



SCHOOL OF BRAND LEADERSHIP

Exploring the role experiential marketing has on Customer Satisfaction and
Customer Loyalty: A *TakeALot* Case Study.

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I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Honours in BA Strategic Brand
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previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

Abstract

With the rise of mobile applications, it is important for brands to be more engaging. Hence, this research explored the influence experiential marketing has on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This research took place in Randburg, South Africa. Research was conducted using the interpretivism paradigm and used an exploratory research design. Standardised open-ended interviews were conducted, with three participants who are users of the *TakeALot* mobile application. Qualitative data was collected and analysed using thematic content analysis which enabled the exploration of the research to occur. The thematic analysis unpacked themes and findings that were interpreted and linked to the literature. Findings indicated that *TakeALot* mobile application experiential marketing enhances customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

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SECTION 1: Introduction

Introduction

This section entails the background, rationale, the problem and purchase statement. Additionally, it discusses the research goal, research questions, and research objectives. This section provides the reader with the mentioned sections in order to provide the context that is important to understand the research problem and its significance.

Background & Context

Since the introduction of smart phones, there has been an increase of mobile applications (Alaimo, 2018). We live in a digital savvy world where 80% of people search for products and services on their smart phones, of those 27% search for mobile apps that are connected to the products and services they want to acquire (Hamilton, 2019).

In a competitive landscape, mobile applications can be seen as a vital tool that aims to engage with customers of the brand (Green, 2018). Experiential marketing is known to enhance engagement between brands and customers (Patel, 2018).

Mobile applications are becoming the forefront where customers and brands interact (Aarki, 2018), therefore, mobile applications should create a personalised experiences both in and out of store (Green, 2018).

83% of customer's state that they are happy with the customer experience provided by wholesaler mobile applications (Alaimo, 2018). However, 21% said they deleted wholesaler applications due to poor experience (Green, 2018). Poor experience can cripple online engagement (Hope, 2018).

The growth of mobile applications was influenced by two key factors, connectivity and convenience (Delisle, 2017). Users phones are constantly within reach because they travel with their phones everywhere, allowing brands to be a tap away (Woodrow, 2019). Users love the convenience and simplicity of downloading an application that they can use immediately (Delisle, 2017). Together, these factors drove up the development and creation of mobile applications (Delisle, 2017).

Engagement through mobile applications heightens shopping experience while building customer loyalty (Ganguly, 2019) hence, it is important to apply experiential marketing into the applications.

Retail mobile applications enable the retailer to create nourished and strong connections with the customer, therefore, application users tend to be loyal customers (Green, 2018). Ganguly (2019) states personalised customer engagement is a huge driver of customer loyalty.

TakeALot has been chosen as the case study that this research will focus on as it is known to be South Africa's number leading online retailer (Tsele, 2017).

Therefore, with the growing market of mobile wholesaler applications, demand for personalised experiences and need for customer and brand engagement is not performing to its best ability. Thus, exploring experiential marketing and its influence on customer satisfaction; which could potentially create better experiences; and create more customer loyalty.

Rational

Mobile wholesale applications, such as *TakeALot*, seem to be the future for purchasing goods and services (Eugenio, 2016). A study conducted by Flurry Analytics highlights that an estimated 90% of all customer mobile usage, positions mobile retailers in the same space that customers are spending the most time on (Eugenio, 2016).

Mobile applications influence the way we interact with one another, there are applications that are used for various work related tasks such as tracking deliveries and applications that change the way we operate on a daily basis (Delisle, 2017). This shows that it is relevant for brands to create exceptional experiences on mobile applications as we use them in our daily lives, for different reasons.

As technology continues to develop at a fast pace, so does mobile applications (Gross, 2018). With that in mind, the increase of mobile applications will influence the building of greater digital experience (Gross, 2018). Experiential marketing utilizes hands on activities that create personal interaction (Vozza, 2015).

Brands have the potential to enhance brand experiences through the development of mobile applications (Patel, 2018) which can potentially address the aim of increasing

customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Implementing experiential marketing can create engagement and strong relationships within the South African market (Patel, 2018).

Based on various search engines, this research has very little academic literature in the context of South Africa. Therefore, this research could contribute to the increasing body of knowledge regarding experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in a South African context. Furthermore, this research could be relevant and could contribute to both web-designers who are developing mobile applications for businesses, specifically for retail customer usage and also contribute to marketing strategies regarding the retail sector in South Africa.

For the brands that do not adopt experiential marketing, it is believed that the brand will not develop a powerful customer to brand experience which will affect the brands targeted audience as they will not be able to experience the brand through touch, taste, smell, sight and sound; decreasing the emotions that make customers desire certain products (Goodall, 2019). Thus, the purpose of this research aimed to explore experiential marketing on a mobile application [*TakeALot*] and the influence it has on the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Problem Statement

The opportunity in the market is to explore how wholesalers with their comprehensive range of product offerings (clothes, appliances etc.) can increase customer satisfaction and recruit loyal customers through experiential marketing, particularly through mobile applications.

The focus of this research study, aims to discover how experiences on a mobile application bridges customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. It will analyse whether there is an influence between experiential marketing, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. The research will also shed light on how online wholesaler brands and web-designers can use the research in order to enhance their success.

Purpose Statement

This research was conducted under the qualification of Strategic Brand Communication, where one of the key focuses is brand building. Exploring different ways of building relationship and communicating online and offline with potential and current customers is vital in building a strong brand.

However, in context to this study, the researcher focuses on building relationship and communicating online through the usage of mobile applications.

The purpose of this research is to explore the opportunity experiential marketing has on enhancing customer satisfaction and customer loyalty through a mobile application.

Research Goal & Question

The research goal is applied research, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of customers' experiences of the *TakeALot* mobile application. This research aims to explore the influence between experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Davis, 2014).

Research Question: To what extent does experiential marketing influence customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on the *TakeALot* mobile application.

Research Objective

- To explore the influence customer satisfaction has on customer loyalty
- To explore the extent to which experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction
- To explore the degree to which experiential marketing influences customer loyalty

SECTION 2: Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

There are two theoretical frameworks that this research will adopt. The first is the Keller Brand equity model, also known as the customer based brand equity [CBBE] model. This theoretical framework will correlate with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The second framework is Schmitt's Strategic Experience Modules that will be used to explore the concept of experiential marketing.

Keller Customer Based Equity model

The Keller CBBE is a model that believes on the idea that the power of the brand lies on the customer (Keller, 2006). The model progresses from bottom up and consists of four building blocks, namely: brand identity, brand meaning, brand response and brand relationship (Keller, 2001). Within these building blocks are six elements, namely: brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, consumer feelings, consumer judgments and consumer brand resonance (Keller, 2001).

These building blocks and elements work in conjunction into building and maintaining a powerful brand (Keller, 2001). However, this research will focus on the emotional route of the model which only consists of elements: Salience, Imagery, Feelings and Resonance.

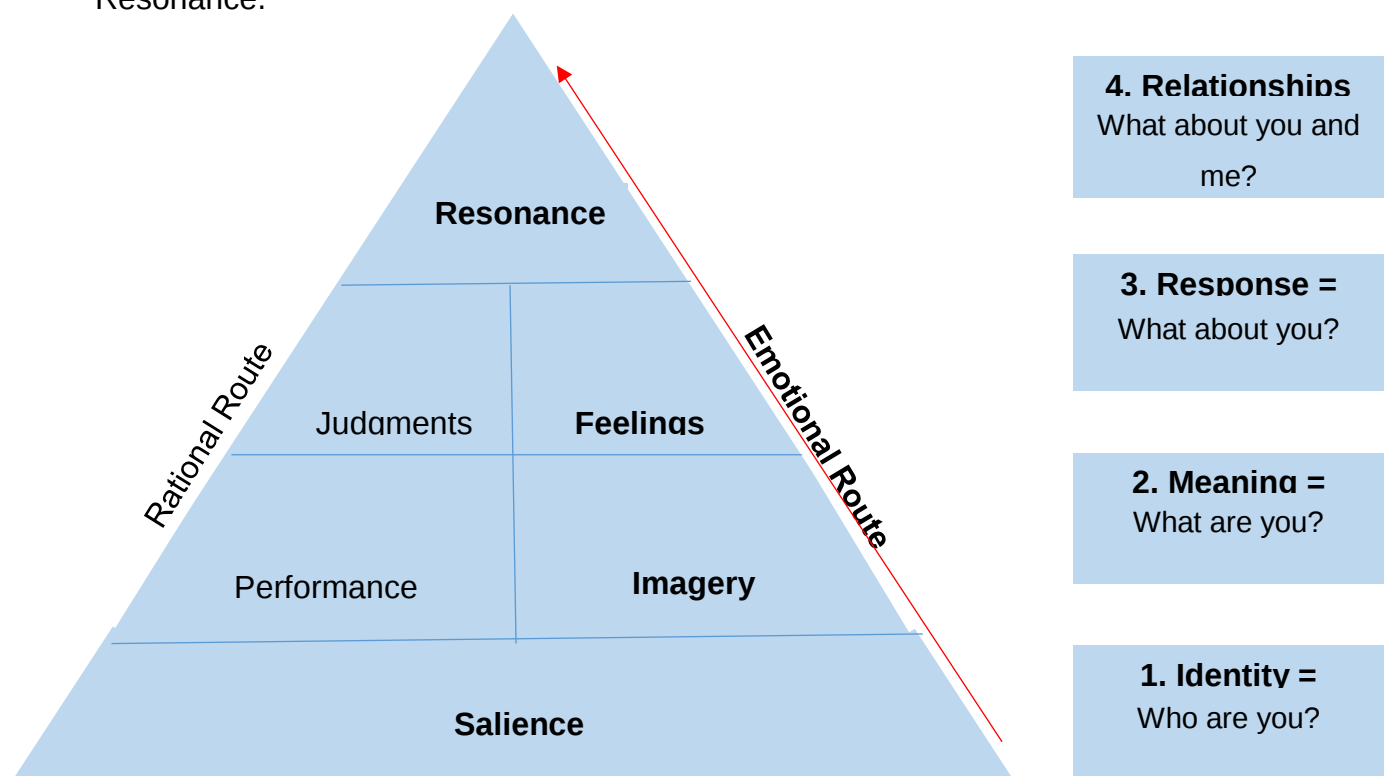


Figure 1: Senguta, S. 2013.

Brand salience to measure brand awareness; salience is made up of two sub-dimensions which are need satisfaction and category identification (Keller, 2001). Brand awareness alludes to the consumer's capability to remember and recognize the brand; building brand awareness refers to ensuring that consumers understand the product or service category in which the brand competes in (Farjam & Hongyi, 2015). It is important for the customer to know the brand in order for them to create a relationship. For this research, salience will assist the researcher in exploring the awareness of the *TakeALot* mobile application, furthermore, how and when the brand/service is evoked in the customer's mind (Sengupta, 2013).

The second stage is based on meaning, this is where the customer begins to comprehend the brand and their offerings (Keller, 2006). Under brand meaning is imagery, which is known as the element that relates to satisfaction of the customer's psychological needs; such as experiences (Sengupta, 2013). For this research, imagery will assist the researcher in exploring what the customers of *TakeALot* mobile application think of the experience.

Brand response refers to how the customer responds to the brand, for example: the brands marketing activities (Keller, 2001). Brand response can be distinguished between judgement and feelings (Keller, 2001). Regarding feelings, this will help the researcher to explore the customer's emotional response [fun, excited, secure] to the *TakeALot* mobile application.

Brand resonance, the final stage of the model focuses on creating the ultimate relationship and level of identification that the customer has with the brand (Keller, 2001). This element will allow the researcher to focus on the loyalty that has been created through the engagement with the *TakeALot* mobile application (Sengupta, 2013).

Keller's CBBE model is considered to be more appropriate for this research because Keller focuses on the consumers and believes that in order to create a strong brand, you need to shape how customers think and feel about the brand; this must be done through creating the right experiences for the consumers in order for consumers to perceive your brand positively, have specific thoughts, feelings and beliefs towards the brand (Bhasin, 2018).

Schmitt Strategic Experience Modules [SEM]

SEM is a framework which focuses consumers' experiences which includes sensory experiences [sense], creative cognitive experiences [think], affective experiences [feel], physical experiences, behaviours and lifestyle [act] and social identity experiences that are based from relating to a culture or reference group [relate] (IGI Global, 2019).

The relate element will look into the connections that are created between consumers and other users of the brand to build their preferences of the *TakeALot* mobile application (Ying Wu and Tseng, 2015).

The act element enables the researcher to explore the consumers behaviour towards the *TakeALot* mobile application (Ying Wu and Tseng, 2015).

The feel element, will allow the researcher to understand the moods and emotions of the consumer that further affect their engagement with the *TakeALot* mobile application (Ying Wu and Tseng, 2015).

The think element will explore how consumers perceive the *TakeALot* mobile application and their thoughts regarding the applications and specifically based on the service it renders (Ying Wu and Tseng, 2015).

Due to the fact that the *TakeALot* mobile application is not in a physical form, sensory experiences will not be applied to this research.

This strategy of measuring experiential marketing will assist the researcher to understand the consumer and their experience on the *TakeALot* mobile application. Through understanding the consumer, it will provide direction to whether the consumer is satisfied with the service and whether this satisfaction has led to loyalty.

Conceptualisation

Table 1: Concepts

Concept	Definition
Experiential Marketing	Experiential marketing can be defined as any form of customer centric marketing activities that creates a connection to customers (Schmitt, 2011). This research will explore the concept of experiential marketing on the <i>TakeALot</i> mobile application.
Customer Satisfaction	Customer satisfaction is defined as the result of comparison of the customer's expectation and his/her perceived performance of service quality (Minh and Huu, 2016).
Customer Loyalty	Customer loyalty is seen to be a behavioural concept that involves repeat buying of products and services measured as the magnitude of reflections (Isoraite, 2016). Customer loyalty can also be perceived as a long-term relationship between brand and consumer, which the customers desire and willingness to be in the relationship with the brand (Isoraite, 2016).

These concepts are relevant to the study as the researcher aims to explore how the role of experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Review of Literature

Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing, also known as engagement marketing can consist of different marketing strategies that are combined to immerse consumers within the brand, product or service by engaging them in as many ways possible (Galetto, 2017).

According to Same and Larimo (2012), experiential marketing is a “process of identifying and satisfying customer needs and aspirations profitably, engaging them through two-way communications that bring brand personalities to life and add value to the target audience”. This definition is supported by the father of experiential marketing, Martin Lindstrom (Maleklu, 2016).

Experiential marketing is not a process but rather a communication method which predominantly raises customers' physical and emotional feelings (Same and Larimo, 2012).

Machado, Cant and Seaborne (2014) agree with Same and Larimo (2012) as it is further explained that consumer's involvement goes beyond identifying and meeting consumer needs and wants but involves emotions, self-image, values, social goals and desires of the consumer. Involvement through experiential marketing allows consumers to engage and interact with product, services and brands in many ways (Same and Larimo, 2012).

Schmitt (1999) believes that experiential marketing is customer-centric and is all about creating a unique experience for customers which will encourage their purchase intentions by enabling them to sense, feel, think, act and relate. In this way, it enables the consumer to have a pleasant memory about this experience which results in increased product awareness and product value (Wu and Tseng, 2015).

Schmitts five elements are strategic experiential modules (SEMS), which focused on exploring creating different customer experiences for the customer (Alkilani, Ling and Abzakh, 2013). The elements can be divided into internal and external experiences (Nagasawa and Otsu, 2015). Of the five, relate, think and sense can be understood as internal experiences [such as feelings] and the act elements as external experience [such as behaviour] (Nagasawa and Otsu, 2015).

The feel element relates to the emotions (Snakers and Zajdman, 2010), it is experienced that involve moods and feelings in order to have a powerful effect (Alkilani et al, 2013). Consumers who are emotionally attached are more likely to invest more in their relationships than consumers who are lacking affective commitment (Alkilani et al, 2013).

The think elements create rational experiences, which enables the consumer to be overcome by emotion, this SEM is closely related to the cognitive behaviour of the consumer (Alkilani et al, 2013).

According to Alkilani et al, (2013) “the aim of think experience is to encourage consumers to think and be attracted in a creative way so that it may produce re-evaluation feedback to the company and its brand”. It is about creating experiences which enable the consumer to buy emotion (Snakers and Zajdman, 2010).

Alkilani et al, (2013) further explain that they are experiencing is the experience of action is designed to create experiences that concern consumer’s physical body, behaviour, and lifestyle, as well as the experiences as the results of social interaction with other people”. Relate involves creating connections between individuals and other people (Snakes and Zadjman, 2010).

This research will adopt the five SEMs proposed by Schmitt to explore the influence that experiential marketing has on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

All these explanations indicate that experiential marketing is mainly related to emotions, feelings, and senses. Alkilani et al, (2013) highlight that experiential marketing can be related to customer satisfaction. Customer experience is a construct that cannot be ignored as it has shown to have a strong influence on customer satisfaction (Maleklu, 2016).

Customer Satisfaction

The concept of customer satisfaction was first applied by Cardozo in 1965 (Yeh, Chen and Chen, 2019). Customer satisfaction is important to implement for businesses that are looking into building a nourished, long-term relationship with their consumer (Ngo and Nguyen, 2016).

Customer satisfaction is an attitude that is based on the consumer's experience after acquiring a product or service (Leninkumar, 2017).

After a customer has used the product or service, the customer would analyse the product and evaluate their expectations before the purchase which influenced customer satisfaction (Yeh et al, 2019). Customer satisfaction is the outcome of a customer's expectations compared to his/her subsequent perceived performance of service quality (Ngo and Nguyen, 2016). Customer satisfaction depends on the consumer's evaluation between the effectiveness of the product/service and his/her expectation (Yeh et al, 2019).

Chen and Hsieh (2010) agree with Yeh et al (2019), as they believe that customer satisfaction is determined by the outcome of a product or service that are in line with the expectation. Customer satisfaction is an emotional response to the experience (Alkilani et al, 2013). It is associated with products or services purchased or purchased, retail outlets, shopping and buying behaviour and the overall market (Alkilani et al, 2013).

Wu and Tseng (2015) points out a simple approach to increasing customer satisfaction, which starts with identifying the needs of customers and satisfy them. In other words, it is to understand customers' expectations of a company, product or its employees, manage to meet the expectations earlier than competitors, and improve weaknesses through constant evaluations from customers' perspective to win customers' trust and lifetime loyalty (Wu and Tseng, 2015).

Sometimes, customer satisfaction cannot guarantee the occurrence of customer loyalty (Zena and Hadisumarto, 2012). This can happen when the consumer visits are not constant; when the consumer is an individual who loves new experiences; low level of loyalty due to consumers' sensitivity to price and convenience of the brand (Zena and Hadisumarto, 2012).

If the consumer is satisfied, it is more likely for the consumer to make another purchase, positively discuss the product/service with others; pay no attention to the advertisements of competitor brands and not purchase anything from competitor brands (Yeh et al, 2019). Customer satisfaction is important when it comes to business strategy, customer retention and product repurchase (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). A customer-centric approach is a good way to improve customer satisfaction and keep customers from competitors (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017).

It is important to note that factors that influence/impact customer satisfaction are different to the factors that influence/impact customer loyalty because customer satisfaction is known to be an attitude while customer satisfaction is more of a behaviour (Zephan, 2018).

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is a commitment to rebuild and re-patronage a preferred product or service in the future, regardless of situational influences and marketing efforts which have the potential to change the mind-set and behaviour of the consumer (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017).

It is believed that customer loyalty is developed by sustained satisfaction of the customer and the customer's emotional attachment build from the product or service (Chiguvi and Guruwo, 2015). This creates consistency and willingness in the relationship with patronage and preferences (Chiguvi and Guruwo, 2015).

Customer loyalty can be divided into three categories, namely: emotional loyalty, intentional loyalty and behavioural loyalty (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). Behavioural loyalty is shown through repurchasing products/services while intentional loyalty refers to the possible buying intention but most importantly, emotional loyalty refers to when the consumer feels that the brand resonates with their ideas, passion and values (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). Customer loyalty is perceived as the strong relationship between the customer's relative attitude and re-patronage (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017).

Customer loyalty can be classified as the closest step to the repurchasing behaviour of customers (Ngo and Nguyen, 2016). Hence, loyalty is present in the consumer when

the consumer feels satisfied, has intentions of repurchasing and spreads positive words about the product/service (Wu and Tseng, 2015).

Furthermore, a loyal customer's characteristics are: spending more money to buy the company's products and/or service; consumer encourages other individuals to buy products/services of the company and the consumer believe that it is important to purchase products or services of a company (Zena and Hadisumarto, 2012).

Customer loyalty refers to the customer's behaviour that shows motivation and willingness to strengthen an ongoing relationship with a company (Houmann, Quaiser, Wieseke and Rese, 2014). Customer loyalty usually results in the positive experiences that the customer has with the product/service provided (Ngo and Nguyen, 2016).

Customer loyalty is not gained by accident, it is built over-time through different strategies and tactics (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). Loyalty building consists of the company focusing on the value the product/service provides to the consumer and showing consumers the desire to build a relationship (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017).

Customer loyalty can differ based on long-term loyalty or short term loyalty. Short term loyalty is loyalty that does not last long, it has an expiry date; it is loyalty that might vanish when a consumer finds/receives a better choice (Wu and Tseng, 2015). Long term loyalty, what all businesses and marketers are aiming for; it is loyalty that is considered true loyalty, consumers are not easily influenced by competitors to change their views on a product or service (Wu and Tseng, 2015).

SECTION 3: Methodology

Introduction

This section focuses on the paradigm selected for the research, the research approach and design, population, sampling, data collection method, and data analysis method used to explore experiential marketing and its influence on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Research Paradigm

A paradigm involves a worldview, a tradition or even a pattern accepted by members of a community; in a social science light, paradigms are referred to as research traditions or worldviews (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014). There are three dominant paradigms in research that will be discussed; critical realism, interpretivism and positivism.

Positivism is a quantitative data approach of the natural sciences that believes that science is the only way to learn about the truth (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014). This paradigm is objective, as it assumes that reality is external (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014). Experiences are subjective in nature (Schmitt, 2011). In order to explore the role that experiential marketing plays on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, the participants of the research cannot be detached from the research for the fact the experiences are felt by the individual. Therefore, the positivism paradigm is not suitable for this research.

Critical realism believes that natural and social science are different and reality is experienced based on how people perceive reality (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014). In this view, this research topic can apply to this paradigm, however, critical realism will require the researcher to have a large sample size and due to time constraints and lack of resources, this paradigm cannot be executed. The best suited paradigm would be Interpretivism.

Interpretivism is qualitative and believes that humans are different from objects, therefore we cannot study humans like we study objects because humans are affected and influenced by the environment, causing them to constantly change [reality is always changing] (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014).

The aim of the Interpretivism paradigm is to understand and interpret human behaviour and why humans behave the way they do (Edirisingha, 2012). This paradigm does not generalize and does not predict the causes and effects (Edirisingha, 2012).

The interpretivism paradigm is best because it does not detach participants from the research (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014), it is imperative that participants are involved and considered throughout the research, as they will be the research source to exploring experiences and exploring whether experiential marketing on *TakeALot*, influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014).

The interpretivism paradigm is suitable for this research, as it aims to explore the relationship and further, have an in-depth understanding of the customer's experiences. Based on the fact that the research is exploratory, Interpretivism leans towards the collection of qualitative data which uses methods such as interviews which are receptive to capturing meaningful human insights (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014).

Within the different paradigms, there are five different positions, namely, the epistemological position, ontological position, metatheoretical position, methodological and axiological position (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014). For this research, the ontological, epistemological and methodological positions are applied.

The ontological and epistemological positions within the Interpretivism paradigm believe that there are multiply realities and that realities are relative (Edirisingha, 2012). It is believed that these multiple realities depend on other systems of meaning, therefore, Interpretivism paradigm does not generalize (Edirisingha, 2012).

Ontological Position of Interpretivism

In the interpretivism perspective, the ontological position is concerned with understanding the world from subjective experiences from the individual (Antwi and Hamza, 2015). The ontological position believes that reality is subjective and is created by human interaction (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014), meaning that all realities, opinions and experiences are never the same between individuals.

Furthermore, a subjective experience also has truth for an individual, alluding to a popular aphorism, one might say, "Experience is reality" (Schmitt, 2011). This position is ideal for this research, as this research aims to explore numerous opinions that are all based on the consumer's experiences. This will assist the researcher to understand

realities through participant's views, background and experiences (Thanh and Thanh, 2015).

Epistemological Position of Interpretivism

The epistemological position believes that knowledge is subjective because knowledge is socially constructed and mind dependent (Kawulich and Chilisa, 2012). The goal of interpretivism research is to understand and interpret the meaning in human experiences rather than generalising and predicting the causes and effect (Edirisingha, 2012). The truth and knowledge within human experience (Kawulich and Chilisa, 2012).

This position is appropriate for this research as it guides and influences how the researcher frame their research in attempts to explore knowledge (Blackman and Moon, 2017).

Because the epistemological position believes that knowledge and truth is dependent on an individual's interpretation of what is common sense and what is fact, interpretivism do not generalize their results (Du Plooy- Cilliers, 2014). Subsequently, the research methodologies used are sensitive and are never generalised (Du Plooy- Cilliers, 2014).

Methodological Position of Interpretivism

The aim of Interpretative research is to explore and understand user's experiences (Kawulich and Chilisa, 2012). Interpretative research is subjective which enables the exploration and understanding of consumers (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). Furthermore, interpretivist research seeks methods that will allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of human beings to their experiences and the other systems of meaning that create the social fabric that they are a part of (Thanh and Thanh, 2015).

This position is important as it provides a context that allows me to explore what the participants of this research have to say about their experiences on the TakeALot mobile application (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). Additionally, this position is considered as this research as it emphasises the need for in-depth understanding of multiple realities and experiences (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014; Thanh and Thanh, 2015).

This position is imperative as it emphasizes that in order to gain an in-depth understanding, the usage of focus groups, in-depth interviews, ethnography and narrative methods are needed and (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014). Moreover, the need for data collection of words rather than quantification of numbers is imperative for this research (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014).

Methodological Approach and Research Design

A research approach is how the researcher selects, interprets, analyses and collects information (Davis, 2014). Furthermore, the research approach directs the research into the respective data collection and data analysis methods that will be utilized (Davis, 2014). As explained in the paradigm outline, this research employed the interpretivism paradigm, therefore, a qualitative approach was suitable for this research (Du Plooy, 2009).

A qualitative research approach was suitable as it enabled the researcher to gather insights on how customers experience the *TakeALot* mobile application (Surbhi, 2016). Furthermore, a qualitative approach was applicable as this research looked into perceptions, feelings and thoughts of the *TakeALot* mobile application and enabled the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Schmitt, 2011).

As discussed in the paradigm outline, the interpretivism paradigm states that humans are different from objects and cannot be studied like objects in the natural science because humans are effected and influenced by the environment they are in, which is constantly changing (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014).

Experiences are subjective to the customer, therefore, all customers who experience *TakeALot* mobile application, experienced it differently, based on their senses, feelings and thoughts (Schmitt, 2011). Because of these differences, the information gathered was not generalized.

Exploratory Research

This research was exploratory in design (Davis, 2014). There are numerous reasons to why exploratory research could be conducted, namely, to explore and gain insight into a phenomenon or to become familiar with an unknown condition or problem (Davis, 2014).

Exploratory research is best suited when the research involves economic, technological and social systems (Davis, 2014), based on this research, social systems are involved as these systems influence a consumer's experience (Edirisingha, 2012).

Moreover, because these systems are constantly changing, new areas of research emerge and this particular research has the purpose of gaining new insights into users of the *TakeALot* mobile application and explore the role that experiential marketing has on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on a mobile application (Davis, 2014). The exploratory design of this research encouraged the researcher to gain the in-depth understanding of *TakeALot* mobile application users and how their experiences have influenced their satisfaction and loyalty.

Inductive Theorising

The method of reasoning that the research employed was inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning is utilized when analysing the responses of the participants to confirm theoretical assumptions (Plooy, 2009). During inductive reasoning, the researcher gathers specific data which was processed into general claims (Davis, 2014). Hence, inductive reasoning can be deduced as a process that utilises findings to confirm or create a new theory.

Therefore, this research adopted the inductive approach which aided the researcher to analyse previous literature, studies and theories on experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, thereafter, the findings were used to confirm or create a phenomenon. Furthermore, this research questioned the participants, based on assumptions which ended with interpretations of the responses received (du Plooy, 2009).

The researcher worked inductively by firstly gathering all the relevant information based on the three main concepts, Secondly, the researcher looked into experiential marketing on *TakeALot* and how that influenced the user's customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Davis, 2014). Thirdly, gathered all the new information, enabling the themes to emerge from the data collected (Bezuidenhout and Cronje, 2014).

Cross- Sectional study

This research paper adopted a cross-sectional design as the research was conducted within a short period of time (du Plooy, 2009). Furthermore, the researcher only conducted data from the respondents once, there were no repeats (Bezuidenhout and Cronje, 2017).

Population

In order to adequately define the population, three parameters were used, namely, the nature, size and unique characteristics of the population, which enabled the researcher to differentiate between the target and accessible population (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Nature of population: A research population consists of all units whether people or elements with similar characteristics (Pascoe, 2014). This research comprised units of analysis as people. The selection of people as the units of analysis was suitable as questions were asked and targeted towards *TakeALot* mobile application users.

Unique characteristics based on the profile of a *TakeALot* mobile application user: South African males and/or females, aged 18 years and above, are aware of the *TakeALot* mobile application and utilize the *TakeALot* mobile application at least twice in two months.

Target Population: Targeted population includes everyone and/or everything that falls under the population parameters (Pascoe, 2014). Thus, the target population for the research consisted of all citizens in South Africa who utilize the *TakeALot* mobile application.

Accessible Population: Due to time personnel, cost and constraints of time, we may not always have access to the target population (du Plooy, 2009). Hence, the accessible population included *TakeALot* mobile application users, that frequently shop on the *TakeALot* mobile application, who are geographically located Gauteng. This population was accessible due to the proximity as the researcher was located in Gauteng, South Africa.

Sampling

A sample consists of subsets of a population and can be deemed as a representative of the accessible population (Pascoe, 2014). Therefore, the sample for this research encompasses people (unit of analysis), namely, Take A Lot mobile application users who are referred to as the participants. Sampling can be approached from two different sampling methods; non-probability and probability sampling methods (Pascoe, 2014).

Non- Probability sampling leans towards a qualitative design (Pascoe, 2014). A nonprobability sampling method was adopted because it was the most suitable for this research (Pascoe, 2014). This was considered to be the most suitable sampling method due to the qualitative and exploratory nature of the research, and the difficulty to gain access *TakeALot's* entire customer base. This research used the non-probability method with a small sample of participants to gain insight into the experiences consumers face on the *TakeALot* mobile application.

Non-probability consists of six different techniques- but only two techniques were considered the most suitable for this research, namely, purposive sampling and convenience sampling (Pascoe, 2014).

With purposive sampling, the researcher samples with a purpose in mind (Trochim, 2006), meaning that the researcher purposefully chooses elements that they want to include in the sample, which are based on the list of characteristics (Pascoe, 2014). This study was a purposive study because the research only selected participants who only bought from the *TakeALot* mobile application.

Convenience sampling applied to this research as the researcher only decided on participants who were conveniently available for the research, and participants who comply with the research characteristics. Therefore, the sample was carefully selected from the accessible population using the researcher's judgement (Pascoe, 2014).

This research consisted of a small sample size of three participants that represented the population. The sample size of this research were two females and one male that are 18 years and above; adhered to the requirements and characteristics of the accessible population. These participants were selected thorough mutual work connections.

Data Collection Method

Qualitative data collection focuses on obtaining an in-depth analysis of human experience which includes all individual, personal experiences that are associated with the research topic (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

The purpose of conducting qualitative research is to explore, understand and describe the research through using techniques such as interviews and questionnaires (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014). Due to the methodological position of interpretivism, the research relied on qualitative data collection methods as a way to achieve exploration and understanding.

Hence, to explore the subjective reality of experiences from the customer's perspective, open ended questions were adopted. The open ended questions discovered deeper understanding of views and opinions of participants which advantage the researcher to obtain rich and detailed information and insights based on the research (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

This research was commissioned through standardized open-ended interviews. This method was suitable as it enabled the researcher to ask each participant the same set of questions in a personal conversational manner (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014). Furthermore, this enabled the participants to be honest and open with their answers and enabled the researcher to capture non-verbal reactions as a form of communication as well (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014). It also made the analysis easier in this format as it was easier for the researcher to compare responses and inductively create the findings (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

Three interviews were conducted over a period of one day, on Tuesday, 3rd September 2019 between 9am to 11am. All interviews occurred face to face and consisted of 10 open ended questions which were conducted around Gauteng, the Randburg, Parkwood area. The open-ended questions in the interviews were valuable in this research, as the outcome was insightful, emotive and personal, as the participant's provided the researcher their experiences with the brand (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

All questions were based on the Keller's CBBE model and Schmitts SEMs. Interviews were verbally recorded by the usage of a smart-phone recorder and were later (post-interview), transcribed in Word for analysis [Appendix x].

Before the research was conducted, all participants were given a consent form to sign, which shows they are aware of the research, and comply with research terms.

The researcher asked five predetermined experiential marketing questions, three customer satisfaction questions and two customer loyalty questions all based on Keller's CBBE model and Schmitts SEMs model. This assisted to answer the research question (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2016).

Once the interviews were done, the researcher thanked all the participants for their time and effort. Once all the interviews for the research is conducted, the data was then transcribed, analysed and interpreted utilizing a thematic analysis to derive findings (Bezuidenhout and Cronje, 2014).

To enhance the trustworthiness of this research and effectively test the data collection method, a pilot test was conducted among two participants that fitted the population parameters but were not part of the sample. This enabled the researcher to establish an estimated time to conduct interviews, whether or not there are additions, deletions or any other amendments required to change the data collection method (Koonin, 2014).

Data Analysis Method

In a qualitative data analysis, data is transformed into findings (Bezuidenhout and Cronje, 2014). This transformation takes place when the researcher identifies and describes common patterns within the data, in order to achieve research aims and research objectives (Bezuidenhout and Cronje, 2014).

The most suitable data analysis method for this research as data was processed by organising and exploring themes thus a thematic content analysis through the use of coding was suitable.

This research consisted of descriptions for the main ideas in messaging (du Plooy, 2009) in order to accomplish a thematic content analysis. These data analysis steps were adapted from Clarke and Braun (2013) and Maguire and Delahunt (2017). The data collected by participants was analysed through the following steps:

Step 1 Organising and preparing the collected data.

The in-depth interviews were conducted individually, one after the other. Each interview was recorded on the researcher's smartphone. Recording were transcribed into text using a Word document.

Step 2 Reading through the data.

The transcripts were read once and re-read in order to get familiar with the general responses from the participants and to understand the context of what the participants really meant in their statement. All cues, pauses, facial expressions and hesitations were noted down.

Step 3 Coding the transcribed material.

Interviews were individually then collectively studied. The researcher then coded the interviews by using a specific colour to highlight the different codes, which helped organise and condense the data into more meaning chunks of information. Researcher made use of open coding as there were no pre-set codes created for this research. Therefore, the researchers own codes were developed and modified.

Step 4 Identification of themes.

The codes that were highlighted the same colour, emphasized that they are in relation to one another, were labelled. Once all codes were labelled, preliminary themes were developed, reviewed, modified and combined into three key themes.

Step 5 Discussion of themes.

The identified themes were defined in order for the reader to understand what the theme entails. The theme was then discussed by the researcher in terms of findings, which were also supported by exact quotes from the participants.

Step 6 Interpretation of findings.

The research findings were interpreted and related to the theory and/or literature; the researcher having evaluated the context alignment of primary and secondary research questions

Conclusion

This section outlined the research methodology for the research, the interpretivism paradigm used, the research design and approach applied. Furthermore, the population parameters and key characteristics were discussed. Additionally, sampling was discussed which emphasised that non-probability sampling was adopted for this research. Purposive and convenience sampling were practiced and the sample size comprised of three participants who are users of the *TakeALot* mobile application. Finally, the data analysis included in-depth interviews and data was analysed using the thematic data analysis method.

SECTION 4: Findings and Interpretation

Introduction

This chapter details the findings from the data collection described in Chapter 3. As stated in the previous section, data was analysed using thematic analysis, and the findings are discussed below. In this section, significant themes are discussed, interpreted, related to the literature, theory, and the research questions.

The themes that were the most significant from the three interviews [See Appendix *] conducted among selected *TakeALot* mobile application users in the Randburg area include: the feelings towards the *TakeALot* mobile application, purchase retention and the convenience that the *TakeALot* mobile application provides. Each theme will be discussed and followed by an interpretation which details what the finding means.

The table below provides a summary showing the emergent themes, the interview questions that link to the theme and the research objective addressed by the theme.

Table 2: Summary of themes

THEME	INTERVIEW QUESTION	OBJECTIVE
Theme 1: Feelings	Question(s): 6 & 5	Objective 1 & 2
Theme 2: Purchase Retention	Question(s): 9 & 4	Objective 2 & 3

Findings and Interpretation of Themes

Theme 1: Feelings towards the TakeALot mobile application

This theme entailed the participant to self-introspect into their feelings towards the *TakeALot* mobile application, which brought to light the emotional reactions and responses participants displayed towards the mobile application.

It was evident that the feelings evoked from the *TakeALot* mobile application were positive upon being asked how the application makes them feel when they are using

it. One of the respondents used emotive language in their response, with positive words such as “I feel empowered that I can go and buy them right now”.

Furthermore, it was distinguished that all three of the respondents used positive words to convey positive feelings towards the *TakeALot* mobile application, such as “*Good I suppose, it’s always been a positive experience for me*” and “*I am satisfied with the feel of shopping on the TakeALot app*”.

Moreover, based on the participant’s responses, it can be deduced that the prominent emotional response displayed by all the participants was satisfaction of the experience provided by the *TakeALot* mobile application; therefore, participants satisfaction was exhibited in their feelings.

When participants were asked whether or not they deemed the experience with the *TakeALot* mobile application satisfactory, all participants responded yes, hence it can be deduced that based on the experience, an extent of customer satisfaction was reached.

In response to *TakeALot*’s experiential marketing efforts, participants have displayed positive feelings towards the experience. Thus, strengthening customer satisfaction as it is an emotional response to the experience (Alkilani et al, 2013).

The findings that convey that a positive experience evokes positive feelings are in agreement with Schmitt (1999) who states that experiential marketing is customer centric and is all about creating a unique experience for customers, which will result in a pleasant feeling and memory.

In addition, Alkilani et al (2013), state that experiential marketing is mainly related to emotions, feelings, highlighting that experiential marketing can be related to customer satisfaction.

Keller’s CBBE model is analogous to the findings as it focuses on the consumer’s response to the brand; the brand needs to shape how the consumers think and feel about it, which is done through creating the right experiences for the consumers in order to achieve positive feelings (Bhasin, 2018).

Therefore, these findings indicate that experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction because positive feelings have been evoked from the customer's perspective.

Theme 2: Purchase/Customer Retention

This theme encompassed the analysis of consumer behaviour which brought light into consumer retention and loyalty towards the usage of the *TakeALot* mobile application.

When asked whether the participants would change where they purchase online if the *TakeALot* mobile application was to disappear, two out of three respondents said no, they would not change where they purchase online, they would simply use the *TakeALot* browser to purchase.

The unwillingness to change to another online wholesaler can be concluded as participants being loyal to the *TakeALot* mobile application. This is supported by the theory in the literature review that defines loyalty as the deep commitment to re-build and re-patronize preferred products or a service in the future despite situational influences (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017).

However, it is vital to point out the uncertainty in the two participant responses. The cues and vocabulary used by the participants can be deduced to uncertainty as they used words such as 'probably and not necessarily' which does not determine whether or not they could change where they purchase online.

Nevertheless, when participants were asked how the *TakeALot* mobile application makes their purchasing experience convenient, all respondents mentioned that *TakeALot* mobile application is all about convenience, and the number one convenience is that instant shopping; the ability for users to shop at their fingertips and not have to physically go to a brick and mortar store.

Participant 1 also stated that the *TakeALot* mobile application positively enhances their purchasing experiences beyond just purchasing a product, but *TakeALot* fulfils more of their needs when online shopping.

Participant 1 states: “, is not just purchasing something, it's also finding out my delivery time, it's also changing my delivery address, its updating”.

These findings are aligned with the literature as it states that, in order to increase customer satisfaction, brands need to identify and provide their consumers with needs to meet the consumers' expectations and eventually win the consumers trust and loyalty (Wu and Tseng, 2015).

Furthermore, the literature discusses that customer satisfaction cannot guarantee the occurrence of customer loyalty, this happens when there is a low level of convenience (Zena and Hadisumarto, 2012); but because there is a high level of convenience, there is a higher chance of creating customer satisfaction and occurrence of customer loyalty.

Through these findings, it is evident that the participants experience an extent of satisfaction through the convenience that *TakeALot* mobile application provides. Due to the satisfaction, it is known that consumers are more likely to come back and purchase from the same provider.

This statement is supported by literature from Yeh et al (2019), that highlights "If the consumer is satisfied, it is more likely for the consumer to make another purchase and not purchase anything from competitor brands". Customer satisfaction builds customer retention and product repurchase (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017).

Thus, it is clear that experiential marketing, which influences customer satisfaction, is a major variable that contributes towards the purchase retention of a consumer.

Trustworthiness

Due to research design of this study, this research did not aim to generalise findings nor establish a causal relationship, instead this research aimed to generate an in-depth understanding of the influence experiential marketing has on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, therefore, trustworthiness is suited for this research (Koonin, 2014). Thus, to ensure trustworthiness, the researcher considered four criteria namely: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Koonin, 2014).

Credibility

For the research, the researcher enhances credibility by conducting in-depth interviews and using a thematic content analysis method which enabled the researcher to further understand the participant responses and create findings (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). The researcher read and re-read interviews, analysed them and theorised and revised the data accordingly (Korstjens and Moser, 2018).

Furthermore, the researcher implemented an exploratory research design which complimented the research questions concerning the key concepts of this research (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). While conducting research, the researcher spent adequate time interviewing all the participants, to achieve comprehensive understanding and gain the insights from them (Koonin, 2014). The research further enhanced credibility by meeting with the research supervisor for guidance and debriefing sessions (Korstjens and Moser, 2018).

Transferability

In the aforementioned study, the researcher mentioned precise characteristics of all the participants, provided descriptive research through the literature review, sample size, the interview guideline and the research process to enable the reader to assess whether the findings are transferable in their own setting (Korstjens and Moser, 2018).

Furthermore, the researcher provided verbatim accounts of audio-recordings of all three participants achieved through the in-depth interviews (Korstjens and Moser, 2018) in order to enhance the transferability,

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability and confirmability go hand in hand as dependability focuses on the integration quality between the data collection, data analysis process and the theory generated from the data (Koonin, 2014). Confirmability focuses on the golden thread between the findings and the data (Koonin, 2014). In order to enhance dependability and confirmability, the researcher consulted in research supervisors to stay away from bias which acted as an ethical precaution for this research.

In addition, the researcher provides guidelines and additional notes to enable the reader to see the transparency of the research path (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). Furthermore, the researcher discussed the document and research process concerning key concepts which enabled scrutinising from others to occur (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

SECTION 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

The aim of this research was to explore the extent to which experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty through a mobile application, specifically the *TakeALot* mobile application. After analysing and interpreting the research findings, it became clear that the *TakeALot* mobile application was positively experienced and created customer satisfaction and an extent of customer loyalty. Thus, the implications of the findings include: positive feelings towards the brand, purchase retention of the brand and creating convenience.

Given the research conducted, the following objectives were examined:

To explore the influence customer satisfaction has on customer loyalty: It is evident that customer satisfaction plays an important role in the loyalty of the customer. All three participants confirmed that they are loyal customers of the *TakeALot* mobile applications and all participants state that the mobile application satisfies their needs. Therefore, customer satisfaction influences customer loyalty positively.

To explore the extent to which experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction: All participants state that they are very satisfied with the experience provided by the mobile application which they confirm their satisfaction. Therefore, it is known that experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction positively.

To explore the degree to which experiential marketing influences customer loyalty: This objective replies on the top objective. Through achieving customer satisfaction, customer loyalty is easier to achieve.

Ethical considerations

Ethics in research focus on the moral and professional code of conduct which provides the researcher guidelines, explaining what is acceptable and unacceptable practices in research (Louw, 2014). Based on this research, there were ethical considerations concerning the participants and the researcher. The researcher ensured to follow all guidelines throughout the study.

Ethics issues for the participants:

Consent forms are important, all participants need to be aware that they are taking part of this research, all participants need to know what is required of them, they need to be informed how the results will be used and whether or not their identities will be used as well, all participants need to give their consent before starting the research (Louw, 2014).

Based on this research, all participants were given a consent form that stipulated all the information about the research. The researcher was present when giving all participants the consent form, in case a participant was not in agreement with the consent form, however there were no problems and all participants agreed and signed the consent form.

This research was not a sensitive topic, however, the researcher adhered to anonymity and confidentiality (Louw, 2014).

Ethics for the researcher:

The researcher needs to comply to what is stated in the consent form, researcher needs to protect the information of participants, Researchers cannot falsify information, researcher cannot be biased and at any point, influence the outcome of the research (Louw, 2014).

This research was not a sensitive topic, however, the researcher adhered to anonymity and confidentiality (Louw, 2014). Throughout the research, the researcher was neutral and was not biased nor used false information (Louw, 2014). The researcher also conducted research ethically by avoiding inappropriate methods and never distorting results (Louw, 2016).

Additionally, throughout the research, the above ethical considerations were practiced. Moreover, the researcher conducted the research adhering to the IIE Ethical Guidelines and Clearance which enabled all the participants to be formally informed about the purpose of the research and the procedures that will take place.

Limitations

Time: Due to the time frame that was allocated for the researcher became a limitation as it hindered the researcher from collecting more data and to interview more

participants. The researcher was not able to go into as much depth in the research as possible which would result in greater findings.

Sample size: Due to time constraints, the sample size was limited. This research is qualitative in design and utilizing the interpretivism paradigm, the time constraint affects the depth of the research, therefore, this sample size cannot truly be representative of the whole population.

Resources: The researcher had limited resources to conduct this research, therefore, they couldn't conduct extensive research as they did not have access to field researchers. All research was conducted and analysed by the researcher alone. Due to this, the researcher was not able to conduct research across South Africa. There were no financial resources for the researcher which was a limitation, as they had to travel to Randburg to conduct all three interviews.

Heuristic Value (Possible future actions)

In order to future explore and gain a deeper understanding regarding the extent experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, it is recommended that future contributors consider the following:

- 📌 Including a larger sample size in order to conduct more in-depth interviews, which will enable greater findings, insights and the researcher will know about more experiences of the *TakeALot* mobile application
- 📌 Extending the time frame of this research would enable a more holistic view to this study and achieve more comprehensive results.
- 📌 Broaden the locations and target market segments to explore whether the experience *TakeALot* mobile application varies in demographics or not. This will allow future researchers to broaden the research and gain more insight to the perceptions and experiences across different demographics throughout South Africa.
- 📌 Add more questions about the participant to understand more the type of person the researcher is interviewing
- 📌 Add prompt questions to further gain more insight into the participant experiences.

Conclusion

The research goal to explore the extent experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on the *TakeALot* mobile application was completed. All participants who were interviewed were cooperative and knowledgeable about the *TakeALot* mobile application as they were frequent customers of the brand. This provided the researcher with insightful answers about their experiences.

The researcher set research questions that enabled the researcher to meet the research objectives. The data collected from the three participants confirmed that experiential marketing does indeed influence customer satisfaction and customer loyalty by catering to their needs, being convenient, evoking positive feelings and creating purchase retention.

The *TakeALot* mobile application was found to be successfully creating positive experiences that positively influence their customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Thus, the *TakeALot* mobile application case study confirms that successfully implementing experiential marketing on a mobile application, can create larger engagement and build customer and brand relationships.

Hence, further exploration into the topic of experiential marketing and its influence on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty within South Africa is recommended and adaption of more brands in South Africa to be more experiential.

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Annexure

Annexure A: Summary Document Table.

Research Purpose	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection	Ethics	Key Findings	Recommendations
The purpose of this research is to explore the opportunity experiential marketing has on enhancing customer satisfaction and customer loyalty through a mobile application	To what extent does experiential marketing influence customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on the TakeALot mobile application	The purpose of this research aimed to explore experiential marketing on a mobile application [TakeALot] and the influence it has on the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty	Keller Schmitt	Theme 1: Feelings towards the TakeALot mobile application Theme 2: Purchase/Customer Retention /	Paradigm Interpretivism Epistemological Position The epistemological position believes that knowledge is subjective because knowledge is socially constructed and mind dependent (Kawulich and Chelisa, 2012) Ontological Position The ontological position believes that reality is subjective and is created by human interaction (Du Plooy Cilliers, 2014),	Quantitative. Population Unique characteristics based on the profile of a TakeALot mobile application user: South African males and/or females, aged 18 years and above, are aware of the TakeALot mobile application and utilize the TakeALot mobile application at least twice in two months.	Interviews	The researcher was present when giving all participants the consent form, in case a participant was not in agreement with the consent form, however there were no problems and all participants agreed and signed the consent form. Moreover, the researcher conducted the research adhering to the IIE Ethical Guidelines	Theme 2: This theme encompassed the analysis of consumer behaviour, which brought light into consumer retention and loyalty towards the usage of the TakeALot mobile application Theme 1: This theme entailed the participant to self-introspect into their feelings towards the TakeALot mobile application, which brought to light the emotional reactions and responses participants displayed towards the mobile application.	Including a larger sample size in order to conduct more in-depth interviews, which will enable greater findings, insights and the researcher will know about more experiences of the TakeALot mobile application Extending the time frame of this research would enable a more holistic view to this study and achieve more comprehensive results.
Research Problem	Secondary Questions OR Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Methods	Limitations	Key Contributions	
The opportunity in the market is to explore how wholesalers with their comprehensive range of product offerings (clothes, appliances etc.) can increase customer satisfaction and recruit loyal customers through experiential marketing, particularly through mobile applications.	To explore the influence customer satisfaction has on customer loyalty -To explore the extent to which experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction -To explore the degree to which experiential marketing influences customer loyalty	Experiential Marketing Customer Satisfaction Customer Loyalty	Keller Customer Based Equity model Schmitt Strategic Experience Modules [SEM]			Non-probability sampling. Convenience & Purposive sampling. A sample size of 3.	Unit of Analysis Individuals Thematic Content Analysis	Time Sample Size Resources		Add more questions about the participant to understand more the type of person the researcher is interviewing Add prompt questions to further gain more insight into the participant experiences.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guidelines

1. Do you prefer buying your products on the TakeALot mobile application compared to brick and mortar stores and Why?
2. What benefits come to mind when thinking of TakeALot mobile application?
3. Based on your prior experience with TakeALot, how would you describe the manner in which they (TakeALot) communicate their products and services to you on their mobile application?
4. Explain the manner in how the TakeALot mobile application makes your purchasing experience more convenient?
5. Based on your answers above, would you deem the experience with the mobile application as satisfactory or not?
6. Given your overall experience on the TakeALot mobile application, how does the application make you feel when you're using the application and why?
7. Have you used the TakeALot web browser?
8. [If yes] what are the significant benefits between the website and the mobile application? [If no] is there a reason why?
9. If the TakeALot mobile application was to disappear, would you change where you purchase online?
10. Do you talk to others about your experience on the TakeALot mobile application?

Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form



To whom it may concern,

My name is Rudo Manjoro and I am a student at Vega Pretoria I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Anthony Wingfield about Exploring the role experiential marketing has on Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty: A TakeALot Case Study. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the importance of adopting experiential marketing into mobile applications to enhance customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

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 it will facilitate the exploration of my research topic. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to interview you for a maximum of 30 minutes.

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. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your experience on the TakeALot mobile application. 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. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega Pretoria, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communications. 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:

Rudo Manjoro

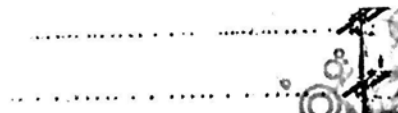
0828458007

15014946@vegaconnect.co.za

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Anthony Wingfield

45018@iieconnect.co.za



Consent form for participants

I, Ricardo Lopes, agree to participate in the research conducted by Rudo Neo Manjoro about the role experiential marketing plays on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on a digital platform.

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

1. I agree to be interviewed 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

3/9/2019
Date



Consent form for participants

I, Loren Curnick, agree to participate in the research conducted by Rudo Neo Manjoro about the role experiential marketing plays on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on a digital platform.

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

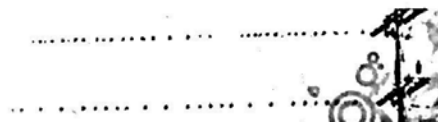
1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to 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

03 Sept 2019

Date

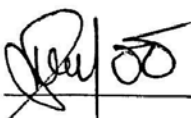


Consent form for participants

I, Suresha Naidoo, agree to participate in the research conducted by Rudo Neo Manjoro about the role experiential marketing plays on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on a digital platform.

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

1. I agree to be interviewed 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

3/09/2019
Date

Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance Letter



August 29, 2019

Student name: Rudo Manjoro

Student number: 15014946

Campus: Vega Pretoria



Re: Approval of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Strategic Brand Communication 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
Supervisor
Coordinator

Name:
Campus Postgraduate

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Appendix 4: Interview Transcripts

Interviewer:	Hello, thank you so much for participating in this interview with me. I really appreciate it. So let's jump straight into it. Do you prefer buying your products on the TakeALot mobile application compared to brick and mortar stores and Why?
Participant 1:	Uhm, I prefer to buy, yeah, I prefer to buy on Take A Lot if I don't need something urgently. If I don't, I mean, even though it's very seamless and you don't have to wait two to three weeks, sometimes four to five days, sometimes I need or want something now. Uhm, for Kasey, uhm these earphones, I was getting on a plane the next day and I needed to go and buy earphones, I couldn't wait four days, but they were cheaper on Take A Lot and I would've waited if I had the luxury. But I do definitely prefer to buy compared to brick and mortar, because it's cheaper
Interviewer:	So, What benefits come to mind when thinking of TakeALot mobile application?
Participant 1:	Uhm, well I'm in the moment, so I don't need to, it's a lot more seamless process than logging on to my computer and if I'm with my wife or friends and we talk about something and I think about a product I want to buy, it's very easy to go and actually just buy it.
Interviewer:	OK, Based on your prior experience with TakeALot, how would you describe the manner in which they (TakeALot) communicate their products and services to you on their mobile application?
Participant 1:	Yeah, I mean it's, its fine it's not, I mean, it's the browsing experience or the purchasing experience is perfect, all products are explained, all delivery

	terms and times are explained, time is explained, colours are explained. So there's no real difference to, to the web, I find it a seamless experience.
Interviewer:	Explain the manner in how the TakeALot mobile application makes your purchasing experience more convenient?
Participant 1:	Its, the purchasing experience for me, is not just purchasing something, it's also finding out my delivery time, it's also changing my delivery address, its updating. Uhm. So it helps my purchasing experience because my phone is always on me and I am able to check exactly when a product can arrive, escalate a query if the product hasn't arrived yet. Uhm, and also like I said, I'm in the moment of purchasing something. I generally don't shop around, I used to shop around, but right now, with the online retailers, you cannot find a cheaper product. I suppose, they don't pay for rent, they don't pay for physical store space, so thee, I know I'm getting close to the best deals or the best deal. I won't need to shop around and if I want something, I will go on to the app and buy it.
Interviewer:	Oh wow, so Based on your answers above, would you deem the experience with the mobile application as satisfactory or not?
Participant 1:	Yeah
Interviewer:	Given your overall experience on the TakeALot mobile application, how does the application make you feel when you're using the application and why?
Participant 1:	I suppose it empowers me to a point, uhm, I didn't grow up with this kind of technology and now that I can afford products and services when I want them, is a little bit of a, I feel

	empowered that I can go and buy them right now.
Interviewer:	Oh wow. Have you used the TakeALot web browser?
Participant 1:	Yeah
Interviewer:	Alright so what are the significant benefits between the website and the mobile application? [If no] is there a reason why?
Participant 1:	I wouldn't say there's many, I wouldn't see benefits in one or the other. The browser for me is, uhm, I tend to spend more time on the browser, I tend to read more of the product information on the browser, and if I am not sure about comparing one product to another, I'll generally do it on the web first vs doing it on the phone. Uhm, so the only benefit I'd say is what stage am I in, in my purchasing decision. So, if I'm pretty sure I know exactly what I want, I generally won't even go to the browser but if I want to compare products or browse more, then I'll generally do it on the browser.
Interviewer:	I understand. So If the TakeALot mobile application was to disappear, would you change where you purchase online?
Participant 1:	No, well I mean the mobile app and the browser or just the app? No, I'd probably still purchase from Take A Lot.
Interviewer:	Do you talk to others about your experience on the TakeALot mobile applicationn Experiential Marketing Perspective.
Participant 1:	No
Interviewer:	Well that is the end of our interview. Thank you so much again.

Interviewer:	Hello, thank you so much for participating in this interview with me. I really appreciate it. Do you prefer buying your products on the TakeALot mobile application compared to brick and mortar stores and Why?
Participant 2:	Absolutely. Erm, You can get anything you can think of on Take A Lot, so it's just the easiest place to find anything you're looking for and you actually do not have to go anywhere
Interviewer:	So, What benefits come to mind when thinking of TakeALot mobile application?
Participant 2:	Definitely convenience. Especially because Joburg is so big, you don't want to be driving everywhere. Traffic etc. Convenience, there's also a lot of discounts on Take A Lot, specials. I often find that things are a bit more cheaper on Take A Lot than they are anywhere else. Yeah.
Interviewer:	Oh wow, alright so Based on your prior experience with TakeALot, how would you describe the manner in which they (TakeALot) communicate their products and services to you on their mobile application?
Participant 2:	Erm, I don't think they communicate anything to me unless I go on the app myself. But when communicating about the delivery, they are usually pretty good. You know, straight after you've made payment, they send you an email to

	confirm, erm, in my experience, they generally delivery when they say they're going to deliver. So yeah, I think their communication is pretty good.
Interviewer:	Ok, please explain the manner in how the TakeALot mobile application makes your purchasing experience more convenient?
Participant 2:	Well its basically, you can order at a fingertip. And you know, the app allows you to search for what you want, click order
Interviewer:	Oh wow, Based on your answers above, would you deem the experience with the mobile application as satisfactory or not?
Participant 2:	Yes, very, very satisfactory.
Interviewer:	Given your overall experience on the TakeALot mobile application, how does the application make you feel when you're using the application and why?
Participant 2:	Erm, how does it make me feel? Erm, Good I suppose. It's easy to use, convenient, you know so..it's always been a positive experience for me.
Interviewer:	Great. what are the significant benefits between the website and the mobile application? [If no] is there a reason why?
Participant 2:	Yes
Interviewer:	If the TakeALot mobile application was to disappear, would you change where you purchase online?
Participant 2:	Well I generally only use the website when I'm at work, erm because it's just easier to open the browser than to look on my phone but with the app, you can kind of open, because you know you have your phone wherever you are so you can open at any point. If you're waiting for an appointment or you're waiting for someone in any case, it's convenient so yeah.
Interviewer:	I see. So if the Take A lot mobile application was to disappear, would you change where you purchase online?
Participant 2:	Erm, no, not necessarily. I wouldn't change. It's pretty easy to open a browser.

	Erm, it's just convenient that you can click on the app icon and you're there. Verses opening your browser but yeah, I'd probably still use Take A Lot.
Interviewer:	Do you talk to others about your experience on the Take A Lot mobile application?
Participant 2:	Hmmm... not really. It's more like if someone hears of a special on Take A Lot, they'll tell me but it's not necessarily to do with the application itself but to do with Take A Lot.
Interviewer:	Well that is the end of our interview. Thank you so much again.

Interviewer:	Hello, thank you so much for participating in this interview with me. I really appreciate it. Do you prefer buying your products on the TakeALot mobile application compared to brick and mortar stores and Why?
Participant 3:	Well, for a matter of convenience if I'm looking for specific things for example, electronics. I know that it's often on sale on Take A Lot, I would generally do a look at their daily sales list, the one that comes up so I'll browse through that Uhm, I'll often start my shopping on Take A Lot then go into an actual mall And then, thereafter, do a little bit of comparisons and then once I've made my decision, because more often than not, I'm buying a laptop or I'm buying a camera. It's a decision. That takes a little bit of thought and often requires further research. So that would be my process but once I'm satisfied And more often than not, I found that there is competing prices between Take A Lot and Game. So I mean, because Game is one of the suppliers that says if you can get it cheaper elsewhere, we'll beat that. So more often than not, It'll be Take A Lot, Game, then Take A lot and Game then I make a decision there after. But 100%, Take A Lot generally because its less of a hassle, then actually going to the store. It's a matter of convenience so generally I would prefer Take A Lot.
Interviewer:	So, What benefits come to mind when thinking of TakeALot mobile application??

Participant 3:	I think its very user friendly. So, it's not like you have to dig for what you're looking for. Everything is sectionalised, departmentalised which makes it easier. My daily sales, my daily promotions will come up as I'm going through it. Uhm, that the only hindering thing about that Is that Take A Lot has specific times in which they release the daily specials and I think it's not before 7am and more often than not, I'm sitting and you can't sleep, and I'm trying to shop, you know (laughs). Whatever the case is. If it's convenient, that should be something they take into consideration.
Interviewer:	Oh wow, Based on your prior experience with TakeALot, how would you describe the manner in which they (TakeALot) communicate their products and services to you on their mobile application?
Participant 3:	I think its excellent. Because there's more than one picture when you click on something you know you look at it, at all angles, you have a thorough understanding. Yes, there's thee aesthetic element, there's the visual element but there's no sensorial element so I can't then say "I am buying this cap from Puma, I can see it's not flimsy but I can't feel the material, you know what I mean" so that the only drawback but I mean, it is an online app and it's something that comes with it.
Interviewer:	Ok, Explain the manner in how the TakeALot mobile application makes your purchasing experience more convenient?

Participant 3:	Hell it's all about convenience! There's no more convenience when it comes to this. You order online, and within a week or within a few days in fact, I've had deliveries within 3 days, 2 days, its delivered to me so I've been pleasantly surprised previously when things have come quicker than expected.
Interviewer:	Oh wow, Based on your answers above, would you deem the experience with the mobile application as satisfactory or not?
Participant 3:	100% with the exception of the daily sales list of course!
Interviewer:	Given your overall experience on the TakeALot mobile application, how does the application make you feel when you're using the application and why?
Participant 3:	Uhm, erm, well look, I am a shopper by nature. So I go on there and I would select a product and naturally, I don't get buyer's remorse or anything like that or cognitive dissonance, if that's what you mean. Look, I can't say it makes me feel great or whatever, I mean it's a form of shopping , and you know how women are about shopping, surely there's all sorts of endorphins being released while pressing that <i>add to cart</i> or <i>finalise purchase decision</i> but overall I think I am satisfied with the feel of shopping on the Take A lot app.
Interviewer:	Great. Have you used the TakeALot web browser?
Participant 3:	No, because there is an application. If there was not an app, that would limit me, because I would not go specifically to Take A Lot, I'd probably do a price check, then from the price check, pull out other information.

Interviewer:	Alright so what are the significant benefits between the website and the mobile application?
Participant 3:	Again, convenience.
Interviewer:	[If yes] what are the significant benefits between the website and the mobile application? [If no] is there a reason why?
Participant 3:	I just answered that question, Yes I would change.
Interviewer:	If the TakeALot mobile application was to disappear, would you change where you purchase online?
Participant 3:	I have had discussions with family members when I have been pleased, I have not been disappointed with Take A Lot so more often than not, it is a good sort of advocacy for the brand uhm, as in "oh hey wow, Taka A Lot delivered this in two days and I never had a problem with quality or if I was to return the stuff, they would come pick it up from my house" so you know, it's not putting me out in any way. So yes I have, uhm, sort of been a good brand ambassador for Take A Lot (giggles).
Interviewer:	Well that's a wrap. Thank you so much again.

This is for experiential marketing

This is for customer satisfaction

This is for customer loyalty

Appendix 4: Safe assign document



1 Exploring the role experiential marketing has on Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty: A TakeALot Case Study.

Student name: Rudo Neo Manjoro 15014946

Qualification: **2** BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication

Module: Research Methodology 8419

Supervisor: Anthony Wingfield

Lecturer: Ivan Mkhomazi

Words:

3 I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Honours in BA Strategic Brand Communication 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.

RESM8419_2019_ALL_VGPT - RESM8419_VGPT1

Research Report 1

Rudo Manjoro on Fri, Oct 25 2019, 5:00 PM

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