measure respondents' opinions, attitudes, or beliefs. The 5-point rating scale typically ranges from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. The scale is labelled as follows:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

It was designed in this manner to enable the researcher to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The concept of validity in relation to a research instrument pertains to its capacity to effectively assess the intended construct. According to Sekaran (2003), validity pertains to the degree to which the collection of test items correctly reflects the content that the test aims to evaluate. The development of the research instrument is the result of an extensive examination of relevant literature, which serves to support the content validity of the instrument (Turner & Huile, 2019). This study investigates different types of validity, including face validity, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Face Validity

Face validity refers to the extent to which a test is seen, subjectively, as effectively measuring the concept it aims to evaluate. The present study included the validation of the research instrument for face validity. This validation procedure was carried out by the supervisor and other specialists affiliated with the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management at the University of Port Harcourt.

Reliability of Instrument

There are a number of ways to assess the reliability of a research instrument. One common approach is to calculate the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a measure of internal consistency, which is the degree to which the items in a scale are correlated with each other. A higher Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates higher internal consistency, and therefore higher reliability. Another approach to assessing the reliability of a research instrument is to use a test-retest method. In a test-retest method, participants are given the same instrument at two different points in time. The correlation between the results from the two-time points is a measure of the reliability of the instrument. The reliability of the questionnaire in this study was assessed using the test-retest method.

Data Presentation

The research methodology employed encompasses a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics to assess and analyze the underlying connection between the variables that are dependent and independent of each other. Additionally, the hypotheses were subjected to rigorous testing, and the resulting findings were subsequently deliberated upon and thoroughly discussed.

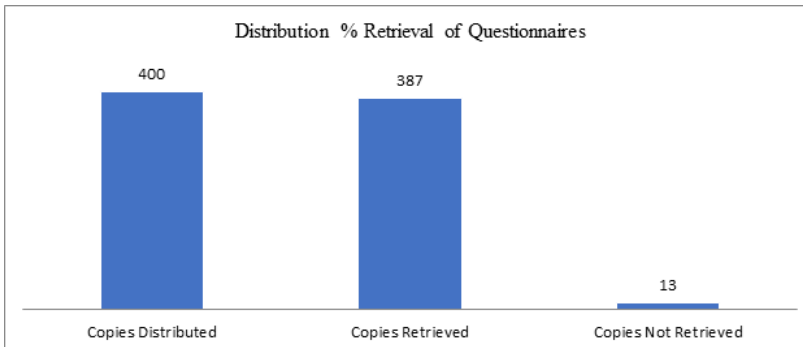
Data Analysis

Table 2: Distribution & Frequency of Questionnaire

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Copies Distributed	400	
Copies Retrieved	387	96.75%
Copies Not Retrieved	13	3.25%
Copies Not Useable	3	0.75%
Copies Completed and Usable	384	96%

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

Fig 1: Distribution & Frequency of Questionnaire



Source: Author's Field Survey, 2023

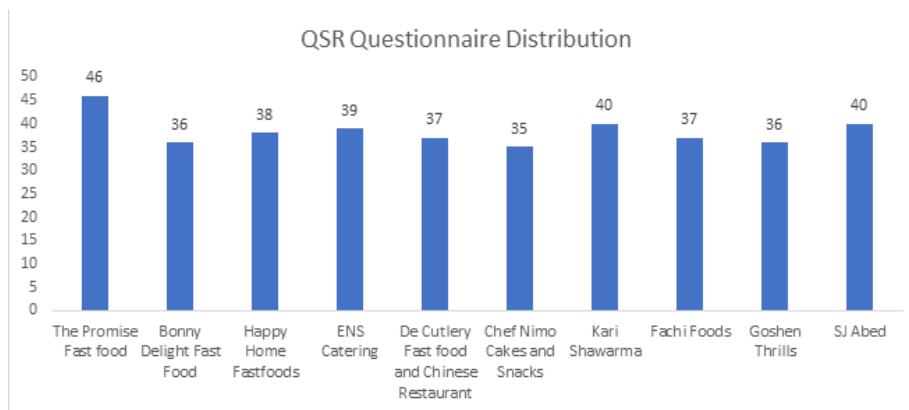
The table above shows that the researcher distributed 400 copies of questionnaires. 387 copies (96.75%) were returned while 13 copies (3.25%) were not returned. 3 copies (0.75%) were not usable. This signifies that despite their retrieval, these copies could not be utilized for different reasons. 384 copies (96.00%) were both returned and usable.

Table 3: Quick Service Restaurant Distribution

S/N	Selected QSR	Sample Size	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaires Retrieved	Questionnaires Used
1	The Promise Fast food	50	50	46	46
2	Bonny Delight Fast Food	37	37	36	36
3	Happy Home Fastfoods	40	40	38	38
4	ENS Catering	39	39	39	39
5	De Cutlery Fast food and Chinese Restaurant	39	39	38	37
6	Chef Nimo Cakes and Snacks	35	35	35	35
7	Kari Shawarma	41	41	40	40
8	Fachi Foods	38	38	37	37
9	Goshen Thrills	39	39	36	36
10	SJ Abed	42	42	41	40
	Total	400	400	387	384

Source: Research Data 2023

Figure 2: QSR Questionnaire Distribution



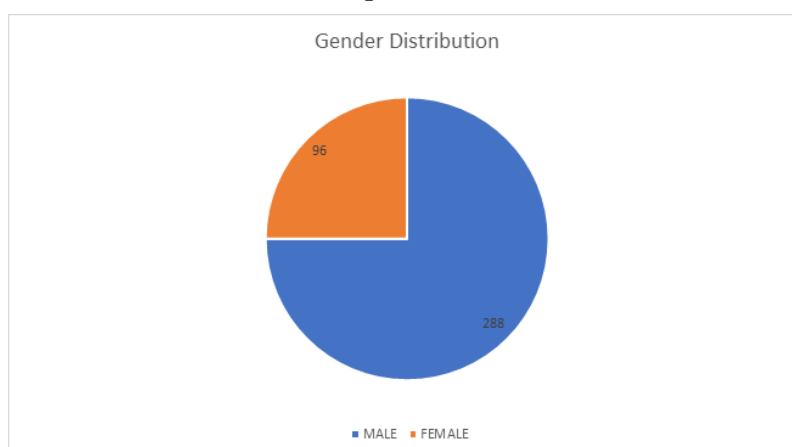
Source: Research Data 2023

The provided table showcases the quantity of questionnaires that were distributed, collected, and utilized for a customer satisfaction survey encompassing 10 Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs). Out of the 400 distributed questionnaires, a remarkable 387 (96.75%) were successfully collected. This implies that an overwhelming majority of customers who received a questionnaire diligently completed and returned it. Among the collected questionnaires, 384 (96.00%) were found to be applicable. Therefore, a minute number of questionnaires were deemed unsuitable due to missing information or other errors. For the majority of QSRs, both the retrieval and utilization rates were exceptionally high. The lowest retrieval rate was observed to be 92.00% for The Promise Fast Food, while the lowest utilization rate was recorded as 92.31% for Goshen Thrills. ENS Catering boasted the highest retrieval and utilization rates, with 100% of the questionnaires being both collected and utilized.

Table 4: Demographics Analysis

GENDER		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	288	75.0	75.0	75.0
	FEMALE	96	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	
AGE RANGE		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-24	32	8.3	8.3	8.3
	25-34	32	8.3	8.3	16.7
	35-44	224	58.3	58.3	75.0
	45-54	96	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	
MARITAL STATUS		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	96	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Married	288	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	School Certificate	32	8.3	8.3	8.3
	HND (Higher National Diploma)	64	16.7	16.7	25.0
	LLB/BSC/BENG/BED (Bachelor's degree)	32	8.3	8.3	33.3
	LLM/MSC/MBA/MA/MPHIL (Master's degree)	256	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

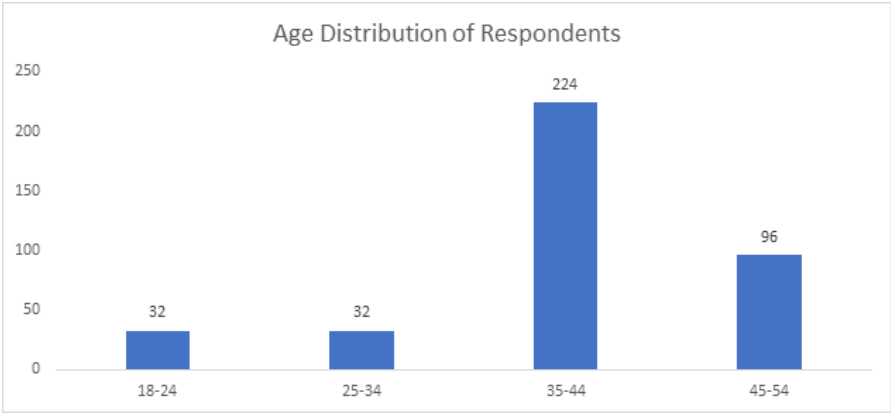
Figure 3: Gender Distribution of Respondents



Source: Research Data 2023

The data presented in the figure above provides a comprehensive analysis of the gender distribution among the 384 respondents in terms of frequency, percentage, valid percentage, and cumulative percentage. It offers a detailed breakdown of the proportions of males and females within the sample. A noteworthy observation derived from the analysis is that 75% (288) of the respondents are identified as males. This indicates a substantial male representation within the surveyed population. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that 25% (96) of the respondents are classified as females. This finding highlights the existence of a relatively smaller yet significant female presence within the surveyed cohort.

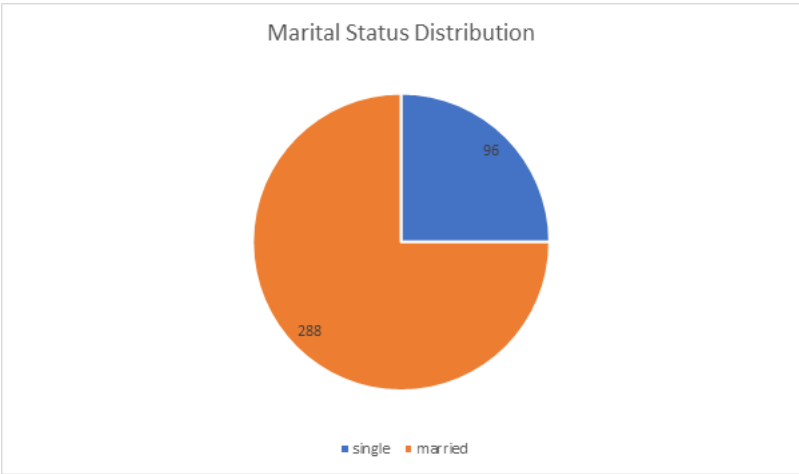
Figure 4: Age Distribution of Respondents



Source: Research Data 2023

The above figure provides an overview of the age distribution observed among the 384 respondents. The largest segment, consisting of 58.3% or 224 participants, falls within the age range of 35-44. This finding suggests that the questionnaire attracted a significant number of individuals from this particular demographic. The youngest age group, 18-24, and the oldest age group, 45-54, each contribute to roughly equal proportions of the overall sample (8.3% and 25.0% respectively). This signifies the presence of some representation across the younger and older age brackets; however, it is not as substantial as the middle-aged group. Furthermore, the 25-34 age group constitutes a smaller subset, accounting for 8.3% or 32 respondents.

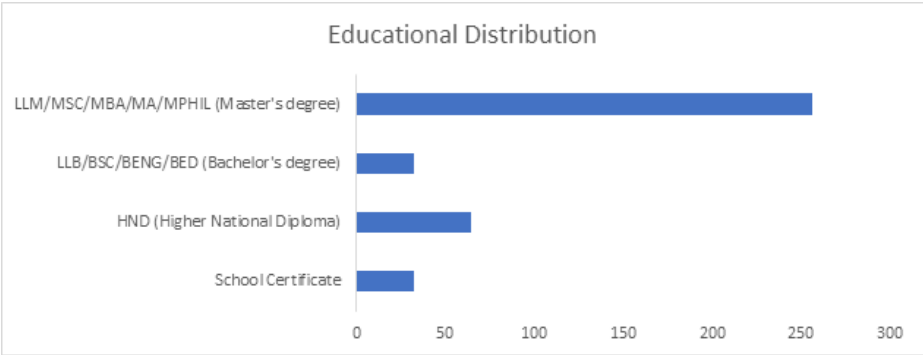
Figure 5: Marital Status Distribution of Respondents



Source: Research Data 2023

According to the aforementioned figures, a sizable percentage of the participants – 75% – are married. In contrast, 25% of respondents are not married.

Figure 6: Educational Qualification Distribution of Respondents



Source: Research Data 2023

Table 5: Brand Credibility

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I trust this brand to deliver on its promises	384	2	5	3.75	1.091
The staff here have displayed an excellent level of competence	384	2	5	4.00	1.001
I can bank on the fidelity of this QSR; They are reliable	384	3	5	4.17	.800
I find this QSR to be innovative	384	3	5	4.17	.688
This QSR is socially responsible	384	3	5	4.25	.596
Valid N (listwise)	384				

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

This table presents the statistical information pertaining to the five elements of brand credibility in your customer satisfaction survey. Herein lies a breakdown of the data:

1. The level of trust I place in this brand's ability to fulfil its promises.
2. The exceptional level of competence demonstrated by the staff at this establishment.
3. The reliability and dependability I associate with this Quick Service Restaurant (QSR).
4. The innovative nature I perceive in this QSR.
5. The social responsibility exhibited by this QSR.

The total number of participants who responded to each element (384 for all elements). The lowest attainable score on the rating scale (2 for all elements). The highest attainable score on the rating scale (5 for all elements). The average score for each element (ranging from 3.75 for trust in the brand to 4.25 for social responsibility). Standard Deviation, measure of the dispersion of scores around the mean (ranging from 0.596 for social responsibility to 1.091 for trust in the brand). Valid N (listwise): The number of participants who responded to all five elements (384).

In general, customers perceive the brand favourably in terms of credibility. The mean scores for all elements surpass the midpoint of the rating scale (3). Social responsibility emerges as the element with the highest mean score, at 4.25. This implies that customers acknowledge and value the QSR's dedication to social causes. Trust in the brand's ability to deliver on its promises receives the lowest mean score, at 3.75. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in establishing trust with customers.

Table 6: Strategic Communication

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This QSR communicates its brand values and messages effectively with me	384	2	5	3.58	.955
The marketing and advertising campaigns for this QSR is effective	384	3	5	4.00	.818
The QSR uses social media well to communicate with its customers	384	2	5	3.33	1.180
This QSR takes customers' feedback very seriously	384	2	5	3.58	1.039
The customer support experience of this QSR is amazing	384	2	5	3.75	1.091
Valid N (listwise)	384				

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

This table presents the statistical descriptions for five items pertaining to strategic communication in the customer satisfaction survey. The number of survey respondents who answered each item (384 for all items). The lowest achievable score on the scale (2 for all items). The highest achievable score on the scale (5 for all items). The average score for each item (ranging from 3.33 for social media use to 4.00 for marketing/advertising effectiveness). Standard Deviation, a measure of the dispersion of scores around the mean (ranging from 0.818 for marketing/advertising to 1.180 for social media use). Overall, customers exhibit a moderate level of satisfaction with the QSR's strategic communication. The mean scores for all items surpass the midpoint of the scale (3). The marketing and advertising campaigns are perceived as the most successful aspect of communication, with a mean score of 4.00. This implies that the QSR's marketing efforts effectively reach and influence customers. Social media communication receives the lowest mean score of 3.33. This suggests that the QSR may benefit from enhancing its social media engagement or presence. The standard deviations indicate some variability in responses, signifying that customers possess different experiences or opinions regarding the QSR's communication strategies.

Table 7: Customer Loyalty

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am likely to return to this QSR in the future	384	3	5	3.67	.746
I want my relationship with this QSR to be long-term	384	3	5	3.67	.746
I am most likely to switch to another QSR as my preferred brand	384	2	5	3.75	.830
This QSR meets my expectations always, and I have never regretted visiting this QSR	384	2	5	3.67	1.029
It is always a place of fun, excitement and positive memorable experience for me and I will be very ready to try out new services and menu from this QSR	384	3	5	4.00	.818
Valid N (listwise)	384				

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

The presented table encapsulates the descriptive statistics pertaining to five distinct items gauging customer loyalty in your survey. These items, encompassing factors such as the likelihood of return, the desire for a long-term relationship, openness to switching to another Quick Service Restaurant (QSR), overall satisfaction, and the perception of the QSR as a source of fun and positive experiences, offer a comprehensive view of customer sentiments. Across the board, the descriptive statistics reveal valuable insights: Examining the mean scores, which range from 3.67 to 4.00, it is apparent that customers demonstrate a moderate level of loyalty to the QSR. While these scores surpass the midpoint of the scale (3), indicating a positive inclination, they do not reach exceptionally high levels. Noteworthy is the "fun & excitement" item, registering the highest mean score of 4.00. This suggests that the QSR has been successful in creating a positive and engaging experience for its patrons, potentially contributing to their loyalty. Conversely, the item related to the openness to switch to another QSR attains the second-highest mean score of 3.75. This signals a level of receptivity among customers to explore alternatives, warranting a more in-depth investigation into the factors influencing this inclination.

The standard deviations accompanying the mean scores highlight variations in customer responses, indicating that loyalty levels and the underlying reasons for loyalty are not uniform across all respondents. This diversity in responses underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of the factors shaping customer loyalty within the QSR landscape.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have recommended this QSR to my friends and family in the past year	384	2	5	3.08	.955
I will willingly advocate for this QSR	384	2	5	3.67	.746
I am willing to convince my family and associates about this QSR	384	2	4	3.33	.746
I will happily recommend this QSR for any occasion	384	2	5	3.67	.746
This QSR is worthy of my recommendation	384	2	5	3.58	.955
Valid N (listwise)	384				

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

The above table paints a picture of customer recommendations for the QSR. While the average customer seems moderately willing to recommend it to friends and family, there's a range in how actively they promote it. Advocacy, however, comes across as stronger, with customers more inclined to publicly champion the QSR. Convincing close circles shows a slightly lower but still positive average, suggesting some hesitation in actively influencing them. Interestingly, recommending the QSR for any occasion garners strong agreement, showcasing a general confidence in its appeal across diverse situations. Finally, while most consider the QSR worthy of praise, some differences in opinion exist about its recommendation-worthiness. Overall, a positive stance towards recommending the QSR prevails, with nuances regarding how readily and in what contexts customers endorse it. This information can be invaluable for the QSR in tailoring strategies to further leverage positive word-of-mouth promotion.

Table 9: Bivariate Analysis
The Relationship between Service Quality Delivery and Recommendations

Correlations

			Serv.Qual	Rec
Spearman's rho	Serv.Qual	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.262**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	384	384
	Rec	Correlation Coefficient	-.262**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	384	384

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

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

This table shows the correlation between service quality and recommendations for your QSR. Correlation coefficient: -0.262 (negative value indicates an inverse relationship) Significance level: $p < 0.01$ (statistically significant, meaning the observed correlation is unlikely due to chance). There is a statistically significant negative correlation between service quality and recommendations. This means that as the perceived quality of service decreases, customers are less likely to recommend the QSR to others. Conversely, higher service quality is associated with increased likelihood of recommendations. The correlation coefficient, -0.262, is considered a weak to moderate negative correlation. This suggests that while there is a relationship between service quality and recommendations, it's not incredibly strong. Other factors besides service quality may also influence customers' decisions to recommend the QSR.

Table 10: The Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Loyalty

Correlations

			Serv.Qual	Cust.Loy
Spearman's rho	Serv.Qual	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.224**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	384	384
	Cust.Loy	Correlation Coefficient	.224**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	384	384

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

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

This table reveals an interesting dynamic between service quality and customer loyalty at your QSR. Correlation coefficient: 0.224 (positive value indicates a direct relationship) Significance level: $p < 0.01$ (statistically significant, meaning the observed correlation is unlikely due to chance). There's a statistically significant positive correlation between service quality and customer loyalty. This means that as customers perceive higher service quality, they tend to be more loyal to the QSR, returning for repeat business and potentially advocating for it. Conversely, lower service quality might lead to decreased customer loyalty and churn. The correlation coefficient, 0.224, is considered a weak to moderate positive correlation. While there's a connection between service quality and loyalty, it's not exceptionally strong. This suggests that other factors, besides service quality, might also influence customer loyalty.

Table 11: The Relationship between Brand Credibility and Recommendations

Correlations

			Brand.Cred	Rec
Spearman's rho	Brand.Cred	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.406**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	384	384
	Rec	Correlation Coefficient	.406**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	384	384

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

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

The table above reveals the relationship between brand credibility and recommendations for QSR. Correlation coefficient: 0.406 (positive value indicates a direct relationship) Significance level: $p < 0.01$ (statistically significant, meaning the observed correlation is unlikely due to chance). There's a statistically significant positive correlation between brand credibility and recommendations. This means that as customers perceive the QSR as more credible and trustworthy, they're also more likely to recommend it to others. Conversely, a QSR perceived as lacking in credibility might see fewer recommendations. The correlation coefficient, 0.406, is considered a moderate positive correlation. This suggests a stronger link between brand credibility and recommendations compared to service quality and recommendations (0.262). This emphasizes the importance of building and maintaining brand credibility alongside service quality to truly influence customer advocacy.

Table 12: The Relationship between Brand Credibility and Customer Loyalty

Correlations

			Brand.Cred	Cust.Loy
Spearman's rho	Brand.Cred	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.309**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	384	384
	Cust.Loy	Correlation Coefficient	.309**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	384	384

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

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

The above table reveals the connection between brand credibility and customer loyalty in QSR. Correlation coefficient: 0.309 (positive value indicates a direct relationship) Significance level: $p < 0.01$ (statistically significant, meaning the observed correlation is unlikely due to chance). There's a statistically significant positive correlation between

brand credibility and customer loyalty. This means that customers who perceive the QSR as more credible and trustworthy are also more likely to be loyal, returning for repeat business and potentially becoming stronger advocates. Conversely, a lack of perceived credibility might lead to customer churn and decreased loyalty. The correlation coefficient, 0.309, is considered a moderate positive correlation. While slightly weaker than the link between brand credibility and recommendations (0.406), it still highlights the importance of building brand credibility for fostering loyal customer relationships.

Table 13: The Relationship between Strategic Communication and Recommendations

Correlations

			Strat.Comm	Rec
Spearman's rho	Strat.Comm	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.766**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	384	384
	Rec	Correlation Coefficient	.766**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	384	384

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

Source: Author's Field Survey (2023) – SPSS version 27.0 output extracts

This table shows how strategic communication influences customer recommendations for your QSR. Correlation coefficient: 0.766 (strong positive value indicates a direct relationship). Significance level: $p < 0.01$ (highly statistically significant, meaning the observed correlation is very unlikely due to chance). There's an incredibly strong and statistically significant positive correlation between strategic communication and recommendations. This means that as customers perceive the QSR's communication as more effective and engaging, they're also significantly more likely to recommend it to others. Conversely, weak or ineffective communication might lead to decreased recommendations and word-of-mouth promotion. The correlation coefficient, 0.766, is considered a strong positive correlation. This is the highest correlation coefficient among all the relationships you've presented, highlighting the substantial impact of strategic communication on driving customer recommendations.

Conclusion

The findings of this research offer valuable insights into the intricate relationships between Brand Reputation (service quality, brand credibility, strategic communication), and customer post-purchase behaviours within the Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) context in Bonny Island. The negative correlation (-0.262) between service quality and recommendations suggests that a decline in service quality diminishes customers' likelihood to advocate for the QSR. However, the weak to moderate correlation underscores the multifaceted nature of factors influencing customer recommendations, hinting at the need for a comprehensive approach to enhance overall service quality.

On the other hand, the positive correlation (0.224) between service quality and customer loyalty establishes a nuanced connection, highlighting the role of various elements beyond service quality in shaping customer loyalty. This calls for a holistic understanding of customer expectations and experiences to foster sustained loyalty. The examination of brand credibility reveals a robust positive correlation (0.406) with recommendations, emphasizing the pivotal role of perceived credibility in driving customer advocacy. Similarly, the moderate positive correlation (0.309) between brand credibility and customer loyalty underscores the significance of building and maintaining a credible brand image for fostering enduring customer relationships.

These findings reject the null hypotheses associated with the study, providing clear evidence of the influence brand reputation wields over customer post-purchase behaviour. Finally, strategic communication emerges as a paramount factor, with an exceptionally strong correlation (0.766) with recommendations and a moderate positive correlation (0.580) with customer loyalty. These results unequivocally reject the null hypotheses associated with strategic communication, affirming its critical role in shaping customer perceptions and behaviours.

Recommendations

- i. **Enhancing Service Quality:** The research findings underscore the pivotal role of service quality in influencing customer recommendations and loyalty. To capitalize on this, the QSR should prioritize continuous improvement in service delivery, focusing on aspects such as speed, accuracy, friendliness, cleanliness, and food quality. Implementing regular training programs for staff, investing in quality control measures, and actively seeking customer feedback can aid in identifying areas for improvement and maintaining consistently high service standards.
- ii. **Strategic Communication Optimization:** Given the substantial impact of strategic communication on customer recommendations and loyalty, the QSR should refine its communication strategies. This involves ensuring clarity in conveying brand values, messages, and promotions. Leveraging various communication channels, including social media, traditional advertising, and customer feedback platforms, can enhance visibility and engagement. Furthermore, monitoring and responding promptly to customer feedback and reviews can demonstrate the QSR's commitment to customer satisfaction and contribute positively to its image.
- iii. **Comprehensive Customer Loyalty Programs:** While service quality, brand credibility, and strategic communication play crucial roles in shaping customer loyalty, the QSR should also consider implementing comprehensive customer loyalty programs. These programs could include personalized offers, exclusive discounts, and rewards for repeat visits. Additionally, creating a memorable and enjoyable overall experience, as indicated by the high mean score in the "fun & excitement" aspect, can contribute to fostering emotional connections with customers, further enhancing loyalty.

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