

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	2
3.1 Introduction	2
3.2 Research Philosophy	2
3.3 Research Approach	4
3.4 Research Design.....	5
3.5 Research Strategy.....	6
3.6 Data Collection Method.....	7
3.7 Sampling Method and Technique	8
3.8 Research Hypothesis and Variable	9
3.9 Sample Size	10
3.10 Data Analysis Technique	10
3.11 Ethical Issues	11
3.12 Research Limitations	11
References.....	13
Appendices.....	26
Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire	26

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

According to Mackey & Gass (2015) research methodology is one of the major approaches that encompass the hypothetical and analytical details that are required by the researcher for the research to be conducted and to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. Particularly in this study the researcher is determined to evaluate the effectiveness of Loyalty Program in the development of customer loyalty within the context of Grocery Retailing industry.

Specifically this chapter includes the methods and techniques that have been used by the research in order to gather or retrieve the data that are necessary for the research to be completed. In addition to it in this chapter the researcher also discusses the research design research approach research strategy research philosophy data collection method sampling method and technique sample size ethical consideration and research limitations that have been used by the researcher in order achieve the research aim and objectives.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is a belief or conception related to the way in which the data or information about the phenomenon of the research must be collected used and analysed (Creswell 2012). Research philosophy is an approach to understand the nature source and development of knowledge. In essence discussing the research philosophy in this research includes being aware and framing the assumptions and concepts. Research philosophy is also known as research paradigm that organises the framework of the study and supports the

theoretical framework of the study. Moreover research philosophy also structures the research methods and techniques that have been used by the researcher.

As per the study conducted by Collis & Hussey (2013) research philosophy can be classified into three types including realism positivism and interpretivism. Realism research philosophy is an assumption that works on the some facets of reality and independent to the perceptions conceptual schemes beliefs and linguistic practices of an individual. In other words according to Robson & McCartan (2016) realism research philosophy works on the principles of real world and in which a situation is experienced and practiced by the researcher. Realism may be spoken of pertaining to the past future other conceptions mathematical entities universals material world moral categories and thought. Researchers who profess realism frequently claim that reality involves in a relationship between reality and cognitive representation.

On the contrary interpretivism is an approach to the social science that conflicts the positivism of natural science. Principally interpretivism is the collection of thought in philosophy of law and the contemporary jurisprudence. This philosophy works on the understanding of an individual regarding different concepts and ideas that arises from the opinions and findings of individuals. In the last Blaxter (2010) demonstrated about positivism that it is an approach that uses the interpretations and observations taken from the personal practice and experience in the research design in order to achieve the research aim and objectives. This type of research philosophy usually used in the quantitative research design as it uses statistical analysis and mathematical entities for the research to be conducted.

Furthermore according to Bryman & Bell (2015) positivism refers to the scientific and analytical methods that could be used by the researcher in order to achieve the research findings of the study. According to nature of the study researcher has undertaken the positivism research

philosophy as the study is founded on the quantitative research design that applies the statistical analysis in order to prove or disapprove the research hypothesis.

3.3 Research Approach

According to Maxwell (2012) research approaches are classified into two types of approaches including inductive and deductive approach that can be used by the researcher to perform the research study. Inductive approach is another research approach that can be used by the researcher in the research study to be completed. According to the study conducted by Hausman et al (2010) inductive approach is also known as inductive reasoning that begins with the theories and observations generated towards the end of the whole research as an outcome of observations.

Inductive approach involves the search pattern and strategy from interpretations and development of reasons or theories for that pattern on the basis of hypotheses. Inductive approach transforms the general interpretations to the specific. On the contrary Deductive approach usually adapted to construct the research hypothesis on the basis of existing research theories and hypothesis and then constructs the research design in order to test the constructed hypothesis (Bryman & Bell 2015). Deductive approach is founded on the laws and rules that are approved and pursued on the whole.

It has been articulated by Vogel et al (2011) deductive approach refers to the reasoning from the specific to the general. It builds the causal link between particular and general view and opinions. As nature of the study that is quantitative research design the researcher has taken the deductive research approach in order to generate the research hypothesis by examining the existing theories and observations.

3.4 Research Design

Research design is one of the essential approaches that refer to the whole strategy that the researcher uses to different components into the study in the most appropriate and logical manner which eventually provides the researcher with an opportunity to address the research questions in most effective and efficient manner. In addition research design is an important aspect that involves suitable research design when commencing any research study.

Research design is the foundation of research study that underpins the designs and ideas generated on how to collect or retrieve the data in a particular way that could be useful for the researching for addressing the research problem. In the words of Yin (2013) research design can be used in the form of qualitative quantitative and mixed method research design. Qualitative research design is related to the understanding the phenomenon exploring issues and addressing the research questions by making sense of and examining the unstructured data. This type of research design examines the responses of the participants that have been studied in the research study. Particularly qualitative research design examines the individual's experience perception and feelings.

On the other hand quantitative research design is a more data-led and logical approach which support the research findings by measuring of what people perceive from a numerical and statistical point of view. As per stated by Lewis (2015) quantitative research design involves the statistical and numerical techniques that can be used to evaluate the result and research findings according to the gathered data through participants. Finally the mixed method research design is also an essential research design that can be used by the research in order to address the research question. Mixed method approach is a mixture of both research designs. In this study the

researcher is determined to study the effectiveness of loyalty programme in the building of customer loyalty. Considering the nature of the study researcher has taken the quantitative research design for addressing the research problem within the context of grocery retailing industry.

3.5 Research Strategy

Research strategy is an approach which provides assistance to the research in order to address the research problem. As per stated by Verschuren et al (2010) strategy that has been taken for the research to be completed is a general research plan that supports the researcher in addressing the research questions in a methodical way. In other words research strategy could be measured as a research plan or strategy that provides easiness and accessibility in terms of conducting the entire research study. In order to address the research problem a constant research flow is needed to continue the constant research flow.

As per the nature of existing study that is purely quantitative research; questionnaires as a research instrument has been used by the researcher for addressing the research question and 200 questionnaires have been filled by the customers of grocery retail stores. The results and analyses attained from these questionnaires have been demonstrated in the appendix section. In order to convert the numeric of Likert's scale into words statistical tool termed as SPSS has been used by the research. The technique that has been taken in the statistical analysis is the correlation technique as it analyse the effectiveness of loyalty programme in the building customer loyalty.

On the basis of SPSS results the researcher will approve or disapprove the research hypothesis. Upon approval researcher could be able to conclude the research findings on the basis of experimental evidence that loyalty has a significant effect in building the customer

loyalty. Although upon rejection of the hypothesis the researcher will be able to conclude the research findings that loyalty programme has no significant effect in building the customer loyalty.

3.6 Data Collection Method

According to Palinkas et al (2015) data collection can be argued as the systematic process to collect and measure the knowledge and information with respect to the variables being studied where the foremost aim of the researcher is to address the research questions and evaluate the research outcomes. Data collection method helps the researcher to collect the essential and relevant points as collected information. In addition to it data collection method is one of the major aspects of research design and essential part of the research.

Data collection refers to what information and data makes the research effective and successful in order to address the research questions and problem. According to Meeker & Escobar (2014) there are two types of data collection methods that can be used by research to perform the research study. These types include primary and secondary data collection. Primary data collection method includes the new and first-hand data that can be gathered by means of interviews closed-ended questionnaires and personal experience of the researcher or respondents.

On the other hand secondary data collection is the collection of data from prior researches literatures of past conducted studies in accordance with the selected topic of the research. In this particular study both types of data collection have been taken into consideration by the researcher. Primary data has been collected by using the questionnaires as an instrument tool. Alternatively the secondary data has been collected by using the past conducted researches and available literatures through internet journals article review articles and magazines.

3.7 Sampling Method and Technique

Sampling method is an approach that refers to the way of observations which are taken from the population to be in the sample size of the research. The sampling methods and techniques provide direction to the researcher to gather data consistent with how to collect the data or retrieved. In addition data that has been collected from the sampling technique is liable to examine the research findings and results in order to signify the overall sample size or population. This makes the sampling method and technique as a significant part of the study that involves the researcher's interpretations and understandings. According to Csikszentmihalyi & Larson (2014) sampling method are categorised into two types including as probability and non-probability sampling method.

As per Palinkas et al (2015) probability sampling method is a technique that works on the principle of random selection. According to the probability sampling all respondents are equally allowed to participate in the research study. Probability sampling technique has further been categorised into cluster sampling systematic random sampling and simple random sampling technique. In contrast non-probability sampling technique is another technique of sampling method. Non-probability sampling includes judgemental sampling convenience sampling and snowball sampling and quota sampling (Uprichard 2013). Quota sampling technique is a sampling technique refers to the integration of essential traits of respondents in the research project to be accomplished (Im & Chee 2011).

Convenience sampling technique refers to the availability and convenience of the researcher. The convenience sampling method is determined by the convenience and availability of the respondents as that of an investigator (Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad 2012).

Moreover snowball sampling is a method that holds the respondents' referrals that have formerly been elected for the participation in the research. This approach typically concludes with the inclination as the respondents refer the individuals that commonly have same opinions and are usually from the similar social circle. Lastly judgemental sampling method can be used by the researcher when the he or she chooses the individuals on the basis of personal judgements and observations.

According to the quantitative research design the researcher has chosen the non-probability sampling technique in order to select the population relevant or essential for this research. Among the types of non-probability sampling methods the researcher has selected the judgemental sampling technique to be incorporate in the research design for addressing the research problem and question. The reason for using the judgemental sampling technique is that the researcher wants to address the particular research problems which cannot be attained by including the irrelevant individuals or population. With this into consideration the researcher only considered those individuals that frequently purchased the goods offered by the company rather than considering individuals that rarely purchase from the specific retail outlet.

3.8 Research Hypothesis and Variable

The generation of hypothesis is a very significant approach in the research as approval or disapproval of the generated hypothesis illustrates the significance of the existing study. According to the literature review as mentioned above following hypothesis could be essential for addressing the research problem:

H₀: Loyalty programme has no significant impact on building of customer loyalty

H₁: Loyalty programme has significant impact on the building of customer loyalty

In this particular study the researcher is determined to evaluate the effectiveness of loyalty programme that is independent variable in the building of customer loyalty that is dependent variable of the study. The supporting hypotheses for the research study are as follows;

H2₀: Trust has no significant impact on building of customer loyalty

H₂: Trust has significant impact on the building of customer loyalty

H3₀: Commitment has no significant impact on building of customer loyalty

H₃: Commitment has significant impact on the building of customer loyalty

H4₀: Corporate Image has no significant impact on building of customer loyalty

H₄: Corporate Image has significant impact on the building of customer loyalty

H5₀: Customer Satisfaction has no significant impact on building of customer loyalty

H₅: Customer Satisfaction has significant impact on the building of customer loyalty

3.9 Sample Size

According to the selected topic of the research researcher has used 200 questionnaires a sample size of the study and has been elected by the process of judgemental sampling technique.

3.10 Data Analysis Technique

In this research the researcher has collected the data by means of questionnaires that shows the data in the numeric term and scale of 1-5. This scale is named as Likert's scale and need to be evaluated in the form of explanations. For this purposes SPSS statistical tool has been used by the researcher in order to address research questions and problem. The reason for

selecting this tool is that it analyses the numeric data and convert it into the interpretations and results.

3.11 Ethical Issues

Ethical concerns are essential to be taken into account as respondents that have been selected into the research supposed that the data collected for the declared determinations and not to be manipulated. Ethical concerns on the subject of this study include preference of retailing industry information and the research maintains confidentiality and privacy of the respondents.

Last of all when concerning about the collection of secondary data ethical considerations have been subjected for in a certain way that no plagiarised work has been used by the researcher and embraces references and citations to endorse the researchers whose researches have been integrated in the study in order to support the research findings. In this regard optimal care has been taken into consideration during the data collection methods in order to get the reliable and valid research outcomes.

3.12 Research Limitations

Within the current study there are several limitations and obstructions that have been handled by the researcher in order to address the research questions and problem. One of the major obstructions is the timeframe restriction which made the study restricted and bounded by the conciseness. The selection of targeted population was also a major limitation that has been faced by the researcher. The aforementioned limitations have some consequences. For instance the researcher might not collect the relevant and specific information as intended due to the

limited time frame and resources which might have affected the overall validity and reliability to some extent of the research study.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Gender

- Male
- Female

Age

- 18-23
- 24-30
- 31-36
- 37-43
- More than 43

Income Level

- 2500-3500
- 3501-4500

- 4501-5500
- 5501-6500
- More than 6500

Trust	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Customers purchase goods and services offered by company based on trust				
Trust increases the willingness of the customers towards company and its offerings				
Trust increases the credibility of the company and its products and services				
Commitment				
Commitment has influenced the customers to continue their association with the company				

Relationship between the consumers and companies are based on the mutual commitment				
Commitment has played an important role in reducing the switching intention of the consumers				
Corporate Image				
Corporate image has significantly increased the likelihood of shaping the response of the customers				
corporate image has influences the customers to mould their attitude and behavior with respect to the company				
Corporate image shapes trust and satisfaction level amongst the customers				
Customer Satisfaction				
Customer satisfaction has stimulated and motivated the consumers to prefer the specific brand over others available in the marketplace				

Satisfaction has influenced the customer to frequently purchase the goods and services offered by the company				
Satisfaction amongst the customers increases the likelihood of the customers to be engaged in loyalty programs				
Building and maintaining outstanding loyalty amongst the customers has become a rising concern for the companies				
Customer loyalty has played an influential role in the success and growth of companies				
Customer loyalty increases the possibility of attracting and retaining existing and potential customers				