



A descriptive and exploratory study on the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on customer brand loyalty.

Student Name: Michaela Raal
Student Number: 19015052
Supervisor: Ivan Mkhomazi
Module: RESM8419

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I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Hons in Strategic Brand Management degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

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Abstract

Economic value has moved beyond delivering quality services. Economic value now includes distinctive brand experiences. Brand experiences are vital in developing brand loyalty and achieving business sustainability (Ong, Lee & Ramayah11, 2018). Customers may enjoy different types of experience with a brand through sensation, affection, behavior, and intellect. This paper seeks to determine the influence each component of brand experience has on the customer's brand loyalty particularly in the restaurant industry. Customers revisiting four of the restaurants in the Village, in the Pretoria area provided 21 units of feedback for this study. A mixed method approach allowed for this study to remain flexible in nature. This allowed the researcher to gather quantitative information as well as qualitative information which allowed the researcher to gain in-depth information regarding the perceptions held by customers concerning the influence of the various dimensions of brand experience on customer brand loyalty. Findings revealed that the four different types of brand experience influenced customers brand loyalty differently. Managerial implications are addressed in the discussion section.

Key words: Brand experience; customer brand loyalty; word of mouth; willingness to pay more; repurchase intentions; restaurant industry.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Contextualization (Background and Orientation)

The restaurant industry is the chosen industry for this study, as it has significant meaning to the researcher. In the past birthday celebrations were special events people looked forward to because they were a time to dine out as a family. Eating out was not common at that time and left individuals with a unique and lasting experience. However, the days are gone when consumers tended to visit a restaurant only to celebrate special occasions. Now, dining out has become a casual lifestyle of today's consumer behavior globally (Ong, Lee & Ramayah, 2018). Customers are no longer only seeking tangible benefits, but also intangible benefits such as unique experiences in their purchase (Morrison & Crane, 2007); (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). As a result, competition has expanded from simply providing functional value through delivering quality services, price, or food quality, to providing symbolic value such as unique dining experience. For the purpose of this study the researcher explored the previously established positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty (Hussein, 2018) and what that means for restaurants in today's world when focusing on creating an experience in order to achieve increased word of mouth, willingness to pay more and repurchase intention (Ong, et al., 2018).

The issue investigated in this study is relevant to communication, branding and marketing as loyal customers do not only buy more from the chosen company, but they can also increase sales by recommending the products to others. In today's world word-of-mouth and peer recommendations are the most trusted sources for product information (PayMotion Ecommerce Blog, 2019). Furthermore, Generation Z is known as the least loyal generation craving an authentic brand experience (Inphantry, 2019).

1.2 Rationale

Research in the restaurant industry has investigated numerous factors such as price, food quality, service quality, atmosphere, and experience (Basri, Ahmad, Anuar, & Ismail, 2016); (Jin, Lee, & Huffman, 2012). Most such studies are motivated to understand the factors of value creation which are attractive to improve the restaurant business either through purchase intention, customer retention, word of mouth, or willingness to pay more. This is in line with the argument proposed by Reichheld (1996), who claimed that superior value creation is vital for a business to achieve better profits for sustainable business performance through customer loyalty.

However, there is a dearth of studies measuring brand experience as compared to customer experience in the hospitality industry. Customer experience research in the restaurant industry typically measures experience with the environment, food quality, and price fairness (Ali, Amin, & Cobanoglu, 2016); (Jin et al., 2012). This study was conducted as it is important to measure experience based on the brand rather than solely on the customer perspective because a unique brand experience will serve as a sustainable competitive advantage in the restaurant industry (Aaker, 1989).

This study explores an ongoing trend namely the Foodie trend (Forbes.com, 2019) as well as the importance of creating a dining experience from the perspective of restaurant owners with the hopes of attracting customers. Based on the two-mentioned evident trends this topic is deemed relevant. However, this paper may only be relevant in South Africa but due to the flexible nature of the topic, the study can be conducted in a similar fashion in other countries.

1.3 Problem Statement

Brand experience has attracted a lot of attention in marketing practice. Marketing practitioners have come to realize that understanding how consumers experience brands is critical for developing marketing strategies for goods and services (Zorentello, Brakus & Scmitt, 2009).

Previously it has been established that there is a direct positive relationship between brand loyalty and brand experience (Ong, et al.,2018).However, the problem is that research has largely ignored the exact nature and dimensional structure of brand experiences and studies on customer experience in the restaurant industry have largely ignored the fact that experience may also derive from sensation, affection, behavioral, and intellectual from the perspective of branding (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009). Recently a few studies have focused on the different types of brand experience in the restaurant industry but none in South Africa (Hussein, 2018) ;(Ong, et al.,2018). Furthermore, previous research into the relationship between these two constructs has only been conducted through a quantitative approach resulting in no evidence from a customer's perspective as to why the relationship between these two constructs exist.

1.4 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is explore and describe the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on customer brand loyalty. The researcher will attempt to confirm the quantitative results found in past studies regarding the influence between these constructs as well as attempt to gain further understanding as to why this influence exists. The study has an applied goal as the findings aim to address a real-life business problem which includes the importance of having an understanding of how customers experience the brand when creating marketing strategies.

1.4.1 Research Questions

These questions have been adapted from the study 'The impact of brand experience on loyalty' (Ong, et al.,2018).

RQ 1: Does the consumers sensory experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?

RQ 2: Does the consumers affective experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?

RQ 3: Does the consumers behavioural experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?

RQ 4: Does the consumers intellectual experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?

1.5 Research Objectives and Hypotheses

1.5.1 Research Objectives

Exploratory objectives explore an unknown area to obtain new insight, identify key concepts or identify key stakeholders. Descriptive objectives describe the characteristics or relationship between variables (du Plooy, 2009). The objectives of the study is to explore the influence of the four dimensions of experience on word of mouth ,willingness to pay more and repurchase Intention. Furthermore, to determine and describe the participants reasoning behind this negative or positive influence between each experience and WOM, WPM and RI.

1.5.2 Hypotheses development

Adapted from the study 'The impact of brand experience on loyalty' (Ong, et al.,2018).

Sensory experience refers to a consumer's experience as derived from sensory interaction with the brand such as sight, touch, smell and listen (Brakus, 2009).

H1a: Sensory experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM).

H1b: Sensory experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM).

H1c: Sensory experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI).

Affective experience refers to the consumer's experience as derived from emotional interaction with the brand such as positive or negative feels (Ong, et al.,2018).

H2a: Affective experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM).

H2b: Affective experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM).

H2c: Affective experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI).

Behavioral experience refers to a consumer's experience with the brand which leads to an action-based exhibition such as taking photos and co-preparation of the food (Brakus, 2009).

H3a: Behavioral experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM).

H3b: Behavioral experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM).

H3c: Behavioral experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI).

Intellectual experience refers to a consumer's experience derived from intellectual interaction with the brand such as positive thinking and curiosity (Voon, Jager, Chitra, Keuh & Jussem, 2013).

H4a: Intellectual experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM).

H4b: Intellectual experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM).

H4c: Intellectual experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI).

1.6 Conceptualization

The key concepts include brand loyalty, brand experience, word of mouth, willingness to pay more and repurchase intention. The researcher will attempt to define and discuss the relevance of the concepts in this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

For the purpose of this research two models will be used. The Brakus et al. (2009) framework for brand experience and the Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Loyalty Model (Singh, Singh & Vij, 2017). Two models are used in this study as it is a recently studied approach to brand experience and brand loyalty and for this reason authors are combining the two established models (Walter, et al., 2013). This is due to the fact that one single model that analyses the specific components of this study has not been developed yet.

Brakus et al. (2009) provides a well-defined framework from which more confirmatory research can be conducted to measure the intensity of consumers' experience with brands. Furthermore, this framework aids in determining the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty and brand satisfaction (Walter, et al., 2013). This framework includes four dimensions namely: sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual. Each of the four dimensions include three items (figure 1) that help determine the intensity of the consumer's brand experience (Brakus et al., 2009). The model is useful in academic research but also in marketing practice. As marketers engage in projects to understand and improve the experience their brands provide for their customers, they can use the scale for assessment, planning, and tracking purposes (Brakus et al., 2009).

The four dimensions of Brakus et al. (2009) framework:

Sensory experience refers to the experience derived from sensory interactions, for example smell (Ong, et al., 2018). Sensory brand experience refers to bodily experiences based on visual, aural, olfactory, gustatory and tactile experiences (Barnes, Mattsson & Sorenson, 2012). Affective experience refers to the experience derived from the emotional interaction, for example positive or negative feelings (Ong, et al., 2018). Affective brand experience refers to feelings, sentiments and emotions (Barnes, et al., 2014). Behavioural experience refers to the experience derived with the brand that leads to an action, for example taking photos. Behavioural brand experience refers to physical actions, bodily

experiences and behaviours (Barnes, et al., 2014). Intellectual experience refers to the experience derived from intellectual interactions for example curiosity (Ong, et al., 2018). Intellectual brand experience refers to thought, stimulation and problem-solving (Barnes, et al., 2014).

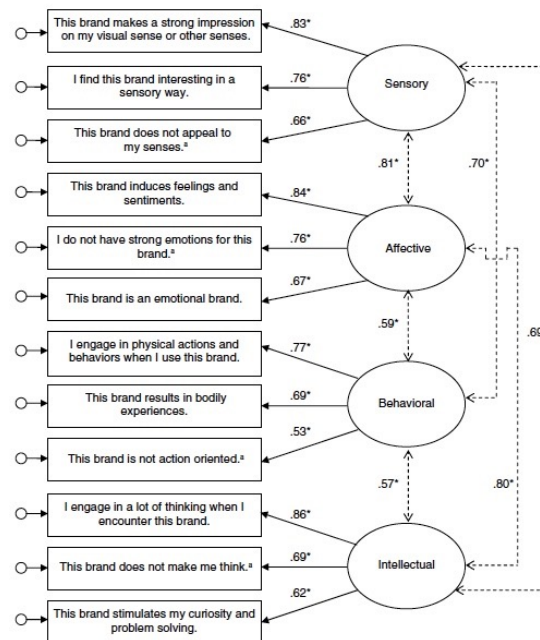


Figure 1 :Brakus. Brand Experience: The Four-Factor Model(2009).

This model is supported by the theory of value creation (Reichheld ,1996). Reichheld stated that superior value creation is fundamental for a business to achieve better profits for sustainable business performance through customer loyalty. Hogarth-Scott, Watson, and Wilson (1996) suggested avoiding using complicated brand equity theories for studies related to SMEs. The research was conducted on customers in the restaurant industry focusing on SME's and therefore this theory is deemed viable (Ong, et al., 2018).

Past literature which made use of Brakus et al. (2009) framework as well as the 12 items in the four dimensions (sensory, intellectual, affective and behavioral) provided future researchers with additional knowledge regarding the framework. The brand experience scale displays validity from branding measures and scales such as brand involvement, brand attachment, brand personality, customer delight, and brand evaluations (Brakus, et al., 2009). In the article ' Brand experience – how it relates to

brand personality, consumer satisfaction and consumer loyalty: an empirical analysis of the adidas brand' the brand experience supported the results reached in Brakus et al. (2009), (Walter, et al., 2013). However, as like most previous studies consumer satisfaction and brand personality is included when analyzing brand experience and brand loyalty. Thus, resulting in the lack of information regarding the direct link between brand experience and brand loyalty. The behavioral variables are inherently difficult as when they are added to the data it results in the data being unstable (Walter, et al.,2013). This resulting in two independent analyses. The first containing the sensory, affective and intellectual and the second only containing the behavioral variables (Walter, et al., 2013).

The Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Loyalty Model . The structure of this conceptualized model is divided into three parts. The first part presents the antecedents of customer loyalty (customer satisfaction, commitment, trust and image) identified from the review of marketing literature. In the second part, conflict handling and switching costs are proposed as the moderators. The third part proposes the consequences of customer loyalty(word-of-mouth, repurchase intention, price premium, and share-of-wallet (Singh, et al., 2017) WPM, WOM, and RI is how brand loyalty is commonly being measured (Ong, lee & Ramayah, 2018); (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

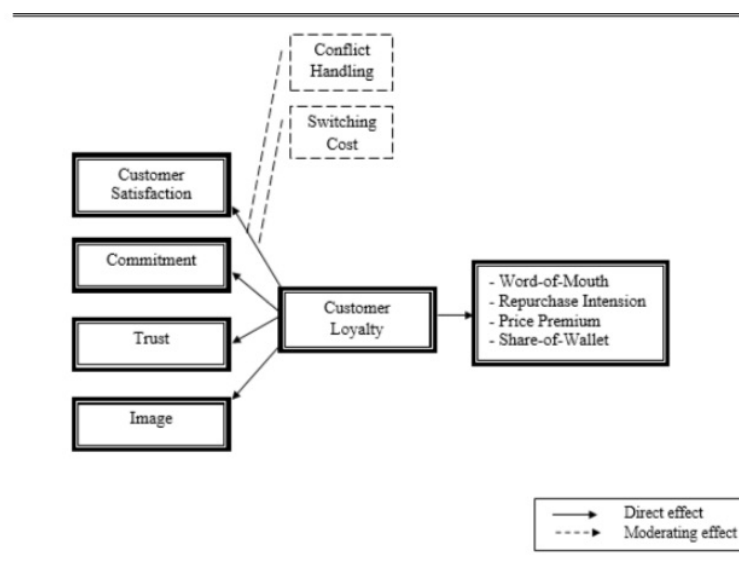


Figure 2: Conceptualized Model of Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Loyalty.

The Consequences of Customer Loyalty

Word of mouth (WOM) is an oral communication. Loyal customers act as information channels linking friends, relatives and potential customers (Singh, et al., 2017).

Customers who are loyal are more likely to present constructive word-of-mouth for a company (Dick & Basu, 1994); (Luo & Homburg, 2007). Repurchase Intention is the individuals intention to buy the same product from the same company taking into consideration the individuals situation and circumstances. Loyalty and repurchase intention is said to have the strongest positive relationship (Singh, et al., 2017) as loyalty gives birth to repurchase intention (Fullerton, 2003). Price premium is the customers willingness to pay more for a certain product or service compared to others. A basic indicator of loyalty is the amount a customer will pay for the brand in comparison with another brand offering similar benefits (Aaker, 1996). It is suggested that organizations with long lasting clients can often charge more for their products or services (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Therefore, it can be assumed that there is a significant relationship between loyalty and price premium (Singh, et al., 2017). Share of Wallet is the amount of the customers total spending that a business gains through its product or service. Loyalty has positive effects on the share of a customer's expenditure (Waarden, 2007). The 'share of wallet' factor requires the researcher to apply more resources such as time *than the other three* mentioned factors above require and for this reason it will not be included in this study. This will therefore act as a limitation of the study.

Past literature has analyzed the impact of personal characteristics on the impact of loyalty behaviors (WOM, WPR, RI) concluding individual characteristics such as gender, age, income level and education level are suggested to have a moderating effect on perceived value/customer satisfaction such that loyalty behaviors are demonstrably changed (Sahin, 2014). However, there is a dearth of literature of the link between brand experience and the brand loyalty behaviors also known as the consequences of consumer loyalty (Ong, et al., 2018). This study therefore aims to adapt previous studies which have made use of these models and conduct it in a South African context in order to further accept the hypotheses that there is positive relationship between the four dimensions of brand experience and brand loyalty.

2.2 Literature Review

This section presents discussion of relevant literature that has been published relating to the brand experience and brand loyalty concepts.

Brand experience

The concept of experience became apparent in the field of consumption and marketing through Holbrook and Hirschman's 1982 pioneering article. They explained experience as something that provides customers with a way to engage on a physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual level when consuming the product or service. This made the interaction meaningful (Cova & Carù, 2003). Over the last decade the importance of experience and more so brand experience has been highlighted and subsequently gained the attention of many marketing practitioners and businesses, as it has become critical to developing marketing strategies and gaining a competitive advantage (Brakus, et al., 2009). Brand experience is theorized as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses that are evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design, identity, packaging, communications, and environment (Sahin, Zehir & Kitapçı, 2011). Furthermore the brand related stimuli can be placed in two distinct categories based on the customers response to the stimuli, namely internal response and behavioral response (Hussein, 2018). Internal response is the response customers have towards brand related sensations, feelings and cognitions and a behavioral response is the response customers have towards brand design, identity, packaging and communications (Hussein, 2018).

Brand experience is related but also empirically distinct from other brand constructs such as the brand evaluation, brand affective and associative constructs which include brand involvement, consumer delight and brand personality (Brakus, et al., 2009). Unlike brand experience the other constructs are evaluated according to general evaluations that are based on beliefs or affective reactions, brand experience is not measured by general evaluations but rather specific feelings and sensations. The other brand constructs are also measured by a motivational state whereas brand experience can take place even when the consumer does not show interest in the brand (Brakus, et al., 2009) ; (Sahin, et al., 2011).

Experience can be divided into four broad categories according to two dimensions: 'the level of active participation' and the 'level of immersion vs absorption' (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Schmitt (1999) identified five types of experience: sensory experience, affective experience, creative cognitive experience, physical experience, behavioral and lifestyle experience and social identity experience. Recently, a new framework has emerged for brand experience (Brakus, et al., 2009), which is in contrast to Pine and Gilmore (1998) and Schmitt (1999). The new framework suggests that brand experience be tested using only four dimensions namely: sensory experience, affective experience, intellectual experience and behavioral experience. These four dimensions were not identified from literature but rather from explorative and confirmatory factor analysis. Six further studies were conducted to ensure and prove that the scale was valid and reliable (Walter, et al., 2013).

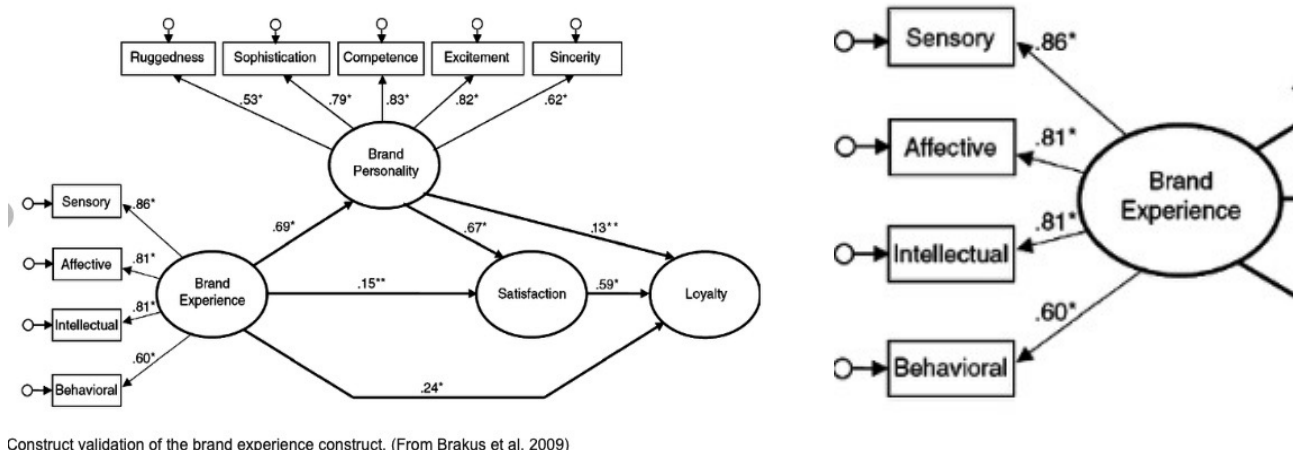


Figure 3: Brand experience diagram (2009)

Yet many studies have largely ignored the possibility that experience may be derived by the sensation, affection, behavior and the intellectual perspective of a brand (Brakus, et al., 2009). However, the past studies on brand experience have shown the impact of brand experience both directly and indirectly on satisfaction and loyalty (Sahin, et al., 2011). This study aims to explore and form conclusions by analyzing the relationships between each component of brand experience on customer brand loyalty in order to fill the gap between literature and practical issues (Ong, et al., 2018).

Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty is defined as the biased behavioral response expressed over time by some decision-making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of brands and it is a function of a psychological process (Mellens, et al., 1996). Brand loyalty is a deep commitment to a preferred product or service in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts which have the possibility of causing switching behavior. This theory causes repetitive same-brand purchasing (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). When defining and evaluating brand loyalty it is imperative to differentiate between repurchasing behavior and brand loyalty. Repurchasing behavior only considers the repurchasing behavior as important, regardless of the degree of commitment. Brand loyalty focuses on the repurchasing behavior as well as the antecedents of behavior (Bloemer & Kasper, 1995). Commitment is therefore a critical part of defining brand loyalty as it is the determining factor between brand loyalty and mere repurchasing behavior. Commitment is the pledging or binding of an individual to his/her brand choice (Kiesler, 1968: 448)

Based on previous research three general insights have been generated regarding brand loyalty. The first insight states that not all brand loyal relationships are alike in strength or in character. The second insight states that some brand relationships that are not identified as loyal according to the dominant theoretical assumptions are especially meaningful and the third insight states that current approaches to the classification accept some brands that under scrutiny do not possess characteristics of loyalty or strength (Fournier & Yao, 1997). Future research has determined that in order to test true loyalty behavioral and attitudinal behavior aspects must be measured and explained (Curtis, 2009). Despite the research conducted on brand loyalty, the understanding of the phenomenon remains incomplete and for this reason it is important that the research on brand loyalty increases and continues.

Customer Brand loyalty is crucial for competing and remaining sustainable in the industry one is competing in, as loyal customers are a precondition to acquire high market share and a large customer base (Aaker, 1996); (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). To acquire loyal customers many companies, focus on value saving and benefits such as coupons and loyalty programs (Bridson, Evans, & Hickman, 2008). However, this

method is not always a success (Yi & Jeon, 2003) The brand loyalty this research will focus on is the loyalty that is formed by nothing other than the brand itself.

Brand loyalty is a vital elements of brand equity (Aaker, 1996). The loyalty pyramid framework which places customers in certain categories based on their level of loyalty can be used when evaluating brand loyalty. The bottom of the pyramid named 'switches' speaks of the customers that have no brand loyalty and the top of the pyramid speaks of the individuals that are committed to the brand as the brand is very important functionally and as an expression of the customer's personality (Moisescu, 2006). However, willingness to pay more(WPM),word of mouth(WOM) and repurchase intention(RI) is a common method used to measure brand loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001

The importance of WOM communication in the service sector is well documented. WOM communication can be positive, neutral or negative (Sahin, 2014) ,but managers are obviously more interested in promoting positive WOM (Hutchinson, Lai & Wang, 2009). WPM has been defined as the maximum amount of money a customer is willing to spend for a product or service (Sahin, 2014) and the willingness on the part of the customer to continue purchasing despite an increase in price. According to Reichheld and Sasser (1990), loyal customers have lower price elasticity.RI refers to a customer's willingness to maintain a relationship with a particular brand and to make the next purchase from the same brand (Sahin, 2014).

Many previous studies have analyzed brand loyalty as one single component but academics have expressed the need to analyze brand loyalty as a separate component consisting of WOM, WPM and RI (Ong, et al., 2018). For this reason, WOM, WPM and RI also known as the consequences of customer loyalty will be used to analyze brand loyalty in this research. These elements also ensure that the behavioral and attitudinal aspects are considered which as mentioned above is important in measuring true brand loyalty (Ong, et al., 2018j) as WPM and WOM are classified as attitudinal while RI is categorized as behavioral (Jaiswel & Niraj, 2011).

The relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty remains equivocal. There is however consensus among multiple studies that there is a direct link between

these two constructs. Brakus et al. (2009) and Chen and Chen's (2010) studies found a positive effect of quality experience on tourist brand loyalty. The positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty implies that the more customers have a positive experience, the higher loyalty will be achieved (Hussein, 2018). The study on the Indonesian casual dining industry concluded that there is a direct link between brand experience and brand loyalty (Hussein, 2018). Several studies were performed about love to brand, brand loyalty and oral advertising including the study of Khademi & Akhavanfar (2015). This study concluded that consumers that have an emotional attachment will show higher levels of loyalty, spread more the word of mouth about brand and are willing to pay more for brand.

A study conducted on the Malaysian casual dining restaurants in 2018 found there to be a direct link between brand loyalty and brand experience. This study further detailed the link between WOM, RI AND WPM and the sensory, intellectual, affective and behavioural experience (Ong, et al., 2018). The study found that the sensory experience impacted the WPM and RI. The affective experience impacted the WOM and RI. The behavioural experience impacted WPM and WOM and that the intellectual experience impacted all three: WOM, WPM and RI (Ong, et al., 2018). The research on the link between these concepts is however limited (Brakus, et al., 2009) and for this reason the research will evaluate the above-mentioned concepts in the restaurant industry in a South African context.

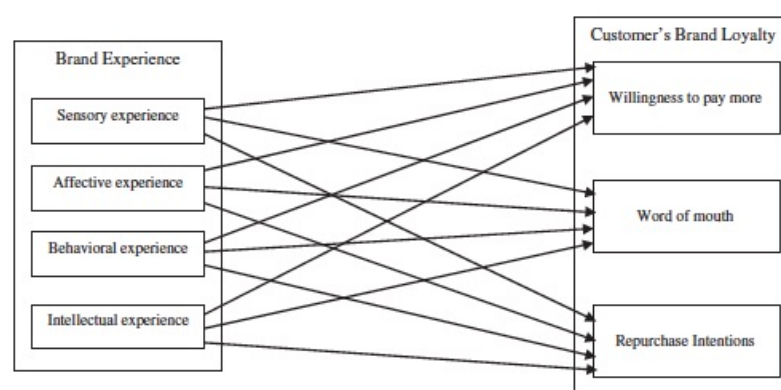


Figure 4: Ong, Lee & Ramayah. Impact of brand experience on loyalty-Proposed Model (2018)

For the purpose of this study the following model which combines the consequences of customer brand loyalty and the four types of brand experience will be used in order to determine if brand experience has a positive influence on brand loyalty (Ong, et al.,

2018). The evidence from this study will provide insight regarding the importance of each brand experience component in the relationship between the customer and the brand (Bagozzi, 1975).

2.3 Conceptualization

Brand experience is theorized as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses that are evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design, identity, packaging, communications, and environment (Sahin, Zehir & Kitapçı, 2011). The importance of this construct for this study is based on the fact that it is a vital differentiation tool for companies in general and in terms of the restaurant industry consumers gain consumption value from brand experience (Holbrook, 1999).

Brand loyalty is a deep commitment to a preferred product or service in the future ,despite situational influences and marketing efforts which have the possibility of causing switching behavior (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).The importance of this construct for this study is based on knowledge that the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty remains equivocal as well as the fact that customer brand loyalty is crucial in the restaurant industry for sustainability as loyal customers is a prerequisite for a strong customer base and a high market share (Ong, et al., 2018).

Chapter 3 : Research Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigm

A paradigm can be viewed as a set of basic beliefs that represents a worldview (Guba & Lincoln, n.d.). Critical realism has its origins in Germany, it was born out of the frustration of the limitations of both positivism and interpretivism and for this reason combined the traditions (Plooy-Cillers, Corné & Bezuidenhout, 2014:23-35). The critical realism paradigm focuses its research on social justice issues and aims to address the political, social and economic issues which lead to issues such as conflict and oppression (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The critical realism paradigm allows the researcher to look at various perspectives from a zero-based stand and values freedom, equality and emancipation (Plooy-Cillers, Corné & Bezuidenhout, 2014:198). Emancipatory action research aims to transform and bring about change within existing societal boundaries, conditions and systems. The aim is to empower people through knowledge (Maree, 2016).

The critical realism paradigm assumes a transactional epistemology, a historical ontology and a methodology that is dialogic (Guba & Lincoln, n.d.). The critical realism paradigm is the paradigm that underpins this study as the researcher aims to use the strengths of both positivism which is quantitative in nature and interpretivism (Dean, 2019) which is qualitative in nature in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on brand loyalty.

3.1.1 Epistemological critical realism paradigm

The word Epistemology originates from the Greek word episteme which means knowledge. Epistemology is used to describe how an individual comes to know something (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It can be defined 'as the study of the nature of knowledge and justification' (Schwandt, 1997). The questions that are asked when considering the epistemology of a study are aimed at gathering information on whether the knowledge can be gathered through personal experience, the understating of the nature of the knowledge and the identification of the relationship between the inquirer and what is known. The aim is to discover what other knowledge can be gathered, given what is known (Kivunja, et al., 2017).

The epistemology of the critical realism paradigm is transactional and subjective. The researcher and the problem being researched are assumed to be interactively linked as the value of the researcher influences the inquiry. The findings are therefore value mediated (Guba & Lincoln, n.d.). Critical realists do not only aim to gain knowledge for the sake of understating, critical realists aim towards a practical action (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d.). This study is subjective in nature as it gathers the qualitative opinions of the participants with the aim of using the information in a practical manner.

3.1.2 Ontological critical realism paradigm

Ontology is concerned with assumptions that individuals make in order to believe that something is real (Scotland, 2012). It examines the researches underlying belief system about the nature of being. These assumptions help the researcher to orientate their thinking about the research problem, the significance of the problem and the method in which the researcher could possibly go about solving it or contributing to a solution (Kivunja, et al., 2017). An ontological position aims to determine the foundational concepts of the themes that are being analyzed in order to make sense of the data collected. The questions that are asked when considering the ontology of the study aim to understand the nature of reality and the nature of the situation being studied (Kivunja, et al., 2017).

The ontology of the critical realism paradigm is of historical realism as what is being investigated should be considered in its historical context. The reasoning for this rests in the fact that what is being investigated would have been shaped over time by social, political, cultural, economic and many other factors (Guba & Lincoln, n.d.). For critical realists, certain aspects of reality are seen as real regardless of human interpretation, and make known that dominance and oppression are very often the result of dominant ideologies. This argument leads to the statement that social reality is not always as it is observed (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d.). This study is objective in nature as it gathers the quantitative objective reality of the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on brand loyalty.

3.1.3 Methodological critical realism paradigm

Methodology refers to the research design or method that is used in the study with the purpose of finding out something (Keeves, 1997). The methodology articulates the systematic processes that are followed in order to gather information about the research problem (Kivunja, et al., 2017). The questions that are asked when considering the methodology of the study include questions regarding how the desired data will be collected.

The methodology of the critical realism paradigm is dialogic as there is a transaction between the researcher and the participants. The methodology must be dialogic in nature to avoid misapprehensions (Guba & Lincoln, n.d.). Critical realists believe that no single method can provide definite results and therefore tend to use a mixed-method research design, and this is done with the aim that the quantitative and qualitative methods will supplement each other. This also results in a more valid and reliable method of study (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d.).

The critical realism paradigm was selected for this study as the researcher aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the influence brand experience has on brand loyalty. Past studies have been conducted using a quantitative method (Walter, et al., 2013); (Iglesias, Singh & Batista-Foguet, 2010). This research aims to use both methods to gain further understanding as to whether brand experience influences brand loyalty, and more so the personal perspectives on the reasoning for this.

3.2 Research Approach and Design

A research design should include the type of reasoning, the research objectives, the data collection methods as well as the data analysis (Du Plooy, 2013).

There are two approaches of reasoning, namely: an inductive approach and the deductive approach. Deductive reasoning is a form of valid reasoning which uses a general statement and examines the possibilities to reach a logical conclusion (hypotheses generating), (Surbhi, 2018). Inductive reasoning is the process in which the researcher uses raw data to develop themes without the use of a conceptual

model(hypotheses testing). Deductive reasoning is applicable to this research as it accepts the positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty and aims to test arguments about the effect of this relationship such as WPM, WOM and RI. Inductive reasoning is applicable to this research when analyzing the qualitative data as thematic analysis (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d: 241) is used to identify trends found within the participant's opinion about the positive relationship between the four experiences and WOM, WPR and RI.

Grounded in a critical realism paradigm the nature of this research design is a mixed method approach. Mixed method research refers to the use of both quantitative and qualitative designs which allows the researcher to make contextual interpretations through the collation of data (Maree, 2016). The distinction between a quantitative and qualitative approach refers to how the researcher chooses, collects, analyses and interprets information that will serve the aims of the research.

A mixed method approach is a procedure for collecting, analysing and combining qualitative and quantitative data within a single study to understand a research problem in more depth (Maree,2016). An explanatory sequential mixed method design will be used. This specific mixed method approach was selected based on the fact that this study has been researched in the past, however it has been conducted in a purely quantitative manner (Ong, et al., 2018);(Hussein, 2018) and this research aims to gain further understanding as to why these quantitative results are true. The mixed method approach is flexible as it does not limit the collection and analysis of data to just one form. The use of the mixed method approach encourages both objective and subjective methods. Furthermore, the research topic being exploratory in nature further results in the study being flexible (Maree,2016).

The intent of this design is to use qualitative findings to explain quantitative results. The quantitative data collection and the qualitative data collection will be completed concurrently due to time and accessibility reasons. Based on the information gathered from both the quantitative data and qualitative data the researcher will derive findings and further interpret the findings in order to attempt to explain the consumers reasoning behind the quantitative results.

3.3 Population and Sampling

3.4.1 Extent

The research will be conducted in September 2019 over a 15-day period in Pretoria, the village, Hazelwood road, 0081 South Africa. The Hazelwood area chosen is based on the close proximity and ease of access for the researcher. Convenience sampling was thus made use of which subsequently resulted in the researcher choosing the twenty-one individuals based on availability, accessibility and convenience (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). The nature of the time dimension is current and cross sectional (Levin, 2006). The research will be conducted over a 30-hour time period.

3.4.2 Population

The target population is everyone or everything that falls within the population parameters (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d: 133). The target population in this study is represented by all individuals that eat out at restaurants in South Africa. The accessible population is the units of analysis in the target population to which researchers have access (Du Plooy, 2009: 91). The accessible population in this study is represented by the twenty-one individuals (n=21) in the Pretoria, Hazelwood area. The restricted accessible population is due to time and cost limitations.

The unique characteristics of the population include individuals that are 18 years of age and above, that can adequately speak the English language found eating at one of the chosen four restaurants – Culture Club, Alfie's, Cowfish Hazelwood and Ozé Café & Bistro.

The unique population characteristics along with the unit of analysis, that being the individuals from which the data will be gathered, enables the researcher to address the research issues through the use of structured interview and surveys applying the two main concepts brand experience and brand loyalty. This is due to the researcher's ability to easily come into contact with the accessible population as well

as the simplicity of the survey design in its ability to help the researcher form conclusions.

3.4.3 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting the individuals that will support the researcher in answering the research questions and achieving the research purpose (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d: 132). For the purpose of this study Non-probability sampling was deemed most applicable due to the inability to determine the entire population as well as the time limitations which results in the researcher having to carefully select individuals that meet the unique population characteristics instead of individuals being randomly chosen. Any inclusion in the sample will be based on coincidence or the researcher's ability to make contact with participants and not necessarily on a random or systematic selection (Maree, 2016:197). Convenience sampling is the nonprobability sampling method selected for this study. Convenience sampling includes members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity and availability at a given time. The main objective of convenience sampling is to collect information from participants who are easily accessible to the researcher (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim,2016). The disadvantage of convenience sampling includes the biased nature of the sampling method and for this reason the results should not be taken to be representative of the population (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim,2016). This method of sampling was chosen based on quick, inexpensive and easy access of the individuals at the four chosen restaurants in the Hazelwood area (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d).

Based on the cross-sectional nature of this study as well as the use of nonprobability convenience sampling the intended sample size is $n=21$. The unit of analysis in this study therefore consists of the individuals from which the data will be gathered. The sample which was selected and utilized for the purpose of this study represents a small percentage of the target population. This therefore impacts the reliability and validity of the study.

3.4 Data collection

There are several data collection techniques that can be used, such as structured interviews, observations, surveys for quantitative research and in-depth interviews and document analysis for qualitative research (Du Plooy , 2009: 396).

Aligned with the paradigm, critical realism, and the research questions the researcher made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods for the collection of the data. The quantitative data collection was completed first and the qualitative data collection followed concurrently. A pre-test was conducted before the data collection process took place. The pre-test was conducted on my research mentor as well as an individual that does not form part of my accessible population to ensure that the survey and interview questions were easily understandable and resulted in answers that were aligned with the intention of the questions being asked.

3.4.1 Quantitative approach to data collection

The quantitative method of collecting data will include cross- sectional face to face, English surveys (n=21). The 21 surveys include three qualifying questions to ensure that the participants meet the unique characteristics of the population being studied. Furthermore, the survey is divided into 4 sections, which represents the four types of experience, with 6 questions per section thus resulting in each survey having 24 questions.

For the purpose of measuring brand experience, the four types of experience (sensory, intellectual, emotional and behavioral) will be explored by means of asking three questions per experience. These questions have been adapted from the study the 'Impact of brand experience on loyalty'. For the purpose of measuring brand loyalty three questions regarding the participant's willingness to pay more, repurchase intention and influence on word of mouth will be presented following the three questions for each experience as mentioned above. Refer to Annexure 2.

The scales that will be used for these surveys include 5 point- Likert scales and dichotomous questions. Surveys were chosen as it is versatile and can be conducted in almost any setting. Surveys are inexpensive, less time consuming and they can be completed anonymously (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d: 160).

3.4.1 Qualitative approach to data collection

The qualitative method used to collect data is structured interviews. Three of the 21 individuals that filled out the quantitative survey were randomly selected to be interviewed. This took place shortly after the individuals filled out the survey; this was due to time constraints. The researcher used the structured interviews to gather more in-depth information regarding the reasoning behind the quantitative information provided in the surveys. The aim of structured interviews is to collect data and learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviors (Maree, 2016: 92). The researcher specifically aims to gain an understanding on the views and opinions of the participants on the influence of different brand experiences on brand loyalty. The 12 interview questions were developed in advance, they were standardized and straight forward. The 12 questions were broken down into four sections which represents the four types of experience. Each section includes three questions reading WOM, WPM and RI. Each participant was asked the same questions, in the same order by the same interviewer. Structured interviews are used mostly in qualitative descriptive studies which aligns with the second objective of this study which is to describe the participants reasoning behind this negative or positive relationship between each experience and WOM, WPM and RI.

Data collection process:

- 1) Provide 21 individuals with the opportunity to answer the surveys anonymously.
- 2) Select three of the individuals that completed the survey. Ensure they meet the unique population characteristics.
- 3) Interview the three individuals chosen.
- 4) Keep the surveys and interviews in a secure place that ensures anonymity for data analysis reasons.

3.5 Data Analysis

The critical realism paradigm and mixed method approach results in the researcher engaging in qualitative and quantitative methods for the analysis of the data.

3.5.1 Quantitative approach to data analysis

Quantitative data analysis is focused on numerical values. For the purpose of this study descriptive statistics will be used in order to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics is a collective name for the number of statistical methods that are used to organize and summarize data in a meaningful way (Maree, 2016:204) and can be divided into two ways of representing or describing data: graphical ways or numerical ways. For the purpose of this study the quantitative data will be gathered, placed in frequency tables, converted to percentages and then placed into pie charts using Microsoft Excel. The advantage of the pie chart is that one can immediately determine the most prominent response (Maree, 2016:204). Prior to analyzing the data, the questions were coded based on the experience being studied and the question number. For example: S1, this represents sensory question number 1. The data for each experience will be gathered and analyzed on separate spread sheets, this is to ensure consistency and simplicity of the process (Maree, 2016). Following the coding process the collected data was analyzed.

The analysis process included first analyzing the positive sensory experience on spreadsheet 1. The overall positive sensory experience was gathered across all 21 surveys by placing the information gathered from question 1-3, which made use of the 5-point Likert scale, into a frequency table. This information was then converted into percentages and finally the percentages were then placed into a pie chart. This pie chart represents the attitude towards their positive sensory experience at the various restaurants (Ong, et al., 2018); (Maree,2016:204).

The positive sensory experience is further analyzed on spreadsheet 1 by gathering the information across all 21 surveys from questions 4-6, which made use of yes or no also known as dichotomous questions to determine the respondents WOM, WPM AND RI. This information was gathered and inputted into three frequency tables as

each brand loyalty consequence was analyzed separately. The results were then converted into percentages which were further placed into pie charts. These three pie charts individually represented the respondent's likelihood to pay more, tell more people about the restaurant and take their family and friends to the restaurant the next time they wanted to eat out.

This process was then duplicated across spreadsheet 2 which analyzed the affective experience, spreadsheet 3 which analyzed the behavioral experience and spreadsheet four which analyzed the intellectual experience (Maree, 2016:204). The quantitative finds were then finalized separately.

3.5.2 Qualitative approach to data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is usually aimed at establishing how participants make meaning of phenomenon by analyzing perceptions, attitudes and feelings. It is best achieved through inductive analysis (Maree, 2016:109). Thematic analysis is the qualitative approach that will be used in this study to analyze the data. An inductive approach to thematic analysis will be used which allows the researcher to code while scrutinizing the text. The process includes the researcher continuously and repeatedly reading through the material in order to decide on dominant trends or patterns in order to inductively work with emergent categories and constantly compare them (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d: 241).

The analysis process:

- 1) The researcher became aware of the sections that spoke of Brand loyalty, Brand experience, WOM, WPM and RI in the literature review.
- 2) The researcher read through the answers provided by the respondents and highlighted the positive and negative statements in two separate colors.
- 3) The positive and negative statements provided by the respondents were grouped and then further analyzed to determine what the respondents were saying.
- 4) Themes and trends were identified within the statements regarding the influence of each experience on WOM, WPM AND RI.
- 5) The qualitative findings were finalized separately.

- 6) The researcher created interpretations based on the qualitative and quantitative findings.

This method was chosen as the study has only been previously conducted using a quantitative approach which subsequently results in there being a lack of information regarding the reasons for the quantitative results. The aim of the data analysis in this study is to expand the body of knowledge regarding brand loyalty in the restaurant industry as the study is conducted in South Africa and the opinions of the participants regarding the influence of the different types of experience on WOM, WPM and RI has not previously been explored.(Ong, et al., 2018) ;(Hussein, 2018).

Chapter 4: Research Findings and Interpretations

4.1 Quantitative findings

Sensory experience

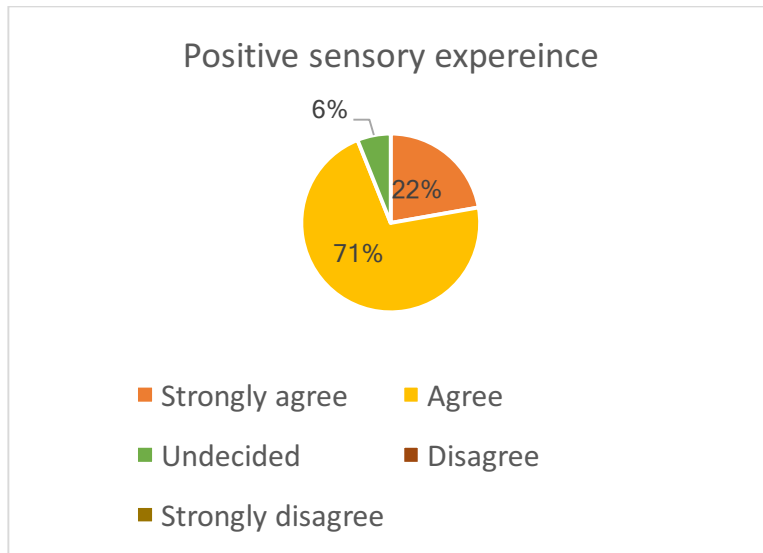


Figure 5 : Positive sensory experience

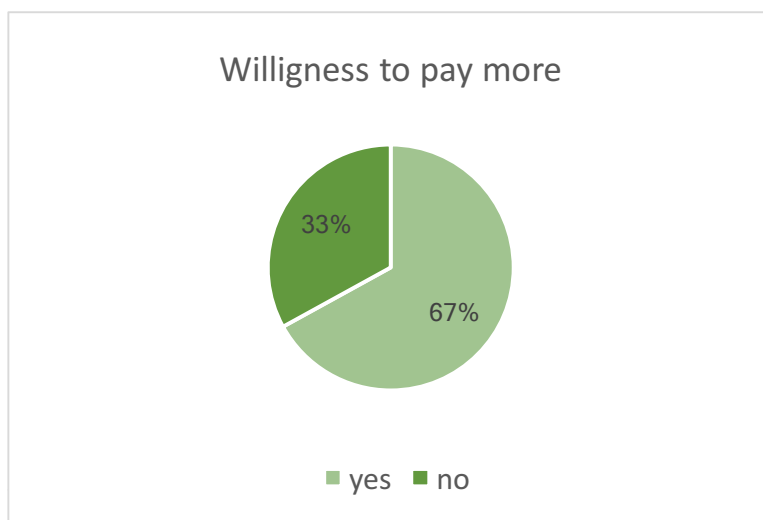


Figure 6: Sensory experience: Willingness to pay more

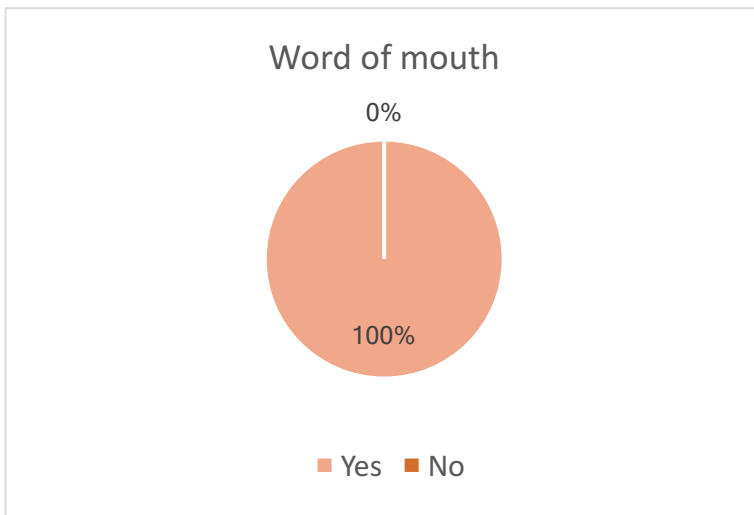


Figure 7: Sensory experience: Word of mouth

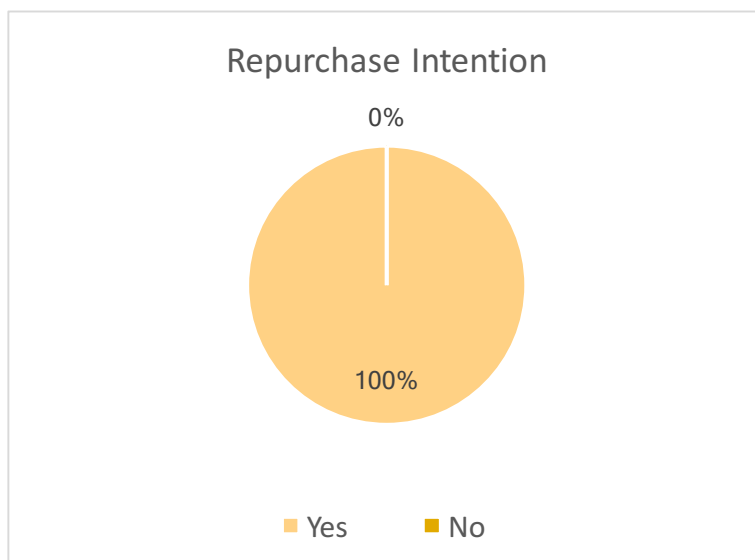


Figure 8: Sensory experience: Repurchase intention

Findings:

The respondents experienced a positive sensory experience across the four restaurants seeing that 71% of individuals responded 'strongly agree'. The result of this highly positive sensory experience resulted in more than 50% of respondents stating that the positive sensory experience would result in an increase in their willingness to pay more. Furthermore, 100% of the respondents stated that the highly positive sensory experience would result in an increase in word of mouth and repurchase intention.

Affective experience

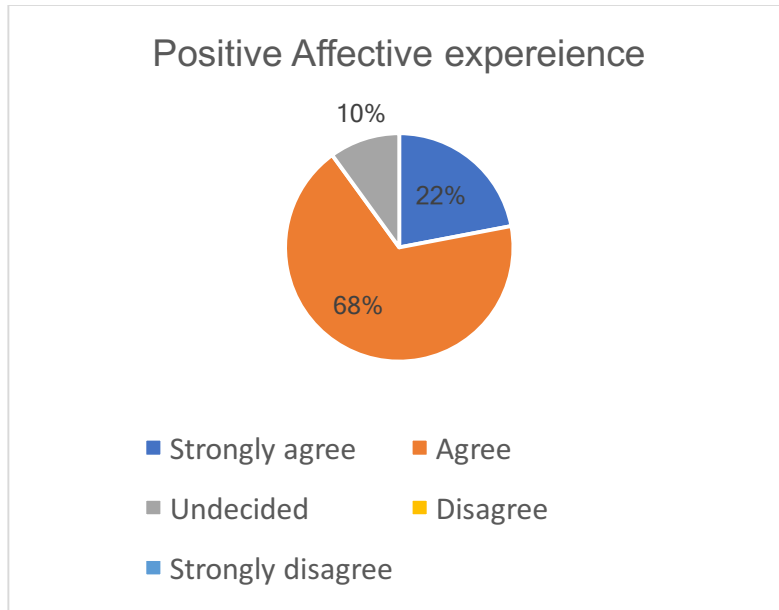


Figure 9: Positive affective experience

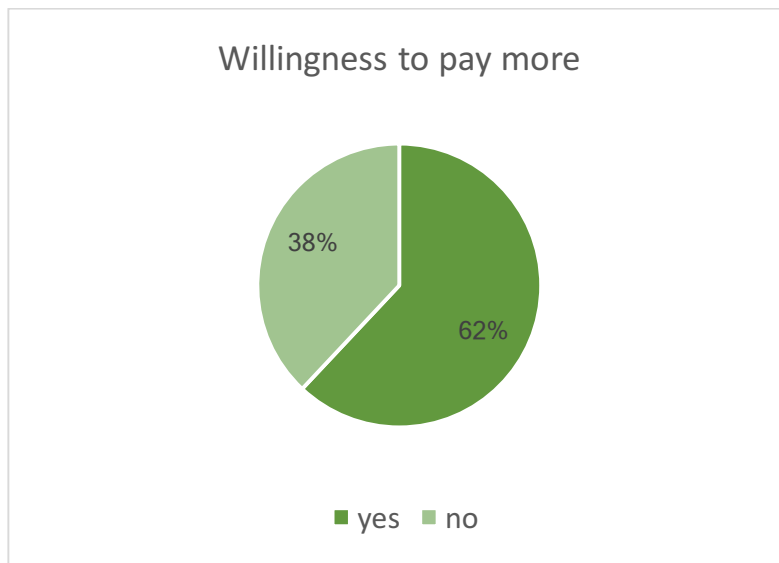


Figure 10: Affective experience: Willingness to pay more



Figure 11: Affective experience: Word of mouth

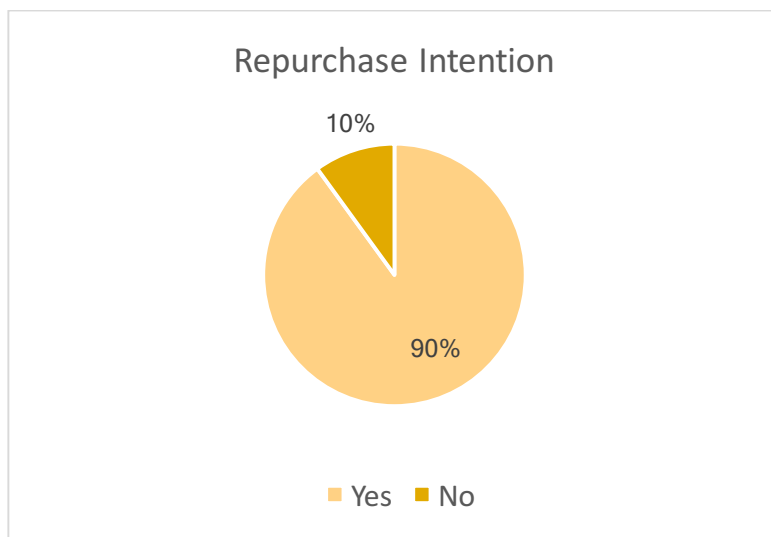


Figure 12: Affective experience: Repurchase Intention

Findings:

The respondents experienced a positive affective experience across the four restaurants seeing that 68% of individuals responded 'agree'. The result of this positive affective experience resulted in more than 50% of respondents stating that the positive affective experience would result in an increase in their willingness to pay more. Furthermore, 100% of the respondents stated that the positive affective experience would result in an increase in word of mouth and repurchase intention.

Behavioural experience

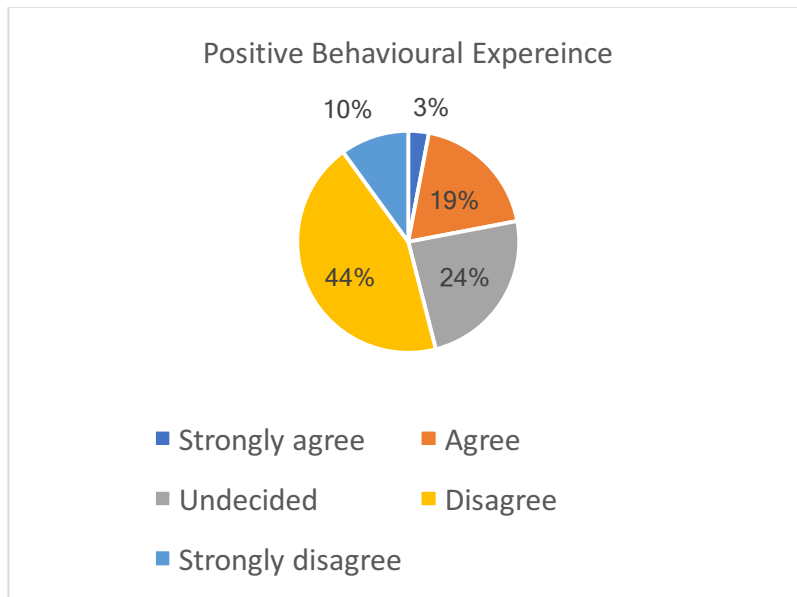


Figure 13: Positive Behavioural Experience

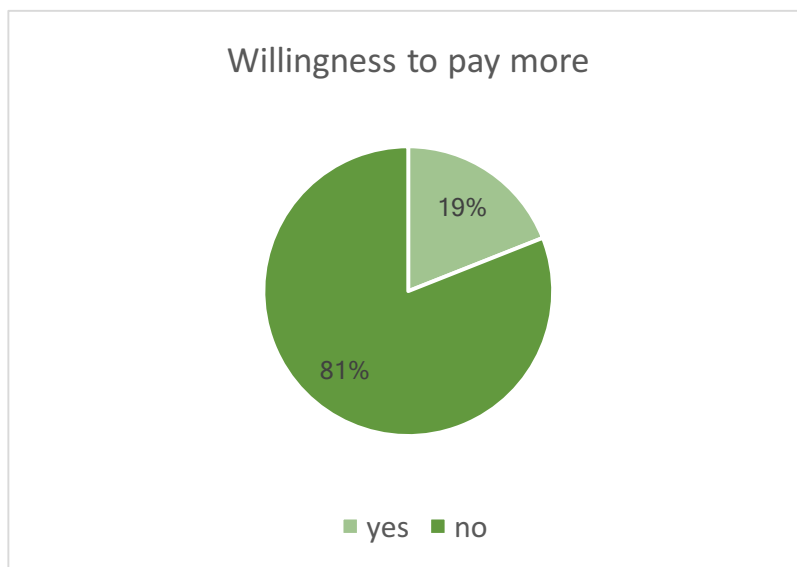


Figure 14: Behavioural experience: Willingness to pay more

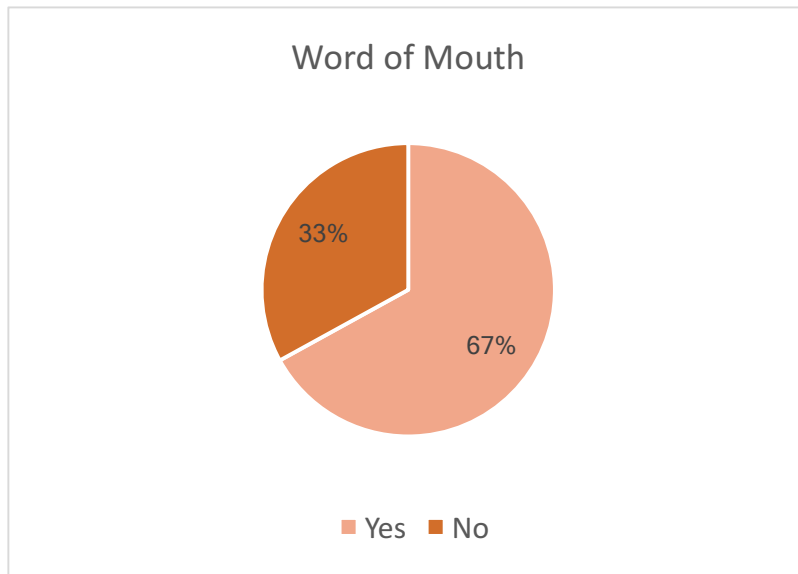


Figure 15: Behavioural experience: Word of mouth

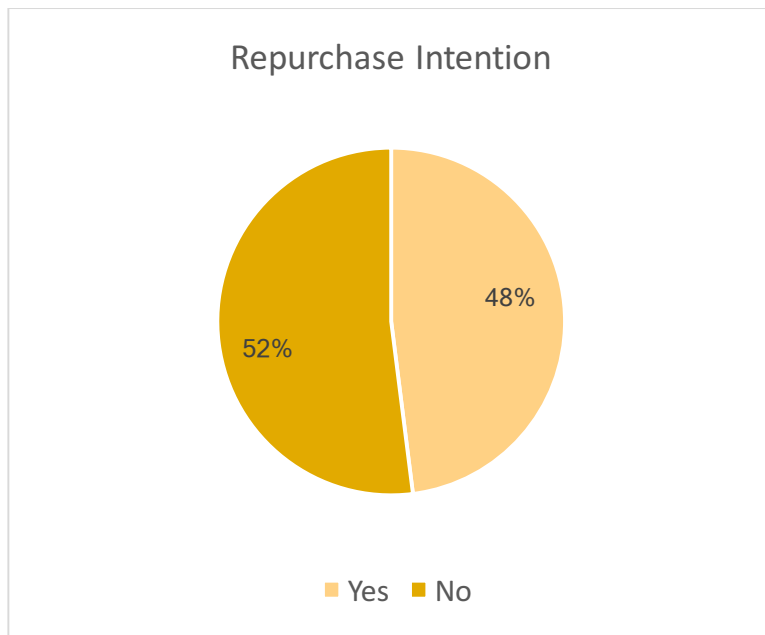


Figure 16: Behavioural experience: Repurchase intention

Findings:

The behavioural experience varied across the respondents with majority of the respondents answering 'disagree'. The result of this emotional experience resulted in 81% of respondents stating that a positive emotional experience would not result in an increase in their willingness to pay more. However, more than 50% of the respondents stated that a positive behavioural experience would result in an increase in word of mouth and repurchase intention.

Intellectual experience

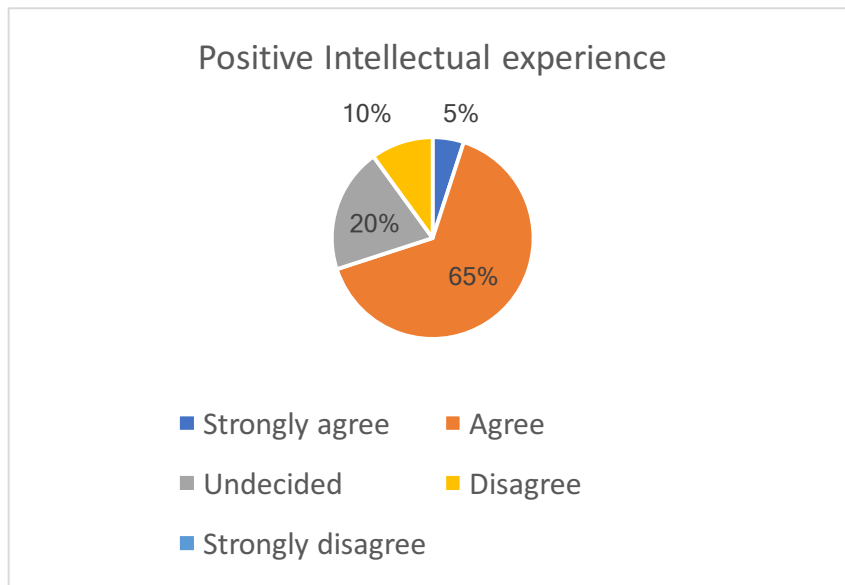


Figure 17: Positive intellectual experience

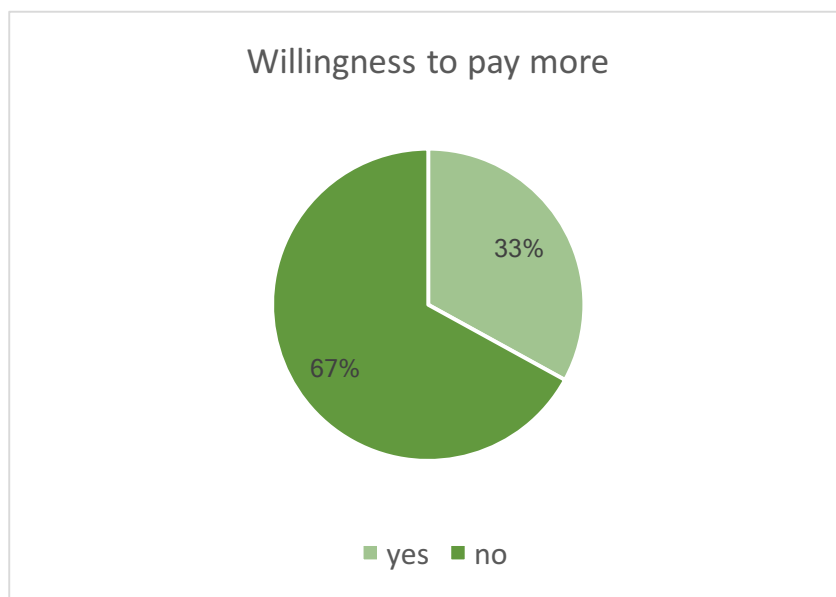


Figure 18: Intellectual experience: Willingness to pay more



Figure 19: Intellectual experience: Word of mouth

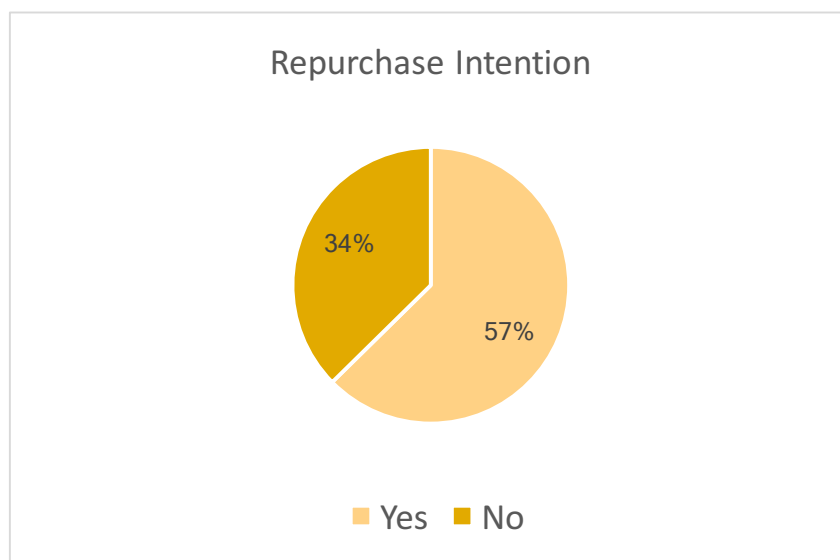


Figure 20: Intellectual experience: Repurchase Intention

Findings:

The intellectual experience varied across the respondents with majority of the respondents answering 'agree'. The result of this intellectual experience resulted in 67% of respondents stating that a positive intellectual experience would not result in an increase in their willingness to pay more. However, more than 50% of the respondents stated that a positive intellectual experience would result in an increase in word of mouth and repurchase intention.

4.2 Qualitative findings

Themes	Interview section/question	Hypothesis
Sensory experience	Section 1	H1
Affective experience	Section 2	H2
Behavioural experience	Section 3	H3
Intellectual experience	Section 4	H4
Willingness to pay more	1,4,7,10	H1a,H2a,H3a,H4a
Word of mouth	2,5,8,11	H1b,H2b,H3b,H4b
Repurchase Intention	5,6,9,12	H1c,H1c,H1c,H1c

Table 1: Qualitative data findings

The predominant themes that came to light from the three in-depth interviews that were conducted concurrently with the quantitative surveys include sensory experience, affective experience, behavioural experience, intellectual experience, WPM,WOM an RI.

The general perceptions of the participants result in the conclusion that there is a strong correlation between a positive sensory experience and ones willingness to pay more. The participants believe that a strong sensory experience is linked to an upmarket and high quality restaurant with characteristics such as light non-obtrusive music. These characteristics and upmarket associations result in individuals being prepared to pay more. Participant 3 mentioned ‘ It’s a nice environment, its well decorated, the vibe is really nice , with a lot of restaurants around it which makes the price worth it.’

Furthermore ,the general perceptions of the participants regarding the influence of a positive sensory experience within a restaurant on increased word of mouth is very high as individuals feel that if a positive sensory experience results in their willingness to pay more ,which as mentioned above it does then it is something they feel is worth sharing. Participant 1 mentioned ‘ It definitely increases my willingness to tell more people about it as I love to share new and great places on my social media or to anyone who asks for any recommendations. ‘

Lastly in terms of sensory experience, the general perceptions of the participants regarding the influence of a positive sensory experience within a restaurant on repurchase intention is also very high as individuals want to share their great experiences with the people they love and cherish. Participant 2 mentioned:’ I would

take my family and friends to a restaurant based on a sensory experience because my sensory experience releases more endorphins and pleasures, making the whole experience more enjoyable.'

The general perceptions of the participants result in the conclusion that there is a strong correlation between a positive affective experience and ones willingness to pay more. Individuals are willing to pay more for an experience that leads and more so leaves them with happy and positive emotions. However, the general perception is that it is very subjective. Participant 3: 'The affective experience leads me to be willing to pay more because of the Italian experience as it feels like an escape from normal South African life'.

Furthermore, the general perceptions of the participants regarding the influence of a positive affective experience within a restaurant on their word of mouth and repurchase intention is high as individuals similarly to the sensory experience want to share it with individuals they care about. Participant 1 mentioned: 'It increases my willingness to tell more people about it because in a time where a lot is negative it is important to sometimes put yourself in a happy place and restaurants do this for me and I would want to share that with other people,'. Participants also mentioned that it is a determining factor as participants would not take loved ones to a place that resulted in them feeling negative emotions. Participant 1 mentioned: 'I would not take my family or friends to a restaurant that did not make me feel happy, lucky or any positive emotions'.

The general perceptions of the participants regarding the influence of a positive behavioural experience within a restaurant on ones willingness to pay more is low as participants believe it is not the reason one goes to a restaurant and for this reason they would not be willing to pay more. Participant 1 spoke specifically about recycling actions: 'The removal of straws does not impact me because whether they use straws or don't I always take my metal straw with me. I feel like behavioural experience doesn't really impact the general experience of a restaurant.'

Furthermore, the general perceptions of the participants regarding the influence of a positive behavioural experience within a restaurant on their word of mouth and

repurchase intention is high. Majority of individuals feel that it makes no difference to their overall restaurant experience. However, they will take other individuals there and tell more people about it based on this experience because other people may feel differently..

The general perceptions of the participants regarding the influence of a positive Intellectual experience within a restaurant on ones willingness to pay more is low. All three participants are not willing to pay more for an intellectual experience as it does not add to their experience and it is not the reason they would go to a restaurant. There are varying results about RI and WOM as 1 out of the three participants mentioned they would tell other people about the restaurant and take other people to the restaurant based on this experience as it may add to their experience. Participant 1 mentioned: 'It does result in me wanting to take family and friends there, because like I said it could be an experience that really speaks to them'. Participant 3 mentioned: 'most times an intellectual experience plays no role in the enjoyment of the restaurant and based on that reason I would not perform the three actions mentioned above.'

Interpretations:

The quantitative findings found that sensory experience positively influences WOM,WPM and RI and that affective experience positively influences WOM,WPM and RI. However, the sensory experience has the largest influence on a customer's loyalty.

The behavioural experience was found to positively influence WOM and RI but more so WOM. The intellectual experience was found to positively influence WOM and RI but more so WOM. Both a positive behavioural and intellectual experience did not influence the customer's WPM. The findings determined within this research show that sensory experience is the experience that mostly influences customer brand loyalty in the restaurant industry.

A previous study conducted on the restaurant industry in Malaysia found that the sensory experience impacted the WPM and RI (Ong, et al., 2018). This study however

mentioned 'that the indication that WOM is not influenced by sensory experience is rather fascinating and that it could be due to lack of aesthetical presentation of food given the casual dining restaurant research context'. The affective experience impacted the WOM and RI however it was mentioned that the researchers believed that favourable results may be found in research conducted in a fine dining setting (Ong, et al., 2018). The behavioural experience impacted WPM and WOM and that the intellectual experience impacted all three: WOM, WPM and RI (Ong, et al., 2018). Based on the findings provided by this research it is seen that the customers in South Africa respond differently towards different types of experience specifically the intellectual and behavioural experience which was shown to have the least influence on customer loyalty.

Moreover, the qualitative findings gathered within this study supported the quantitative findings gathered within this study as it was found that sensory experience and affective experience are the two dimensions of experience that are most important for customers when looking at brand loyalty in the restaurant industry. More so, that the sensory experience is the experience that customers find the most important. Thus resulting in the conclusion that restaurant marketing strategists should be focused on a sensory experience when looking to increase brand loyalty. Individuals are looking for a clean, upmarket environment, with light music that feels like an escape from everyday life.

In terms of behavioural and intellectual experience participants feel that It does not add to their restaurant experience in such a way that it would result in them paying more. However, it was still an experience they appreciated and that they would share with friends and loved ones. Participants appreciate not being told what to do and in many cases find it unappealing if the intellectual experience is dominant.

The qualitative finding produced above provide insight into what customers are looking for in terms of experience in the restaurant industry.

4.3 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are key measures in quantitative research. Trustworthiness is a key measure in qualitative research. Triangulation is an alternative to validation and establishing data trustworthiness. Triangulation is a process in which conclusions based on qualitative sources are supported by quantitative perspectives. Based on the mixed method approach used in this research it can be concluded that a form of triangulation was used. Validity and reliability also lies in the open and transparent nature of the research procedure (Maree, 2016: 122). The researcher ensured that the steps taken were open and transparent. The questions used in the study were adapted from previous studies (Ong, et al., 2018) thus ensuring that the research methodology was designed in a way that the research questions could be answered. The instruments and the process of data collection have been included in the document and the process can be inspected.

Trustworthiness of a study is determined by analysing the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility is increased when the researcher spends long periods of time with the participants in order to understand them better and gain insight into their lives as well as when the findings are believable from the participants perspective (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d: 258). The researcher designed a coding timetable to ensure that the data is analysed consistently and that the researcher spends time going through the text and making sufficient links.

Transferability ensures that the study can be replicated in another context and it will deliver the same results (Plooy-Cilliers, et al., n.d). Trustworthiness cannot be applied in this study as a population size of 20 is too small and not representative of the larger population subsequently resulting in the inability of the findings to be generalized.

Dependability describes the quality of the entire research process, it is demonstrated through the research design, implementation and the detail of data gathering (Maree, 2016 :124). The researcher will ensure dependability by documenting all processes, decision and changes made to the entire research

process in such a manner that a third party could identify and understand the decisions made, the analysis process as well as how the final interpretations were made.

Confirmability is the extent to which the findings of the study were shaped by the participants and not by the researchers bias, motivation or interest (Maree, 2016:124). The researcher describes the research process and results fully in the study to ensure that others who look at the data can generate similar conclusions. The study is cross sectional in nature which does not allow the researcher to build strong bonds over long periods of time with the participants which decreases the change of bias results.

Chapter 5 : Conclusion

The focus of this research paper was to explore and describe the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on customer brand loyalty In the restaurant industry in South Africa. The primary aims of this study was to explore the previously established positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty (Hussein,2018) and what that means for restaurants in today's world when focusing on creating an experience in order to achieve increased word of mouth, willingness to pay more and repurchase intention (Ong, et al.,2018). This aim was achieved by meeting the two objectives which was to explore the influence of the four dimensions of experience on word of mouth, willingness to pay more and repurchase Intention. Furthermore, to determine and describe the participants reasoning behind this negative or positive influence between each experience and WOM, WPM and RI.

The findings presented previously answered the research questions and addressed the objectives.

5.1 Concluding answers to the research questions

Research question one was 'Does the consumers sensory experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?'

Research question 2 was 'Does the consumers affective experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?'

Research questions 3 was 'Does the consumers behavioural experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?'

Research question 4 was 'Does the consumers intellectual experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?'

Through the research it was found that the consumers sensory, affective, behavioural and intellectual experience influenced at least one of the consequences of customer brand loyalty. Therefore the answer to RQ 1 is yes, the answer to RQ2

is yes , the answer to RQ 3 is yes and the answer to RQ4 is yes. Companies should implement each experience depending on what their business goal is. Companies aiming to achieve all the three components of brand loyalty (i.e. WPM, WOM, and RI) should emphasize on a sensory experience strategy as sensory experience was found to be the type of experience that influenced all three consequences of brand loyalty. Affective experience had the second most influence and behavioural and intellectual experience had the least amount of influence on brand loyalty.

The hypotheses of this particular study were addressed by examining the quantitative and quantitative findings on the influence between the four dimensions of brand experience on customer brand loyalty. Based on the data analysis

H1a: Sensory experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM) is accepted. H1b: Sensory experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM) is accepted. H1c: Sensory experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI) is accepted.

H2a: Affective experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM) is accepted. H2b: Affective experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM) is accepted. H2c: Affective experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI) is accepted.

H3a: Behavioral experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM) is rejected. H3b: Behavioral experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM) is accepted. H3c: Behavioral experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI) is accepted.

H4a: Intellectual experience positively influences willingness to pay more (WPM) is rejected. H4b: Intellectual experience positively influences word of mouth (WOM) is accepted. H4c: Intellectual experience positively influences repurchase intentions (RI) is accepted.

Marketing practitioners have come to realize that understanding how consumers experience brands is critical for developing marketing strategies for goods and services. The research problem is that the relationship between brand loyalty and

brand experience remains equivocal. Furthermore, the study has only previously been conducted in a quantitative manner which provides very little information as to which experience businesses should focus on when looking to increase brand loyalty (Ong, et al.,2018). The researcher attempted to solve this problem by adding more information to the body of knowledge regarding the influence between these two constructs in a South African context. The researcher also attempted to solve this problem by conducting this study through a mixed method approach in order to gain more-in-depth knowledge about the influence between these two constructs.

5.2 Implications of findings for future practices

This study had demonstrated the influence between brand experience and brand loyalty with emphasize on its dimensions. This is a contribution as prior works rarely report these influences in the brand experience and loyalty relationships (Brakus et al., 2009; Nysveen et al., 2013; Ong et al., 2015a). Brand loyalty is influenced by brand experience (Brakus et al.,2009). This study also found that there is at least one dimension of brand loyalty, namely WOM, WPM, and RI that is influenced by each dimension of brand experience. Furthermore, only the sensory experience influenced all the dimensions of brand loyalty which shows the importance of this dimension when aiming to gain customer brand loyalty in the restaurant industry.

Additionally, these findings provide an in-depth understanding of the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on brand loyalty. Ultimately, two theoretical contributions to the field of brand experience can be derived from this research. First, this study tested empirically the influence of the individual brand experience dimensions on individual loyalty dimensions. Secondly, it provided qualitative reasoning behind the empirical findings.

5.3 Final Conclusions

This study was successful as it addressed the relevant objectives and hypotheses. However, future research on this particular project should be conducted over a longer period of time with more participants in order to ensure validity and reliability.

Future studies could possibly create better methodologies to validate the various findings across many different sources at present. Lastly, the model proposed in this initial study only focused on the direct relationship between brand experience and loyalty it would be recommended that future research enhanced the model by incorporating related mediating or moderating variables accordingly to suit studies in both the goods and services contexts.

5.4 Ethical considerations

The study meets the ethical criterion mentioned in the IIE ethical consideration document. The researcher conducted a pre-test on the research mentor and gained ethical clearance before conducting the data collection process in order to ensure the interview and survey met the research standards of the IIE. A pretest was further conducted on an individual that did not form part of the studied population to ensure the interview and survey was easily understandable and the questions were understood as it was meant to be understood.

The researcher created a consent form which ensures that the participants are aware that they will not be harmed in any way, that their participation is voluntary and even if they consent to participating in the research that if they feel uncomfortable at any point, they are able to withdraw from the study. The consent form further ensures that their identity will remain confidential. For the three individuals that will be interviewed the consent form will include information regarding the recording of their answers and the anonymity thereafter. The interviews and survey information will furthermore be kept for 5 years in the iCloud. The iCloud has been chosen to ensure confidentiality and safekeeping.

5.5 Limitations

The limitations of the study included the fact that the research study was cross-sectional; therefore, the researcher was bound by time constraints. The assignment requirements for the study include a word count that limits the amount of words that the researcher can use in the assignment which limits the amount of detail that can be provided. The researcher had no budget so research decisions such as sampling

and population were based on the accessibility and convenience. Therefore, the sample size was small and not representative of the population resulting in the inability to generalize the findings gained from the data.

In terms of data analysis, the inability to use tools and software such as SPSS restricted the quantitative data analysis process and for this reason in depth analysis could not be reached. In terms of the data collection method, the researcher's preference would have been to choose a sample size of 20 to complete the survey and thereafter analyze the quantitative data. After completing the data analysis of the quantitative data to then conduct the interviews with three different individuals. This however was not possible because of time constraints and for this reason the quantitative and qualitative data collection took place concurrently. Lastly, the consequences of brand loyalty includes share of wallet which was not included in this study because of lack of resources.

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Annexures 1: Consent form

By signing this document, I give my consent and agree to participate in the research conducted by Michaela Raal regarding the exploration of the positive influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on brand loyalty.

I have been fully informed about this research and I understand what participating in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be questioned for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature

Date

Annexure 2 :

2.1 Quantitative survey:

This questionnaire aims to explore the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on customer brand loyalty.

When answering the three questions below please tick the most applicable option.

Age

18-22	1
23-27	2
28-32	3
33-37	4
38-42	5
43-47	6
48-52	7
52+	8

Home language

English	1
Other	2

The restaurant brand you are most familiar with.

Culture Club	1
Alfie's	2
Cowfish	3
Ozé Café & Bistro	4

When answering the following questions please refer to the brand you have selected above as well as tick the box that most accurately describes your attitude.

Sensory Experience

1. This restaurant brand evokes my senses.
Senses: Sight, smell, hear, touch and taste

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

2. This restaurant brand makes a strong positive impression on my senses.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

3. This restaurant brand focuses on experience through positive senses.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

4. Based on your sensory experience are you willing to pay more?

Yes	
No	

5. Based on the sensory experience will you tell more people about the restaurant?

Yes	
No	

6. Based on the sensory experience will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to eat out?

Yes	
No	

Affective/ Emotional Experience

Tick the box that most accurately describes your attitude.

7. This restaurant brand induces positive feelings.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

8. I have strong positive feelings about this restaurant brand.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

9. This restaurant brand focuses on experience through positive emotions.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

10. Based on these feelings and emotions experienced, are you willing to pay more?

Yes	
No	

11. Based on these feelings and emotions experienced, will you tell more people about the restaurant?

Yes	
No	

12. Based on these feelings and emotions experienced, will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to eat out?

Yes	
No	

Behavioral Experience

Tick the box that most accurately describes your attitude.

13. This restaurant brand tries to encourage me to interact with the brand E.g. take photos, follow an Instagram page.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

14. This restaurant brand tries to make me think about my lifestyle E.g. reducing the use of plastic as the brand has removed plastic straws.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

15. This restaurant brand focuses on experience through leading customers to do certain actions or activities.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

16. Based on your behavioral experience are you willing to pay more?

Yes	
No	

17. Based on the behavioral experience will you tell more people about the restaurant?

Yes	
No	

18. Based on the behavioral experience will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to eat out?

Yes	
No	

Intellectual Experience

Tick the box that most accurately describes your attitude.

19. I engage in a lot of positive thinking when I encounter this restaurant brand.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

20. This restaurant brand stimulates my curiosity.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

21. This restaurant brand focuses on experience through positive thoughts.

Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)

22. Based on your intellectual experience are you willing to pay more?

Yes	
No	

23. Based on your intellectual experience will you tell more people about the restaurant?

Yes	
No	

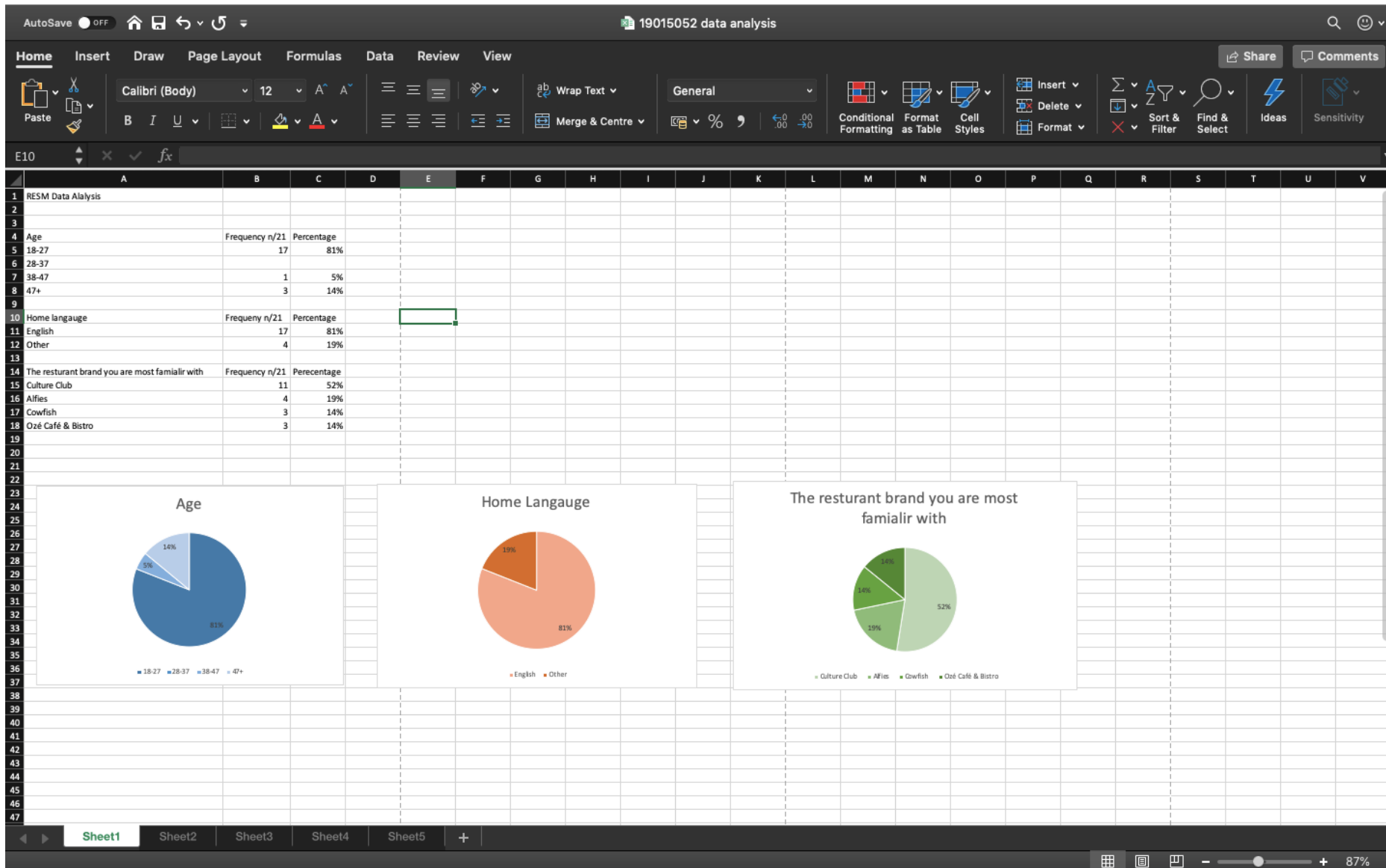
24. Based on your intellectual experience will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to eat out?

Yes	
No	

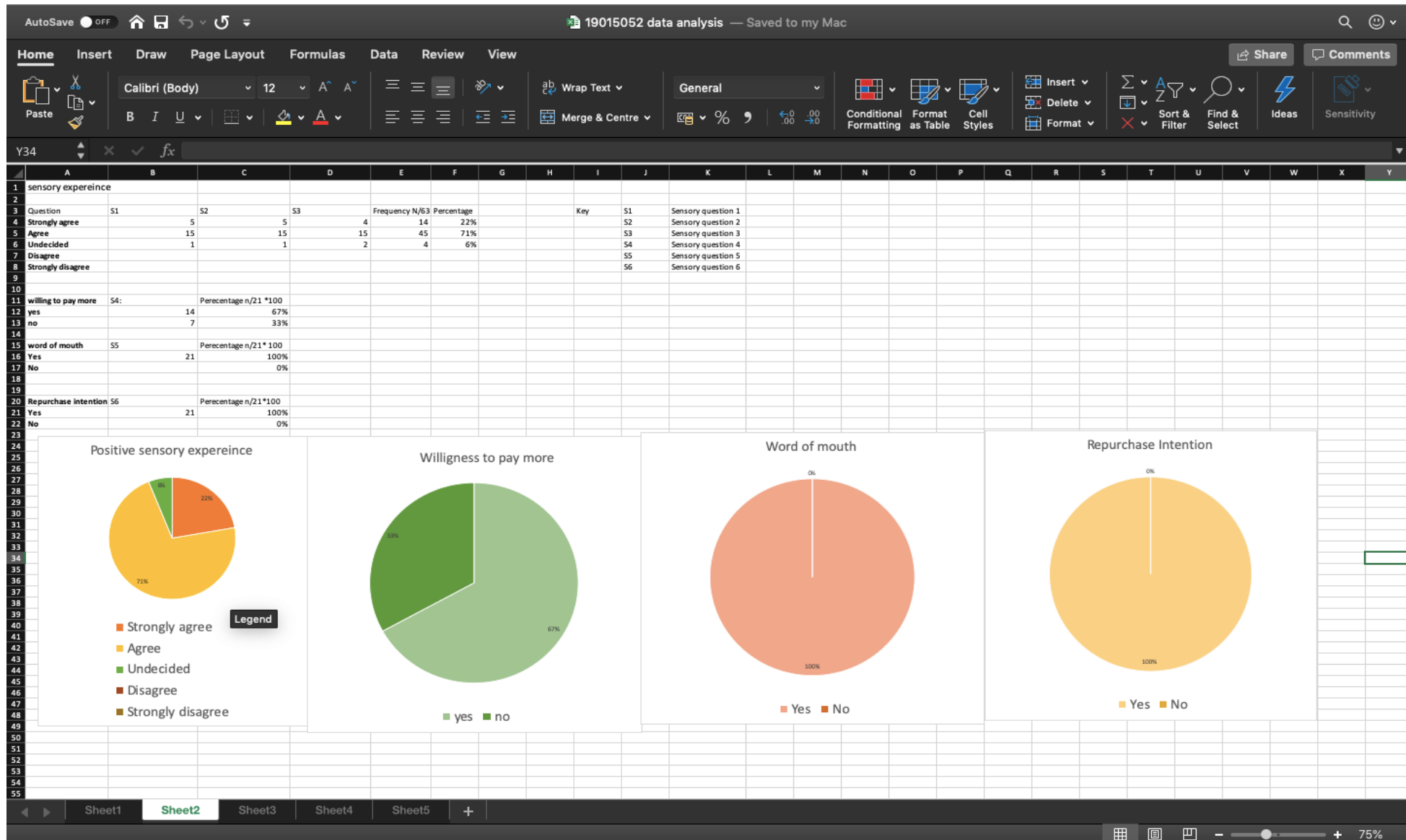
2.2 Qualitative interview

1. Based on your sensory experience are you willing to pay more and what is the reasoning behind this?
2. Based on the sensory experience will you tell more people about it and why?
3. Based on the sensory experience will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to dine and why?
4. Based on the affective experience, are you willing to pay more and why?
5. Based on the affective experience, will you tell more people about it and why?
6. Based on the affective experience, will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to dine and why?
7. Based on your behavioral experience are you willing to pay more and why?
8. Based on the behavioral experience will you tell more people about it and why?
9. Based on the behavioral experience will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to dine and why?
10. Based on your intellectual experience are you willing to pay more and why?
11. Based on the intellectual experience will you tell more people about it and why?
12. Based on the intellectual experience will this restaurant be the restaurant you will take your family and friends to the next time you are wanting to dine and why?

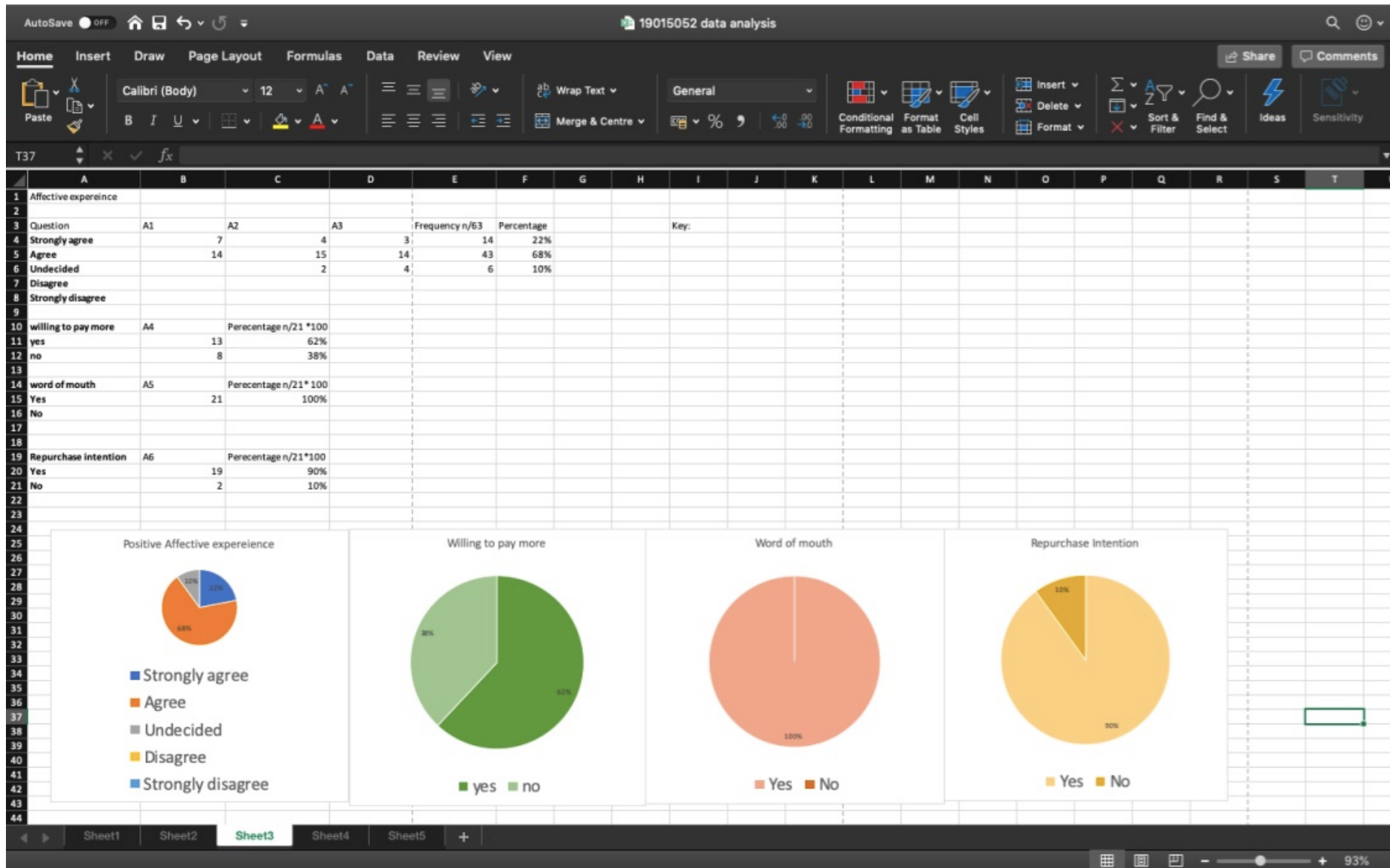
2.3 Excel spreadsheet Demographics



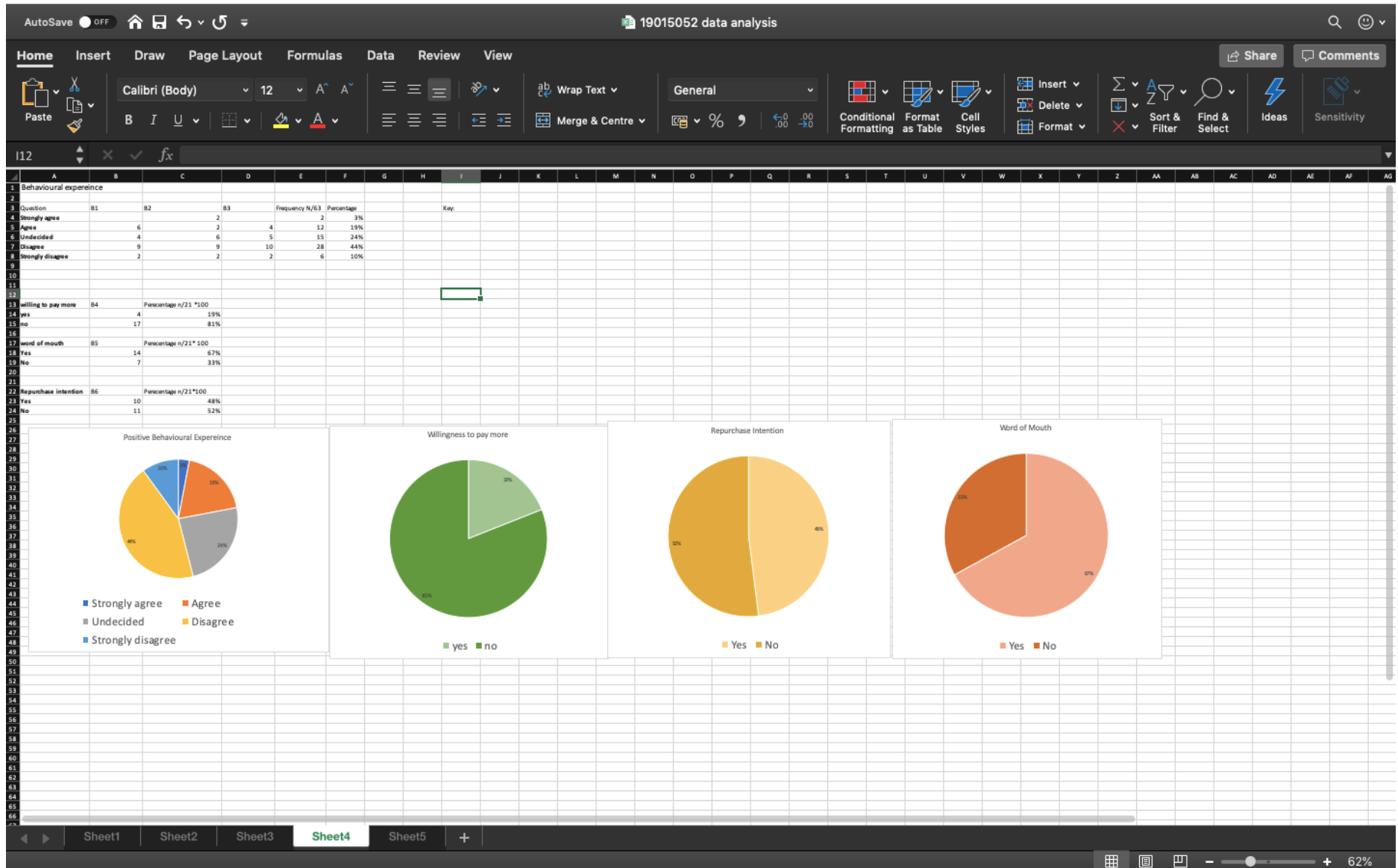
Excel spreadsheet 1: Sensory experience



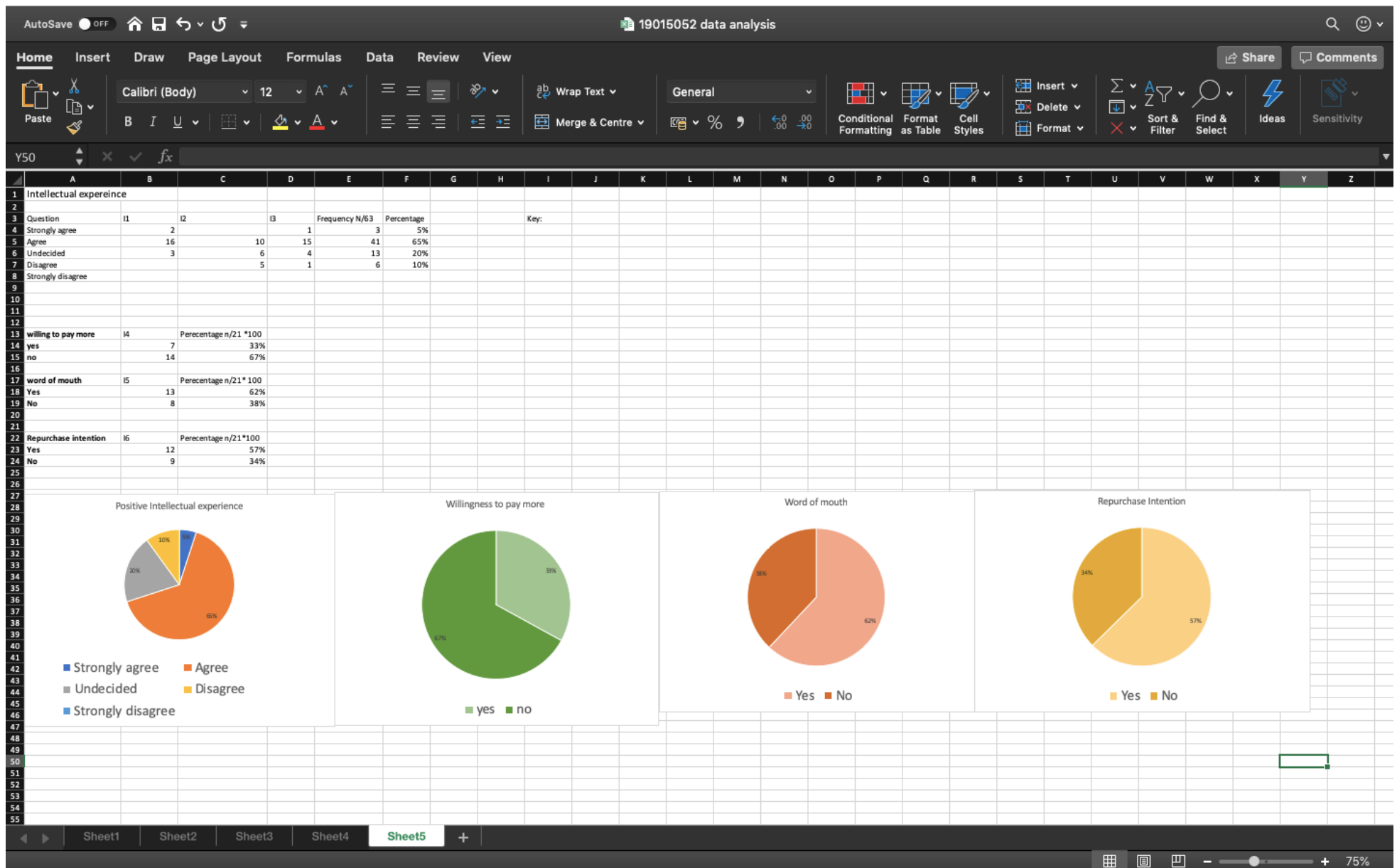
Excel spreadsheet 2: Affective experience



Excel spreadsheet 3: Behavioural experience



Excel spreadsheet 4: Intellectual Experience



2.4 Transcript

Participant 1

Question:

- 1) You have said that you agree to all the sensory questions regarding culture club and furthermore that this will result in you willing to pay more. Why is this the case?

So I agree that I would pay a more expensive price, I think because if you go to a place and like the glasses are dirty and the tables are dirty and it doesn't smell good you wouldn't really be keen to pay an up market price for a place that isn't of an upmarket value. A positive sensory experience comes with an upmarket place and higher prices.

- 2) you have also said that it will result in you telling more people about it. Why is this the case?

It definitely increases my willingness to tell more people about it as I love to share new and great places on my social media or to anyone who asks for any recommendations. I would however only do this if the sensory experience gave me a great feeling of enjoyment and would make me want to return. A positive sensory experience leads to this enjoyment and whether I would return or not. This could be achieved through the setting, but the music, service, how clean it is and the food are the most important aspects for me.

- 3) you have also mentioned that because of this sensory experience you will take your friends and family there the time next you are wanting to eat out. Would this not be the case if the sensory experience was average or non-existent and by this I mean is it a determining factor of whether you take people there(repurchase intention)?

You would take your friends to a place you enjoy yourself so obviously you would want to take them somewhere where you feel like it's worth their time and also when I recommend a place I would recommend it based on knowing they will enjoy and have a good time. I myself would also return as I am the type of person that when I find something I love or really enjoy, I would like to return and try new items on the menu.

- 4) moving on to the emotional/affective experience. You have also said you agree to all the questions regarding the emotional experience and furthermore that this will result in your willingness to pay more. Why is this the case?

I would pay more in a setting where I feel relaxed, happy, safe and comfortable. Comfort is very important for me, if a restaurant is too cramped I immediately feel anxious. I would pay more for a better emotional experience that puts me in a happy mood. I would want people I care about to share this positive experience with me and I feel like if I was prepared to pay more for the experience then they would be too.

- 5) you also said that it increases your willingness to tell more people about it. Why is this the case?

It increases my willingness to tell more people about it because in a time where a lot is negative it is important to sometimes put yourself in a happy place and restaurants do this for me and I would want to share that with other people, even though they might not experience the same positive experience as it is subjective. For me this could be achieved through a restaurant that is outside or is surrounded by trees. A nature setting leaves me in a positive mood.

- 6) you have also mentioned that because of this emotional experience you will take your friends and family there the time next you are wanting to eat out. Would this not be the case if the emotional experience was average or non-existent and by this I mean is it a determining factor of whether you take people there?

The emotional experience is a determining factor, I would not take my family or friends to a restaurant that not did not make me feel happy, lucky or any positive emotions. When you take your family and friends to a restaurant you want to be sure that they will leave grateful that you chose that restaurant. This can only be achieved if the restaurant focused on experience through positive feelings.

- 7) moving on to the behavioural experience. Your responses regarding the behavioural experience is dominantly disagree. This has also lead to you saying that you would not be willing to pay more?

The behavioural experience does not result in me willing to pay more. If a restaurant used plastic straws, or encouraged me to take pictures or for actions that made me think about my lifestyle because it is not the reason I go to a restaurant. If a restaurant does not use plastic straws I comment on the good environmental behaviour but I wouldn't pay more for it. The restaurants that I go to are upper market restaurants and most of the food that leaves all restaurants encourages me to take a photo, so I also wouldn't pay more for it. I would also deter me if a restaurant constantly encouraged me to follow their pages or take photos.

- 8) You have also that you would not tell more people about it based on the behavioural experience and based on the experience you would not take your family and friends there the next time you wanted to eat why?

The behavioural experience does not result in me willing to pay more. If a restaurant used plastic straws, or encouraged me to take pictures or for actions that made me think about my lifestyle because it is not the reason I go to a restaurant. If a restaurant does not use plastic straws I comment on the good environmental behaviour but I wouldn't pay more for it. The restaurants that I go to are upper market restaurants and most of the food that leaves all restaurants encourages me to take a photo, so I also wouldn't pay more for it. I would also deter me if a restaurant constantly encouraged me to follow their pages or take photos.

The behavioural experience would also not result in me telling more people about it or an increased willingness to take my friends and family to the restaurant as it is not a determining factor of whether I like that restaurant or not. The behavioural experience does not change the dining experience, which is the most important for me.

- 9) moving on to intellectual experience. You have said you agree to positive thinking but you are undecided regarding the other 2 questions. Furthermore, this has also lead to you saying that you would not be willing to pay more, you would not tell more

people about it based on the intellectual experience and based on the experience you would not take your family and friends there the next time you wanted to eat. If the intellectual experience was positive and lead you to say agree to question 19,20 and 21 would your willingness to pay more, repurchase intention and your willingness to take people to the restaurant the next time you wanted to eat be a 'yes' or does the intellectual experience not lead you to perform these three actions and why ?

The intellectual experience does not impact whether I will tell more people about it, my willingness to pay more or my willingness to take my family and friends to the restaurant the next time I want to eat because each person will have a different intellectual experience, once again it is not the reason I would go to a restaurant. Sometimes it can be slightly annoying if the restaurant uses very strange names for items and you have to constantly ask what the dish is. However, most times an intellectual experience plays no role in the enjoyment of the restaurant and based on that reason I would not perform the three actions mentioned above.

Participant 2

Question:

- 1) You have said that you agree and strongly agree to all the sensory questions regarding cowfish. However, you have said that this will not result in you willingness to pay more. Why is this the case?

21st century, costs are already high even at 'cheaper' places, Only quality and quantity dictate my willingness to pay more. Even though the quality is higher a sensory experience does not justify a higher purchase price. I am a student and quantity is of higher importance. For an older individual earning a higher salary, I do believe that a positive sensory experience results in the willingness to pay more.

- 2) Contrary you have said that this experience will result in you telling more people about it. Why is this the case?

It's not my wallet, maybe elders or foodies who would be willing to pay that price premium and would be interested in an upmarket and pleasurable sensory experience.

- 3) you have also mentioned that because of this sensory experience you will take your friends and family there the time next you are wanting to eat out. Would this not be the case if the sensory experience was average or non-existent and by this I mean is it a determining factor of whether you take people there(repurchase intention)?

Yes, I would take my family and friends to a restaurant based on a sensory experience because my sensory experience releases more endorphins and pleasures, making the whole experience more enjoyable.

- 4) moving on to the emotional/affective experience. You have also said you agree and strongly agree to all the questions regarding the emotional experience. However once again you have said that this will not result in your willingness to pay more. Why is this the case?

21st century, costs are already high even at 'cheaper' places, Only quality and quantity dictate my willingness to pay more. Even though the quality is higher a sensory experience does not justify a higher purchase price. I am a student and quantity is of higher importance. For an older individual earning a higher salary, I do believe that a positive emotional experience results in the willingness to pay more. I still believe a sensory experience holds more importance

- 5) Contrary you have said that it will result in your willingness to tell more people about it. Why is this the case?

I enjoy sharing positive experiences with fellow individuals. I would however, be more likely to share a negative experience to warn people not to go to that restaurant.

- 6) You have also mentioned that because of this emotional experience you will take your friends and family there the time next you are wanting to eat out. Would this not be the case if the emotional experience was average or non-existent and by this I mean is it a determining factor of whether you take people there?

An emotional experience is a determining factor for me because I wouldn't take my family and friends to a place that will leave them with negative feelings.

- 7) Moving on to the behavioural experience. Your responses regarding the behavioural experience is dominantly disagree. This has also lead to you saying that you would not be willing to pay more. Why is this the case?

Behavioural experience does not impact my restaurant choice or experience. I am not one to take photos and I would not pay more for a restaurant that uses straws.

- 8) However, you have said that based on the behavioural experience you would tell more people about it and based on the behavioural experience you would not take your family and friends there the next time you wanted to eat. Does this mean that If the behavioural experience was positive so opposite to your experience at cowfish you would be willing to tell more people about it and you would have an increased willingness to take people to the restaurant the next time you wanted to eat. If yes, what behavioural experiences would lead you to do so?

I would tell people about this restaurant based on a behavioural experience because other people may appreciate an experience that focuses on encouraging people to partake in certain actions. In a very environmentally conscious time this could be a deciding factor for certain people.

I wouldn't take my family and friends to a restaurant based on a behavioural experience because the people I surround myself with would also not be willing to pay more for this type of experience. A behavioural experience is not why we go to a restaurant.

- 9) Moving on to intellectual experience. You have said you agree to all the questions regarding the intellectual experience. However, this has also lead to you saying that you would not be willing to pay more, you would not tell more people about it based on the intellectual experience and based on the experience you would not take your family and friends there the next time you wanted to eat. Why is this the case?

I wouldn't be willing to pay more, tell more people about it or take my family and friends there based on an intellectual experience because an intellectual experience does not enhance my experience and for this reason it does not result in be interacting in any three of those actions.

Participant 3

Question:

- 1) you have said that you agree and strongly agree to all the sensory questions regarding cowfish. However, you have said that this will result in you willingness to pay more. Why is this the case?

The sensory experience leads to my willingness to pay more because it's a nice environment, its well decorated, the vibe is really nice , with a lot of restaurants around it. It is very authentic , the vibe matches the food Italian. The light music is not obtrusive and adds to the atmosphere. It makes the price worth it.

- 2) Contrary you have said that this experience will result in you telling more people about it. Why is this the case?

I would tell more people about it, because of all the reasons I have mentioned above. For me it's not only about the food, it's about where you are -the physical location and the senses that are awakened by the food as well as the environment. It adds to the whole experience.

- 3) you have also mentioned that because of this sensory experience you will take your friends and family there the time next you are wanting to eat out. Would this not be the case if the sensory experience was average or non-existent and by this I mean is it a determining factor of whether you take people there(repurchase intention)?

I would take my family and friends to a place that enhanced by sensory experience because I am a foodie and I love to share experiences like that with people I love.

- 4) moving on to the emotional/affective experience. You have also said you agree and strongly agree to all the questions regarding the emotional experience. However once again you have said that this will not result in your willingness to pay more. Why is this the case?

The affective experience leads me to be willing to pay more because of the Italian experience it feels like an escape from normal South African life and commercialized feeling and I'm prepared to pay more for that.

- 5) Contrary you have said that it will result in your willingness to tell more people about it. Why is this the case?

I'm willing to tell more people about it because I feel like based on the emotional and sensory experience mentioned above it is in a class of its own.

- 6) You have also mentioned that because of this emotional experience you will take your friends and family there the time next you are wanting to eat out. Would this not be the case if the emotional experience was average or non-existent and by this I mean is it a determining factor of whether you take people there?

I feel like if it's worthwhile to pay more than it's definitely worthwhile to tell my friends and more so to take my family and friends there. I don't think it will completely change your mood but if you are in a neutral or happy state it will make you happier.

- 7) moving on to the behavioural experience. Your responses regarding the behavioural experience is dominantly disagree. This has also led to you saying that you would not be willing to pay more. Why is this the case?

I am grateful that it is not asked to take photos or follow pages and it would deter me if they did. It must be a choice not really asked, I don't like it. The removal of straws does not impact me because whether they use straws or don't I always take my metal straw with me. I feel like behavioural experience doesn't really impact the general experience of a restaurant. South Africa doesn't have the adequate infrastructure for recycling and there are no restaurants that are up to par with really being environmentally friendly so there is no restaurant that will make it worthwhile to pay more for it. It is my responsibility and interest rather.

- 8) However, you have said that based on the behavioural experience you would not tell more people about it and based on the behavioural experience you would not take your family and friends there the next time you wanted to eat. Does this mean that if the behavioural experience was positive so opposite to your experience at cowfish you would be willing to tell more people about it and you would have an increased willingness to take people to the restaurant the next time you wanted to eat. If yes, what behavioural experiences would lead you to do so?

I don't feel that Alfie's focuses on behavioural experience so it doesn't result in me wanting to take my family and friends there or tell more people about it based on this experience but like I said previously, this experience does not really add to my general experience of the restaurant. However, I do feel like it's important for South African restaurants as I feel like

they not scratching the surface in terms of this experience and I would be prepared to pay more if there was more focus placed on it given that the food was good.

- 9) Moving on to intellectual experience. You have said you agree to all the questions regarding the intellectual experience. However, this has also lead to you saying that you would not be willing to pay more, you would not tell more people about it based on the intellectual experience and based on the experience you would not take your family and friends there the next time you wanted to eat. Why is this the case?

The intellectual experience does not result in me willing to pay more or me telling people about it as maybe it speaks of my boring character but I always order the same thing so I don't really engage in an intellectual experience. I also think it's very subjective and the intellectual experience will be different for each person. However, it does result in me wanting to take family and friends there, because like I said could be an experience that really speaks to them. I think exotic food has a very specific market but could be a new experience for the family and friends. It doesn't really excite me or aid to my experience as it is not a reason i would go to a restaurant.

Annexure 3: Ethical clearance letter

August 26, 2019

Student name: Michaela Raal

Student number: 19015052

Campus: Vega Pretoria

Re: Approval of Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) in Strategic Brand Management Proposal and Ethics Clearance

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and we hereby provide you with ethical clearance to proceed with your data collection.

There may be some aspects that you still need to address in your proposal. If this is the case, feedback will be provided to you in writing. You will need to address these aspects in consultation with your supervisor.

In the event of you deciding to change your research topic or methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure that all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued in such instances.

We wish you all the best with your research!

Yours sincerely,



Amalia van Schalkwyk

Name:

Research Purpose	Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection	Ethics	Key Findings	Recommendation
The purpose of this research is to explore the different types of brand experience namely (sensation, affection, behavioral, and intellectual) and the influence that these different types of experience individually have on the consumer's word of mouth, willingness to pay more and their repurchase intention in South Africa.	RQ 1How does the consumers sensory experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty? RQ2 How does the consumers affective experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty?	This study explores an ongoing trend namely the Foodie trend (Forbes.com, 2019) as well as the importance of creating a dining experience from the perspective of restaurant owners with the hopes of attracting customers. Based on the two-mentioned evident trends this topic is deemed relevant.	Hussein, 2016 Ong, lee, Ramayah, 2018	Theme 1: brand experience Theme. 2: Brand loyalty	The critical realism paradigm is the paradigm that underpins this study as the researcher aims to use the strengths of both positivism and interpretivist This study is subjective in nature as it gathers the qualitative opinions of the participants with the aim of using the information in a practical manner.	Deductive and deductive reasoning. Mixed method	-Structured interviews for qualitative -Surveys for quantitative	Participants will not be harmed. Participation is voluntary Can withdrawal if they feel uncomfortable Remain confidential and data kept for 5 years.	-Sensory experience influences all aspects of brand loyalty. -behavioral and intellectual linked to wom and ri.	-the resta indu: shou furth anal sensi expe - resers sho do furt stud intc infl or rela hip bet the con s.
						Population				
						Total: everyone eating out at restaurants Accessible: 21 at the village, Hazelwood area				
Research Problem	Secondary questions/hypotheses/objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories							
Research has largely ignored the exact nature and dimensional structure of brand experiences and studies on customer experience in the restaurant industry have largely ignored the fact that experience may also derive from sensation, affection, behavioral, and intellectual from the perspective of branding.	RQ 3:How does the consumers behavioural experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty RQ4:How does the consumers intellectual experience influence the components of customer brand loyalty? Objectives: The objectives of the study are to explore the influence of the four dimensions of experience on WOM,WPM and RI and to describe the participants reasoning behind this negative or positive relationship	-Brand loyalty -Brand experience: sensory, affective, intellectual and emotional -WOM, WPM and RI	For the purpose of this research two models will be used. The Brakus et al. (2009) framework for brand experience and the Antecedents and Consequence s of Customer Loyalty Model (Singh, Singh & Vij, 2017).		This study is objective in nature as it gathers the quantitative objective reality of the influence of the four dimensions of brand experience on brand loyalty.	Nonprobability Convenience sampling based on convenience and easy accessibility based on geographic proximity. N=21	-Thematic analysis for qualitative and descriptive statistics for quantitative.	-Time -sample size -resources -method of analysis -no share of wallet	-qualitative info. -add to a limited body of knowledge. -south African context.	