

Adaptation of Responsiveness by Front Line Employee to Achieve Customer Loyalty in Restaurateurs around Klang Valley Malaysia

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Abstract: In the service industry, responsiveness is a way to show your attention towards the customer and make them feel the sense of importance. Around the world service industry is one the booming sector. Here in Malaysia service sector plays an important role for growth of GDP and also creates an employment opportunity for millions of people. Restaurateurs are one of the contributors of service industry in Malaysia. People here are more frequent in visiting restaurateurs as they provide quality of food with reasonable price. But it is seen that lack of responsiveness is one of the major reasons that customers don't feel to come back again, which in turn weakens the growth of business. This paper focus on building a conceptual model that will help the restaurateurs' owner to come up with tactical strategies for adapting responsiveness, which can increase their profit through customer loyalty.

Key words: Service Responsiveness • Customer loyalty

INTRODUCTION

Service responsiveness is an important contemporary issue that affect customer loyalty. Service responsiveness had been used as a system for helping employees to exhibit appropriate emotional responses towards the customer [1]. Moreover, responsiveness is important capability of an organization to cope with the change in customer demand [2] and to enhance organizational performance [3]. Thus, providing sufficient training to your staff members and clearly communicating goals regarding customer satisfaction can help organization improve customer responsiveness.

Besides that, businesses have to focus on service orientation to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Majority of the business pay more attention towards creating customer loyalty. Zook and James [4] emphasize that "loyalty is more profitable". As consumer loyalty depends primarily upon rendering quality service, the delivery process among business service orientation, frontline service employee performance and consumer response deserves more attention. This study therefore assessed the adaptation of responsiveness by front line employee in order to achieve customer loyalty. Specifically, this study examines the attributes of front

liners responsiveness and customer loyalty and test whether responsiveness attributes may affect customer loyalty.

Problem Statement: Today, consumers call the shots (who makes important decisions). With globalization and the internet providing nearly unlimited choices, power has shifted from corporations to consumers. This shift makes it nearly impossible for companies to sustain differentiation based solely on price or product. The only option that remains is the customer experience. The ability to retain and lock in customers in the face of competition is a major concern for businesses; especially those that invest heavily in advertising and customer acquisition. Hundreds and thousands of similar companies are targeting the same customers that you've worked so hard to earn.

World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), who declared Malaysia as "a destination full of unrealized potential" with the main strength as the availability of a vast range of diverse attractions to suit all tastes relatively affordable prices and; largely unspoilt destination. This creates a demand for vast F&B industry that can meet up local and tourist food demand. Eating-out is one of the manifestations of the changes [5] the crowd



Andaleeb and Conway, 2006&Tuomi, 2009& Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003

Fig. 1: Conceptual frame work.

is biggest at the end of the month after pay days. Families also celebrate birthdays and other success stories of family members at selected eating place to enjoy eating and to foster familial relations [6]. There were about 167,490 food and beverage establishments in 2015 with Number of persons engaged in this services was 891, 616 [7] representing an annual growth rate of 5.1% since 2010.

The economic census of food and beverage services revealed that the gross output generated by the services in these establishments was RM66.4billion, representing an annual growth of 12.2% or a total of RM29. 1billion since 2010. "The more you engage with customers, the clearer things become and the easier it is to determine what you should be doing." [8]. "A lack of responsiveness is possibly one of the major reasons that customers leave a company, which in turn weakens and ultimately destroys a business" [9]. Study finds that 70% of retail and restaurant customers never make a return visit (Jan 29, 2015). It is also said that "If you don't have any kind of relationship with a customer, they're simply not going to be a customer" [10]. These are the major problem that we find in our restaurant.

Literature Review: Food businesses grow as the individual capacity to cook and to eat food at home in no longer expected and it goes that traditional values expecting women to prepare food for the family is not compulsory anymore. As a result, the practice of eating-out has helped families and individuals to meet their food needs, biologically and socially. However, when there is so much and variety of foods around paying capacity is not limiting the consumption of food, the Malaysian population may be facing implications out of the eating behaviour [11].

The public benefits from the rampant cooked food services. Domestic task of food preparation is no longer a burden to those with daily tight schedule as food services are available nearby and at any time. "Working wives need not necessarily bear the burden of food

preparation. Eating-out among family members at weekend or public holiday enable parents to have quality time with their children [12] they also able to enjoy food of their choices as they normally less particular with food during weekdays.

The public also foster social relation by entertaining friends at food premises, as usually practice by businessman to foster economic relation with their partner or clients. To hold up this clients Restaurateurs must be responsive towards the customer which will give a sense of satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is influenced by specific product or service features and perceptions of quality. Satisfaction is also influenced by customer's emotional responses, their attributions neither perception of equity [13]. Hence as a result increased customer satisfaction can provide company benefits like customer loyalty [14]. Therefore this study wants to find out the weather responsiveness by the front line employee have a relation with customer loyalty.

Hypothesis Development and Conceptual Framework Employee Service Responsiveness to Customer Loyalty:

Responsiveness is the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service to their requirement which makes customer fell their importance towards service provider. Customer falls satisfaction once they are acknowledged by the service provider and given appropriate attention. Furthermore, [15] defines responsiveness such as speed and timeliness of service delivery. Moreover as responsiveness is one of the components of service quality that helps the organization to achieve customer satisfaction [16]. Moreover, only if the customers are satisfied will become a loyal towards the organization [17]. According to [18] loyal customers forge bonds with the company and behave differently from disloyal customers. In a long term, a loyal customer, however, benefits the firm involved and brings in more customers in through the process of word of mouth [19].

Therefore we can hypothesized that

H1: Employee service responsiveness has a significant relation with customer loyalty.

CONCLUSIONS

This conceptual paper where the framework is drawn from the relationship that is found in between the variable. This study will contribute by filling the knowledge gap in the Restaurateurs. And also this model will help to educate the owner of the Restaurateurs to have more emphasis on the employee service responsiveness, which will ensure customer loyalty with more profit. For the future researcher they can find out the antecedence or the factors for responsiveness.

According to the latest population census from the department of statistics (2017), Klang valley is home of approximately 7 million people, thus making it the most appropriate place to conduct a research project. And also the purchasing power of the people living in Klang valley is comparatively higher than other areas in Malaysian, thus, making it easier for a company to make their product and service [19]. Hence, this proposed conceptual model can be tested on Restaurateurs located in Klang valley of Malaysia.

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