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CREATING BRAND LOYALTY IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE ENTERPRISES: A CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Brand strength is a well-known concept in food and beverage enterprises as a service sector as well as in other sectors. The activity of eating out that meets the need of socializing beyond being a need is growing rapidly. The importance of creating brand loyalty by the enterprises in the customers' decision process on making choices about the food enterprises comes into prominence. As the brand loyalty increases, advantages such as the customers of a brand being less affected by the activities of rival brands arise. In this regard, it is tried to explain the brand loyalty in food and beverage enterprises from a conceptual perspective through a literature review in the study. Findings indicate the significance of brand loyalty for enterprises to create value and differentiate themselves. In the scope of this research, creating brand loyalty and approaches are discussed and the significance of brand loyalty in food and beverage enterprises is investigated. Lastly, some recommendations related to food and beverage enterprises to create brand loyalty based on the literature are proposed.

KEY WORDS: Brand, brand loyalty, food and beverage enterprises.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The attitudes towards food and beverage enterprises have changed in recent years along with the up growth in food and beverage enterprises, and interest in culinary arts has increased, as a result, international and national food and beverage enterprises brands have accrued (Aydogan-Cifci & Oz, 2016). In parallel with this accretion, an intense competition environment has sprung. In the marketing competition environment of today, most companies comprehend that attainment of brand loyalty from their customers and retaining it is of critical importance for the survival of a company. Consequently, most companies have been developing marketing strategies in order to attract the loyal consumers to their companies.

Having a loyal costumer portfolio can help a company eliminate their rivals and provide a competition advantage necessary for the success in the markets. The most powerful brands have loyal or even fan customers. A customer's not being interested in any other brands rather than the one he prefers indicates his loyalty to that brand which is the common goal of all brands (Bati, 2015). Additionally, studies have remarked that employer brand loyalty influences positive employee well-being which affects brand loyalty (Benraiss-Noailles & Viot, 2020). Brand loyalty is crucial for service foundations since loyal customers directly and constantly affect the current and prospective income streams (Dwivedi, 2015). Customers who are satisfied with the services and products they have purchased bring new customers and the price sensitivity of the satisfied customers are lesser (Turan, 2017). High brand loyalty is a concept that contributes to expansion, high market share, high investment return and high brand value ultimately (Kabiraj & Shanmugan,2011). Brand loyalty may have an impact on the customers' decision-making process on repurchasing the same product through leaving a better impression on the customers about a brand than other rivals. (Hanzaee & Andervazh, 2012; Lam, 2007; Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016; Uzunkaya, 2016).

We can claim that creating a brand loyalty is generally one of the desired outcomes of the brand loyalty of a food and beverage enterprises. Because most enterprises make investments in brands so as to create a brand value. We have been encountering with new innovations in product range and quality aiming at creating brand loyalty day by day. The brand image perceptions of customers

and their feedbacks after the consumption may differ depending on their experiences at a food and beverage enterprises. The experiences of customers at a food and beverage enterprises are connected with the decision on their preference of that management once again. It is important for management executives to strengthen the brand identity through continuous monitoring and research activities in order to determine the changes that are to increase brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty is one of the marketing concepts that has been argued and misunderstood at most in recent years; thus, it is essential to revise the concept of brand loyalty (Kabiraj & Shanmugan, 2011). It was aimed at revealing and reviewing the literature in the field of creating brand loyalty in food and beverage enterprises. The experiences of customers at a food and beverage enterprises are connected with the decision on their preference of that enterprises once again. In this study It is believed that this study might contribute the academic process in regard to the inspection of the significance and value of creating brand loyalty in food and beverage enterprises considering the scarcity of the academic studies in the field.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The concept of brand loyalty

The key feature of a strong brand is to create a loyal customer population. A brand that created brand loyalty in its own product category outcompetes and it can restrain the new products that are to penetrate into the market (Onan, 2006). Brand loyalty can be defined as a customer's psychological attachment and affinity towards a brand in conjunction with purchasing the brand repeatedly. This loyalty promotes the maintenance of substantive market share, reduction of marketing costs, decrease in prices sensitivity, advertisement of marketing messages and sustention of brand expansion for the enterprises (Taskin, 2018). Brand loyalty is the preference of a customer to purchase a certain brand in a product category. It arises when the consumers perceive the specifications of an actual product, and when its image and quality are introduced with a suitable price. This perception can transform into repurchases that eventuates with brand loyalty (Ishak & Ghani, 2013). We define brand fidelity as the consumer's faithfulness to a brand partner demonstrated by an aggregate of behaviors (i.e. accommodation/forgiveness, willingness to sacrifice) and cognitions (i.e. derogation of alternatives, cognitive interdependence and

positive illusions) that maintain relationship stability and durability (Grace et al., 2018). The question of "How could customers remain more loyal to a brand?" is one of the difficulties encountered by marketers mostly (Mishra et al., 2016). The degree of a customers' attachment and devotion to a company is ensured through brand loyalty. Customers who have great brand loyalty always purchase that brand and their loyalty to that brand is considerably high. A customer's repurchase may result from reasons such as customer's accustomedness, absence of rival brands, low level of income, accessibility to the brand, brand's being retailer or low-priced product (Gultekin, 2020). Concordantly, brand loyalty could generate a resistant customer group to the competitive strategies (Devrani, 2009). According to the results of various studies, it is seen that corporate image and corporate reputation have a positive effect on brand loyalty. In other words, corporate image and corporate reputation are effective and critical in creating a brand loyalty (Marangoz & Biber, 2007).

Brand loyalty is a strategic step necessary for the aim of expanding market share and maintaining continuity through creating customer loyalty by companies (Wood, 2004). Brand loyalty in marketing includes the involvement of consumer who is to purchase the brand again and it can be indicated with positive behaviors such as repurchases of a product or a service and an advice (Dick & Basu, 1994). Several researchers are in agreement with that brand loyalty is a complicated disposition in the marketing literature. Therefore, the definition of brand loyalty is not extensive or consistent enough.

Factors affecting brand loyalty (Datta, 2003):
- Interest level and risk,
- Advertisements,
- Satisfaction level,
- Brand names,
- Product performance,
- Price,
- Sales promotion,
- Demographic attributes,
- Ethnic relations, and
- Time factor.

Table 1. Definitions of brand loyalty

Author	Definition of brand loyalty
Jacoby & Kyner (1973)	It is the function of a psychological process that has a biased attitudinal reaction being expressed in time and selected among multiple alternative brands by some decision-making units.
Wilkie (1994)	It is stated as an aspirant attitude towards a substantive brand and a stable eagerness to purchase.
Cunnigham (1956)	It is the most purchased brand among total purchases.
American Marketing Association (1960)	It is a sale-based approach as the maintenance of purchasing attempt of a product among the same product groups.
Gounaris & Stathakopoulos (2004)	It is repurchasing, preferability, given promises, memorability and commitment.
İmrak (2015)	It is the condition of a customer's purchasing a certain brand not only in present time but also in oncoming continuum.
Palumbo & Herbig (2000)	It is the constant searching and purchasing ability of a consumer even when the competitors offer lower prices and sales promotion.
Raj (1982)	Brand loyalty is customers' more than 50% purchases of a certain brand in a product category.
Biong (1993)	It is the computation of the intention of customers to repurchase a brand they are contented with again.
Brown (1952)	It is described as an intentional inclination to purchase a brand again that generally arises from positive past experiences of usage.
Dick & Basu (1994)	Brand loyalty is conceptualized as the power of relationship between a relative attitude adopted towards an asset and the behavior of repurchase.
Deniz & Ercis (2010)	It is a customer's finding a brand appealing, purchasing it more often than rival brands, retaining this purchasing and using it for long periods.
Yilmaz (2005)	It is a type of psychological commitment acquired towards a brand like friendship.
Yoo & Donathu (2001)	It is the desired outcome of brand value.
Yildiz (2008)	The action of repurchase of a same brand's products is interpreted as a positive behavior pattern.

2.2. Creating brand loyalty

Various parameters should become integrated in order to able to notice the existence of loyalty to a brand since brand loyalty, which is a complicated concept and a systematic process, is affected by several parameters and it affects them (Babur-Tosun, 2017). According to Pearson (2016) arguing that despite of being challenging to ensure brand loyalty, it is essential for companies to focus on the establishment of more intimate, significant and attached relations with their customers which provides mutual benefits, a favorable loyalty initiative should first create a significant customer experience. Enterprises should retain their existing customers and ensure that they are satisfied with the services

being provided by improving and promoting their relations with their customers. If the customer feels satisfied following the transaction, his loyalty is to increase in time, and he is to be a loyal customer (Turan, 2017).

Brand loyalty does not appear overnight. Customers become a loyal customer by passing through some stages. Erbas explains brand loyalty as a process consisting of four stages (Dogru, 2015):

First stage: Recognition of the brand, in other words notice of the brand and the trial of the brand stage.
Second stage: Acceptance of the brand by the customers. That is to say, the brand and image's being suitable for one another from the point of customers.
Third stage: Preference of the brand among other brands.
Fourth stage: Repeated repurchase of the preferred brand by the customers persistently.
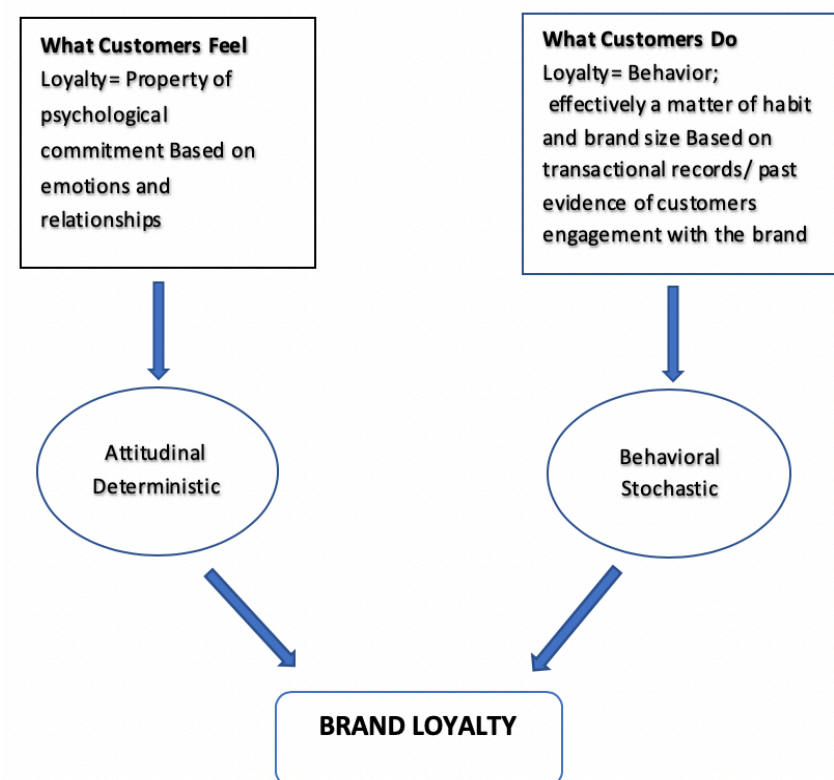
It can be speculated that brand loyalty is created in the customer having reached at the fourth stage on the ground that the customer at this stage will continue to purchase the same brand instead of alternatives.

Brand loyalty is attained in two ways as rationally and affectively. The rational way includes performance (such as price, efficiency, durableness and reliability) and judgements (such as quality and credibility). On the other hand, affectional way consists of image (such as user profile, the status of purchase and use, personality and values) and emotions (such as entertainment, excitement, social acknowledgement and self-respect). Therefore, it is vital to focus on the stated variables for brand loyalty (Gultekin, 2020). Enterprises need to analyze their customers properly to be able to create brand loyalty. Inadequacies such as customer's previous unfavorable experiences, brands not being able to meet expectations, lack of post-purchase services lead to leave a negative impact on the customer and he does not favor working with that enterprises again (Hacihasanoglu, 2017).

2.3. Brand loyalty approaches
The dimensions (approaches) of brand loyalty in the marketing literature are discussed as behavioral loyalty, attitudinal loyalty and mixed loyalty. Brand loyalty is a behavior according to the proponents of stochastic, in other words

incidental, perspective. A person who repurchases the same brand is regarded as being loyal to that brand. While this approach associates brand loyalty with purchase, it does not analyze the underlying reasons behind this behavior (Odin, Odin, & Florence, 2001). When behavioral approaches are viewed in which the brand being purchased is addressed as the reference point, the action of purchasing cannot prevent customers to gravitate towards other brands as it is practiced independently from affective components such as appreciation of brand and engagement with it (Babur-Tosun, 2014). Attitudinal loyalty transcends behavior on the contrary to the behavioral loyalty and it expresses loyalty with the power of customers' affection towards a brand. Figure 1. (Mechinda et al., 2009). The third one, mixed approach, is the combination of two approaches as attitudinal and behavioral. Mixed approach gauges loyalty considering the product preferences of customers, their inclinations to change brand, purchase frequency, their recent purchases and the total amount of the purchases (Bowen & Chen, 2001).

What Customers Feel
Loyalty= Property of psychological commitment Based on emotions and relationships

What Customers Do
Loyalty= Behavior; effectively a matter of habit and brand size Based on transactional records/ past evidence of customers engagement with the brand

Attitudinal Deterministic

Behavioral Stochastic

BRAND LOYALTY

Figure 1: Brand loyalty- A deterministic and stochastic perspective (Source: Sajal Kabiraj, Joghee Shanmugan, (February 2010), "Development Of a Conceptual Framework For Brand Loyalty: A Euro-Mediterranean Perspective Received (In Revised Form)", *Brand Management, 18*(4/5), 285–299.)

2.3. Brand loyalty in food and beverage enterprises

It is possible to claim that food and beverage enterprises' creating a value for their customers might be a significant factor in generating satisfaction and accordingly, customer brand loyalty (Turkmendag & Hassan, 2018). Food and beverage enterprises that have a critical contribution to tourism sector have resorted to establish a close bond with their customers by differentiating themselves from their rivals. Enterprises have been heading towards understanding their customers' expectations better and increasing their quality of service and customer satisfaction in order to create brand loyalty by adopting various strategies (Ozgur, 2013). It is necessary for the enterprises have been heading towards understanding their customers' expectations better and increasing their quality of service and customer satisfaction in order to create brand loyalty by adopting various strategies aiming at achieving success in the long term to be conscious about how the brand is conceived by the customers and the effect of the brand on customers' purchase preferences in order to ensure brand loyalty, to establish an affective bond between the customers and the brand, to create a customer group who do not mind price increases and to create sympathy for the brand. In the light of this information, it is expected from food and beverage enterprises have been heading towards understanding their customers' expectations better and increasing their quality of service and customer satisfaction in order to create brand loyalty by adopting various strategies in service sector to give due importance to branding in parallel with the increasing significance of branding today (Yildiz, 2013). The most crucial issue for a enterprises to be successful is not first-time purchasing customers but repurchasing customers (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978). Two common reasons of people's purchasing from certain brands or companies are not having other alternatives or having high personal preferences for the brand (Zins, 2001). Food and beverage enterprises providing service with customer satisfaction create their brand images first by acquiring customer satisfaction. They transform this satisfaction into brand loyalty in progress of time. Brand loyalty may have a positive effect on people's intention to purchase (Haliloglu, 2019).

We can specify the fundamental aspects to be paid attention by the enterprises to be able to ensure customer satisfaction and to create brand loyalty as following (Kocak, 2006):

- Food and beverages: the quality, variety, seasonality, cultural form, preparation and presentation of the food and beverages tabled in restaurants.

- Variety in menu selection: the length, type, color, of the menu, its content's conformity to the target group, supply of the whole menu and price equilibrium.
- The level of service: the quality and cleanliness of the cutlery packs being used, acting on rules to follow in table service.
- Value of money: it involves not only the monetary equivalent of food and beverages but also the service delivered, hygiene, setting and personnel's behavior.
- Interior design and the atmosphere of the enterprises: capaciousness of lounge, its lighting and furniture, tables and chairs setting along with their positions and colors and so on all affect the atmosphere of the enterprises together with the running of service and personnel's manners.
- Satisfaction of customers' expectations: Apart from eating need, the customer might be in expectation of getting respect from the food and beverage enterprises, developing social relations and being in a different atmosphere.
- Settlement and accessibility of the enterprises: location of the enterprises, its distance to the center, and its car park status all affect the number of customers.
- Personnel: dressing of the personnel, their neatness and maintenance, their abilities to serve up and their manners and behaviors towards the customers are of vital importance. No matter how well all the other factors are succeeded, the service delivery as a whole might be affected when one of the personnel display a negative behavior.

One of the most crucial factors for the sake of branding other than of good quality product and good service quality is standardization. In addition, certification aimed at rating of products is a step for the sake of a enterprises branding. It is difficult to brand for enterprises that do not have standardizations even though they produce good quality products. Despite the fact that it might be challenging to create standardization in food and beverage enterprises, it would be possible to earn the brand loyalty of the customer after reaching to this quality standards (Aydogan-Cifci & Oz, 2016).

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION
The concept of brand loyalty, which can be described as customers' repurchasing of the brand and sticking to that product, has great importance for

the enterprises. Meanwhile, it is a significant goal in the service sector because of the fact that it is an important component for competitive advantage of a company in the long term. As long as the quality of the product and the service remain the same, the customers of the companies created brand loyalty might be less influenced by the marketing activities of rivals.

Customers' expectations develop depending on the physical evidences presented by food and beverage enterprises and satisfaction arises when those expectations are met and so does dissatisfaction when they are not (Cakici et al., 2019). All the consumption activities cannot possibly end with satisfaction for food and beverage enterprises although this is the desired outcome. Satisfaction with the enterprises enables to expand their brand recognition and to pull new customers through positive mouth to mouth marketing.

Muller (1998) suggests three primary factors that have an influence on brand value in the food and beverage industry: the quality of products and service, creating a symbolic and permanent image and execution of service delivery. Muller remarks that food and beverage enterprises can increase their brand loyalty through combining these three elements. Developing a brand which has roots in high level of trust and has a strong brand value is an essential precondition for pulling customers loyal to a brand (Lassar et al., 1995).

Customers do not have any information about the related goods or service before the cognitive process and thus, they do not develop an attitude towards the brand (McMullan & Gilmore, 2003). At this stage, the information related to the qualifications of a brand brings it to the point where it is preferred more than its alternatives (Oliver, 1999; Bowen & Chen, 2001; Yurdakul, 2007). For this reason, McMullan et al. (2003), and Yi and La (2004) reported that cognitive loyalty regarding the profit of a goods or a service shows an increase or decrease depending on the customers' perception of cost and value in creating brand loyalty.

It is only achievable with creating a scenario and transmitting it to the furthest points as possible through various methods and means for enterprises to gain a certain place in the customers' minds and to leave a mark that is to help them to be the first enterprises gaining a place in their minds among the other ones (Kwun & Oh, 2004; Deng et al., 2010; Turkmendag & Hassan, 2018). Brand

loyalty increases when designed brands accommodate to a customer's personality or image; or, when the satisfaction is sustained due to unique benefits the brand provides (Quester & Lim, 2003).

The moderating effect on the relationship between perceived values and brand loyalty is stronger when the acquiring brand is from a higher luxury tier (Chung & Kim, 2019). Perceived quality is also significantly related to brand loyalty (Shanahan & Taylor, 2019; Simsek & Noyan, 2009).

Brand image has a positive impact on food and beverage enterprises brand loyalty (Kurtoğlu & Sönmez, 2016; Uslu & Karabulut, 2019). Brand image constitutes one of the most significant sources of information for the customers in relation to purchasing a product or a service. Factors such as a service provided by the food and beverage enterprises, their locations, menu's variedness, costs, atmosphere, speed of service, food quality, prices and personnel have an impact on the brand loyalty of the enterprises. As the customers gains from the brand increases, the satisfaction is to enhance and therefore, the brand loyalty is to be strengthened. Thereby, enterprises chances to gain customers is to increase when they establish the process of service properly. Thus, enterprises should create a brand image by handling marketing activities as a whole.

Innovation is the source of competitive advantage in terms of loyalty behaviors (intention of repurchase, marketing through word of mouth and disposition of paying more) and formation of customer-based brand value (Dolarslan, 2018). Enterprises can stick in the minds by becoming distinct through innovation in accordance with their brand image.

Shim et al. (2015) in the study verifies that experiencing the state of flow on a brand's website can result in enhanced sensory and affective brand experiences, which leads to enhanced brand loyalty.

Familiar brands are typically mature or established brands which have been in the market for a long time, hence allows for a higher cumulative frequency of brand exposures and a longer history of past usage compared to newer brands (Phua et al., 2020). Brands' benefitting from information processing technologies and forging a bond with their customers on social media provide an advantage

to them (Budak & Tatlı, 2020). Therefore, it might be suggested for the enterprises to have an identity and be active on the internet in order to create a sense of community.

Yapraklı et al. (2017), in their study, it was revealed that the general attitudes of customers towards social responsibility projects have an impact on both brand loyalty and purchasing intentions. Enterprises should attach importance to social responsibility projects in order to be able to advertise their brands and imprint on the memories of the consumers.

Enterprises should recognize the consequences of neglecting their customers negative feedbacks because it may cause a customer to leave and consequently, it might create more damaging effects on brand loyalty (Leckie et al., 2016). Feedback process needs to be managed properly to observe brand loyalty of the enterprises in customer's mind.

Several recent research studies have studied outcomes of brand love, finding brand love positively predicts consumers' brand loyalty for automotive, electronic, food, and social media brands (Loureiro et al., 2012; Machado et al., 2019). Brand love may create a loyalty that eliminates all the risks in the process of constant purchase of the same brand.

It is for the benefit of enterprises to head towards creating brand loyalty in the long term rather than a short one for being afloat in today's condition of competition. Enterprises have been working on developing several strategies for creating and maintaining brand loyalty. Customer-brand identification is a paramount concept for creating a loyal customer base. Preserving the loyalty of the customers is advantageous for the company. Enterprises produce their own loyalty programs to construct loyal customers and so that it becomes probable to retain their presence and attain new customers.

As a result, in order to create brand loyalty, it might be recommended for food and beverage enterprises, to ensure quality standard and certification, receive feedback, employ innovation, perform activities for digital marketing exercises and social responsibility projects, create a substantive brand image, create brand love and brand familiarity, design loyalty programs, consult to scenario

enterprises, provide service quality and notice certain concepts such as customer satisfaction.

Within the scope of this study, the concept of brand loyalty being analyzed can be investigated within a different industry. Additionally, various analysis may be performed through supporting the study with distinctive findings obtained with qualitative methods. The topic being discussed in this study is limited to the concept of brand loyalty in food and beverage enterprises. Further studies can be conducted on variables such as brand personality, brand value, brand trust, brand equation, brand awareness and brand identity.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT
The author(s) declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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