

**THE INFLUENCE OF TRUST ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY AMONG FOOD
COMPANIES IN KENYA**

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Khalayi Rebecca declare that the project titled, The Role of trust in Influencing customer loyalty among food and beverage companies in Kenya is my work and has not been submitted for examination to any other university. This material has not been written or published by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the pivotal role of trust in influencing customer loyalty among food and beverage companies in Kenya. In the highly competitive food and beverage sector, establishing and maintaining customer loyalty is crucial for business sustainability and growth. This research sought to identify the key factors that build trust between consumers and companies and how these factors subsequently affect customer loyalty. A quantitative approach was employed, combining quantitative questionnaires to gather comprehensive data from customers and industry professionals. The study sample included a diverse range of participants from various demographic backgrounds to ensure a holistic understanding of the trust-loyalty relationship. The secondary data findings reveal that trust significantly impacts customer loyalty, with transparency, product quality, consistent customer service, and corporate social responsibility emerging as the most influential factors. Companies that prioritize these elements tend to foster stronger customer relationships and achieve higher loyalty rates. Furthermore, the study highlights the cultural and economic contexts unique to Kenya, providing insights into how local nuances affect consumer perceptions of trust and loyalty. This research contributes to the broader understanding of consumer behavior in emerging markets and offers practical recommendations for businesses aiming to improve customer retention through trust. This study was based on a major theory, The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) which was proposed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in 1975. This theory helps us understand different ways trust influences customer loyalty to food and beverages, especially in Kenya. The study employed a quantitative research methodology to investigate the influence of trust on customer loyalty in food companies in Kenya. This approach involved the collection and analysis of numerical data to quantify the relationship between trust and customer loyalty. Data was collected using structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was designed to measure key constructs such as trust (e.g., reliability, honesty, and competence of the company) and customer loyalty (e.g., repeat purchase behavior, willingness to recommend). The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure validity and reliability before full-scale data collection. Collected data was analyzed using statistical software such as SPSS. This quantitative methodology provided a robust framework for understanding how trust influences customer loyalty in the context of food companies in Kenya, enabling the formulation of evidence-based recommendations for enhancing customer retention strategies.

ABBREVIATIONS

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
KBL	Kenya Breweries Limited
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MSME	Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
EDT	Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory
SET	Social Exchange Theory
B2B	Business to Business
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The trust customers have in a brand or product is critical and it plays a significant role in their purchasing decisions (Kotler, 2016). Understanding trust and its impact on customer loyalty buyer and behavior is crucial for food and beverage companies to develop effective business strategies and to succeed in retaining their customers. Aaker (1996) further discusses how trust is a pivotal element in the relationship between businesses and their customers, influencing purchasing decisions and loyalty to the product, service or brand. In the context of food companies in Kenya, this trust becomes even more crucial due to the unique challenges, customer preferences and dynamics of the local market. The target audience is customers who purchase products and services from any food and beverage shops, supermarkets or restaurants in Nairobi, Kenya and the main issue of discussion is customer loyalty and how it builds trust in those companies. The dependent variable is “Customer Loyalty”. This is because customer loyalty is the outcome that the research aims to explain or predict. The independent variable is “Trust”. Trust is the factor that is presumed to influence or affect customer loyalty.

Over the years, food companies in Kenya have increasingly recognized the critical role of trust in attracting and retaining customers. This has led to a multifaceted approach to building and maintaining customer loyalty. One notable trend is the emphasis on quality assurance and transparency. Companies have invested in stringent quality control measures and openly communicate their adherence to international standards, which has helped in fostering trust among consumers (Nguyen et al., 2019). Additionally, there has been a shift towards embracing corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. By engaging in community support projects and environmental conservation efforts, companies demonstrate their commitment to societal well-being, which positively impacts customer perceptions and loyalty (Kamau, 2021). Another significant trend is the adoption of digital technologies to enhance customer engagement and satisfaction. Many companies have developed mobile apps and robust online platforms that offer convenient services such as home delivery and personalized promotions, thereby strengthening the trust relationship with tech-savvy customers (Ochieng, 2020).

1.1.1 Trust

Mayer and Schoorman (1995) defines consumer trust as the confidence consumers have in a company's products, services, and overall business practices. Customer trust is essential for generating repeat sales, word-of-mouth recommendations, and long-term relationships. Trust reduces the perceived risk of transactions, especially in environments where there might be concerns about product quality, service reliability, and fair business practices (Pavlou, 2003). Trust is built over time through consistent positive interactions and experiences with a brand. It is crucial for fostering long-term relationships and loyalty. Trust influences customer loyalty by enhancing customers' perceived value of products and services, reducing the perceived risks associated with purchasing from lesser-known entities, and increasing overall satisfaction and loyalty (Gefen, 2002). For food companies, building and maintaining trust can lead to a more stable customer base, which is crucial for growth and sustainability.

According to Drost (2011) trust can be broken down into various dimensions namely; reliability, competence, honesty and benevolence. According to the author, reliability is the extent to which measurements are repeatable when different people perform the measurement on different occasion, under different condition, supposedly with alternative instruments which measure the construct or skill. Morgan and Hunt (1994) emphasized that reliability is a crucial component of trust in relationship marketing, particularly in the context of long-term business relationships. They argued that when customers perceive a company as reliable—meaning the company consistently fulfills its promises and commitments—this perception fosters trust.

Reliability, as a dimension of trust, is fundamental because it assures customers that the company will meet their expectations over time, thereby enhancing customer loyalty. Morgan and Hunt's (1994) commitment-trust theory posits that reliable behavior by a company leads to greater customer commitment, which is essential for sustaining long-term loyalty in competitive markets.

Competence is the perceived ability of a company to effectively provide the promised product or service (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Ganesan (1994) highlighted the importance of competence as a key determinant of trust in long-term buyer-seller relationships. He defined competence as the extent to which a party possesses the necessary skills, knowledge, and abilities to perform effectively in a given context. Ganesan (1994) argued that when buyers perceive a seller as competent, they are more likely to trust that the seller can deliver high-quality products or services

and handle transactions effectively. This perception of competence not only strengthens trust but also contributes to the development of a long-term orientation in the relationship, ultimately enhancing the stability and loyalty of the buyer-seller relationship.

Honesty is the company's transparency and truthfulness in its communications and actions. Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) discussed honesty as a critical element of trust in their integrative model of organizational trust. They defined honesty as the perception that a trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable, including truthfulness and sincerity in communications. The authors argued that honesty is foundational for trust because it assures the trustor that the trustee's actions and statements are reliable and transparent. Mayer et al. (1995) emphasized that when an individual or organization is perceived as honest, it reduces uncertainty and vulnerability in the relationship, thereby fostering a stronger and more enduring sense of trust between parties.

Benevolence is the belief that the company has the customer's best interests at heart. McKnight, Cummings, and Chervany (1998) defined benevolence as the extent to which a trustee is believed to have the trustor's best interests at heart, rather than being solely motivated by self-interest. The authors argued that when a trustor perceives a trustee as benevolent, they are more likely to believe that the trustee will act in ways that protect and enhance the trustor's welfare, even when the trustee is not being directly monitored.

Research indicates that trust is a crucial factor in enhancing customer loyalty as it positively impacts perceived value and reduces perceived risks. This relationship is well-documented in various contexts. Trust in a brand or company increases customer satisfaction and loyalty by ensuring consistent quality, security, and reliable service, which reassures customers and encourages repeat business. For this study therefore, trust was measured using reliability, competency, honesty and benevolence.

1.1.2 Customer Loyalty

Kotler (2003) often referred to as the father of modern marketing, defines customer loyalty as a deeply held commitment to re-buy or patronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior. It is often reflected in repeat purchases, positive word-of-mouth, and a higher tolerance for price increases. Loyal customers are valuable because they contribute to a stable revenue stream and are less likely to be swayed by competitors as described in the 4 C's of consumer loyalty which are; captive, contented, convenience-seeker and committed (Rowley, 2005)

According to Camp (2024), there are six types of customer loyalty which include; Emotional loyalty which is rooted in personal connections, creating a strong emotional bond, advocacy loyalty where customers actively endorse and refer the brand, transactional loyalty which is driven by repeat purchases incentivized by rewards, social loyalty which is influenced by social circles and sharing experiences, engagement loyalty which is based on active involvement and interaction with the brand and Behavioral loyalty which is reflected in consistent purchasing actions. Trust is often seen as a precursor to loyalty. Without trust, customers are unlikely to become loyal to a brand. Trust forms the foundation upon which loyalty is built, as it reassures customers that the brand will consistently meet their needs and expectations (Nitin et al., 2023). For this study therefore customer loyalty was measured using word of mouth recommendations, repeat purchases, customer retention rate and customer satisfaction.

1.1.3 Food and Beverage Companies in Kenya

The food industry in Kenya is a significant contributor to the country's economy. It encompasses a wide range of products, including processed foods, beverages, dairy products, and more. The industry is characterized by both large multinational corporations and smaller local enterprises.

Examples of Food and Beverage Companies in Kenya are; Kenya Breweries Limited (KBL) which is a leading brewer in Kenya, known for its brands such as Tusker and Senator, Brookside Dairy Limited which is one of the largest dairy processors in East Africa, providing a range of milk and dairy products, Coca-Cola Beverages Africa which is a major player in the beverage sector, offering products like Coca-Cola, Fanta, and Sprite.

Java House which is a popular coffee house and restaurant chain that has built a strong brand presence in Kenya, Supa-Loaf and Festive bread among others which are major bread and pastry companies in Kenya.

Trust plays a crucial role in the Kenyan food industry or sector. Companies that prioritize quality, transparency, and customer satisfaction tend to build stronger customer loyalty. For example, Brookside Dairy has established trust through its commitment to quality and sustainable sourcing practices. Similarly, Java House has built a loyal customer base by consistently providing high-quality food and beverages in a welcoming environment.

The food sector in Kenya faces significant challenges, particularly concerning trust and performance issues that influence customer loyalty. One major challenge is the prevalence of food safety concerns, which erodes customer trust and undermines loyalty (Wambugu, 2018). Additionally, inconsistent quality and service delivery often result in negative customer experiences, further weakening trust (Mwaura, 2016). The rise of digital commerce introduces complexities in maintaining secure online transactions and protecting consumer data, which are critical for trust (Karami, Rowley, & Heidari-Robinson, 2020). Furthermore, the sector struggles with brand reputation management amidst competitive pressures, where perceived value and prior experiences heavily influence buying behavior (Chernev, Hamilton, & Gal, 2021). Addressing these trust and performance issues is essential for fostering customer loyalty, as trust is a foundational element in the customer-business relationship (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Thus, Kenyan food and beverage companies must prioritize safety, quality, and reliable service to build and maintain consumer trust and loyalty.

Inconsistent product quality in the food and beverage sector in Kenya significantly undermines customer trust, thereby affecting loyalty. Issues such as variations in taste, freshness, and packaging integrity lead to negative customer experiences (Mwaura, 2016). For instance, instances where products like milk or packaged snacks occasionally fail to meet expected standards due to poor handling or storage can result in consumer dissatisfaction and distrust. Moreover, frequent reports of adulterated products and mislabeling exacerbate these concerns, diminishing consumer confidence (Wambugu, 2018). Such quality inconsistencies highlight the urgent need for stringent quality control measures and regulatory enforcement to ensure product reliability, which is crucial for maintaining customer trust and loyalty (Karami, Rowley, & Heidari-Robinson, 2020).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Customer loyalty is fundamental for business success, particularly in the food and beverage industry. In Kenya, where the market is increasingly saturated with numerous players, maintaining customer loyalty has become a significant challenge for companies. Customer loyalty is not only about repeat purchases but also about the emotional and psychological bond that keeps customers committed to a brand that is to say, understanding the dynamics that foster loyalty is crucial for food and beverage companies to thrive in a competitive environment. In the context of food and beverage companies in Kenya, there is a notable gap in understanding the influence of trust on customer loyalty. Additionally, factors such as cultural influences, customer perceptions, and industry trends are greatly considered in analyzing this sector. Food and Beverage companies are very important for Kenya's economy, so it's essential to understand how customer loyalty works for them.

Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasize that when customers trust a brand or product, they are more likely to buy it. The research aims to find out how important customer trust is creating repeat purchases for food and beverage companies in Kenya. Customer loyalty is a critical factor for the success and sustainability of businesses in the food and beverage industry. One of the factors that influence customer loyalty are the platforms that the food and beverage companies use to interact with their customers. Pavlou (2003) discusses how in the digital age, having a secure and user-friendly online presence can enhance trust, as it shows a commitment to protecting customer information and providing convenience. This includes platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Twitter among others. Companies use such platforms to interact with their customers hence boosting sales, through advertising and promotion and providing customer support through after sales services.

This in turn has demonstrated that a significant 74 percent of customers develop a more favorable brand perception after engaging with a company through social media (Cecilia,2023). Other factors that significantly affect customer loyalty in brands are; the quality of products and services, cultural and social factors, transparency and communication and after sales or customer care services among others.

In Kenya, the food and beverage sector is highly competitive, with numerous companies vying for market share. Despite this competition, retaining customers remains a significant challenge.

Companies face issues such as fluctuating customer preferences, increasing customer expectations, and a growing number of alternative options. Understanding the dynamics of customer loyalty, particularly the role of trust, is essential for companies to develop effective strategies that ensure long-term customer retention.

Failing to address the issue of customer loyalty can have several adverse consequences for instance, negative brand image results from bad customer experiences and lack of trust can lead to negative word-of-mouth, damaging the brand's reputation (Hallowell,1996). Loyal customers tend to spend more and make frequent purchases without loyalty, companies face reduced sales and revenue. Companies that cannot maintain a loyal customer base may lose their competitive edge, making it easier for competitors to capture market share. Food and beverage companies may also encounter higher marketing cost because acquiring new customers is often more expensive than retaining existing ones. Companies will incur higher marketing and promotional expenses to attract new customers continually (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

Tarus (2013), carried out a study on the determinants of customer loyalty in Kenya. He emphasizes the role of social pressure being a major factor as well as the moderating role of corporate image. The results indicate that perceived service value, service quality and social pressure were significant predictors of customer loyalty, while customer satisfaction was not significant. Corporate image was found to moderate the relationship between service value, service quality, social pressure and customer loyalty (Tarus, 2013).

The challenges faced by food and beverages in terms of market penetration, customer retention, and competition can be supported or solved by Porter's Five Forces Theory. This theory, developed by Porter (1979), is a framework for analyzing the competitive forces within an industry, which can impact the strategic behavior of firms. By using Porter's Five Forces Theory, we can better understand the strategic challenges faced by food and beverage companies in Kenya and the critical role of consumer trust in navigating these challenges.

For example, the threat of new entrants to a market can increase the level of competition, making it harder for existing food and beverage companies to maintain their market share. In addition, if suppliers have significant power, they can drive up costs, which can be challenging for food and beverage companies with limited financial resources hence affecting their ability to compete on price. For the case of industry rivalry, high levels of competition among existing firms can erode

profits and market share. This competition exists between companies and larger or more established firms and organizations. Building consumer loyalty can mitigate some of these forces by enhancing trust, reducing the impact of competitive rivalry, and increasing the perceived value of the food and beverage company offerings, thereby improving their market position and sustainability.

While considerable research has explored various aspects of customer loyalty, there are notable gaps in understanding the specific role of trust in the context of the Kenyan food and beverage industry, however, this study aims to establish the role of trust in impacting customer loyalty among food and beverage companies in Kenya. Some other possible gaps to be explored are; cultural influences, impact of digital platforms, customer perceptions and industry trends among others.

Cultural differences play a significant role in shaping customer trust and loyalty, yet this area remains underexplored in the context of Kenya's food and beverage industry. According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions' theory, cultural factors such as collectivism versus individualism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance can significantly impact consumer behavior and trust (Hofstede, 2011). In Kenya, where collectivist values prevail, trust may be more closely linked to community perceptions and word-of-mouth recommendations. However, most studies on customer loyalty have been conducted in Western contexts, where individualistic values are more dominant (Jin, Line, & Goh, 2013). This gap highlights the need for research that considers the unique cultural dynamics in Kenya to develop more effective trust-building strategies tailored to local consumer behaviors.

The rise of digital platforms has transformed how businesses interact with customers, yet the specific impact of these platforms on trust and loyalty in Kenya's food and beverage sector is not well-documented. Digital platforms, including social media, e-commerce websites, and mobile applications, provide new avenues for customer engagement and feedback (Grewal, Roggeveen, & Nordfält, 2017). These platforms can enhance trust by facilitating transparent communication and quick resolution of customer issues. However, they can also pose risks if not managed properly, leading to negative reviews and distrust (Pantano & Priporas, 2016). The existing research predominantly focuses on developed markets, leaving a gap in understanding how digital

engagement strategies affect trust and loyalty among Kenyan consumers, who may have different digital literacy levels and trust in online transactions.

Customer perceptions of trustworthiness are critical to loyalty but remain insufficiently explored within the Kenyan context. Trustworthiness is often assessed based on factors like reliability, integrity, and benevolence (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). However, the relative importance of these factors can vary significantly across different markets and cultures. In Kenya, where the informal sector plays a significant role in the economy, perceptions of trust may be influenced by informal networks and community endorsements more than formal marketing efforts (Wanjiru, 2018).

Furthermore, the perception of food safety and quality can profoundly affect trust in the food and beverage industry (De Jonge et al., 2007). The current literature does not sufficiently address how these perceptions specifically impact customer loyalty in Kenya, pointing to a need for more localized studies that take these unique factors into account.

Industry trends, such as the shift towards healthier eating and sustainability, also affect the role of trust in customer loyalty. Globally, consumers are increasingly concerned about the ethical and environmental impacts of their food choices, and these concerns influence their trust in brands (Sirieix, Delanchy, Remaud, Zepeda, & Gurviez, 2013).

In Kenya, these trends are emerging, but their impact on trust and loyalty in the food and beverage sector is not well understood. For instance, how do Kenyan consumers view brands that promote organic products or sustainability practices? Existing studies have not adequately explored these questions, particularly in the context of Kenya's socio-economic environment, where price sensitivity and accessibility may also play crucial roles (Kariuki, 2016). Understanding these trends and their influence on trust can help companies develop strategies that align with evolving consumer values, thereby enhancing loyalty.

1.3 Research Objectives

General Objective

This study sought to determine the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty among food and beverage companies in Kenya.

Research Objectives

- i) To establish the role of reliability satisfaction in influencing customer loyalty within food and beverage companies in Kenya.
- ii) To establish the role of competency in influencing customer loyalty to food and beverage companies in Kenya.
- iii) To determine the role of honesty in influencing customer loyalty in food and beverage companies in Kenya.
- iv) To determine the role of benevolence in influencing customer loyalty in food and beverage companies in Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

- i) What is the role of reliability in influencing customer loyalty in food and beverage companies in Kenya?
- ii) What is the role of competency in influencing customer loyalty to food and beverage companies in Kenya?
- iii) What is the role of honesty in influencing customer loyalty in the food and beverage companies in Kenya?
- iv) What is the role of benevolence in influencing customer loyalty in food and beverage companies in Kenya?

1.5 Significance of the study

Customer trust encompasses confidence in the reliability, quality, and integrity of a company's offerings and practices. In Kenya, food and beverage companies often struggle with establishing and maintaining this trust due to factors such as limited brand recognition, perceived risks associated with product quality, and inconsistent service delivery (Teece, 2018). The competitive landscape, which is characterized by both local food and beverage companies and larger corporations, makes the ability of food and beverage companies to build a loyal customer base somewhat difficult. The problem lies in the fact that without a clear grasp of how consumer trust influences purchasing decisions, food and beverage may continue to face difficulties in achieving sustainable growth and competitive advantage. Trust can reduce perceived transaction risks, encourage repeat purchases, and foster word-of-mouth referrals, all of which are crucial for the survival and expansion of food and beverage companies.

The significance of this study is comprised of its potential to analyze how trust can shape purchasing decisions, enhance customer loyalty, and eventually influence the sustainability and growth of food and beverage companies in a competitive market environment. For instance, customer trust directly affects market penetration for food and beverage companies. In Kenya, where the food industry constitutes approximately 98% of businesses and significantly contribute to employment and GDP (MSME survey, 2016), establishing a trustworthy brand can differentiate a firm from its competitors. For example, a local small enterprise producing organic skincare products can leverage trust by ensuring product quality and transparency. When customer trust that the products are genuinely organic and beneficial, they are more likely to purchase despite potentially higher prices compared to non-organic alternatives. This trust helps food and beverage companies penetrate the market more effectively by building a loyal customer base.

In addition, trust is fundamental in fostering customer loyalty. In Kenya, food companies often operate in sectors where repeat business is crucial for survival and Audretsch (2016) emphasizes this in his book, "The seven Secrets of Germany". Trustworthy businesses can create a sense of reliability and satisfaction among customers, encouraging them to return. For instance, in the hospitality industry e.g. Café Javas, that consistently delivers high-quality services and maintains open communication about booking policies can build strong customer loyalty. When customers

trust that their expectations were met or exceeded, they are more likely to become repeat clients and even advocates for the business, recommending it to others through word-of-mouth (Gefen & Straub, 2004). Additionally, food companies can adopt strategic measures such as enhancing product quality, ensuring excellent customer service, and maintaining consistent communication to build and retain consumer trust (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of this research involves examining how trust influences customer loyalty in the food and beverage sector in Kenya. This study sought to provide valuable insights for business owners and managers, helping them develop strategies to enhance consumer trust and improve their market position. Key aspects of the research include analyzing the factors that contribute to customer trust in food and beverage products and services. Additionally, the study explored the relationship between customer trust and long-term brand commitment, with a focus on both emotional and cognitive factors that foster trust. To understand the competitive dynamics within Kenya's food industry, Porter's Five Forces Theory was utilized. This framework assessed factors such as the threat of new entrants, the bargaining power of buyers, and industry rivalry (Porter, 1980).

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter explores the critical role that trust plays in shaping customer loyalty within the food industry in Kenya. It begins by defining key concepts, including trust, customer loyalty, and the specific dynamics of the Kenyan food market. The chapter then delves into the factors that foster customer trust in food companies, such as product quality, transparency, and ethical business practices. It examines how these factors contribute to a loyal customer base, emphasizing the importance of consistency in delivering quality products and services. The chapter also addresses the four dimensions of trust namely: competence, honesty, benevolence and reliability and their impact on customer loyalty. Emotional trust, rooted in customers' feelings and experiences with a brand, and cognitive trust, based on rational judgments about the brand's reliability, are both analyzed in the context of long-term commitment to food brands. The interplay between these dimensions of trust and their collective influence on customer loyalty is highlighted.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction.

This chapter, is crucial for understanding the role of trust and how it influences Customer loyalty among Food and Beverage Companies in Kenya and how it enables them to develop effective business strategies. It examines theories that relate to this study (literature review), it also identifies knowledge gaps that may emerge from the literature reviewed, analyzes the conceptual framework and explains its importance in the research sector. In Kenya, food and beverage companies constitute a significant part of the economy, therefore, understanding these concepts is highly important in order to be able to navigate the business sector.

2.2 Theoretical foundation

Knowing how trust affects customer loyalty is crucial for food and beverage enterprises in Kenya. This study is based on three main theories that explain how trust impacts consumer decisions. These theories are: The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), and the Social Exchange Theory (SET). Each theory helps us understand different ways trust influences customer loyalty to food and beverages, especially in Kenya.

2.2.1 The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was proposed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in 1975. The Theory of Reasoned Action suggests that a person's behavior is determined by their intention to perform the behavior and that this intention is, in turn, a function of their attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). To explain further, people decide to do something based on their attitudes (how they feel about it) and social pressures (what they think others expect them to do). In simple terms, if consumers trust a firm, they are likely to have a positive attitude towards buying from them. Also, if they hear good things from others about the firm, they feel more pressure to buy. Therefore, trust helps form a positive intention to buy, which influences consumer behavior in favor of food and beverage companies in Kenya. This is the theory that anchors the independent variable which is trust.

2.2.2 The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing

This theory was developed by Morgan and Hunt (1994), highlights that trust and commitment are the fundamental components needed to establish and sustain successful long-term relationships between businesses and customers. Trust refers to the belief that one party can rely on the other to act with fairness, honesty, and in the best interest of the relationship, while commitment reflects a strong intention to continue the relationship.

This theory is particularly relevant to understanding customer loyalty in food companies, where trust in product quality, safety, and ethical practices is vital. In the food industry, particularly in Kenya, trust influences customer loyalty by reducing uncertainty and perceived risks related to the health, safety, and consistency of food products. When customers trust a brand, they are more likely to continue purchasing from it, even when alternatives are available (Morgan & Hunt 1994).

Additionally, trust enhances satisfaction, leads to repeat purchases, and encourages customers to advocate for the brand through word-of-mouth. Thus, the Commitment-Trust Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how trust and commitment drive loyalty in the food sector (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). This theory supports the dependent variable which is customer loyalty.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

In today's evolving world, the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty has become a critical area of study, particularly within the food and beverage industry. This literature review examines previous studies related to consumer behavior, trust development, and the influence of trust on customer loyalty. The insights from these studies provide a foundation for understanding the dynamics of trust and loyalty among food and beverage companies in Kenya.

2.3.1 Reliability and Customer Loyalty

Dewey (1910) proposed the concept of a decision-making process that consumers go through, known as the Five Stages of Decision Making: Problem Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Behavior. Consumer behavior can also be defined as the systematic process by which individuals select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods and services (Kotler, 1960). Maslow (1943) also emphasizes Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and how it influences understanding of consumer motivations by categorizing needs into

physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Understanding consumer behavior is fundamental for firms since they can develop strategies that are tailor made to attract more customers and retain them.

Karami, Rowley and Heidari (2020) carried out this study which was aimed to understand the factors influencing consumer buying behaviors in the digital age. This study was done in the United Kingdom. The population and sampling method used was purposive sampling and the targeted respondents were customers using digital platforms to make purchases. The sample size used was 312 respondents.

In summary the regression analysis was employed to identify significant determinants of online consumer buying behavior. The findings highlighted that convenience, security, and digital trust were crucial factors. This study underscores the importance of digital trust, suggesting that food and beverage companies in Kenya should prioritize secure and convenient online shopping experiences to build trust and foster customer loyalty.

Chernev, Hamilton and Gal (2021) conducted this study with the aim of exploring the role of consumer decision-making processes in buying behavior. This study was done in the United States. The population and sampling Method used was stratified random sampling. The study targeted respondents who were general consumers and the sample size used was 500 respondents.

In a nut shell, cluster analysis revealed that consumer buying decisions are heavily influenced by perceived value, brand reputation, and prior experiences. This study indicates that for food and beverage companies in Kenya, building a strong brand reputation and ensuring positive customer experiences are vital for developing trust and encouraging repeat purchases.

Mukherjee and Nath (2007) conducted this research study to understand how trust is built between consumers and e-commerce businesses. It was carried out in India and the population and sampling method used was simple random sampling. The targeted audience was online shoppers and the sample size was 270 respondents.

The data analysis identified website quality, customer service, and previous purchase experience as significant contributors to trust in e-commerce businesses. For food and beverage companies in Kenya, enhancing website quality and providing excellent customer service are essential strategies for building trust and securing customer loyalty.

Morgan and Hunt (1994) explored the relationship between trust and commitment in marketing. It took place in the United States and the study focused on consumers involved in relational exchanges, using random sampling. The respondents were Consumers involved in relational exchanges and the sample size was 200 respondents.

The data analysis concludes that regression analysis revealed that trust and commitment are essential in fostering strong marketing relationships, leading to positive consumer behaviors. This study highlights the significance of trust and commitment in marketing, suggesting that food and beverage companies in Kenya should cultivate strong, trust-based relationships with their customers to enhance loyalty.

Lee and Turban (2002) explored factors influencing consumer trust in Internet shopping. It was carried out in the United States. The population study targeted Internet shoppers, using random sampling. The sample size was 250 respondents. The researchers used multiple regression analysis. They concluded that perceived security, privacy, and familiarity with the online vendor were crucial in building consumer trust.

2.3.2 Competency and customer Loyalty

Ndubisi (2006) in Malaysia aimed to investigate the role of competency in relationship marketing and its impact on customer loyalty. The study targeted SME customers using a convenience sampling method. A total of 220 SME customers participated in the study. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM), revealing that competency, along with trust, commitment, communication, and conflict handling, significantly influenced customer loyalty.

In a study by Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) in the United states. The authors aimed to explore the relationship between service quality, competency, and customer loyalty in the context of service industries. The study involved a population of service consumers, selected through random sampling. The study included 360 respondents, and data were analyzed using regression analysis. Results indicated that perceived competency of service providers was a critical determinant of service quality, which in turn, significantly affected customer loyalty.

Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol (2002) in the United states examined the antecedents of customer trust and loyalty, focusing on the competency of service providers. This study was conducted with the aim of targeting airline and retail customers through stratified random sampling. With a sample

size of 275 respondents, the study used path analysis for data examination. The findings highlighted that service provider competency directly enhanced customer trust, leading to higher levels of customer loyalty.

In a study by Hennig-Thurau (2004), the author aimed to understand the drivers of customer loyalty in the service industry, emphasizing the role of employee competency. The study was conducted in Germany and targeted service consumers through a systematic sampling method. The sample size consisted of 320 respondents. Data were analyzed using regression analysis, showing that employee competency was a crucial factor in enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Wong and Sohal (2002) in Australia explored the impact of service provider competency on customer loyalty in the retail sector. The study was targeting retail customers through random sampling. A total of 240 respondents participated in the study. Data analysis was performed using factor analysis, revealing that perceived competency of service providers significantly influenced customer perceptions of service quality, which in turn affected their loyalty to the retail brand.

A study by Morgan and Hunt (1994) in the United States of America aimed to investigate the relationship between competency, trust, and loyalty in marketing. The study focused on consumers involved in relational exchanges using random sampling. With a sample size of 200 respondents, data were analyzed using regression analysis. The results indicated that competency and trust were essential components in fostering strong marketing relationships, ultimately leading to enhanced customer loyalty.

2.3.3 Honesty and customer Loyalty

In the study by Chenet, Tynan, and Money (2000) in the United Kingdom, the aim was to analyze how honesty impacts customer loyalty in business-to-business (B2B) relationships. Conducted in the United Kingdom, the study focused on B2B clients using purposive sampling. The sample size consisted of 150 respondents. Data analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM) revealed that honesty was a significant predictor of trust and loyalty in B2B relationships. The study's finding that honesty is a significant predictor of trust and loyalty is directly relevant, as trust and loyalty are key concerns in both B2B and B2C relationships. Understanding how honesty drives trust in B2B relationships can help inform your exploration of trust in food and beverage

companies in Kenya, where customer relationships might differ but the underlying principles of trust may remain similar.

Gurviez and Korchia (2003) in France investigated the relationship between brand honesty and customer loyalty in the context of consumer goods. They targeted consumers through a systematic sampling method. The sample size included 300 respondents. Data were analyzed using regression analysis, showing that brand honesty significantly influenced consumer trust and loyalty. The finding that brand honesty significantly influences trust and loyalty is pertinent to this study. It highlights the potential for honesty as a critical factor in trust-building. The research provides a basis for considering how food brands in Kenya can leverage honesty to foster customer loyalty in a local context, where ethical and transparent practices are increasingly valued by consumers.

Nguyen, Leclerc, and LeBlanc (2013) in Canada examined the role of honesty in service recovery and its impact on customer loyalty. The study was targeting service industry customers who had experienced service failures, using convenience sampling. A total of 250 respondents participated in the study. Data analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM) indicated that honesty during service recovery significantly improved customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study's findings that honesty during service recovery enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty provide a useful framework for considering how food companies in Kenya can manage trust when things go wrong. Given the importance of transparency and rectification in the food industry (e.g., handling food complaints or safety issues), this study underlines the role of honest communication in maintaining customer trust and loyalty.

Doney and Cannon (1997) in the United States explored the impact of vendor honesty on customer loyalty in the B2B context. The study was conducted in the United States, targeting industrial buyers through random sampling. A total of 212 respondents participated in the study. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. Results showed that vendor honesty was a critical determinant of trust and commitment, which in turn significantly influenced customer loyalty. Despite the focus on B2B, the study provides insights into how honesty can build trust and commitment, which are essential for customer loyalty in any context. The emphasis on honesty as a determinant of trust can help you explore how similar principles apply in B2C relationships in Kenya's food and beverage sector, where consumer trust can significantly influence brand loyalty.

Kassim and Abdullah (2010) in Malaysia aimed to examine the impact of honesty on customer loyalty in the banking sector. Conducted in Malaysia, the study targeted banking customers using a convenience sampling method. A total of 210 respondents participated in the study. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM), revealing that honesty, along with service quality and trust, significantly influenced customer loyalty.

2.3.4 Benevolence and Customer Loyalty

Ganesan (1994) investigated the role of benevolence in long-term buyer-seller relationships in the United States. The study targeted retail buyers using a random sampling method, with a sample size of 202 respondents. Data were analyzed using regression analysis, showing that supplier benevolence was crucial in building trust and long-term commitment, which significantly influenced customer loyalty.

Johnson and Grayson (2005) in Canada aimed to understand the influence of benevolence on trust and loyalty in service relationships. The study was targeting service industry customers through a convenience sampling method. The sample included 250 respondents. Data analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM) indicated that perceived benevolence of service providers significantly enhanced trust, leading to increased customer loyalty.

Garbarino and Johnson (1999) in the United States examined the impact of benevolence on customer trust and loyalty in the financial services sector. The study was targeting financial services customers using random sampling. The sample included 235 respondents. Data analysis was performed using structural equation modeling (SEM), revealing that perceived benevolence of financial advisors significantly influenced customer trust and loyalty.

Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) in Canada aimed to understand the role of benevolence in the development of trust in close relationships. The study was focusing on couples in romantic relationships using a convenience sampling method. The sample included 180 couples. Data analysis was conducted using path analysis, demonstrating that perceived benevolence significantly contributed to trust development, which is crucial for relationship satisfaction and stability.

Morgan and Hunt (1994) in the United States investigated the relationship between benevolence, trust, and customer loyalty in marketing. The study focused on consumers involved in relational exchanges using random sampling. The sample size comprised 200 respondents. Data were analyzed using regression analysis, and the results showed that benevolence and trust were essential components in fostering strong marketing relationships, ultimately leading to enhanced customer loyalty.

2.4 Summary of Knowledge gaps

Despite extensive research on the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty, significant gaps remain, particularly within the context of the Kenyan food and beverage industry. Most existing studies focus on markets in North America, Europe, and Asia, often overlooking the unique socio-economic and cultural dynamics in Kenya (Ndubisi, 2007), (Ranaweera & Prabhu, 2003). This geographical limitation restricts the applicability of global research findings to the Kenyan market, where consumer behavior and trust-building mechanisms may differ due to local market conditions.

Another major gap is the lack of attention to how market saturation and intense competition affect consumer trust and loyalty in the food and beverage sector. As the Kenyan market becomes increasingly saturated, with numerous players competing for consumer attention, companies face greater challenges in maintaining customer loyalty. Research has typically focused on industries such as retail, banking, and services (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), but the specific characteristics of the food and beverage sector—such as issues of food safety, transparency, and ethical sourcing—require a more tailored approach to understanding how trust operates in this industry.

Moreover, existing studies often fail to explore how competition and consumer skepticism influence trust and loyalty. In a crowded market, consumers are frequently presented with a wide array of alternatives, which can erode brand loyalty as skepticism about the authenticity and reliability of brands grows (Ndubisi, 2007). Understanding how companies can build and sustain trust in this competitive environment is critical, yet under-researched.

Additionally, there is a gap in comprehensive models of trust that consider multiple dimensions, including brand trust, interpersonal trust, and supply chain trust. Current research often focuses on one aspect of trust without integrating these various dimensions, particularly in industries like

food and beverage where the trustworthiness of the supply chain can be as crucial as brand perception (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Ganesan, 1994). More holistic models are needed to fully capture the dynamics of trust in fostering long-term customer loyalty in the Kenyan context.

By addressing these gaps, future research can provide more nuanced insights into how trust operates within Kenya's food and beverage industry, particularly in an increasingly competitive and saturated market. Such research would offer practical strategies for companies aiming to differentiate themselves and build lasting customer relationships based on trust.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

According to Osenton (2004) framework, customer trust considerably increases client loyalty, which includes recurring business, word-of-mouth, and customer retention. However, because there are so many options available in a market with fierce competition, trust and loyalty may become weaker. The relationship between trust and customer loyalty has been widely studied in various industries, including the food and beverage sector. In the context of Kenya, this relationship is crucial given the competitive market and the significant role of customer retention in business sustainability.

Trust as an Independent Variable is the belief that a company will act in the customer's best interest, which is built through consistent, honest, and transparent interactions. Trust can be broken down into several key dimensions namely, reliability which is the consistency of the company's performance and delivery on promises (Morgan, 1994), honesty which is the company's truthfulness and fairness in its dealings (Doney, 1997) and transparency which is the openness of the company's operations and policies (Gefen, 2002). Competence which is the company's ability to meet customer expectations effectively (Moorman, Deshpande, & Zaltman, 1993). Customer Loyalty as a Dependent Variable reflects the likelihood of customers continuing to purchase from a company and recommending it to others. It includes factors like; Repeat purchase behavior which is the frequency with which customers return to buy products (Dick & Basu, 1994). Recommendation which is the likelihood of customers recommending the company to others (Reichheld, 2003). Customer Satisfaction which is the overall contentment of the customer with the company's products and services (Oliver, 1999). Retention rate which is the percentage of customers who remain loyal over time (Reichheld & Scheffer, 2000).

Independent Variable

Trust

Dependent Variable

Customer Loyalty

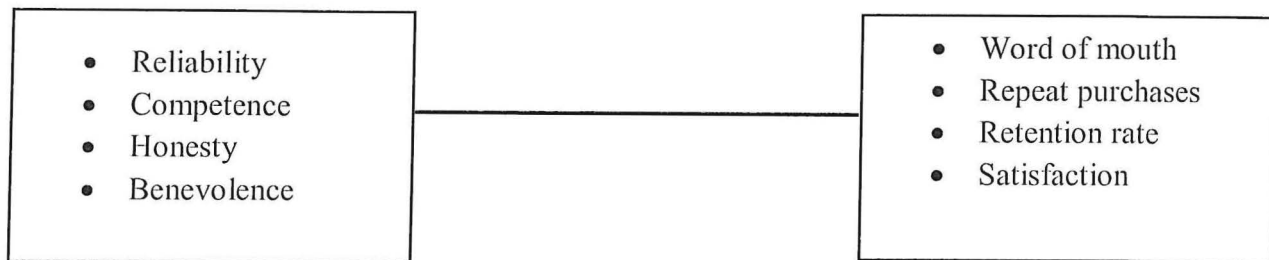


Figure 2.5 1 Conceptual Framework

Table 2.5 1 Conceptual Framework

VARIABLE	DIMENSION	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	MEASUREMENT SCALE/ METHOD
Trust	Reliability	Perception of the company's consistency in delivering promised services	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale
	Honesty	Perception of the company's honesty in its dealings	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale
	Benevolence	Perception of the company's kindness	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale
	Competence	Perception of the company's ability to perform effectively	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale
Customer loyalty	Repeat purchase behavior	Frequency of customers making repeat purchases	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale

	Satisfaction	Overall customer satisfaction	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale
	Retention rate	Percentage of customers retained over a period	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale
	Recommendation	Likelihood of customers recommending the company.	Survey/Questionnaire Likert Scale

(Researcher, 2024)

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter explores the existing literature on the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty, with a particular focus on the food and beverage industry. The review begins by defining trust and customer loyalty, drawing on various academic sources to clarify how these concepts are interrelated. Trust is examined in different forms, including the operationalization of the four dimensions of trust and customer loyalty, highlighting their significance in shaping customer perceptions and loyalty. The review also highlights the role of market saturation and competition in eroding consumer trust and loyalty, pointing to the need for further research on how Kenyan food companies can build and sustain trust in a crowded marketplace. The chapter concludes by summarizing the knowledge gaps in the current literature and outlining how this study addresses those gaps by exploring the dynamics of trust and loyalty specifically within the Kenyan context.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section deals with the population, sampling and data collection methods in order to collect information and analyze and present results. Understanding what retains customers' loyalty to a brand is crucial for commercial success in the dynamic and competitive food and beverage sector. In the interaction between consumers and businesses, trust is essential. It has a significant impact on customer behavior and preferences. The impact of trust on consumer loyalty in Kenya's food and beverage industry was examined in this research study. To guarantee that the study's findings are accurate and trustworthy, a precise and well-structured plan must be in place for choosing the study population and samples.

3.2 The Research Design

This research employed a descriptive methodological design. The descriptive approach is suitable because it aims to describe the characteristics of a specific phenomenon—trust in this case—and its influence on customer loyalty within the food and beverage industry in Kenya.

The purpose of this study is to examine how trust affects customer loyalty in the food and beverage sector in Kenya. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the key trust-related factors that influence customer loyalty, understand the relationship between trust and loyalty, and provide insights that food and beverage companies can use to enhance customer retention.

The study was carried out in Nairobi, Kenya, where a significant number of food and beverage companies are located. The research is expected to span a period of six months, from initial planning and data collection to analysis and reporting.

In this particular study, quantitative data was collected. Quantitative data was gathered through structured questionnaires that measured trust and customer loyalty variables on a Likert scale. The data was sourced from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected directly from customers of various food and beverage companies in Nairobi through surveys and interviews. Secondary data was obtained from company records, industry reports, and academic literature to provide context and support the primary data findings.

The sample units included customers of food and beverage companies in Nairobi. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across different types of food and beverage establishments (e.g., restaurants, cafes, fast food outlets). Approximately 200 respondents were targeted to achieve a representative sample. Respondents can contact the researcher for any queries or further information via email or phone. Contact details was provided on the consent form and survey documents to ensure easy accessibility.

3.3 Population

Kenyan consumers of food and beverage goods in Nairobi make up the study's population. This is a diversified population that includes people from a range of demographic backgrounds, such as age groups, income brackets, educational backgrounds, and geographic regions of the nation. Studying around 10-15 different companies within Nairobi ensured a balanced representation of various business sizes and types, capturing a wide range of customer trust and loyalty dynamics.

To effectively study the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty in food and beverage companies in Kenya, it's crucial to carefully select the respondents and determine their number. Using a sample is often more feasible. A stratified random sampling method is the most suitable, as it ensures that various segments of the population, such as different age groups, income levels, and geographical areas, are adequately represented. The sample size should be large enough to provide reliable results and to account for diversity and ensure statistical significance.

Stratified sampling involves dividing the population into distinct subgroups or strata based on specific characteristics, such as age, income, education, or geographic location. From each stratum, a random sample is drawn, ensuring that each subgroup is adequately represented in the final sample. For instance, the population can be stratified into age groups (e.g., 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46 and above) and geographic regions (e.g., urban, semi-urban, rural). Random samples from each stratum were then collected, ensuring that the sample reflects the demographic diversity of the overall population.

3.4 Sampling

This sampling plan outlines the approach for selecting participants in the study on the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty among food companies in Kenya. The goal is to obtain a representative sample that reflects the diversity of Kenya's food and beverage industry while ensuring that relevant customer segments are adequately covered. The sampling method chosen for this study is stratified random sampling, which allows for greater precision and representativeness across different strata within the target population.

The target population for this study includes customers of food and beverage companies in Kenya who purchase products from both local and international brands. These customers may frequent retail outlets, supermarkets, or buy products online, and they are representative of diverse geographical locations, socio-economic backgrounds, and age groups within Kenya. This population is particularly relevant as it reflects the current consumer base that interacts with various food companies and faces the choice of remaining loyal or switching to competitors.

To capture a comprehensive view of trust and customer loyalty across different segments the stratification criteria was divided into strata based on the following factors: Geographical location. Given that customer trust and loyalty might differ between the several urban areas (counties) the study stratified the population by considering the customers in Nairobi. Socio-economic status. Income levels and purchasing power influence consumer behavior were also included, so stratification also accounts for low-income, middle-income, and high-income groups. Type of food and beverage company. Since customer loyalty may vary depending on the type of company, strata included local Kenyan brands and international brands operating in Kenya.

Purchase platforms. Customers who shop through brick-and-mortar stores (retail outlets, supermarkets) and those who use digital platforms (e-commerce) may exhibit different loyalty behaviors, and this distinction was also used for stratification. Age. Consumer behavior and trust dynamics can vary across age groups, so stratification by age groups (e.g., 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46 and above) ensured representation of different generational cohorts.

The stratified random sampling process was carried out as follows:

Identify strata. Using the stratification criteria (geography, socio-economic status, type of company, purchase platform, and age), the target population was divided into distinct strata. For example, customers in Nairobi was divided by socio-economic status and further by the type of company they purchase from.

Proportional allocation. The sample size within each stratum was determined based on the proportion of the population within that stratum. For example, if 40% of the food and beverage customers in Kenya reside in Nairobi, then 40% of the total sample was drawn from Nairobi.

Random sampling within strata. Once the strata are established, a simple random sampling method was applied within each stratum to select respondents. This ensures that each individual within a stratum has an equal chance of being selected, which minimizes bias.

Data collection. Data was collected through structured questionnaires, distributed either physically in retail outlets or online through e-commerce platforms. Efforts was made to ensure a high response rate, and follow-up procedures was employed to gather responses from initially non-responding participants.

Inclusion Criteria: Customers aged 18 and above who have purchased food and beverage products in Kenya within the last 6 months. Customers who have purchased products from both local and international food companies, either in retail stores or online.

Exclusion Criteria: Individuals below 18 years of age. Customers who have not made any food and beverage purchases in the last 6 months. Individuals working directly in the food and beverage industry, as their responses may be biased.

The sampling plan for this study leveraged stratified random sampling to ensure a representative and diverse sample of customers in Kenya's food and beverage sector. By capturing the perspectives of various customer segments, the study provided comprehensive insights into the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty in an increasingly competitive and saturated market. This sampling method contributed to the reliability and generalizability of the study's findings.

3.5 Data collection methods

In investigating the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty in food and beverage companies in Kenya, quantitative data was employed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena. Quantitative data was collected using structured questionnaires, which incorporated Likert scale items to measure the levels of trust and customer loyalty. This approach allows for the quantification of customer perceptions and the establishment of statistical relationships between trust and loyalty (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Primary data sources include direct responses from customers of food and beverage companies in Nairobi. A stratified random sampling technique ensured diverse representation across different types of establishments, such as restaurants, cafes, and fast food outlets. Approximately 200 customers were surveyed to obtain a representative sample.

Secondary data sources consisted of company records, industry reports, and existing academic literature. These sources provided contextual background and support the primary data findings, offering a broader perspective on trust and customer loyalty in the food and beverage industry (Yin, 2018).

This study made use of quantitative data to measure the influence of trust on customer loyalty in the food and beverage sector in Kenya. The data was collected through the use of structured questionnaires designed to capture respondents' perceptions of trust and loyalty using a Likert scale. Below is a detailed description of the data to be collected, the questionnaire design, and the data collection process. The study focused on collecting quantitative data related to the following variables:

Trust (Independent Variable): Trust was measured through specific dimensions such as reliability, competence, honesty and benevolence. The questions assessed how much customers trust the food and beverage companies they engage with. **Customer Loyalty (Dependent Variable):** Customer loyalty was measured in terms of repeat purchases, retention rate, willingness to recommend, and customer satisfaction. These indicators quantified how loyal customers are to specific food and beverage brands or companies. Both trust and customer loyalty was captured using Likert scale items, allowing respondents to express their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements.

Online Distribution of the questionnaire was conducted to capture responses from customers who engage in e-commerce or digital transactions, the questionnaire was also distributed through online survey platforms (e.g., Google Forms). Links to the questionnaire was shared via email and social media channels, targeting customers who may not frequent physical retail outlets.

The structured questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The Likert scale is ideal for measuring the intensity of respondents' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions, making it well-suited for assessing trust and loyalty.

The questionnaire included the following sections that is: Section A which contains the demographic Information. This section collected data on respondent characteristics such as age, gender, location, income level, and type of food and beverage company they interact with (local or international).

Section B measured various aspects of trust in the food companies that is to say customer perceptions on how trustworthy the food companies are. Sample questions include: I believe this food company is transparent in its operations, I trust the quality of products from this food company and this company delivers on its promises consistently or I feel confident in the safety of the products from this company among others.

Section C captured Loyalty behaviors and attitudes. Sample questions include: I regularly purchase products from this company, I am likely to continue buying from this company even if competitors offer lower prices, I would recommend this company's products to friends and family and I prefer this company over others in the same category among others.

3.6 Data Analysis

The analysis of data for the study on the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty in food and beverage companies in Kenya involved quantitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the findings.

For the quantitative data, collected through structured questionnaires, statistical analysis was conducted using software such as SPSS or R. Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, and percentages, was used to summarize the data and provide an overview of the levels of trust and customer loyalty. Inferential statistics, such as Pearson correlation and regression analysis, was employed to test the hypotheses and determine the strength and direction of the relationship between trust and customer loyalty (Field, 2018). These analyses helped identify the key trust-related factors that significantly influence customer loyalty and quantify the impact of trust on loyalty behaviors.

3.6.1 Data Preparation

Before conducting any statistical analysis, the collected data must be prepared:

Data Cleaning. The data set was reviewed to ensure completeness and accuracy. Incomplete responses (e.g., missing values) and inconsistencies were identified and handled appropriately, such as through imputation (replacing missing data with estimated values).

Data Coding. Responses from the Likert-scale questionnaire were coded into numerical values (e.g., 1 for "Strongly Disagree" to 5 for "Strongly Agree"). Each questionnaire item related to trust and customer loyalty had a numerical value assigned for further analysis.

Data Entry. The cleaned and coded data was entered into statistical software such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), Excel, or R for analysis.

3.6.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the basic characteristics of the data. This step provides an overview of the respondents' demographics and their perceptions of trust and loyalty.

Frequency Distribution. This showed the number of respondents in each category for demographic variables (e.g., age, income, and geographical location) and for responses to trust and loyalty items.

Measures of Central Tendency. Mean, median, and mode was calculated for the Likert-scale responses related to trust and customer loyalty. These measures provided insights into the average levels of trust and loyalty among customers.

Measures of Dispersion. Standard deviation and variance was used to measure how spread out the responses are around the mean, helping to understand the variability in customer perceptions of trust and loyalty.

3.6.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was used to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between trust and customer loyalty. The correlation coefficient, Pearson's r , was calculated to quantify the linear relationship between the two variables.

Interpretation of Pearson's r :

A value of +1 indicates a perfect positive correlation.

A value of 0 indicates no correlation.

A value of -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation.

The aim of this analysis is to determine whether an increase in trust is associated with an increase in customer loyalty, and if so, how strong this relationship is.

Regression Analysis was used to further investigate the causal relationship between trust and customer loyalty, multiple regression analysis was conducted. This helped to quantify the influence of trust (independent variable) on customer loyalty (dependent variable) and control for other factors.

Simple Linear Regression. First, a simple linear regression model was run to determine whether trust significantly predicts customer loyalty. The equation for this model is:

$$\text{Loyalty} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Trust}) + c$$

Where:

- Loyalty is the dependent variable (customer loyalty).
- β_0 is the intercept.
- β_1 is the coefficient of trust, indicating how much a unit change in trust affects loyalty.
- ϵ is the error term.

3.6.4 Hypothesis Testing

The study's hypothesis was tested using statistical tests.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): Trust has no significant influence on customer loyalty among food companies in Kenya. Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): Trust has a significant influence on customer loyalty among food companies in Kenya. The significance level (p-value) was set at 0.05. If the p-value for trust is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that trust significantly influences customer loyalty.

3.6.5 Interpretation of Results

The results from the correlation and regression analyses was interpreted to determine:

Whether there is a positive or negative relationship between trust and customer loyalty. The strength of the relationship between trust and loyalty (based on Pearson's r and regression coefficients). The statistical significance of the relationship (based on the p-value). These findings provided insights into how strongly trust influences loyalty and whether the relationship is statistically significant.

3.6.6 Conclusion and Reporting

After completing the analysis, the findings were summarized and reported. The report included: Descriptive statistics for trust and loyalty. Correlation and regression results showing the relationship between trust and customer loyalty. Hypothesis testing outcomes, indicating whether trust significantly impacts customer loyalty.

Graphs and tables to visually represent the data (e.g., scatter plots for correlation, bar charts for descriptive statistics).

3.7 Ethical Issues in Research

Ethical considerations in this research study are paramount to ensure the protection of participants and the integrity of the research process. These are some of the practices that I must be follow during and after the data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participants was provided with a consent form outlining the purpose of the study, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Confidentiality and anonymity was assured. Ethical approval was sought from a recognized institutional review board.

Informed permission forms was collected from each responder before any data collection starts. Participants was fully informed about the purpose of the study, their rights as participants, and the voluntary nature of their participation.

Confidentiality and Anonymity measures was put in place. Measures was taken to safeguard the confidentiality of participants' responses. Data was made anonymous and kept securely with access.

Findings was reported accurately and transparently, ensuring that interpretations are grounded in the data collected. Any conflicts of interest or biases was disclosed to maintain research integrity.

Given the diverse cultural landscape in Kenya, I was mindful of cultural norms and sensitivities when formulating research questions, interpreting findings, and disseminating results to avoid offending the participants.

By adhering to these ethical guidelines, the study aims to uphold the rights and well-being of participants while producing valid and reliable insights into the complex relationship between trust and customer loyalty in Kenya's food and beverage industry.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty among food and beverage companies in Kenya. The purpose of this research was to investigate how trust factors, such as reliability, honesty, benevolence and competence, impact customer retention and loyalty among food companies. The data collected from respondents was analyzed to identify patterns, correlations, and insights that portray the dynamics of trust and its contribution to building long-term relationships between food companies and their customers.

4.2 Response Rate

The study targeted a total of 200 respondents drawn from customers of food and beverage companies in Kenya. Out of the targeted population, 117 participants completed and returned the survey, representing a response rate of 58.5%. While the response rate falls short of the targeted 100%, it is sufficient for analysis as it meets the acceptable threshold for survey-based research. The achieved response rate provides a reliable sample size to draw meaningful insights and conclusions about the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty in the food and beverage industry.

Table 4.2.2 Response Rate

Targeted Sample Size	Actual Responses	Response Rate
200	117	58.5%

Source: Primary Data (2024)

4.3 Demographic Analysis

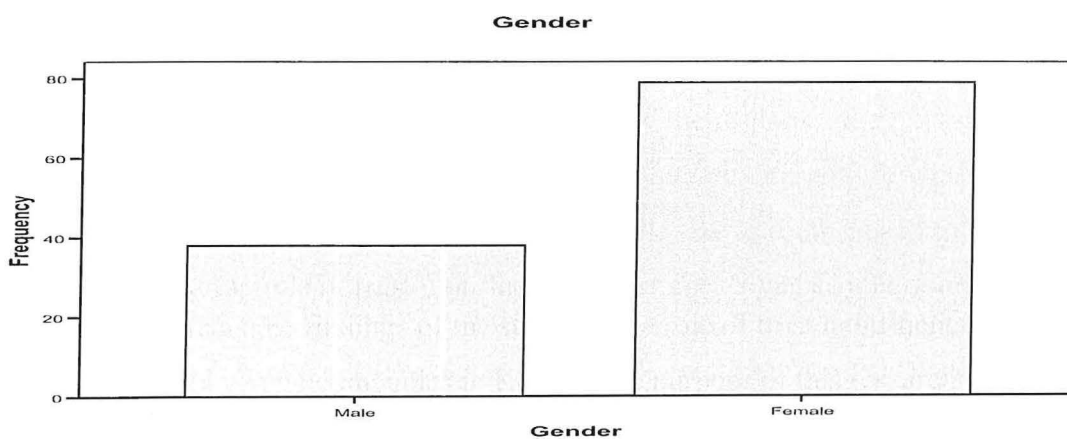
4.3.1 Gender Distribution

The study's findings on gender distribution indicate that the majority of the respondents were female, accounting for 67.5% of the total participants. Male respondents made up 32.5% of the sample. This distribution reflects a greater representation of female participants in the study, which may suggest that women constitute a significant proportion of the customer base in the food and beverage industry in Kenya. The balanced inclusion of both genders provides a diverse perspective, ensuring that the findings on the role of trust in influencing customer loyalty capture insights from both male and female customers.

Table 4.3.3 Gender distribution

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	38	32.5	32.5	32.5
	Female	79	67.5	67.5	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Graph 4.3.1 Gender distribution



Source: Researcher (2024)

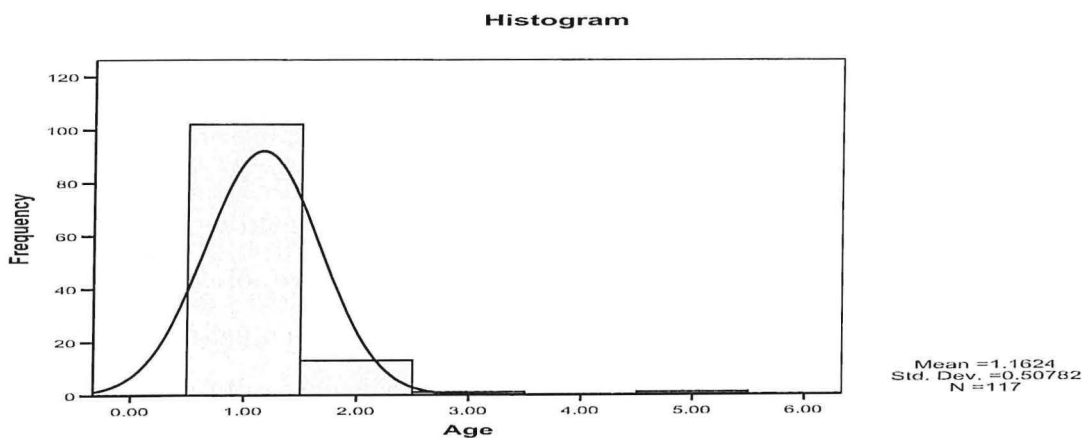
4.3.2 Age of the Respondents

The age distribution of respondents indicates that the majority, 87.2%, were between 18 and 24 years old, highlighting that younger individuals are the predominant customers in the food and beverage industry in Kenya. A smaller proportion, 11.1%, were aged 25 to 34, while respondents aged 35 to 44 and 55 and above each accounted for only 0.9% of the total sample. These findings suggest that the industry’s customer base is heavily skewed toward younger age groups, particularly those in the 18–24 category, potentially pointing to their active engagement with food and beverage products and services. This age distribution provides valuable insights into customer loyalty dynamics among a predominantly youthful demographic.

Table 4.3.2.4 Age Distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-24	102	87.2	87.2	87.2
25-34	13	11.1	11.1	98.3
35-44	1	.9	.9	99.1
55 and above	1	.9	.9	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Histogram 4.3.2 Age distribution



Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.3 Level of Education

The findings on the level of education among respondents reveal that the majority, 77.8%, held an undergraduate qualification. This was followed by 9.4% who had attained a postgraduate degree, and 8.5% who had completed a diploma. A small proportion, 4.3%, reported having secondary-level education. These results suggest that the customer base for food and beverage companies in Kenya is predominantly well-educated, with a significant portion holding higher education qualifications. This high level of educational attainment among respondents may influence their perceptions of trust in food companies since they have a lot of knowledge and awareness on what food companies should provide (Basic standards) for customers. Aside from that factor, highly educated people have the ability to keep track of the current or ongoing trends within the food industry hence influencing their perceptions on trust in food companies.

Table 4.3.3.5 Level of education

Level of education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Secondary	5	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Diploma	10	8.5	8.5	12.8
	Undergraduate	91	77.8	77.8	90.6
	Postgraduate	11	9.4	9.4	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.4 Occupation

The study's findings on the occupation of respondents indicate that the majority, 70.9%, were students, reflecting a strong representation of younger individuals actively pursuing education. Respondents who were employed constituted 17.9%, while 6.0% identified as self-employed. A smaller proportion, 1.7%, were unemployed, and 3.4% fell under the "Other" category. These results highlight that the food and beverage industry in Kenya is heavily patronized by students, suggesting that this demographic plays a critical role in shaping customer loyalty trends.

Table 4.3.4.6 Occupation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Student	83	70.9	70.9	70.9
Employed	21	17.9	17.9	88.9
Self employed	7	6.0	6.0	94.9
Unemployed	2	1.7	1.7	96.6
Other	4	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

4.3.5 Monthly Income of the Respondents

The findings on the monthly income of respondents reveal a varied distribution. A significant portion, 28.2%, reported earning between 20,000–50,000 KES, while an equal percentage 28.2%, indicated having no income, likely reflecting the large number of students in the sample. Respondents earning below 20,000 KES accounted for 27.4%, followed by 8.5% earning between 50,000–100,000 KES, and 7.7% earning above 100,000 KES. These results suggest that the customer base for food and beverage companies in Kenya consists primarily of individuals in the lower to middle-income brackets, with a notable presence of non-earning individuals, which correlates with the high proportion of students in the sample. This income distribution provides critical insights into purchasing power and trust dynamics across diverse economic groups.

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 4.3.5.7 Monthly Income

Monthly income

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid below 20,000 kes	32	27.4	27.4	27.4
20,000-50,000 kes	33	28.2	28.2	55.6
50,000-100,000 kes	10	8.5	8.5	64.1
Above 100,000 kes	9	7.7	7.7	71.8
None	33	28.2	28.2	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

4.4 Descriptive analysis.

Trust

This section aims to assess the perception that customers had on the four dimensions of trust which are; Reliability, competence, honesty and benevolence. Using a Likert scale, the following statement was used to determine the respondent's perspectives.

4.4.1 Reliability

Table 4.4.8 Reliability

Food companies are reliable in terms of product availability

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	4	3.4	3.4	3.4
Disagree	7	6.0	6.0	9.4
Neutral	27	23.1	23.1	32.5
Agree	59	50.4	50.4	82.9
Strongly Agree	20	17.1	17.1	100.0
Total				
	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings reveal that a majority of respondents perceive food and beverage companies in Kenya as reliable in terms of product availability. Specifically, 50.4% agreed with the statement, while 17.1% strongly agreed, indicating that over two-thirds of the respondents (67.5%) view these companies as dependable in ensuring products are consistently available. Meanwhile, 23.1% were neutral, suggesting some level of indifference or variability in their experiences. A smaller proportion expressed dissatisfaction, with 6.0% disagreeing and 3.4% strongly disagreeing. These results suggest that while most customers find food and beverage companies reliable in maintaining product availability, a notable minority either remain unsure or have had less satisfactory experiences.

4.4.2 Competence

Table 4.4.2.9 Competence

I trust that food companies in Kenya comply with health and safety standards

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	4	3.4	3.4	3.4
Disagree	7	6.0	6.0	9.4
Neutral	43	36.8	36.8	46.2
Agree	52	44.4	44.4	90.6
Strongly Agree	11	9.4	9.4	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that a significant proportion of respondents trust that food companies in Kenya comply with health and safety standards. A total of 44.4% (n=52) agreed with the statement, while 9.4% (n=11) strongly agreed, making up a combined 53.8% of respondents who expressed confidence in compliance with these standards. However, 36.8% (n=43) were neutral, suggesting that a considerable number of respondents are uncertain or lack sufficient information to form a definitive opinion. On the other hand, 6.0% (n=7) disagreed and 3.4% (n=4) strongly disagreed, indicating that a small minority harbors doubts about the adherence of food companies to health and safety standards. These results suggest that while there is a general sense of trust in compliance, the notable percentage of neutral responses highlights an opportunity for companies to improve transparency and communication regarding their health and safety practices to build greater trust.

4.4.3 Honesty

Table 4.4.3.10 Honesty in Kenya Food Companies

I believe food companies in Kenya are honest about the ingredients they use in their products

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	7	6.0	6.0	6.0
Disagree	9	7.7	7.7	13.7
Neutral	53	45.3	45.3	59.0
Agree	35	29.9	29.9	88.9
Strongly agree	13	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings show mixed perceptions regarding the honesty of food companies in Kenya about the ingredients they use in their products. While 29.9% (n=35) of respondents agreed with the statement, and 11.1% (n=13) strongly agreed, indicating that 41% of the participants trust the companies' transparency, a significant proportion of respondents, 45.3% (n=53), were neutral. This suggests a substantial level of uncertainty or lack of clarity among consumers regarding ingredient disclosure. On the other hand, 7.7% (n=9) disagreed, and 6.0% (n=7) strongly disagreed, reflecting skepticism among a small segment of respondents. These findings highlight the need for food companies to enhance their communication and transparency about ingredients to reduce consumer doubt and strengthen trust.

Table 4.4.3.11 Transparent Information

Food companies provide transparent information regarding their product sourcing and manufacturing processes

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
Disagree	11	9.4	9.4	12.0
Neutral	45	38.5	38.5	50.4
Agree	49	41.9	41.9	92.3
Strongly agree	9	7.7	7.7	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that while many respondents believe food companies in Kenya provide transparent information about their product sourcing and manufacturing processes, there is still a level of doubt. A total of 41.9% (n=49) agreed with the statement, and 7.7% (n=9) strongly agreed, representing a combined 49.6% who perceive transparency positively. However, a significant proportion of respondents, 38.5% (n=45), were neutral, reflecting uncertainty or insufficient awareness of the companies' practices. On the contrary, 9.4% (n=11) disagreed, and 2.6% (n=3) strongly disagreed, indicating skepticism among a small minority. These results suggest that while nearly half of the respondents recognize transparency, a notable number remain uncertain, emphasizing the need for food companies to communicate more openly and effectively about their sourcing and manufacturing processes.

Table 4.4.3.12 Transparency of Food Companies

Food companies are transparent about addressing customer complaints

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	8	6.8	6.8	6.8
Disagree	18	15.4	15.4	22.2
Neutral	47	40.2	40.2	62.4
Agree	34	29.1	29.1	91.5
Strongly Agree	10	8.5	8.5	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings reveal varied perceptions regarding the transparency of food companies in Kenya when addressing customer complaints. While 29.1% (n=34) of respondents agreed with the statement and 8.5% (n=10) strongly agreed, indicating that 37.6% perceive food companies as transparent in this area, a notable 40.2% (n=47) were neutral. This suggests a significant proportion of respondents are unsure or lack sufficient experiences to evaluate transparency in complaint handling. On the other hand, 15.4% (n=18) disagreed, and 6.8% (n=8) strongly disagreed, highlighting skepticism among 22.2% of respondents. These findings point to an opportunity for food companies to improve their complaint resolution processes and communicate their efforts more effectively to enhance customer trust.

4.4.4 Benevolence

Table 4.4.4.13 Benevolence

I trust food companies in Kenya to prioritize customer well-being over profit

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	9	7.7	7.7	7.7
Disagree	27	23.1	23.1	30.8
Neutral	39	33.3	33.3	64.1
Agree	25	21.4	21.4	85.5
Strongly agree	17	14.5	14.5	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate mixed opinions regarding the trust that food companies in Kenya prioritize customer well-being over profit. A combined 35.9% of respondents expressed trust in this regard, with 21.4% (n=25) agreeing and 14.5% (n=17) strongly agreeing. However, a significant proportion, 33.3% (n=39), were neutral, indicating uncertainty or a lack of definitive opinions on the matter. On the other hand, 23.1% (n=27) disagreed, and 7.7% (n=9) strongly disagreed, suggesting that 30.8% of respondents believe that profit takes precedence over customer well-being. These findings highlight a divided perception and suggest that food companies need to demonstrate more visible actions and initiatives that prioritize customer well-being to build greater trust.

Table 4.4.4.14 Food Companies' Benevolence

I believe that food companies in Kenya have my best interests at heart

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	6	5.1	5.1	5.1
Disagree	15	12.8	12.8	17.9
Neutral	45	38.5	38.5	56.4
Agree	32	27.4	27.4	83.8
Strongly agree	19	16.2	16.2	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings reveal that while a substantial proportion of respondents believe food companies in Kenya have their best interests at heart, many remain uncertain. A combined 43.6% of respondents expressed trust, with 27.4% (n=32) agreeing and 16.2% (n=19) strongly agreeing. However, 38.5% (n=45) were neutral, indicating uncertainty or lack of sufficient evidence to form a definitive opinion. On the contrary, 12.8% (n=15) disagreed, and 5.1% (n=6) strongly disagreed, suggesting skepticism among 17.9% of respondents. These findings suggest that while trust exists among a considerable segment of customers, food companies have an opportunity to enhance their communication and demonstrate actions that align with customers' best interests to convert neutrality into stronger trust.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is the second variable and it was measured using four main determinants which are; Recommendations/word of mouth, repeat purchases, retention rate and customer satisfaction. These are discussed further below:

4.4.5 Recommendations

Table 4.4.5.15 Recommendations

I am willing to recommend food products from Kenyan Companies to my family and friends

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
Disagree	4	3.4	3.4	6.0
Neutral	10	8.5	8.5	14.5
Agree	61	52.1	52.1	66.7
Strongly agree	39	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate a strong willingness among respondents to recommend food products from Kenyan companies to their family and friends. A majority, 52.1% (n=61), agreed with the statement, while 33.3% (n=39) strongly agreed, totaling 85.4% of respondents expressing a positive inclination toward recommending these products. A small proportion, 8.5% (n=10), were neutral, suggesting some level of indifference or uncertainty. On the other hand, 3.4% (n=4) disagreed, and 2.6% (n=3) strongly disagreed, representing a combined 6.0% who were unwilling to make recommendations. These findings suggest that trust in Kenyan food companies is relatively high, as evidenced by the significant majority of respondents willing to endorse their products to others.

4.4.6 Repeat Purchases

Table 4.4.6.16 Repeat Purchases

I am likely to repurchase food products from the same company if I am satisfied with their product

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
Disagree	3	2.6	2.6	5.1
Neutral	7	6.0	6.0	11.1
Agree	46	39.3	39.3	50.4
Strongly agree	58	49.6	49.6	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings reveal a strong likelihood of repurchase among respondents who are satisfied with food products from Kenyan companies. A majority, 49.6% (n=58), strongly agreed with the statement, while 39.3% (n=46) agreed, resulting in an overwhelming 88.9% of respondents expressing a positive intention to repurchase. A small proportion, 6.0% (n=7), were neutral, indicating indifference or variability in their purchasing behavior. Only 5.2% of respondents expressed disagreement, with 2.6% (n=3) disagreeing and 2.6% (n=3) strongly disagreeing. These findings suggest that satisfaction is a key driver of customer loyalty, with most respondents indicating they would remain loyal to a company that meets their expectations.

Table 4.4.6.2.17 Repeated Purchases

I prefer purchasing food products from companies I trust, even if their prices are higher

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
Disagree	4	3.4	3.4	6.0
Neutral	12	10.3	10.3	16.2
Agree	63	53.8	53.8	70.1
Strongly agree	35	29.9	29.9	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that trust plays a significant role in influencing purchasing decisions, even when prices are higher. A majority of respondents, 53.8% (n=63), agreed with the statement, while 29.9% (n=35) strongly agreed, making up a total of 83.7% who prioritize trust over cost. A small proportion, 10.3% (n=12), were neutral, suggesting that price sensitivity or other factors may influence their choices. Meanwhile, 3.4% (n=4) disagreed, and 2.6% (n=3) strongly disagreed, representing a combined 6.0% who are less inclined to pay a premium based on trust. These findings underscore the importance of trust as a critical factor driving customer loyalty and willingness to pay a price premium for food products.

Table 4.4.6.3.18 Repurchases

I am more likely to repurchase from a company even if they experience minor issues e.g. product delays

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
disagree	13	11.1	11.1	13.7
Neutral	33	28.2	28.2	41.9
Agree	48	41.0	41.0	82.9
Strongly agree	20	17.1	17.1	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings suggest that many respondents are willing to repurchase from a food company, even in the face of minor issues such as product delays. A combined 58.1% of respondents, with 41.0% (n=48) agreeing and 17.1% (n=20) strongly agreeing, expressed a positive inclination to remain loyal despite occasional setbacks. However, 28.2% (n=33) were neutral, indicating some level of indifference or that such issues do not heavily influence their decision-making. A smaller portion, 11.1% (n=13), disagreed, and 2.6% (n=3) strongly disagreed, showing that a minority of respondents are less forgiving of such issues. These results suggest that trust and overall satisfaction may help mitigate the impact of occasional operational problems, leading to continued customer loyalty.

4.4.7 Retention Rate

Table 4.4.7.19 Retention Rate

I feel a strong sense of loyalty towards food companies that have consistently met my expectations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	4	3.4	3.4	3.4
Neutral	11	9.4	9.4	12.8
Agree	54	46.2	46.2	59.0
Strongly agree	48	41.0	41.0	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate a strong sense of loyalty among respondents towards food companies that consistently meet their expectations. A combined 87.2% of respondents expressed loyalty, with 46.2% (n=54) agreeing and 41.0% (n=48) strongly agreeing with the statement. Only 9.4% (n=11) were neutral, suggesting that most customers who are satisfied with a company's performance feel a strong connection and remain loyal. A small portion, 3.4% (n=4), strongly

disagreed, indicating that a minority of respondents do not feel particularly loyal, even when expectations are consistently met. These findings underscore the importance of consistently meeting customer expectations as a key driver of loyalty in the food industry.

4.4.8 Customer Satisfaction

Table 4.4.8.20 Customer Satisfaction

I am less likely to switch to a competitor if I trust a particular food company

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Disagree	4	3.4	3.4	6.0
	Neutral	23	19.7	19.7	25.6
	Agree	55	47.0	47.0	72.6
	Strongly agree	32	27.4	27.4	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that trust in a food company significantly reduces the likelihood of customers switching to a competitor. A majority, 47.0% (n=55), agreed with the statement, and 27.4% (n=32) strongly agreed, making up a combined 74.4% who feel loyal to a trusted company and are less likely to switch. A smaller portion, 19.7% (n=23), were neutral, suggesting that trust plays a moderate role in their decision-making or that other factors influence their loyalty. Only 3.4% (n=4) disagreed, and 2.6% (n=3) strongly disagreed, indicating that a small minority are more likely to switch, even if they trust the company. These results highlight the importance of building and maintaining trust, as it signifies that customers are satisfied with the food companies.

4.4.9 Purchase behavior of Respondents

Table 4.4.9.21 Purchase behavior

How often do you purchase food and beverage products from companies in Kenya?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Daily	48	41.0	41.0	41.0
	Weekly	47	40.2	40.2	81.2
	Monthly	13	11.1	11.1	92.3
	Rarely	9	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings reveal that a significant portion of respondents frequently purchase food and beverage products from companies in Kenya. A combined 81.2% of respondents indicated

regular purchases, with 41.0% (n=48) buying daily and 40.2% (n=47) buying weekly. A smaller percentage, 11.1% (n=13), purchase monthly, while 7.7% (n=9) purchase rarely. These results indicate that food and beverage companies in Kenya have a substantial and consistent customer base, with daily and weekly purchases being the most common. This highlights the importance of maintaining product quality and customer satisfaction to retain frequent buyers.

Table 4.4.9.2.22 Purchase Behavior

How often do you switch between different food and beverage companies?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Very Often	6	5.1	5.1	5.1
Often	14	12.0	12.0	17.1
Sometimes	44	37.6	37.6	54.7
Rarely	49	41.9	41.9	96.6
Never	4	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that most respondents rarely switch between different food and beverage companies. A substantial 41.9% (n=49) reported rarely switching, and 37.6% (n=44) sometimes switch, suggesting moderate brand loyalty. Only 12.0% (n=14) of respondents switch often, and 5.1% (n=6) switch very often, reflecting a small segment of customers who frequently change brands. A minority, 3.4% (n=4), stated they never switch companies. These results suggest that, while many customers are loyal to specific brands, there is still some level of brand switching, particularly among a smaller proportion of the population. This indicates that food and beverage companies need to continuously engage customers to maintain their loyalty and prevent defections.

CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the research on the influence of trust on customer loyalty among food companies in Kenya. Based on the findings from the data collected and analyzed in the previous chapters, this chapter summarizes the key insights, reflects on the study's objectives, and discusses the implications of the research. Additionally, it offers recommendations for food companies seeking to enhance customer loyalty through trust-building strategies, and outlines areas for future research to further explore this area of study.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Reliability

The assessment of reliability as a dimension that measures trust in this study indicates that a significant majority of customers perceive food and beverage companies in Kenya as dependable, particularly in ensuring consistent product availability. By evaluating reliability as an element of trust, the study highlights its crucial role in shaping customer loyalty. When food companies are perceived as reliable, they build trust, which in turn strengthens customer loyalty. This insight is particularly valuable for food companies in Kenya, as it underscores the importance of maintaining consistent product availability to retain customer trust and loyalty. Ultimately, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how trust, specifically through reliability, influences customer loyalty within the Kenyan food sector, offering valuable recommendations for companies aiming to enhance their competitive edge in the market.

This study indicates that 67.5% of respondents perceive food and beverage companies as reliable in ensuring product availability. This aligns with research by Kotler and Keller (2016), who highlight reliability as a key determinant of customer loyalty, noting that consistent product availability fosters trust. Similarly, Morgan and Hunt (1994) argued that reliability strengthens the trust-commitment relationship, essential for maintaining customer loyalty.

However, the 23.1% neutral responses and 9.4% negative responses in my study reveal variability that may not be addressed in studies emphasizing predominantly positive outcomes. For instance, Parasuraman et al. (1988) found that reliability is a critical component of service

quality, but your findings suggest that variability in customer experiences can undermine trust, a nuance less emphasized in their study.

5.2.2 Competence

The assessment of competence, specifically in terms of food companies' adherence to health and safety standards, reveals a generally positive perception among respondents, with a majority expressing trust in companies' ability to meet these standards. However, the study also identified a significant portion of respondents who were uncertain, as indicated by the neutral responses, suggesting that many customers lack sufficient information or clarity on the subject. A smaller proportion expressed doubts, which emphasizes that while trust in competence exists, there is room for improvement.

The findings reveal that 53.8% of respondents trust food companies in Kenya to comply with health and safety standards. This aligns with Grönroos (1990), who posited that competence in delivering safe and quality products is foundational to building consumer trust. Similarly, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) found that competence increases consumer confidence and enhances loyalty.

However, the high percentage of neutral responses (36.8%) in my study suggests a gap in customer awareness or transparency. Previous researchers, such as by Del Giudice et al. (2020), emphasize that visible and proactive communication about safety standards can bridge this gap. This indicates that while competence is acknowledged, companies need to better demonstrate and communicate their adherence to these standards to solidify trust.

By examining competence as a dimension of trust, this study highlights the important role that transparency and clear communication play in fostering customer confidence. Food companies in Kenya that prioritize demonstrating their adherence to health and safety regulations can further solidify their customers' trust, thereby enhancing loyalty. The findings underscore that trust in competence is not just about meeting standards but also about effectively communicating those efforts to customers. This research contributes valuable insights into how building trust through competence can strengthen customer loyalty in Kenya's competitive food sector.

5.2.3 Honesty

The assessment of honesty, specifically regarding the transparency of food companies in Kenya about their product sourcing and manufacturing processes, reveals that while a significant portion of consumers perceive companies as transparent, there remains a notable level of uncertainty and skepticism. A considerable number of respondents expressed either neutrality or doubt, highlighting that transparency is still an area where many food companies can improve. This finding emphasizes the critical role of honesty in building trust with customers. Food companies that are seen as open about their practices can strengthen consumer trust, but the level of uncertainty indicates that many customers may not have enough information or clarity to fully trust companies in this regard.

In addition, this finding underscores the importance of honesty as a critical dimension of trust, with transparency being a key factor in fostering consumer confidence. For food companies in Kenya, these results highlight an opportunity to improve communication around ingredient sourcing and labeling to reduce uncertainty and address consumer concerns.

This study shows that only 41% of respondents trust food companies to be honest about their ingredients, with 45.3% neutral and 13.7% expressing skepticism. This supports the findings of Hingley et al. (2011), who observed that honesty in ingredient disclosure significantly influences consumer trust and loyalty. Similarly, Hartmann and Moeller (2014) argued that transparency regarding product composition is a critical factor in fostering trust, particularly in food marketing.

The high percentage of neutral responses in this study, however, contrasts with studies that assume transparency initiatives are universally effective. For example, Jahn et al. (2005) argued that third-party certifications and labels are sufficient to assure customers of ingredient transparency, but this study suggests that customers in Kenya might require more direct communication to mitigate skepticism.

5.2.4 Benevolence

The assessment of benevolence, which reflects whether food companies in Kenya prioritize customer well-being over profit, reveals a divided perception among consumers. While some respondents express trust in the companies' commitment to customer welfare, a significant portion remains uncertain or believes that profit is prioritized over well-being. This division

suggests that there is room for improvement in how companies demonstrate their genuine concern for customer interests.

This finding underscores the importance of benevolence as a key dimension of trust. For food companies, actions that visibly prioritize customer well-being—such as transparent health initiatives, ethical sourcing, and community-focused practices—can strengthen trust and loyalty. The study highlights the need for companies to go beyond words and demonstrate their commitment to benevolence through tangible efforts. By doing so, food companies can enhance customer trust, which, in turn, can significantly influence long-term customer loyalty in Kenya's competitive food industry.

This study reveals divided opinions on whether food companies prioritize customer well-being over profit, with 35.9% expressing trust and 30.8% expressing doubt. This aligns with Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002), who argued that perceptions of benevolence (acting in the customer's best interest) are central to trust.

However, this study contrasts with the more optimistic results from studies in developed markets, where customer-centric initiatives often translate into higher perceptions of benevolence (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). The notable proportion of neutral (33.3%) and skeptical (30.8%) responses in your study underscores the unique challenges in the Kenyan context, where economic pressures may influence perceptions of corporate motives.

Reliability and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

According to the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), behavioral intentions, such as customer loyalty, are influenced by attitudes toward the behavior and subjective norms. In this study, 67.5% of respondents perceive food companies in Kenya as reliable in maintaining product availability. This reliability positively influences customers' attitudes toward the companies, which, in turn, shapes their intention to remain loyal or recommend these companies to others.

The 23.1% of respondents who were neutral and the 9.4% who expressed dissatisfaction reflect variability in subjective experiences. These attitudes could influence behavioral intentions negatively, demonstrating that while trust in reliability is critical, variability in customer

experiences may hinder the consistent formation of positive behavioral intentions. This aligns with TRA's emphasis on the role of personal beliefs in shaping attitudes and behaviors.

Competence and Commitment-Trust Theory

The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) posits that trust and commitment are essential for long-term relational exchanges. This study indicates that 53.8% of respondents trust food companies in Kenya to comply with health and safety standards. This trust in competence creates a foundation for building commitment, as customers are more likely to engage with companies that demonstrate a strong adherence to regulations and standards.

However, the 36.8% of respondents who were neutral and the 9.4% who expressed doubts reveal a gap in perceived competence. According to Morgan and Hunt, any perception of inconsistency in competence can undermine trust and, consequently, commitment. Companies must address these doubts by enhancing communication and demonstrating compliance through certifications or transparency initiatives to reinforce customer trust.

Honesty and Theory of Reasoned Action

The mixed perceptions about honesty (41% trusting vs. 45.3% neutral) align with the Theory of Reasoned Action, which highlights the role of perceived behavioral control. The neutrality in responses suggests that while some customers believe food companies are transparent about ingredients, others lack sufficient information or clarity, leading to uncertainty. This uncertainty can weaken positive attitudes and behavioral intentions, such as loyalty or repeat purchases.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) emphasize that attitudes are shaped by belief strength. Therefore, increasing transparency about ingredients can strengthen customers' beliefs in the companies' honesty, fostering positive attitudes and increasing the likelihood of loyalty behaviors.

Benevolence and Commitment-Trust Theory

The findings on benevolence show divided opinions, with only 35.9% of respondents trusting food companies to prioritize customer well-being over profit, while 30.8% believe otherwise. According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), benevolence is a key dimension of trust, where

customers believe the company acts in their best interest. A lack of perceived benevolence undermines trust, which can weaken customer commitment.

This aligns with the Commitment-Trust Theory, which posits that customers require evidence of benevolent actions, such as initiatives prioritizing customer well-being, to foster trust and strengthen loyalty. The neutral responses (33.3%) suggest an opportunity for companies to visibly demonstrate their commitment to customer-centric practices, such as corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, to build trust and enhance long-term loyalty.

5.2.5 Customer loyalty and its variables

Recommendations

The findings highlight the critical role that word of mouth plays in fostering loyalty. When customers trust food companies, they not only remain loyal but also become active promoters, enhancing the brand's reputation through personal recommendations. This study underscores the powerful influence of trust in driving positive customer behavior, such as word of mouth, which in turn strengthens customer loyalty. For food companies in Kenya, these insights emphasize the importance of cultivating trust as a means to encourage brand advocacy and sustain long-term customer loyalty.

This study shows that 85.4% of respondents are willing to recommend food products from Kenyan companies, which aligns with the work of Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol (2002). They found that trust plays a pivotal role in fostering positive word-of-mouth, as satisfied and trusting customers are more likely to recommend products to others. Similarly, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) demonstrated that brand trust strengthens brand advocacy, driving customers to endorse a brand to their social circles.

However, the small proportion of respondents (6.0%) unwilling to recommend Kenyan food products underscores the variability in trust levels, as noted by Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán (2001). They emphasized that negative experiences, even among a minority, can detract from overall trust and limit recommendations. This study is consistent with their observation that companies must ensure consistent reliability and transparency to mitigate skepticism.

Repeat Purchases

The assessment of repeat purchases as a dimension of customer loyalty highlights that trust significantly influences customers' willingness to make repeat purchases, even when food products are priced higher. A strong majority of respondents prioritize trust over cost, demonstrating that customers are willing to pay a premium for brands they trust. When customers trust a brand, they are more likely to make future purchases, even in the face of higher prices, as they value the reliability, quality, and consistency associated with the brand. The study illustrates that for food companies in Kenya, cultivating trust is essential for ensuring not only customer satisfaction but also long-term loyalty and repeated transactions.

This study reveals that 88.9% of respondents express a positive intention to repurchase food products from Kenyan companies, emphasizing the strong link between trust and repeat purchases. This aligns with Oliver's (1999) loyalty framework, which highlights that trust and satisfaction are primary antecedents of repurchase intentions. Similarly, Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) argued that trust enhances perceived value, increasing the likelihood of repeat transactions.

In contrast, this study shows a small segment (5.2%) of respondents expressing disagreement with repeat purchases, which resonates with Reichheld and Scheffer's (2000) assertion that customers who perceive inconsistency in product quality or service are less likely to maintain loyalty, despite general trust in the brand.

Retention Rate

The assessment of retention rate as a dimension of customer loyalty reveals that consistently meeting customer expectations is a critical factor in fostering strong loyalty. A significant majority of respondents expressed loyalty to food companies that reliably deliver on their promises, highlighting that satisfaction and consistent performance are key to retaining customers over time. This retention is not only a sign of satisfaction but also a reflection of trust in the company's ability to deliver quality products and services.

This study demonstrates that 87.2% of respondents feel loyal to food companies that meet their expectations, which aligns with Morgan and Hunt's (1994) commitment-trust theory. They argue that consistent performance fosters emotional attachment and long-term loyalty. Additionally,

Gremler and Brown (1996) noted that meeting or exceeding customer expectations builds trust, which translates to higher retention rates.

However, the small minority (3.4%) who do not feel loyal even when expectations are met suggests that other factors, such as price sensitivity or alternative options, may influence loyalty. This aligns with Homburg and Giering (2001), who observed that while trust is essential, individual differences such as value perception and market dynamics can moderate its effect on loyalty.

Customer satisfaction

The assessment of customer satisfaction as a dimension of loyalty reveals that trust plays a pivotal role in reducing the likelihood of customers switching to competitors. A large proportion of respondents indicated that their loyalty to a trusted food company makes them less likely to seek alternatives, suggesting that satisfaction with a company's products and services fosters deeper commitment. These findings emphasize that customer satisfaction, driven by trust, is essential in retaining loyal customers. When customers trust a food company, they are more content with their experiences and are less inclined to switch to competitors, even when other factors might come into play.

This study indicates that 74.4% of respondents believe trust reduces their likelihood of switching to competitors, reinforcing the notion that trust is a critical driver of customer satisfaction. This supports findings by Anderson and Srinivasan (2003), who noted that trust decreases customer defection and increases satisfaction by fostering a sense of security in transactions.

The 19.7% neutral responses in this study, however, align with the work of Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003), who observed that while trust is a significant loyalty driver, external factors such as competitive offers or perceived product differentiation can influence switching behavior. Your findings suggest that while trust is vital, it must be coupled with competitive offerings to fully deter switching.

5.3 Conclusions

This study has explored the significant role that trust plays in fostering customer loyalty among food companies in Kenya. The findings reveal that trust is a critical determinant of customer

behavior, influencing various aspects of loyalty, such as repeat purchases, retention, word of mouth, and willingness to pay a premium for trusted brands. The research indicates that customers who trust food companies are more likely to remain loyal, recommend products to others, and continue to purchase from these companies, even when faced with higher prices or competing alternatives.

Through the analysis, it became evident that trust and customer loyalty work hand in hand, with each reinforcing the other. When food companies demonstrate reliability, competence, honesty, benevolence, and transparency, they not only build trust but also cultivate a loyal customer base. Trust in food companies was found to significantly reduce the likelihood of customers switching to competitors, underscoring its role in retention. Moreover, loyal customers who trust a company are more inclined to make repeat purchases, recommend products, and defend the brand to others, thereby contributing to a company's growth and long-term success.

In conclusion, trust is the cornerstone of customer loyalty in the Kenyan food industry. Food companies that prioritize building and maintaining trust are more likely to experience sustained customer loyalty, which is essential for long-term business success. This study provides valuable insights for food companies, emphasizing the importance of cultivating trust through consistent performance, transparency, and ethical practices. Future research could further explore the dynamics of trust and loyalty across different sectors within the Kenyan market, offering deeper insights into how trust can be leveraged to enhance competitive advantage.

5.4 Recommendations

Food companies in Kenya should focus on increasing transparency, especially in areas such as product sourcing, manufacturing processes, and ingredient disclosure. Clear communication about health and safety standards, ingredient sourcing, and manufacturing practices will not only address the concerns of customers but also build stronger trust and loyalty.

Companies should invest in better communication strategies to directly engage with customers. This could include providing clear, accessible information about product quality, ethical sourcing, and corporate social responsibility initiatives. Proactively engaging with customers through digital platforms and in-store experiences can strengthen relationships and increase trust.

Food companies should emphasize their commitment to customer well-being by focusing on product quality, health-conscious offerings, and ethical business practices. Communicating these efforts clearly will improve the perception of benevolence, helping to foster stronger, long-lasting relationships with customers.

Regularly collecting and acting on customer feedback will help food companies better understand their customers' needs and concerns. Using surveys, reviews, and social media interactions can provide valuable insights into areas where trust can be further nurtured, leading to more targeted improvements in service delivery.

These findings align closely with previous research in several dimensions of trust and customer loyalty, but they also highlight opportunities for improvement. Based on these insights, the following recommendations can be drawn:

Enhance Communication and Transparency

To address the neutral responses regarding recommendations and repeat purchases, Kenyan food companies should increase transparency in their practices, such as disclosing ingredient information and health compliance certifications. This aligns with recommendations by Hartmann and Moeller (2014), who found that clear communication builds trust and drives loyalty.

Personalize Customer Experiences

Acknowledge the diversity in customer expectations and tailor experiences to meet specific needs. As highlighted by Homburg and Giering (2001), personalized service strengthens trust and encourages repeat behavior.

Strengthen Value Propositions

To retain customers with a propensity to switch, companies should offer unique value propositions, such as loyalty programs or price incentives, as noted by Zeithaml et al. (1996).

Monitor and Address Negative Experiences

Address the concerns of the small minority who express skepticism or dissatisfaction. As Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán (2001) suggest, even a small segment of dissatisfied customers can significantly impact overall trust and loyalty.

5.5 Areas of future Research

Future research on the role of trust in customer loyalty in food companies in Kenya could explore several key areas. These include examining the impact of digital engagement and e-commerce on trust and loyalty, assessing how corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability efforts influence customer perceptions, and investigating the role of transparency in building long-term trust. Additionally, understanding the interplay between price sensitivity and trust, as well as exploring regional and cultural differences in trust dynamics, could offer valuable insights. Future studies could also examine how crises or scandals affect trust and loyalty, and how food companies can rebuild customer relationships in such situations. These areas of exploration will deepen the understanding of trust and loyalty in the food sector, providing companies with strategies to strengthen customer relationships and sustain long-term loyalty.

In conclusion, this study highlights the crucial role that trust plays in building customer loyalty within the Kenyan food industry. The findings emphasize that trust, driven by transparency, reliability, and ethical practices, is essential for fostering loyalty and ensuring long-term business success. Addressing the gaps identified in this research will provide food companies with the insights needed to enhance their customer engagement strategies and maintain a competitive edge in the market.

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APPENDICES

QUESTIONNAIRE

THE INFLUENCE OF TRUST ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY AMONG FOOD AND BEVERAGE COMPANIES IN KENYA

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study about the role of trust on customer loyalty among food and beverage companies in Kenya. This study aims to investigate the trust that customers have in different food and beverage brands in Kenya and how that trust impacts consumer buyer behavior.

We Kindly request that you answer the questions attached to this questionnaire to the best of your knowledge. Your honest responses are vital for the accuracy and success of this particular research study.

By proceeding, you willingly accept to share your data relevant to the above study. (Please note that this data was treated with utmost confidentiality)

- Agree
- Disagree

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Age

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55 and above

Gender

- Male
- Female

Level of Education

- Primary
- Secondary
- Diploma
- Undergraduate
- Postgraduate

Occupation

- Student

- Employed
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Other

Monthly Income

- below Ksh 20,000
- Ksh 20,000 - 50,000
- Ksh 50,000 - 100,000
- Above Ksh 100,000
- None

SECTION B: PERCEPTIONS OF TRUST

The questions in this section are aimed to find out how much customers trust various food and beverage companies in Kenya. Please answer honestly and in your most suitable perspective.

How often do you purchase food and beverage products from companies in Kenya?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely

Please rate the following statements based on your perception of trust in food companies in Kenya on a scale of 1to5 i.e. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

I believe that food companies in Kenya are honest about the ingredients they use in their products.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I trust that food companies in Kenya comply with health and safety standards.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Food companies in Kenya provide transparent information regarding their product sourcing and manufacturing processes.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Food and beverage companies are reliable in terms of product availability

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Food companies in Kenya are transparent about addressing customer complaints and issues.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I trust food companies in Kenya to prioritize customer well-being over profit.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I believe that food companies in Kenya have my best interests at heart

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

SECTION C: PERCEPTIONS OF CUTOMER LOYALTY

The questions in this section are aimed to interrogate perceptions on consumer buying behavior. Please pick the most suitable answers.

I am likely to repurchase food products from the same company if I am satisfied with their product.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I am willing to recommend food products from Kenyan companies to my family and friends.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I prefer purchasing food products from companies I trust, even if their prices are higher.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I feel a strong sense of loyalty towards food companies that have consistently met my expectations.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I am less likely to switch to a competitor if I trust a particular food company.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

I am more likely to continue purchasing from a company, even if they experience minor issues (e.g., product delays or shortages) if I trust them.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

How often do you switch between different food and beverage companies?

- Very Often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Thank you for your participation!