

To determine which aspects of negative online reviews, have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.

A research report submitted by

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DECLARATION

I, Donovan Barrett (15015204) hereby declare that the Research Proposal submitted for the Bachelor of Commerce Honours 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donovan Barrett', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature

25 October 2019

Date

Abstract

Brand equity, which is influenced by various factors, is a crucial element for the success of organisations within South Africa and globally. In order for organisations to build brand equity, they need to consider the following factors: customer perceptions, brand associations, brand loyalty, brand image and brand awareness.

Due to the increased usage of the internet, online consumer reviews have become quite popular and are being used by consumers frequently. In today's society, online reviews influence consumer decisions and thoughts of brands. These reviews undoubtedly influence the brand equity of organisations. Previous research has indicated that negative online reviews influence brand equity negatively, however, this study goes further and seeks to determine which specific aspects of online reviews have the greatest impact.

This study aims to identify whether negative online reviews influence the brand equity of organisations and more specifically which aspects of these reviews have the greatest effect on brand equity. For the purpose of this study, the Doppio Zero restaurant franchise was used. The aspects within negative online reviews that were made use of in this study include: food quality, price, service and atmosphere.

A quantitative study was conducted in which food quality, price, service and atmosphere were analysed to determine which aspects had the greatest influence on the brand equity of Doppio Zero. An online survey was administered to individuals between the ages of 18 and 40, who live in the Johannesburg area and consult the Hellopeter online review platform. A total of 28 responses were gathered. Descriptive statistics were utilised in order to ascertain which aspect of the consumer reviews had the greatest effect on brand equity. The results from this study are essential in providing organisations with knowledge on what consumers find most important when reading online reviews. The results from this study indicated that food quality was the most important factor to consumers when reading negative online reviews. This was followed by service, atmosphere and lastly pricing. This is thought to be due to the fact that Doppio Zero is considered a fine dining restaurant and also due to the consumer demographic that attends this type of restaurant.

TABLE OF CONTENTS/

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Context	1
1.2	Rationale	2
1.3	Problem Statement	2
1.4	Purpose Statement	3
1.5	Research Question	3
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	4
2.1	Conceptualisation of Key Concepts.	8
2.2	Theoretical Foundation	9
3	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	13
3.1	RESEARCH DESIGN	13
3.1.1	Research Paradigm	13
3.1.2	Research Approach	14
4	RESEARCH PLAN	15
4.1	Unit of analysis	15
4.2	Population.....	15
4.3	Sampling.....	15
4.4	Data Collection	16
4.5	Data Analysis Method.....	16
4.6	Validity and Reliability or Trustworthiness	17
5	DATA ANALYSIS	18
6	ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION	30
7	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	31
8	LIMITATIONS.....	32
9	CONCLUSION	33
10	References.....	34
11	APPENDIXES	38
11.1	Appendix A: Updated Concept Document Table	38
11.2	Appendix B: Consent Form for Participants.....	40
11.3	Appendix C: Measurement Instrument	43
11.4	Appendix D: Ethical clearance	47

1 INTRODUCTION

Prior to the advent of the internet, word of mouth (WOM) communication was considered to be the most useful tool for marketing research and was known to be the most influential source when exchanging information. Due to the explosive growth of the internet, the electronic word of mouth (eWOM) concept was created and has received considerable amounts of attention in the e-marketing domain (Hussain, et al., 2017). Unsurprisingly, companies are allocating greater portions of their marketing budgets to generate and manage the eWOM process (Moorman, 2014).

Cheung & Thadani (2012) mention that there are several types of eWOM platforms, these include social networking sites; online discussions forums; blogs; online shopping sites and online consumer review sites. For the purpose of this research study, the focus will be on online consumer review sites. Online product and service reviews are types of user-generated content that have become increasingly important, these reviews provide consumers with a valuable source of information when making purchasing decisions (Berezina, et al., 2016).

1.1 Context

Diving further, this study will have a deeper look in to the effect that negative online consumer reviews has on the brand equity of the Doppio Zero restaurant franchise. The reason for choosing negative reviews is that past studies have shown that individuals place greater emphasis on negative online reviews due to mistrust that exists behind the anonymity online (Sen and Lerman, 2007). However, previous research has produced conflicting results, showing that negative online consumer reviews can have a positive effect on the way consumers evaluate a brand (Beneke, et al., 2015). Due to inconsistencies in past findings, there is an opportunity for this research to clarify the effect that negative online reviews have on brand equity, specifically within a South African context. This research is making use of Doppio Zero, which is a proudly South African franchise, the online review site that will be used is Hellopeter. It was thought that it would be fitting to use this platform as Hellopeter is another South African creation.

According to Liu and Park (2015), the hospitality industry, in which Doppio Zero functions, is significantly different from other service or manufacturing industries. The services provided by the hospitality industry are highly experiential and consumption experiences are evaluated in a subjective manner by consumers. Adding to this, it has been found that customers within the hospitality industry are more sensitive to eWOM that is shared by their

peers with regards to restaurant brands, this is greater than any other service industry (McIntosh, Goeldner, & Ritchie, 2009). Due to this fact, prospective restaurant customers are more inclined to consult reviews and experiences that are shared online before they visit or make a booking at a restaurant (Yang, 2017). The restaurant Doppio Zero was chosen as it is a proudly South African franchise that is quite popular. Adding to this, on the Hellopeter online review platform, there is a large amount of data upon which to base this study.

1.2 Rationale

As consumers are placing greater emphasis on eWOM, especially within the hospitality industry, it has become more pertinent for restaurants to understand the effect that negative online reviews have on the brand equity of their business. Not only do restaurants need to understand the effect that the online reviews have on their business, but more specifically, understand the factors within online reviews that have the greatest effect on their brand equity. The factors that have been identified and that are going to be used within this research are: food quality; service; atmosphere, pricing. Through the comparison of multiple online review sites, it was deduced that these factors are the most frequently mentioned. This research will provide Doppio Zero and other restaurants within the hospitality industry further insight into what specific factors of online reviews have the greatest effect on their brand equity and what they would need to improve upon. This study contributes to a gap that had been found in existing literature and research.

1.3 Problem Statement

The hospitality industry customers have an increased sensitivity to eWOM (McIntosh, Goeldner, & Ritchie, 2009) and are more likely to consult online reviews before visiting or booking at a restaurant (Yang, 2017). Due to this, it is essential that restaurants understand the effect that these reviews have on the brand equity of their business. There has been vast research that covers the topics of online reviews and negative online reviews. However, no research conducted on the specific factors within these negative online reviews that have the greatest effect on the brand equity of restaurants.

1.4 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand the effect that the specific factors within negative online reviews have on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.

1.5 Research Question

Primary Question:

- Which aspects of negative online reviews have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero?

Secondary Questions:

- To what extent does the 'food quality' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity?
- To what extent does the 'service' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity?
- To what extent does the 'atmosphere' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity?
- To what extent does the 'pricing' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity?

OBJECTIVES

- a) To explore which aspects of negative online reviews have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.
- b) To determine the effect that the 'food quality' aspect of negative online reviews has on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.
- c) To determine the effect that the 'service' aspect of negative online reviews has on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.
- d) To determine the effect that the 'atmosphere' aspect of negative online reviews has on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.
- e) To determine the effect that the 'pricing' aspect of negative online reviews has on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The following study makes use of Keller's brand equity theory as a theoretical backbone. This was used to determine which aspects of negative online reviews has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero, within a South African context. Furthermore, the study analyses the various factors that contribute towards online consumer reviews and brand equity.

Brand equity:

The concept of brand equity was developed in the 1980's and is a term that became crucial within the marketing sphere (Beneke, et al., 2015). In 1991, David Aaker, released a book called 'Managing Brand Equity' that provided a definition of Brand Equity. Aaker (1991) describes brand equity as a set of brand assets as well as liabilities that are linked to a brand, its name and its symbol. This adds or subtracts from the value that is provided by a product or service to a firm and its customers. He adds to this by saying that brand equity is a multidimensional construct that consists of brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty. Keller (1993), went further to propose the concept of consumer-based brand equity, which is the differential effect that brand knowledge has on a consumer's brand value perceptions. It is proposed by Keller, Apeira, & Georgson (2012) that when an individual has a high level of awareness and familiarity of a brand and holds that brand favourably in memory, it will lead to brand equity.

When analysing Keller's brand equity model, it is seen that brand equity is the effect that brand knowledge has on consumers responses towards a brand. It was also found that Brand Knowledge is a dimension of brand equity, and comprises brand awareness and brand associations (Keller, 1993). Brand awareness was conceptualised by Keller (1993) as the likelihood and ease at which a brand will come to mind. Brand image, which is another component of brand knowledge, is the perceptions that an individual has about a brand, that is reflected by the brand association held in their memory (Keller, 1993).

Electronic word of mouth:

The inception and increasing popularity of Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), was due to the increase in digital communication, that spurred from the popularity and use of the internet. eWOM, while being a less personal form of communication, allowed individuals and marketers to share information more easily (Levy & Gvili, 2015). eWOM is defined as an internet based, interpersonal communication that occurs between virtual persons with the purpose of delivering information with regards to organisations and products (Wu, 2013). eWOM is no longer like traditional word of mouth, which is fleeting communication that occurs between people in a face-to-face setting that needs constant repeating (Cheng & Zhou, 2010). It is now a permanent record that is available on a wide array of web sites and blogs (Craig, Greene, & Versaci, 2015).

eWOM provides individuals with a new manner in which to communicate and connect with each other, such as through email, online forums, blogs, recommendation sites and social networking (Levy & Gvili, 2015). eWOM, principally in the form of online customer reviews, provides consumers with a trusted source of brand information. It has been considered a source that is independent of the control and influence of an organisation (Sher & Lee, 2009). A critical issue that needs to be considered is not only how eWOM builds after an individual has exposure to an experience, but how prominent the word of mouth is before the actual experience of that service, which can ultimately affect its success (Craig, Greene, & Versaci, 2015). Adding to this, Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold (2011), found through their research that eWOM significantly influences the brand equity of organisations.

Online consumer reviews:

There has been an increasing dependence of individuals to use the internet as the source of information with regards to decision making on a variety of service providers (Berezina , et al., 2016). This increased need to acquire information online with regards to products and services led to the inception of eWOM (Chan & Guillet , 2011). Online reviews are a form of eWOM and form the basis upon which this study will focus. Product and service reviews have become a crucial type of user generated content that is available online. They provide a valuable source of information that help other consumers make wise purchasing decisions that they won't come to regret. It has been documented in previous research that user-generated online reviews have a significant influence on the sales and bookings of products and services (Ye, et al., 2011).

Park, Lee, & Han (2007) documented that the quality of online customer reviews has a significant effect on brand equity. Cheung, Lee, & Rabjohn (2008) concur with this, by stating that the difference in the levels of credibility of the online reviews has a significant effect on the brand equity. It is stated further by Park, Lee, & Han (2007) that high quality reviews, are those that are supported by facts and are objective. They compare this with low quality reviews which are based more on the emotions of the writer. A study conducted by Chakraborty and Bhat (2018) indicated that the source and quality of the review are the two most important factors influencing consumer's credibility evaluations of reviews. Furthermore, their study revealed that credible online reviews have a significant impact on brand associations, brand awareness and perceived value.

Negative online consumer reviews:

A study conducted by Beneke, et al., (2015) revealed that negative eWOM communications – more specifically negative online reviews – had detrimental effects on brand equity. Furthermore, it was found that the damaging effect of the negative reviews occur through the brand loyalty and perceived quality dimensions of brand equity. Similarly, numerous studies have corroborated the effects of negative online reviews to be negative, with regard to brand equity (Bambauer-Sache and Mangold, 2011; Nga, et al., 2013). It may seem straightforward to reason that brand equity and consumers brand evaluation will be negatively influenced by negative reviews, however, research has shown conflicting results (Wu, et al., 2011). Research conducted by Berger, et al., (2010) has indicated that negative online reviews tend to have a positive effect on consumers brand evaluation. This study further implies that negative eWOM communication generates awareness and publicity for a brand, suggesting that over time the increased awareness will influence brand equity in a positive manner. The reason for focusing on negative online reviews, rather than that of positive reviews is displayed by Lee & Koo (2012). They state that the presence of negative information within online consumer reviews reinforces the credibility of the review. Adding to this, they go on to state customers consider reviews that include criticism as more credible than those that are purely positive.

A high involvement product is regarded as a highly complex item and in many cases these items are quite costly (Hoyer and MacInnis 2008). Restaurants fall into the 'high involvement product category' as consumers typically engage in extended problem solving by spending time comparing different aspects between various restaurants such as quality, price and atmosphere. It can also be seen that restaurants are not a low involvement purchase, as it

is not a service that a consumer chooses on impulse. Thought and planning goes into the consumer choosing where and what to eat. Adding to this, research conducted by Xue and Zhou (2010), reveals that negative online reviews are significantly more harmful to the brand equity of high involvement products. Due to fact that a large amount of research has focused on the effect that negative online reviews has on brand equity, this research aims to find the specific factors within online reviews that has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero. According to Hellopeter (2019), Doppio Zero is the ranks first amongst all the restuarants on the review site. Adding to this, the restaurant has a large amount of data available on the review platform. It is due to this that the restaurant will be used for the case study. The factors within negative online reviews that are being focused on within this study are: food quality; service; pricing; atmosphere and menu variety.

Restaurant reviews:

As mentioned in the introduction, restaurants are placed in the hospitality industry and this industry differs significantly from that of other service or manufacturing industries. Lee & Cranage (2014) and Liu & Park (2015) state that the services offered in the hospitality industry are highly experiential in nature, they further mention that consumption experiences are evaluated by consumers in a subjective manner. According to McIntosh, et al., (2009), hospitality consumers are more sensitive to eWOM communication when compared to consumers in other industries. Similarly, Yang (2017) discusses how hospitality consumers are more inclined to consult reviews, shared experiences and online information before making purchasing decisions. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier (2007) back this up by providing research that's shows that consumers have an increasing tendency to share their dining experience, whether it be on review sites or on a restaurant's websites. Restaurants are able to make use of eWOM communications posted in online reviews to gain a better understanding of consumer wants and needs (Kwok & Yu, 2013). Li, et al., (2019) conducted a study in which they reviewed the effects that prior online reviews have on consumers evaluation of a brand, the results of this study indicated that consumers restaurant evaluations are socially influenced by two factors, average review rating and the number of reviews.

Conclusion

Online consumer reviews are a subsection that falls within electronic word of mouth (eWOM). It has been established above that eWOM, differing to that of traditional word of mouth, gained popularity due to the digitization and increased popularity of the internet. It

was found that eWOM, more specifically online reviews, has a significant influence on the brand equity of organisations. Research has revealed that consumers find online consumer reviews as a valuable source of information that they use when making decisions about an organisation. Adding to this, when individuals make use of online reviews, they look for credible reviews that are supported by facts and contain forms of criticism.

This study will focus on negative online reviews, as it has been found that any form of negative eWOM generates awareness and publicity for a brand, that over time will affect the brand equity. Furthermore, this study will be analysing the effect that specific factors within negative online reviews has on the brand equity of restaurants. This was chosen as it had been identified that this area of online reviews had not been covered in research that had already been conducted in existing research.

It was found that consumers within the hospitality industry, in which restaurants are found, are more inclined to consult reviews and forms of eWOM before making purchasing decisions. Adding to this, it was also found that these consumers are the most inclined to share their dining experiences. Keller's CBBE model will be used to analyse the influence that the factors within negative reviews has on Doppio Zero's brand equity.

From the insight that was gained from the information discussed above, as well as gaps and inconsistencies found in past research that there was opportunity to conduct this research, specifically within a South African context using a proudly South African online review platform and restaurant franchise.

2.1 Conceptualisation of Key Concepts.

Key concept 1: Online reviews

An online review is regarded as consumers experiences and/or opinions of a product, service or organisation. These reviews form part of customer feedback and can be found on various online shopping sites and review platforms (Valant, 2015)

Key Concept 2: Negative Online Reviews

This is an online review where consumers share their opinions or experiences of a product or service. This online review serves as a complaint and a manner for the consumer to share their dissatisfaction with their experience (Myers,2016)

Key concept 3: Brand equity

Brand equity is defined as the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumers responses towards a brand (Keller,1993). This study will seek to determine the extent to which the brand equity of Doppio Zero is affected by common factors found in negative online restaurant reviews.

Key concept 4: Doppio Zero

Doppio Zero is a South African full-service restaurant franchise that embodies 'European café culture' and has a great passion for high quality food and service (Doppio Zero, 2019)

Key concept 5: Aspects

The word aspects in the research title refers to several factors that are commonly found in online restaurant reviews. These factors include food quality, service, atmosphere, pricing. This study will determine which of these factors have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Brand equity is a fundamental concept in brand management. Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) are known to have the most prominent thoughts on brand equity and describe brand equity as the value of a brand in the minds of consumers. Aaker (1991) constructed a conceptual framework on brand equity, suggesting that five dimensions of brand equity exist, namely: brand awareness, brand associations, brand loyalty, perceived quality and other proprietary brand assets.

Keller's model will be used for the purpose of this research. Keller's model is comprised of four sequential steps, otherwise known as the branding ladder. These steps are brand identity; brand meaning; brand response and brand relationship. For each step to occur, the previous step needs to be completed successfully. These sequential steps correlate with six different brand building blocks which are namely: brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, brand judgments, brand feelings and brand resonance. These six building blocks make up the brand equity pyramid, with each block having their own sub-dimensions and corresponding brand objectives. Brand equity is created and achieved by reaching the pinnacle point of the brand equity pyramid, which equates to reaching the top of the branding ladder.

Below is an image demonstrating Keller's brand equity model CBBE model



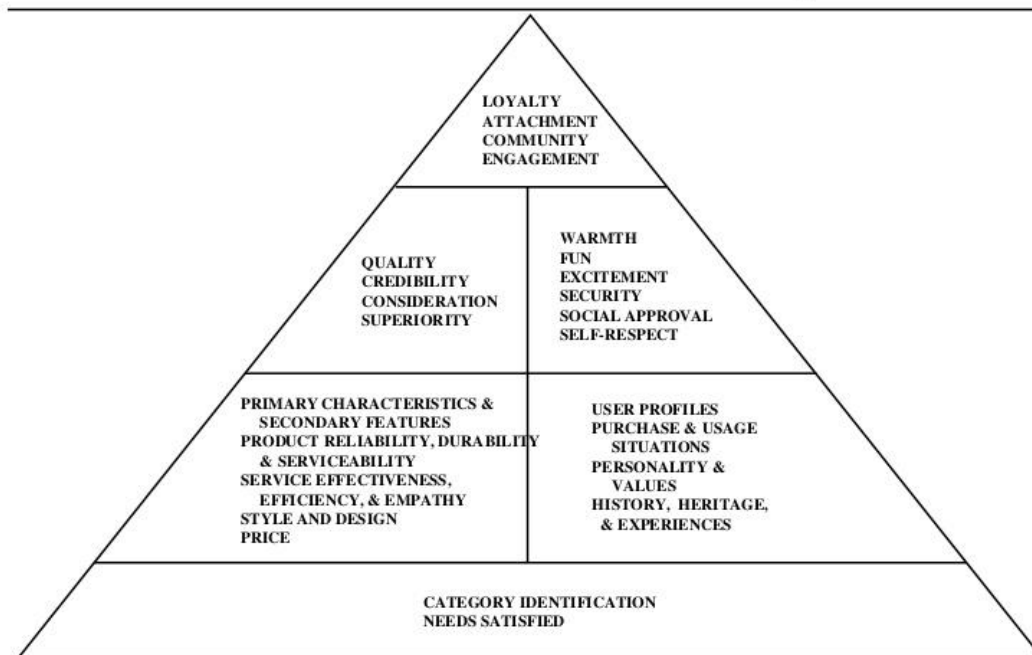
(Bhasin, 2018)

The basic premise of Keller's brand equity model, also referred to as the CBBE model (customer-based brand equity), is that brand equity is the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer responses towards the brand and mentions that brand knowledge is a dimension of brand equity, comprising of both brand awareness and brand associations (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) goes on to mention that brand familiarity paired with favourable associations of the brand forms the brand equity of a brand. This can be seen when individuals demonstrate their favourable or unfavourable associations of a brand on online reviews platforms, similarly, this can be seen through the associations generated by potential consumers when reading past reviews about Doppio Zero.

The CBBE model mentions that the power of a brand and its value resides in the minds of consumers, those who make use of online reviews have the potential to become future customers and thus add or subtract to the value of the brand in the form of brand equity. Furthermore, it is evident from the literature that Keller makes use of the word 'customer' to represent all individuals who either consume or purchase products or services. These are the same individuals who are responsible for developing online consumer reviews and potentially the individuals reading these reviews.

Keller stated that the CBBE model was developed to be versatile and applicable to all possible industry settings and any product or service category, therefore it is applicable to the hospitality industry in which restaurants reside. The various levels within Keller's CBBE model can be linked quite closely with the various aspects of online reviews.

Sub-Dimensions of CBBE Pyramid



The aspect of food quality links to both performance and judgements on Keller's CBBE pyramid. This is due to the fact that the primary characteristics of a restaurant is the products that it provides to its consumers. Consumers judge the performance of a restaurant on what products the restaurant provides and the associated quality. When making judgements of a restaurant, consumers also use food quality as a measure of the credibility and superiority. The pricing of the products offered at a restaurant allow consumers to consider the performance of the restaurants. Consumers will also make judgements of the restaurants. The pricing will determine the consideration of whether a consumer decides to visit the restaurant. They will also make judgements as to the superiority of the product according to the pricing of the product. The service aspect has a large effect on the perceived level of performance in the consumers mind. The consumer will be expecting efficiency and effectiveness. Finally, atmosphere links to imagery and feelings highlighted on the pyramid. Imagery which comprise the experience and usage situation that consumers derive from their time spent at a restaurant. The feelings that a consumer has when visiting a restaurant,

such as excitement and warmth, has an effect on their opinion on the atmosphere of the restaurant.

However, a few limitations of Keller's brand equity model exist. Kuhn, et al., (2008) state that Keller's model tends to ignore certain elements that relate to support services, more specifically the relationships that exist between service providers and consumers. In addition, Kuhn, et al., (2008) mention that the model ignores various factors relating to the organisation, such as profitability, reputation and market share. However, these factors may have greater significance in a business to business context (Kuhn, et al., 2008).

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1.1 Research Paradigm

The study will be conducted from within the **positivism** paradigm because the purpose of the study is to determine which aspects of negative online reviews have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero. This paradigm states that it aims to discover relationships that exist between variables in order to be able to predict and control events. Adding to this, the aim of positivism is to gain enlightenment on a topic and gain a deeper understanding (du-Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). This is what the researcher aims to do – to understand which factor, being food quality, pricing, atmosphere and service, has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero. In terms of the **ontological** position, this paradigm states that reality is objective and the laws that govern it can be discovered (du-Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). Online reviews are the result of an individual's objective reality. Positivist believe that this reality of individuals can be observed and measured (du-Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). This includes the observation and measurement of those making use of online reviews. This aligns with the purpose of this study – as the reality of individuals who make use of online reviews could be influenced by what they read and it is the aim of the researcher to measure this effect. A further aim of this study is to produce knowledge and findings that can be used to supply individuals with the tools and that they can use to gain a further understanding of their own reality. This study will provide individuals as well as the restaurant Doppio Zero with the tools they will need to change the perceptions that people express within online reviews. The study therefore aligns with the **epistemological** position of the positivism paradigm that states that the only valid knowledge is that which is produced through observation (du-Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). It is the aim of positivists to use the knowledge obtained through observation be able to learn how factors within the world work to be able to predict some outcomes (du-Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). Furthermore, positivists value truth and reason, which refers to their **axiological** position (du-Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). Within this study, truth and reason is valued. As this study is based on an individual's reasoning during and after the use of online reviews and the truth they deduce from the reviews they make use of.

Since the aim of this study is to determine which aspects of negative online reviews have the greatest effect on brand equity, a quantitative approach will be utilised. This is due to the fact that quantitative studies have always been connected to positivism, making it suitable for experiments and surveys. It also does not connect to any philosophical ideas or commitments (Bhattacharjee, 2012)

3.1.2 Research Approach

For the purpose of this study, a quantitative approach will be utilised. Quantitative research is the investigation of phenomena through gathering data and performing statistical tests (Surendran, 2019). The chosen paradigm for this research, positivism, is closely related with quantitative research (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Explanatory research is often used for quantitative research. Explanatory research is conducted when a research problem has not been investigated in depth before. This design focuses on explaining and understanding of the aspects within the study (Yousaf, 2017)

In the study an inductive approach will be used as the researcher is attempting to create a hypothesis and not testing an existing one. Going further inductive reasoning focuses on individual behaviour and involves the search for a pattern in a series of observations and sets out to generate meaning from the data that is collected, not merely propose a finding. Inductive reasoning focuses on learning from experiences, which is what consumers do when they write and make use of online consumer reviews (Dudovskiy, 2013).

4 RESEARCH PLAN

4.1 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis that was used in this study is individuals. These individuals are not professionals within this field. However, they meet the criteria stipulated in the population parameters and have the knowledge needed to adequately answer the survey.

4.2 Population

The population being used for the purpose of this research comprises of both male and female individuals that fall within the age range of 20- 40 years. This age range was chosen as one of the co-owners of Doppio Zero, Paul Christie, stated that the target market for the franchise is individuals who are in their early twenties, ranging up to forty years of age (Boucher, 2012). These individuals live in Johannesburg, South Africa. These individuals will have had consulted or still consult the Hellopeter online review platform when deciding on which restaurants to visit. These individuals will also need to know about the Doppio Zero restaurant Franchise. This will be established through the survey. It will form part of the qualifying questions – if they answer no to knowing about Doppio Zero, the survey will close and their response will not form part of the study.

4.3 Sampling

Non-probability sampling has been used. Non-probability sampling is an ideal sampling method when it is difficult to gain access to the entire population or to determine who the entire population is (du-Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). As the population that is being used for this research is vast, it becomes impossible to access a sampling frame that is representative and inclusive of the entire population frame. Therefore, non-probability sampling has been used in order to choose participants that meet the parameters of the population, using the judgement of the researcher of this study.

A purposive sampling technique has been utilised. Purposive sampling involves choosing elements that one wishes to include in their sample that are based on a set of chosen characteristics (du Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014). This study required a sample from the population that met certain characteristics, this ensured that each individual within the sample group will assist with the research. The sample size will consist of 20-25 individuals, due to this study adopting a quantitative approach – a minimum of 20 individuals will be required to obtain data. Both female and male individuals falling between the ages of 18-40 will make up the range of the sample. Individuals who form part of the sample will be contacted via email.

4.4 Data Collection

Online surveys are being used to gather data for this study. The surveys will be created using Google forms. The surveys were sent out via email to individuals who are known to meet the sample criteria. If the number of responses received are insufficient, individuals will be contacted over social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp. Following this, if the response numbers were still insufficient, I had planned to ask the individuals who had already filled out the survey - who met the criteria - to pass the survey along to other individuals who meet the same criteria. In this instance a snowball sampling technique will be used. Online surveys will be utilised as they are convenient for the distribution and gathering of data. This instrument also allows for easy monitoring of responses from respondents.

The data was collected through an online survey that comprised of close ended questions and multiple likert scales. These surveys were distributed via email and sent to individuals who meet the sample criteria. These individuals were known to the researcher, this ensured that they met the criteria before being sent the online survey. The survey will comprise of close ended questions. Likert scales will be used with a scale of 5; ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Close ended questions are being used as they simplify and quantify the responses gathered from respondents (du Plooy-Cilliers, et al., 2014).

4.5 Data Analysis Method

The data was obtained through an online survey that was distributed. As this data is quantitative in nature, it was analysed through statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were used in order to analyse the data. From these results the researcher was looking to determine which factor has the greatest effect on brand equity. Another reason for the use of descriptive statistics is that the researcher wanted to examine the data in such a manner where they may see a pattern emerge. This allows for an easier interpretation and understanding of the data. Thus, allowing the researcher to have a clear indication on which factor has the greatest effect on brand equity (Laerd Statistics , 2018). The descriptive statistic tests that will be used are mode and mean. These will be used in order to identify which factors the respondents thought to have the greatest effect on the brand equity.

4.6 Validity and Reliability or Trustworthiness

Due to this research making use of a positivist approach, there needed to be considerations towards the validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the study. Steps were taken within this study in order to enhance the validity, trustworthiness and reliability of the quantitative section of the survey, comprising of close ended questions in the form of a 5-point Likert scale. When considering the close ended questions, some measures were put into place to ensure that there were no threats to the validity of the survey. These included ensuring that there are no questions to which the respondents can merely just answer yes to, which would skew the data. This also involved minimising the social desirability of the questions, so that respondents did not feel they had to answer in a manner they thought was expected of them (Maree, 2016).

Trustworthiness will be enhanced in this study by enhancing credibility; transferability; confirmability and dependability. Credibility will be ensured through the adoption of a well-established research method. This research will also ensure credibility through a research design that is well suited to the research question, as well as a theoretical underpinning that aligns with the methodology and research questions of this study (Maree, 2016). The transferability of this study will be enhanced through the use of participants that are not specialised or professionals in any form allowing the research to be able to be applied to other scenarios. This research can be applied to a greater context than just the franchise Doppio Zero. It can be applied to the hospitality industry at large – showing how transferability can be ensured and enhanced (James, 2017). Confirmability will be ensured within this study as the findings of this study will be based on the participants responses and literature and not any personal bias from the researcher (James, 2017). Lastly, dependability will be ensured in this study as this study will be able to be taken by another researcher and repeated and similar findings will be achieved. This is due to the fact that the research design and methodology are well designed. There is also sufficient information within the research for it to be replicated without the help of the initial researcher (Maree, 2016).

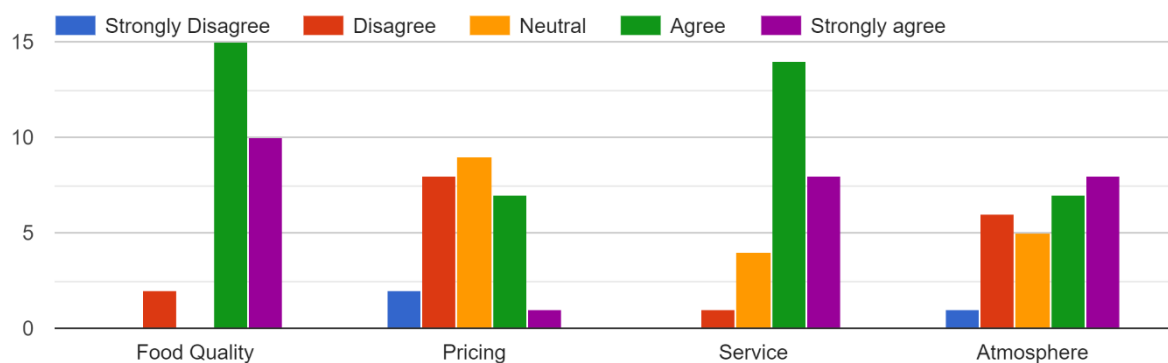
5 DATA ANALYSIS

This section will analyse the results obtained through the survey. These results will be analysed through the use of descriptive statistics. These statistics will then be compared to the objectives that have been developed for this research. There was a total of 43 surveys distributed, however only 28 of the surveys were clean and viable for use. This was due to the fact that some of the respondents did not meet the qualifying characteristics.

Question One

This question was used in order to understand which factor respondents felt was the most important to them when reading any online review. This was done in order to gauge what is generally important to readers of online reviews before analysis of what is important in terms of Doppio Zero.

Please indicate which of the following factors you feel is the most important when reading online restaurant reviews



90% of the respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that food quality is the most important factor when reading online reviews. This is compared to 82% for service; 54% for atmosphere and 29% for price. 25 respondents out of 28, responded that they agree or strongly agree for food quality. This is compared to 23 for service, 16 for atmosphere and 9 for price.

Mode: In this question, the mode is food quality as it has 25 responses for strongly agree or agree. As mode indicates the most fitting or the most popular option available (Laerd

Statistics, 2018), the results show that the respondents felt as if food quality is the most important aspect to them when reading online reviews about restaurants.

Mean: In this instance, $n = 4$. This is the number of factors being compared

$$\bar{x} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{x} = (25 + 23 + 16 + 9) \div 4$$

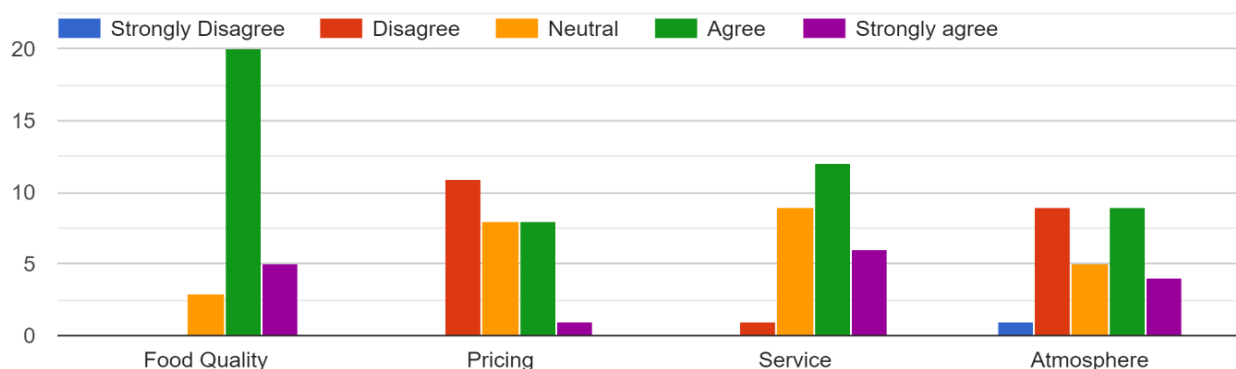
$$= 18.25$$

This indicates that on average, 18.25 of the responses were strongly agree or agree. It also indicates that 18.25 is the point around which the data is spread. This result shows an agreement with the results of the mode and indicates to the researcher that food quality is the most popular and common factor chosen by the respondents. From this data it can be seen that food quality is the most important factor when reading any online reviews about restaurants.

Question Two

This question brought Doppio Zero into the discussion. This question was used to ascertain what factor has the greatest impact on the respondents not wanting to visit Doppio Zero. This question also linked to the brand response, more specifically feelings aspect of Kellers CBBE pyramid.

When reading a Negative Online Review about Doppio Zero, the following factors below cause me to not want to visit the restaurant



89% of the respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that food quality is the most important factor when reading online reviews. This is compared to 64% for service; 46% for atmosphere and 33% for price. 25 people responded that they agree or strongly agree for food quality. This is compared to 18 for service, 13 for atmosphere and 9 for price.

Mode: Mode indicates the response that was chosen most by the respondents due to it being the most popular or most fitting option available to the respondents (Laerd Statistics, 2018). In this question, the modular factor is food quality again – as it has 25 responses for strongly agree or agree. This result indicating researcher that food quality is the most important aspect to respondents. This provides insight for Doppio Zero that the quality of the food has to be high in order for them to retain customers, more so than other factors.

Mean: In this instance, $n = 4$. This is the number of factors being compared

$$\bar{x} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_i}{n}$$

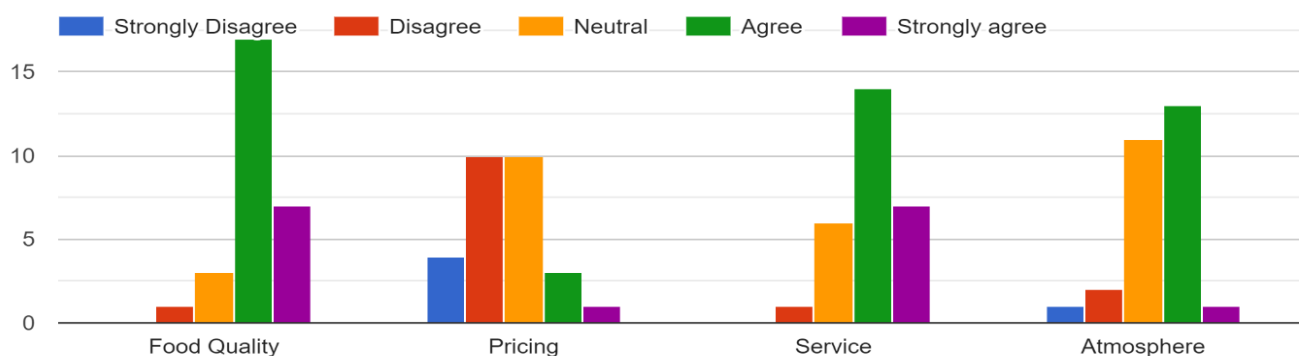
$$\begin{aligned}\bar{x} &= (25 + 18 + 13 + 9) \div 4 \\ &= 16.25\end{aligned}$$

This indicates that on average, 16.25 of the responses were strongly agree or agree. It also indicates that 16.25 is the point around which the data is spread. Even though this result does not have as many responses that are agree or strongly agree as in question one, it is still the majority of responses and makes up more than half of the responses received. It is due to this that the researcher can see that the level of food quality needs to be high at Doppio Zero in order to retain their customers and welcome more.

Question Three

Question three brings into consideration the brand resonance of Kellers CBBE pyramid. It is here that the individual starts to not only think about themselves, but of those around them and close to them. This question was asked in order to ascertain if the respondents would recommend Doppio Zero to their family or friends after reading a negative online review about the factors. This was asked in order to gain a further understanding of what resonates more with the respondents and what they feel others find most important when reading online reviews about restaurants or visiting restaurants.

I will not recommend Doppio Zero to family or friends after reading a Negative Online Review about the following factors



86% of the respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that food quality is the most important factor when reading online reviews. This is compared to 75% for service; 50% for atmosphere and 15% for price. 24 people responded that they agree or strongly agree for food quality. This is compared to 21 for service, 14 for atmosphere and 4 for price.

Mode: In question three it can be seen that the modular factor is food quality, as it has 24 responses for strongly agree or agree. As mode indicated the response that was most fitting or most popular in the eyes of the respondents, it can be seen that food quality resonated with the respondents the most.

Mean: In this instance, n =4. This is the number of factors being compared

$$\bar{x} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_i}{n}$$

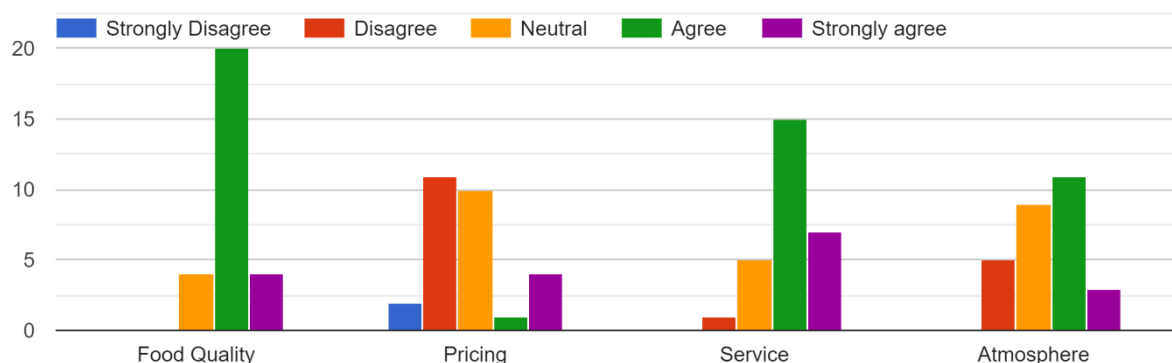
$$\bar{x} = (24 + 21 + 14 + 4) \div 4$$
$$= 15.75$$

This indicates that on average, 15.75 of the responses were strongly agree or agree. It also indicates that 15.75 is the point around which the data is spread. This number of responses is less than in the two questions above, but is great enough to show that food quality is still the most important factor to the respondents. This information can be used by Doppio Zero as it will allow them to see that food quality is the most important factor to focus on in order to grow their customer base.

Question Four

The fourth question was asked in order to understand which factor changes the perception the individual has of Doppio Zero once they have read a negative online review with regards to the restaurant. This question brought in the link of Brand response, more specifically judgements on Kellers CBBE Pyramid. The results from this question will allow Doppio Zero to see what the customers judge the most when reading online reviews about the restaurant.

My perception of Doppio Zero changes after reading Negative Online Reviews about the following factors



86% of the respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that food quality is the most important factor when reading online reviews. This is compared to 79% for service;

50% for atmosphere and 19% for price. 24 people responded that they agree or strongly agree for food quality. This is compared to 22 for service, 14 for atmosphere and 5 for price.

Mode: Food quality is the modular factor within question four as it has 24 responses for strongly agree or agree. As mode indicated the response that was most fitting or most popular in the eyes of the respondents (Laerd Statistics, 2018), it can be seen that food quality is the factor which the respondents and individuals have the greatest judgement when reading online reviews.

Mean: In this instance, $n = 4$. This is the number of factors being compared

$$\bar{x} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_i}{n}$$

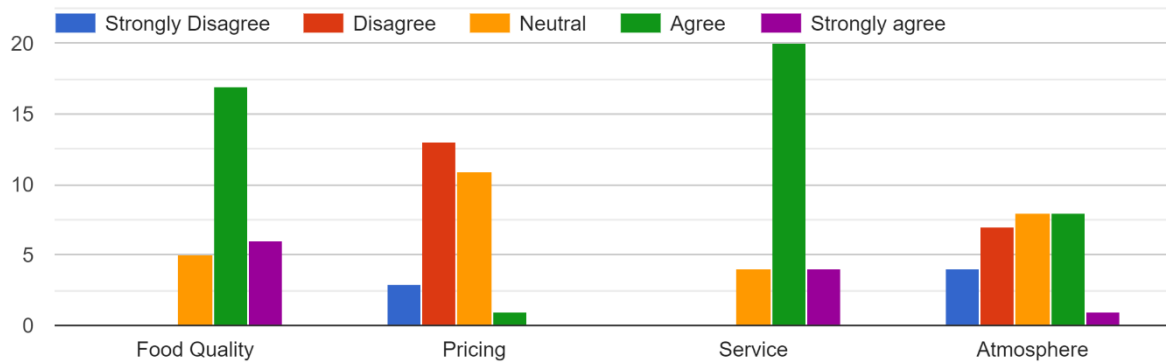
$$\begin{aligned}\bar{x} &= (24 + 22 + 14 + 5) \div 4 \\ &= 16.25\end{aligned}$$

This indicates that on average, 16.25 of the responses were strongly agree or agree. It also indicates that 16.25 is the point around which the data is spread. These results confirm those of the mode and allow the researcher to see that food quality is the aspect that will cause the respondents perception of Doppio Zero to change once reading a negative online review.

Question Five

The following question was asked in order to understand which factor changes how the individual views Doppio Zero after reading a negative online review. This question addressed imagery and brand meaning on Kellers CBBE pyramid. The results from this question will allow the researcher and Doppio Zero to understand what factor causes them to be less reliable in the eyes of the consumer. This will allow Doppio Zero to place greater emphasis on that factor to improve the views of their customers.

I view Doppio Zero as less reliable after reading a Negative Online Reviews about the following factors



86% of the respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that service is the most important factor when reading online reviews. This is compared to 82 % for food quality; 32% for atmosphere and 4% for price. 24 people responded that they agree or strongly agree for service. This is compared to 23 for food quality, 9 for atmosphere and 1 for price.

Mode: For question five, the modular factor is service as it had 24 responses for strongly agree or agree. As the mode indicates the most chosen and popular response in the eyes of the respondents (Laerd Statistics, 2018), it can be seen that service is the factor that will affect the view that individuals have of Doppio Zero after reading a negative online review pertaining to that factor.

Mean: In this instance, n =4. This is the number of factors being compared

$$\bar{x} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{x} = (24 + 23 + 9 + 1) \div 4$$

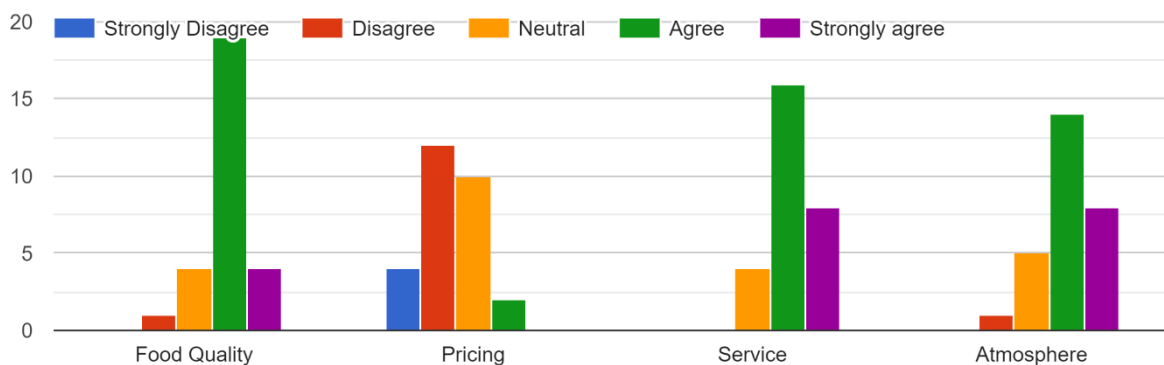
$$= 14.25$$

This indicates that on average, 14.25 of the responses were strongly agree or agree. It also indicates that 1.25 is the point around which the data is spread. This number allows the researcher to see that these results agree with those obtained in the mode. This also allows Doppio Zero to see that they need to have great service or improve on the service within their restaurants in order to retain existing customers and attract new customers

Question Six

The following question was asked in order to understand which factor changes how the individual feels towards Doppio Zero after reading a negative online review. This question addressed feelings and brand response on Kellers CBBE pyramid. The results from this question will allow the researcher and Doppio Zero to understand what factor causes their customers to have worsened feelings and be less excited to visit their restaurants.

I am less excited to visit Doppio Zero after reading Negative Online Reviews about the following factors



86% of the respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that service is the most important factor when reading online reviews. This is compared to 82 % for food quality; 79% for atmosphere and 7% for price. 24 people responded that they agree or strongly agree for service. This is compared to 23 for food quality, 22 for atmosphere and 2 for price.

Mode: Service is the modular factor within question six as it received 24 responses for strongly agree or agree. It can be seen that service is the factor that was the most fitting or most popular for the respondents in terms of being less excited to visit the establishment after reading negative online reviews pertaining to that factor.

Mean: In this instance, n =4. This is the number of factors being compared

$$\bar{x} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{x} = (24 + 23 + 22 + 2) \div 4$$

$$= 17.75$$

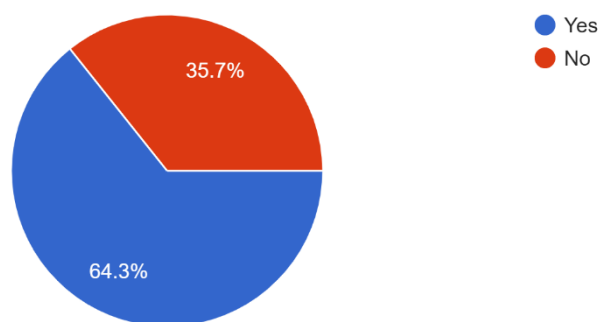
This indicates that on average, 17.75 of the responses were strongly agree or agree. It also indicates that 17.75 is the point around which the data is spread. This number of responses is greater than in the questions above, and shows that service is the most important factor to the respondents. This information can be used by Doppio Zero as it will allow them to see that the service factor is the most important factor to focus on in order to retain their customers and increase the excitement of their existing and potential customers

Question Seven

This question was asked in order to ascertain how the respondents feel towards online reviews. The results obtained from this question allows Doppio Zero to see if they need to address the concerns in negative online reviews or continue as they are.

Do you feel as if Negative Online Reviews effect the success of Doppio Zero?

28 responses



A pie chart was used in the image above as there were only two responses for the respondents to choose from. It also allows for easier interpretation and understanding of the results. 64.3% of the respondents felt as if Negative Online Reviews do affect the success of Doppio Zero. This is compared to 35.7% who feel as if they don't. This information allows the researcher and Doppio Zero to see that negative online reviews does affect the success

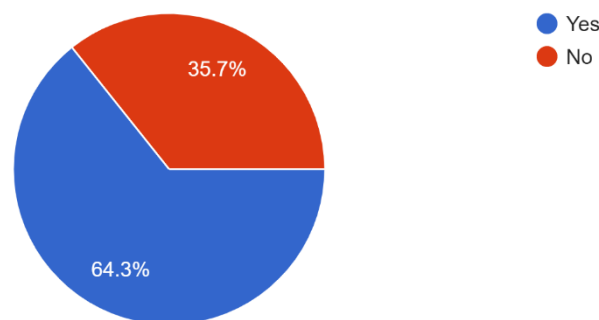
of Doppio Zero and they need to address and work on the factors mentioned within the online reviews to remain successful or improve their success.

Question Eight.

This question was asked in order to see if the overall rating associated with the online review is important to the respondents when making choices in visiting a restaurant. The results obtained will allow Doppio Zero to see that they need to maintain or improve their overall rating in order to improve the number of customers visiting the restaurant.

Is the overall rating of the restaurant important when considering visiting the restaurant?

28 responses



64.3% of the respondents consider the overall rating of restaurants available on online review platforms before visiting a restaurant. 37.3% of the respondents do not consider the overall rating.

For both of the questions above, the high percentage of yes reveals to the researcher that the respondents place importance on online reviews. It also shows that the respondents agree with the findings in the literature, that negative online reviews have a negative effect on the business (Bambauer-Sache and Mangold, 2011; Nga, et al., 2013

Data Analysis Conclusion

The responses and data from all the questions above, was analysed in terms of the agree or strongly agree options. This is due to the fact that this study aims to find the aspect that has the greatest effect that influence the brand equity of Doppio Zero. The other responses

were in the survey to provide the respondents with another option and to also ascertain the importance that they place on each specific aspect of online reviews.

The aspects analysed above were related to Keller's CBBE pyramid in order to fully understand the effect that each one has on the brand equity of a restaurant, in this case Doppio Zero. The food quality aspect links to performance and judgement on the pyramid. The service aspect links performance on the pyramid. Atmosphere links to imagery and feelings and price links to performance.

From the data analysed above, it can be seen in almost all the questions that food quality is the aspect that individuals place the most importance on and focus on greatly. Food quality is thought to be the aspect that the most importance is placed on, this may be due to the fact that Doppio Zero is a fine dining restaurant and consumers expect quality for what they are paying for. Another factor to consider is that the specific age group of consumers that go to Doppio Zero have certain desires. This group of consumers may not place as much importance on service, atmosphere and price when attending restaurants. Following this, the next important factor is service. This ties in with the target market of Doppio Zero, who will place importance on the experience that they receive at the restaurant. Following this is atmosphere and finally price.

Most of the data analysed was of an even distribution showing that the responses received and the data analysed there from had no extreme outliers or errors. Following this, the next aspect that individuals found to be important of focus on in online reviews is service. The aspect, service, in some instances being more important than food quality. Adding to this, atmosphere was next and pricing was found to be the least important factor in the eyes of the respondent.

The responses and data analysed above agree with the findings in the literature, that individuals use and place importance on online reviews, in particular negative online reviews. With the link to Keller's CBBE pyramid – it was found that performance and judgements were often linked to the aspects chosen for the purpose of this study. Due to this It can be said that the consumers greatest judgement is made according to the product that is being provided to them. This explains why food quality and service were considered the top 2 aspects that have an effect on the brand equity. Due to this – it can be said that the food quality aspect of negative online reviews has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio zero. From the researcher's point of view, it is thought that food quality is the most important aspect of a negative online review as the customers of Doppio Zero place greater

emphasis on the product that they are receiving in comparison to other factors. These customers are not expecting a quick and cheaper meal as they would expect with a fast food franchise. The customers will be in search of wholesome, good quality food that is made with high quality ingredients.

6 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION

It is believed that the outcome and results of this study will provide a contribution towards both academia and the hospitality industry. In terms of academia, the outcomes of this study will provide a greater insight into the existing research and literature. This is due to the fact that no research had been conducted on the specific factors within negative online reviews that have an effect, let alone the greatest effect on the brand equity of restaurants. Therefore, this study will fill the gap that had been identified in the literature and positively contribute towards academia and existing literature. This research will also contribute towards the hospitality industry through the deeper understanding that will be gained through the outcome. Firstly, as this study is focused on the South African restaurant franchise, Doppio Zero, it will provide them with direct insight into the views, experiences and opinions that customers have of their restaurant. It will provide them insight into what potential customers are looking for in online reviews, and how they can improve on and implement the factors to ensure satisfaction and choice of their establishment. Following this, it will also provide some guidance to the hospitality industry at large, in providing guidelines as to what consumers in general focus on and want out of their restaurant experience – allowing them to prepare in advance to ensure satisfaction and success.

7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Anonymity or Confidentiality

The identity and information provided by the participants in the survey will remain completely anonymous and confidential. Adding to this, the research and survey, will no way infringe on the human rights and dignity of the participants. The individuals have to be over the age of 18 to participate and answer the survey.

Voluntary participation

When the research is being conducted, participants will participate voluntarily in the study. It was ensured that the participants were informed about the background and purpose of the study. None of the participants were forced to take part in the survey.

Informed Consent.

The participants are going to be required to fill in a consent form, saying that they agree to participate in the research. They will be told that at any point, they do can stop participating in the research. The participants will be informed that they will not receive any compensation for participating in the research.

The Researcher.

As a researcher, there are many considerations regarding the participants of the research. However, there are many ethical considerations that the researcher themselves have to understand. As the researcher, I will undertake to not falsify or change any of the information obtained through the study. I will also undertake to not distort or fabricate information within this study. There will be no inappropriate use of research methods that will result in harm to the participants. I will also agree to not use the information that is obtained in this study for any purpose besides that to which the participants agreed to. I will also have to obtain ethical clearance and permission from Vega Bordeaux, Johannesburg in order to continue with the study. It is also not necessary for the researcher to obtain permission from Doppio Zero as the reviews are available on a public domain. The study is not directly enquiring about the individuals experience at Doppio Zero, but how they reacted and felt about the publicly available online review.

8 LIMITATIONS

The study was limited to the results obtained from the sample group, comprising between 25-30 people, and the information obtained through the literature that was found online. This can lead the results to not be fully representative of all individuals within Johannesburg that make use of HelloPeter and have knowledge of Doppio Zero.

There is also a limitation of time constraint within the study. The study was conducted over the year of 2019, meaning that the information would have to be gathered quickly. This constraint also means that there was not a sufficient amount of time, to investigate the study richly and in depth.

The journal articles that were used to gain a further understanding of the topic were not all South African, but were also focusing on the topic in a global context which means it does not fully apply to the topic in this country.

There may be a possible limitation that the population size from which to draw a sample is smaller than expected. This meaning that the results collected from the data may be smaller than anticipated. This may also lead to the analysis of the data being slightly skewed and lead it to not being an accurate representation of the results. It also means that the study will not be as rich and in-depth as desired.

9 CONCLUSION

It has been established that negative online reviews, being a form of eWOM, have increased in popularity and use due to the increase in digitization (Hussain, et al., 2017). Adding to this, there are findings in existence that show the effect that negative online reviews have on the brand equity of organisations. However, no one knows the effect that the specific factors and, such as menu variety and atmosphere, have on the brand equity. Due to the hospitality industry's consumers being so sensitive to eWOM, they make prime candidates for respondents.

Following this gap in existing research, this study aimed to determine which aspects of negative online reviews have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero through the use of the variables of food quality, service, atmosphere and pricing. Through the analysis and discussion above it was found that food quality has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero. This being followed by service, atmosphere and pricing in order. There is the possibility of future research to focus on various types of restaurants and dining experiences and not just one franchise. It is recommended that this research is conducted over a longer time period with more respondents in order to allow the results to be more applicable to the population from which the sample was chosen.

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11 APPENDIXES

11.1 Appendix A: Updated Concept Document Table

Research Purpose / Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors / Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings
To determine which aspects of negative online reviews has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero. To Determine the effect that the specific factors of negative online reviews has on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.	Which aspects of negative online reviews have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero?	Not only do restaurants need to understand the effect that the online reviews have on their business, but more specifically, understand the factors within online reviews that have the greatest effect on their brand equity.	Keller (1993) Aaker (1991)	Theme 1: Brand Equity Theme 2: Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) Theme 3: Online Consumer reviews Theme 4: Negative Online Consumer Reviews Theme 5: Restaurant Reviews	Paradigm Positivism, Epistemology This study will provide individuals as well as the restaurant Doppio Zero with the tools they will need to change the perceptions that people express within online reviews Ontology Online reviews are the result of an individual's objective reality. Positivist believe	Quantitative	Online surveys created on Google forms. They will be distributed via email to individuals who meet the population parameters. Survey comprises of close ended questions	Anonymity and Confidentiality Voluntary Participation Informed consent	It is anticipated that the consumers will place importance on all the aspects, but one will stand out above all the others.
						Population Population Parameters Male or female. Age 20-40. Live in Johannesburg, South Africa. Have consulted Hellopetter online review platform Know about Doppio Zero Franchise			
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/ Hypotheses/ Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution

	To what extent does the 'food quality' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity? To what extent does the 'service' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity? To what extent does the 'atmosphere' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity? To what extent does the 'pricing' aspect of negative online reviews affect brand equity?	Online reviews Negative Online reviews Brand Equity Doppio Zero Aspects	Kellers CBBE model.		that this reality of individuals can be observed and measured Axiology Truth and reason are valued, as this study is based on an individual's reason during and after the use of online reviews and they truth they deduce from the reviews they make use of. .	Non-probability Purposive sampling The sample size is between 25-30 people	Unit of Analysis Male and female individuals who have knowledge on the subject Data Analysis Method (s) Descriptive statistics will be used to analyse the data	The sample may not be representative of the population at large. Time constraint – as the study is conducted over 1 year Not all the Journals use were South African Based	A contribution to both the hospitality industry and academia. The study will provide greater insight into the topic and fill the gap identified in the literature. It will arm those in the industry with a deeper understanding of consumers and what they need to improve upon
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11.2 Appendix B: Consent Form for Participants

To whom it may concern,

My name is Donovan Barrett and I am a student at Vega Bordeaux. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Nicole Mason about which aspects of negative online reviews, such as food quality, has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because you have knowledge about the topic being studied. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to you to fill out an online Survey.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision

Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished collecting all the responses, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BCom Honours in Strategic Brand Management. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

- Donovan Barrett
- 082 739 3248
- donb2501@gmail.com

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

- Nicole Mason
- 22291@iieconnect.co.za

Consent form for participants

I, _____ agree to participate in the research conducted by Donovan Barrett about determining which aspects of negative online reviews have the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. 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.
3. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
4. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected

Signature

Date

11.3 Appendix C: Measurement Instrument

Negative Online Review Questionnaire

To whom it may concern

My name is Donovan Barrett and I am a student at Vega Bordeaux. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Nicole Mason about which aspects of negative online reviews, such as food quality, has the greatest effect on the brand equity of Doppio Zero.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because you have knowledge about the topic being studied. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to you to fill out an online questionnaire.

Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so. Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you.

Once I have finished collecting all the responses, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BCom Honours in Strategic Brand Management. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

- Donovan Barrett
- 082 739 3248
- donb2501@gmail.com

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

- Nicole Mason
- 22291@iieconnect.co.za

Do you consent to fill out the questionnaire as per the description above? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you know about Doppio Zero? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you make use of online reviews through the 'hellopeter' online review platform? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you fall between the ages of 20-40 years? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

NEXT

Negative Online Review Questionnaire

For the following section, please choose the option that you agree with most

Please indicate which of the following factors you feel is the most important when reading online restaurant reviews

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Food Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pricing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

When reading a Negative Online Review about Doppio Zero, the following factors below cause me to not want to visit the restaurant

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Food Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pricing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I will not recommend Doppio Zero to family or friends after reading a Negative Online Review about the following factors

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Food Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pricing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

My perception of Doppio Zero changes after reading Negative Online Reviews about the following factors

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Food Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pricing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I view Doppio Zero as less reliable after reading a Negative Online Reviews about the following factors

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Food Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pricing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I am less excited to visit Doppio Zero after reading Negative Online Reviews about the following factors

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Food Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pricing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Atmosphere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Do you feel as if Negative Online Reviews effect the success of Doppio Zero?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is the overall rating of the restaurant important when considering visiting the restaurant?

☐ Yes

☐ No

BACK

SUBMIT

11.4 Appendix D: Ethical clearance



07 August 2019

Student name: Donovan Barrett
Student number: 15015204
Campus: Vega Bordeaux

 **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,



Nicole Mason
Supervisor



Dr. Franzél du Plooy-Cilliers
Campus Postgraduate Coordinator

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CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, fares and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

The Independent Institute of Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors, are indemnified against all claims which may arise in connection with or as a result of any loss, damage or injury to you as a researcher entering into an agreement with a participant in the course of your research, provided that such loss, damage or injury is caused by the gross negligence or intentional act(s) or omission(s) of The Independent Institute of Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors.

Wishing you the very best of luck.

Yours sincerely,



Dr François du Plooy-Cilliers
Dean, Research and Postgraduate Studies
The Independent Institute of Education