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## Article

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## **Employing Sensory Marketing as a Promotional Advantage for Creating Brand Differentiation and Brand Loyalty**

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### **Abstract**

Sensory marketing is an up-coming tool that integrates the five human senses for generating a total experience that the customer keeps in mind. The main objective of the study is to identify the impact of sensory marketing on consumers to generate brand loyalty. The second objective of this study is to generate impact of sensory marketing on brand loyalty and also brings out the results, which can be adopted by marketers for the other products of same genre. The third objective is by using the sensory marketing to gain promotional advantage over competitors. SPSS 21 is used in this study. Random sampling is used to collect the data. Sample size is of 520 and 5- point Likert scale is used. The result of the study shows that the effective usage of the sensory marketing generates the brand differentiation and brand loyalty in the form of sale enhancement. Marketing manager can attain promotional advantage and retain the loyal customer by using sensorial environment.

**Keywords:** brand differentiation, brand loyalty, sensory marketing, customer.

### **1. Introduction and Literature Review**

Human senses, experiences and emotions of consumers are emerging as important marketing paradigm and an alternative main phenomenon (Achrol and Kotler, 2012). To accept and cooperate with the mentioned changes, marketers all around the world developed the marketing ways based on human emotion (Kotler et al. 2011). Feelings impact on various parameters such as priority and selection of retail marketing, store files, the time spent in the store, shopping satisfaction, satisfaction with a product or service, pleasure seeking and consumption-oriented shopping, consumer decision-making styles and the desire and interest rates of the consumer (Haghigi et al. 2010). During the recent years, the role of sensory experience in judging and deciding, in a wave of interest in marketing, is expressed as sensory marketing. There have been some researches concerning the role of the scattered senses on consumer behavior (Krishna and Schwarz, 2014). Sensory marketing involves senses of consumer and affects their perception, judgment and behavior (Krishna, 2012). Purpose of Sensory marketing is to send messages to the right hemisphere of the brain, stimulation of the consumer senses, and finally creating a bond between customer and product and inducing induce him to purchase (Costa et al. 2012).

## Employing Sensory Marketing as a Promotional Advantage

The essential difference between emotion and reason is that human beings act based on emotion and conclude based on the reason (Kotler et al. 2011). Using the unconscious sensory stimuli in sensory marketing can be an effective way to engage consumers and their behavior and affect their perception. As much as stimulants, in association with five senses, are in harmony and have high stimulating power, they will have more effect on the audience and customer (Hulten et al. 2012).

### *1.1 Objectives of the Study*

The main objective of the study is to identify the impact of sensory marketing on consumers to generate brand differentiation. The second objective of this study is to generate impact of sensory marketing on brand loyalty and also brings out the results, which can be adopted by marketers for the other products of same genre. The third objective is by using the sensory marketing to gain promotional advantage over competitors.

### *1.2 Research Questions*

- Does sensory marketing create brand differentiation?
- Does sensory marketing generate loyalty in terms of customers?
- Does sensory marketing obtain promotional advantage?

### *1.3 Hypothesis*

- **H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relation between sensory marketing and brand differentiation
- **H<sub>2</sub>:** There is significant relation between sensory marketing and brand loyalty

### *1.4 The Concept of Sensory Marketing*

The fundamental strategy of sensory marketing is to trigger emotional depth beyond the tangible characteristics of the product, where the brand will improve its recognition and strengthen customer loyalty (Lindstrom 2005). Sensory marketing looks to create positive experience through the five human senses, making consumers fall in love before, during and after the purchase decision; what is important, brand acknowledgment and how this wave can help solve new marketing challenges (Hulten, 2009). Krishna (2012) defines sensory marketing is "...marketing that engages the consumers' senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior". Lindstrom claimed that by using all the five senses "a total sensory experience would at least double, if not triple, the consumer's ability to memorize the brand" (Lindstrom 2005, p 23). While using senses consumer's attitude and behavior keep changing according to the atmosphere or environment. According to the marketing point of view, marketers started employing the human inclination as a strategy to put up for sale their goods or services by generating such atmosphere that allure to human senses at the point of sale. The formulation of a common definition for the sensory marketing, which translates as: the set of variables of shares controlled by the producer and/or distributor to place around products or services a specific multi-sensory atmosphere, either by through the characteristics of the product/service, either through communication in your favor, either through the atmosphere from the point of sale (Barros, 2004).

Kotler (1973) defines the atmosphere is "the creation of a consumption environment that produces specific emotional effects on the person, like pleasure or excitement that can increase his possibility of buying". He considers that the creation of this atmosphere as the most important strategic way of differentiation the product or service for retailers.

According to Rieunier (2000), the elements of atmosphere are:

- Visual factors: - Colors of the interior and exterior restaurant, equipment, illumination, cleanness
- Sonorous factors - back ground music, sounds
- Olfactory factors - Natural aroma, artificial aroma
- Tactile factors - equipment Temperature
- Gustative factors – Sampling

Now the marketing manager can differentiate the brand by employing the synergy of sensory marketing and encouraging atmosphere.

### *1.5 Impact of Sensory Marketing on Consumer*

#### *1.5.1 Visual (Sight) Marketing*

Vision is dominant and important among others senses since the coordination between eyes and brain, apparently to perform better than any mechanism ever invented (Winter & Winter, 2003). Both brain and eyes have the fast coordination. Any human can notice a visual objective. Sight plays pivotal role to obtain 80% of the information that are passed on through this sense (Herz & Engen, 1996). According to memory retention studies, the identification of company name from customer does not depend on whether the customer sees the name it or not! Consumer can remember up to 78% a printed message that is in color or black and white. The difference depends on the resources and its intensity: artificial light or natural light would enhance the positive sensational feelings at point of sale where customer spends the time (Rieunier 2000).

#### *1.5.2 Auditory (Sound) Marketing*

Sound is used in advertising to give music in a message to make the customer remembered it. However, music plays important role for sensory marketing manager, since the researchers put focus music on behavior at the point of sale for example. The subjectivity of the prospective customer needs to handle its capacity depending on the effectiveness of a selling environment (Célier, 2004). Music plays pivotal role to make the environment galvanized at a selling point. Customer's perception depends a lot on lighting system, decoration, speakers, big flat Television etc. Back ground music is so important to create the attraction in the environment for customer. High volume in music creates more consumption of the consumer in a bar.

#### *1.5.3 Olfactory (Smell) Marketing*

Scientific studies have shown that 75 % of our emotions are generated by the smell (Lindstrom, 2005). Scientifically prove that smell make the reason to generate 75 % of our emotions. This is why, smell has been using frequently in every commercial place. We can close our eyes, cover up our ears, do not call and say no to taste, but smell is element of an air that you breathe (Lindstrom, 2005). The sense of smell engages 45% communication about the brand (Kotler and Lindstrom, 2005). But the usage of olfactory marketing practice in the fast food industry is the use of artificial smell to galvanize the customer. However, it is proved that in many study smell can change the behavior of the consumer. In a study conducted by Krishna et al (2010), they made the outcomes that in long-term impact of smell reasons more aromatic memory and an fragrant object is much gorgeous than non- fragrant one. In another research by Chebat and Michon (2003) made in a shopping center, they said that the odor directly puts affect the impression of consumers and has a significant influence on buyers' behaviors.

#### 1.5.4 Gustative (Taste) Marketing

Taste marketing basically attaches to the intrinsic attributes of a product that is effective technique to differentiate the product in the alimentary market, in many researches, taste have been employed in toys, baby's bottle, cigarettes, medicine (Célier, 2004). Due to the scientific advancement, manufacturers exploit to adapt their products; this sense has been using widely to meet the local preference: e.g. German consumer wants to have sweet-salty mix, but British consumer likes softly sour (Célier, 2004). Scientists have come to know the combination of salty, sweet, bitter and sour with green, red, yellow and blue (Célier, 2004).

Provided that and the way of serving the food with beverages as instinctive, expression are significant for taste experience (Klosse et al. 2004). Restaurant managements and marketing experts can catch the attention of more customers through telling a food or meal with colorful names. According to the many researches, this planned process has enhanced 27 % of restaurants sale (Wansink et al. 2005). Costa et al (2012) in their research on restaurant industry made conclusion that sensory marketing, as an experience in marketing, is a strategy that plans to attain buyer's loyalty.

In promotional technique, marketing managers make comparative advertisement of taste to induce the customer or through sampling or use the product for free tasting. Such kind of promotional activities make the customer ready to purchase the product at once that they already liked or tasted it (Rieunier, 2000).

#### 1.5.5 Tactile (Touch) Marketing

Touch sense linked with brand making has 25% share (Kotler and Lindstrom, 2005). By touching the products, buyer behavior and shopping attitude is positively affected (Peck and Wiggins, 2006). Peck and Wiggins (2006) proposes that the touching the touch-screen electronic products support customers to interact with the products. One reason might be the fact that the eye alone is not enough to judge brands like computers or mobile (Hultén, 2013). Flavors connected with brand building possess 31 % share (Kotler and Lindstrom, 2005). Marketers try to consider the emotion glimmered off by making touch while having the product conception (clothing, pen, steering, crisps pack, perfume bottle...) For example, French mineral water brand Valvert seduces while touching it because its natural origin sources come from the heart of the mountains. The customer's perception is affected regarding at sale point by cutleries size and weight, the comfort of a chair, the softness of the napkins, according to Rieunier (2000) well – being sensation has major dimension in terms of touch. Thus, the concept of sensory marketing is a deep and complicated concept due to its dealing with consumer's unconscious, perception, feeling and taste. This practice is essential for controlling the atmosphere elements.

#### 1.6 Brand Differentiation

Advertising, lighting system, product logo, product color, web site and product design are elements of visual stimuli to make it product differentiation, mount loyalty, and avert clutter and competition (Hultén et al., 2009). Many sort of sensory elements like music, sound brand, jingles atmosphere theme, can provide sound experience and be applied as a sensory marketing tool to product differentiation (Hultén et al., 2009). A sensory marketing model “offers a firm the opportunity to differentiate and express a brand through sensorial strategies, based on cognitive, emotional or value-based elements in relation to the human mind and senses” (Hultén, 2012).

Brand identity plays pivotal role in forming brand. Brand is distinguished regarding its identity. The basic aims of brand identity is of consumer recognition as a brand's distinction from its competitors. Different elements can form brand identity like visual, auditory and combination of other sensory elements that make brand recognition, promise, differentiation, mutual communication and proprietary (Lister Butler Consulting, 2010). There are many graphic devices, unique designed, color and shape, logo, symbol, brand voice, slogans and so many features that linked with a brand are all elements of a brand's identity.

### *1.7 Brand Loyalty*

According to De Pelsmaecker et al. (2013), taste is precious in order to help buyers form loyalty to a brand.

Brand loyalty exhibits customer's affection with a brand. Many researchers claim that service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty have become equally important for marketing management because they are creating reasons for dining satisfaction (Kaplan & Norton, 2001). It have also been proved that customer satisfaction and food quality play major role for success and gain competitive advantage on the bases of consumer's purchase intention, loyalty and voluntarily spread positive word of mouth, suggestions, greetings (Olsen, 2002).

The basic aim of sensory marketing is to generate deeply emotion rather than characteristics of the product by improving brand knowledge and make stronger customer loyalty (Lindstrom, 2005). Thus we observe the character of five senses in the relation world; they also enhance the feelings and emotion that increase the sale and customer loyalty. If the product or service provides an enjoyable experience and satisfies the customer's needs, success is assured". The purpose of sensory marketing is to develop the way to indulge the customer falling in love with the brand as quick as possible and also make them surprised with offering. By using these strategies marketers can access such customers who made sensorial experience with the brand and would become loyal customers (Clegg, 2003).

## **2. Research Methodology**

SPSS 21 is used in this study. Quantitative research is employed in this study for doing data analysis. Probability random sampling method is employed in this research. All the questions measured on 5 points Likert scale, where 1 was (strongly agree), 2 (agree), 3 (neutral), 4(disagree), and 5(strongly disagree).

Self-made questionnaire is used in this study. Five items are used to calculate the Sensory Marketing, four items are used to measure the brand Differentiation and six items are used to measure the brand Loyalty. The data is collected from the students of The Islamia University Bahawalpur. Who visit regularly Fast Food restaurant. 520 questionnaires distributed among targeted population and 478 questionnaires returned.

## **3. Data Analysis**

### *3.1 Assessment of Normality Test*

Distributional test shows that data is distributed normally on every scale. The skewness value ranged from -0.36 to -0.887 and the kurtosis all value ranged from -0.111 to -0.941.

**Table 1: Indicator's Mean, S.D, Variance, Skewness, and Kurtosis (N=520)**

| <b>Mean</b> | <b>S.D</b> | <b>Variance</b> | <b>Skewness</b> | <b>Kurtosis</b> |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2.67        | 1.16       | 1.56            | -.403           | -.557           |
| 2.62        | 1.14       | 1.43            | -.596           | -.369           |
| 2.68        | 1.21       | 1.70            | -.804           | -.198           |
| 2.62        | 1.14       | 1.43            | -.887           | -.111           |
| 2.69        | 1.28       | 1.72            | -.434           | -.466           |
| 2.24        | 1.12       | 1.27            | -.567           | -.146           |
| 2.85        | 1.34       | 1.76            | -.588           | -.295           |
| 2.44        | 1.13       | 1.32            | -.701           | -.738           |
| 2.62        | 1.14       | 1.43            | -.670           | -.346           |
| 2.67        | 1.16       | 1.56            | -.809           | -.216           |
| 2.63        | 1.15       | 1.45            | -.645           | -.528           |
| 2.61        | 1.12       | 1.40            | -.614           | -.787           |
| 2.56        | 1.13       | 1.38            | -.467           | -.941           |
| 2.67        | 1.16       | 1.56            | -.465           | -.523           |
| 2.56        | 1.13       | 1.38            | -.367           | -.632           |

**Table 2: Results of Internal Reliability Tests (N=520)**

| <b>Construct</b>             | <b>Item</b> | <b>Cronbach's Alpha</b> | <b>Item –Total Correlation</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Sensory Marketing</b>     | X1          | .720                    | .819                           |
|                              | X2          |                         | .607                           |
|                              | X3          |                         | .823                           |
|                              | X4          |                         | .607                           |
|                              | X5          |                         | .876                           |
| <b>Brand Differentiation</b> | X6          | .874                    | .729                           |
|                              | X7          |                         | .869                           |
|                              | X8          |                         | .889                           |
|                              | X9          |                         | .607                           |
| <b>Brand Loyalty</b>         | X10         | .864                    | .819                           |
|                              | X11         |                         | .730                           |
|                              | X12         |                         | .722                           |
|                              | X13         |                         | .722                           |
|                              | X14         |                         | .823                           |
|                              | X15         |                         | .730                           |

To calculate the level of significance of the model ANOVA test is used, this test shows the effect of the independent variable sensory marketing on the dependent variable Brand differentiation. The results show the model is significant.

**Table 3: ANOVA**

| Model             | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig  |
|-------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| <b>Regression</b> | 335.839        | 1   | 335.839     | 1.667 | .000 |
| <b>Residual</b>   | 103.717        | 518 | .200        |       |      |
| <b>Total</b>      | 439.556        | 519 |             |       |      |

### 3.2 Predictors: (Constant), Sensory Marketing

a. Dependent variable: Brand differentiation

Regression analysis is used for hypothesis testing H1; sensory marketing has strong impact on the brand differentiation regarding the employing sensory marketing as a promotional advantage for creating brand differentiation  $P=.000 < \alpha$  value of 0.05 indicating significance. The sensory marketing has Beta=.874 that shows each unit changes in sensory marketing change in brand differentiation positively .874 items.

**Table 4: Coefficients**

| Un-Standardized Coefficients |      |            | Standardized Coefficients |        |      |
|------------------------------|------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Model                        | B    | Std. Error | Beta                      | T      | Sig  |
| <b>Constant</b>              | .524 | .053       | 9.900                     |        | .000 |
| <b>Sensory Marketing</b>     | .739 | .018       | .874                      | 40.995 | .000 |

Dependent variable: brand differentiation

To calculate the level of significance of the model ANOVA test is used, this test shows the effect of the independent variable sensory marketing on the dependent variable Brand loyalty. The results show the model is significant.

**Table 5: ANOVA**

| Model             | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig  |
|-------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| <b>Regression</b> | 453.231        | 1   | 453.231     | 1.522 | .000 |
| <b>Residual</b>   | 154.291        | 518 | .298        |       |      |
| <b>Total</b>      | 607.522        | 519 |             |       |      |

### 3.3 Predictors: (Constant), Sensory Marketing

b. Dependent variable: Brand loyalty

Regression analysis is used for hypothesis testing H2; sensory marketing has strong impact on the brand loyalty regarding the employing sensory marketing as a promotional advantage for creating brand loyalty.  $P=.000 < \alpha$  value of 0.05 indicating significance. The sensory marketing has Beta=.864 that shows each unit changes in sensory marketing change in brand differentiation positively .864 items.

**Table 6: Coefficients**

| Un-Standardized Coefficients |      |            | Standardized Coefficients |        |      |
|------------------------------|------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Model                        | B    | Std. Error | Beta                      | T      | Sig  |
| <b>Constant</b>              | .645 | .065       | 9.997                     |        | .000 |
| <b>Sensory Marketing</b>     | .858 | .022       | .864                      | 39.008 | .000 |

Dependent variable: brand loyalty



#### **4. Results and Discussion**

The sense of sight appeared as a store decoration and provided a pleasant ambience through its warm lighting, color theme and soft seating. They endeavor to form it a comfortable, happy and inviting experience for the consumer. The menu was presented in the form of appetizing pictures along with multiple product displays. Many packaging was employed in the form of holiday promotions, seasonal products such as Eid and at lunch and dinner time.

The evoking sense of sound was of sweet low music in the hall, which attracted to the taste of Pakistani customers, sending a pleasant, relaxing, life style and “feel good”. The sense of smell was hit with fresh baking food in restaurant and also baking fresh sandwiches to order along with the pleasing aroma of fresh toasted bread. Ice Cream and coffee is also made fresh for the consumer evoked the sense of smell.

The sense of touch appeared as a packing of products that the consumer can observe before purchasing. Gifts sets and cookies specifically made to be attracting to the sense of touch for the consumer. The evoking sense of taste was through imaginative and tasty product choices launched by the stores. Fresh ingredients are employed and new menu items were launched to hit the taste of the customer of Bahawalpur. Product innovation is a significant part of the marketing strategy of Fast food restaurant, introducing such kind of product as pizza, zinger burger, fish shots, fish pieces, and chicken nuggets.

The outcomes of the brand differentiation exhibit that the brand of fast food restaurant is differentiable or identifiable through seeing the logo. By using sensory marketing the atmosphere of fast food restaurant really differentiates from the others. The restaurant has adapted to the local atmosphere and this has to be proven as a successful brand recognized as an outcome of using sensory marketing. There have been achieved to be identified from the competition, to be at the top of the customers mind and to offer unique experiences with the brand.

The result of brand loyalty shows that by developing pleasant and memorable moments with the product and service loyalty and sale enhancement have been achieved. By using the sensational taste, customer likes to visit the restaurant again and again. The result also shows that providing sensorial environment customer enjoys the atmosphere with his family and relatives. This outcome also exhibits that by employing the sensorial atmosphere, customer will remember the name, its products and services for many years. This is a cheapest way to promote fast food restaurant.

#### **5. Managerial Implications**

The results of this research will be beneficial to the marketing managers looking to widen the scope of their current marketing policies in the attempt of targeting and retaining consumers in this way. The data collection also shows the significance of considering the local customs and cultural values in the implementation of sensory marketing, as the local customer preferences must guide the specific factors of its integration for customize it on the bases of customer.

#### **6. Conclusion**

These outcomes show the effectiveness of implementing the sensory marketing in the fast food industry in Pakistan. This data also demonstrates that sensory marketing enhanced customer purchases and profit. Sensory marketing is a valuable and profitable weapon in gaining competitive advantage in the form of brand differentiation and attaining customer loyalty. This is a better way to cut promotional expenses and increase profit.

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