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Full Length Research Paper

Measuring the attitude and intention to purchase different cohorts towards a fast food retailer

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The elements of the extended marketing mix play a crucial role in assisting a business to gain a competitive advantage over competitors. A combination of the elements of the extended marketing mix is considered by consumers when making a decision to purchase at a fast-food outlet. The article attempts to emphasise whether race, gender and age groups experience the influence of the extended marketing mix elements differently on their intention to purchase at a fast-food retailer. The target population for this study included all visitors to a fast food retail brand in the greater Johannesburg Metropolitan region in Gauteng from which a convenience sample of 209 was selected. Respondents participated through personal interviews in the completion of questionnaires. The Independent sample T-test and the Pearson chi-square test was used to determine whether significant differences exist between the responses of the different gender and age groups in the study. The study established that there is a difference in the relationship between the elements of the extended marketing mix and consumers' intention to purchase from a KFC fast food retailer based on race, gender and age. These differences require consideration by KFC fast food retail management to ensure that their marketing strategy encompasses biographical variables such as race, gender and age. This will ensure that the needs of the target market are addressed according to these biographical variables, resulting in increased customer satisfaction and market share growth.

Key words: Consumers, fast-food, influence, elements, extended marketing mix.

INTRODUCTION

In the consumer market of the fast-food industry in South Africa, it is important to continuously spend large amounts of money on advertising brands, and to reinvent food and product offerings in order to retain customers. The reason for this is that in 2007 and 2008, twenty per cent of South Africans chose fast-food brands over home meals. Some of the factors affecting growth in the fast-food industry are the consumers' demand for convenient foods, and the availability of disposable income (Whitfield, 2009). The South African fast-food industry is worth almost R6 billion, with the chicken component of the industry worth R2.7 billion (Pool, 2003).

Growth in the fast-food industry could be attributed to suitable factors such as the rising value of household time, participation of females in the labour force, rising household incomes and the growing black middle class market segment (Stewart, 2004: 7). Fast-food outlets in South Africa are positioning themselves through the quality of their product offerings, as well as through their reputation as a brand where fast-food of a high caliber is sold (Lockyer, 2007). In addition, fast-food outlets are also offering special products, and they have their own manufacturing divisions for the production of their products (Welgens, 2006).

Powers and Barrows (2003) argue that changing demographics and lifestyles are resulting in people being more pressed for time and unable to prepare food at home. In South Africa, the fast-food retail chains are continuously dependent on public preference for menu and ambience

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to ensure that they satisfy consumer needs and secure their survival. The fast-food retail chains that consider health concerns of consumers will increase the likelihood that consumers patronise them (Pool, 2003). It therefore, becomes imperative for the fast-food industry to continuously spend large amounts of money on the advertising of their brands, to reinvent food and product offerings in order to retain customer support and to remain aware of the price sensitivity of consumers due to the availability of competitor products.

Considering the demographic change in the South African fast-food market, as well as increased competition amongst role players in the fast-food industry since 1994, this article will attempt to indicate whether there is a difference amongst race, gender and age groups regarding the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on consumer intention to purchase in a fast food retail setting. It furthermore wants to illustrate whether there is a relationship between the elements of the extended marketing mix and consumers' intention to purchase at the fast-food retailer.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customers are central to the marketing strategy of a business. The goal of such a strategy is to create value for customers and build professional customer relationships. The marketing strategy is a tool by which the business hopes to create customer value and achieve profitable relationships. The business decides which customers it will serve (segmentation and targeting), and how these customers will be served (differentiation and positioning). It identifies the total market, then divides it into smaller segments, selects the most promising segments, and focuses on serving profitable and satisfying customers in these segments (Kotler and Armstrong, 2009). The subsequent discussion provides a brief overview of the nature of the fast-food industry in South Africa, the importance of a customer driven marketing strategy to improve customer retention and the linkage between such a strategy and consumer behaviour.

The nature of the fast-food industry

One of the world's fastest growing food types is fast-foods (Adams, 2005). During the last decade, there had been a noticeable growth in the fast-food industry all over the world (Fill and Smith, 2004). This growth was fuelled by the busy lifestyles of consumers, and dual working families with children who place much emphasis on quick meals (Schröder and McEachern, 2005). Fast-food is also seen as a response to the ever changing fast life of people. In a modern world, there is a high participation rate of women in the workforce who do not have time to prepare meals in a traditional manner (Jones et al., 2003).

In South Africa, the black middle class has also increased to 6 million since 1994 constituting a large potential target market for local fast-food outlets. In addition to this, the growth in the generation Y consumer market (individuals born after 1975 and before 2000) for fast-food over the last decade necessitates a stronger focus on the preferences of these two market segments. Such preferences should be incorporated into the marketing strategy of fast-food retailers to strengthen their current position in the market and ensure market growth based on the improved satisfaction of the needs and wants of the target market (Welgens, 2006). The demographic characteristics of fast-food customers in South Africa have also changed in terms of race, gender and age since 1994. It therefore, becomes important for fast-food retailers in South Africa to consider such changes in their marketing strategy to secure customer retention through improved need satisfaction (Steward, 2004).

A customer driven marketing strategy for the fast-food industry

It is important for businesses to focus on the development of products and services that are required by consumers in order to survive in a modern competitive market environment. Businesses need to attract customers away from competitors and retain them by offering products and services of greater value. Businesses have also realised that they cannot profitably serve all consumers in the market because the market consists of different types of consumers with different needs. Therefore, a business has to divide the total market into different segments and develop strategies for serving these segments profitably (Kotler and Armstrong, 2009). This approach is highlighted as follows.

Market segmentation

The marketing strategies that target every consumer are not effective because consumers have different characteristics. The market needs to be divided into groups that have the same needs to ensure an effective response to particular marketing actions (Belch and Belch, 2004). It is therefore, essential to understand the group's characteristics such as race, age, gender and purchasing patterns. In the fast-food industry, marketers take employment trends, changes in income levels and purchasing patterns, age, gender and lifestyle into account when they promote goods and services (Kurtz and Boone, 2006). The focus of socio-cultural segmentation is on how group variables, family lifecycle variables, social class and culture can be useful to divide groups into homogeneous segments (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007).

Market targeting

Businesses have noticed the importance of market targeting and need to build relationships with customers as soon as possible. This is especially important since children can influence their parents when they make purchasing decisions (Adcock, Halborg and Ross, 2001). The choice of the target market involves the evaluation of the resources of the business to produce a marketing mix that would meet the needs of the target market. This also involves an evaluation to determine whether meeting the needs of the target market is consistent with the objectives of the business. The size and number of competitors that are marketing their products or services to the target market are also considered. A business can define its target market as a large number of people or a small group. For example, McDonald's could not have had the success they have experienced without their appeal to younger generations of consumers, such as children and teenagers. They cultivate this market and invest heavily in television advertising aimed specifically at children (Vignali, 2001).

Market differentiation and positioning

A business chooses a particular target market to design a marketing mix that will provide customers with superior value. A business builds a competitive advantage by differentiating the marketing mix to meet the needs of customers. Differentiation results in customers viewing the position of the business to be uniquely ideal to meet their needs (McCarthy and Perreault, 2003). Arnould et al. (2004) stipulate the differentiation of a business strategy emphasises a product to be unique in the market, provides a distinct advantage, and sets apart a product from competing brands. The customers who know other brands in a product category compare and rank them according to the differences they perceive. Such differences could be in terms of the quality of the product offered, the variety of product offerings available, the price charged for the product, convenience of purchase, as well as the level of service delivery as perceived by the customer (Duncan, 2005). Therefore, a well-formulated marketing strategy will guide a business on how to meet the needs of the target market. The marketing mix that will best meet the needs of the target market and generate revenue for the business is essential for the survival of the business (Hu, 2009).

Marketing strategy and consumer behaviour integration in the fast-food industry

It is important to understand consumer behaviour in order to formulate effective marketing strategies. For the marketing strategy to be successful, it is essential to have

a good understanding of the behaviour patterns of consumers (Du Plessis et al., 2005). Cant et al. (2006) stipulate that a business that wants to offer its customers best value should react faster to the needs of customers than competitors do. An understanding of consumer behaviour is essential to develop a marketing strategy that enables a business to react to consumers' needs and preferences. The manner in which customers respond to a business's marketing strategy will determine the success or failure of a business. Hawkins et al. (2004) argue that the reactions of customers to the marketing strategy of a business also show the success by which a business is meeting the needs of customers.

A marketing strategy starts by analysing the market considered by a business. This marketing strategy can be regarded as matching the business's resources (for example capabilities and strengths) with those of the external parties, namely competitors, suppliers and customers within the economic, technological and social factors in the environment. In this step, consumer analysis involves identifying groups of individuals, households, or businesses with the same needs (Hawkins et al., 2004). The second step of a business's marketing strategy is market segmentation in which the market segments identified in a market analysis are described in terms of demographic, psychographic, as well as geographic location and others. One or more of the identified segments are chosen to be a target market by taking into account a business's capabilities in relation to those of competitors (Cant et al., 2006; Hawkins et al., 2004). Step three of the marketing strategy involves the penetration of the selected target market segment(s). The aim of this step is to provide the customer with more value than that of competitors, and to simultaneously generate profit for a business. A business develops the marketing strategy in terms of the extended marketing mix, namely the product features, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence and processes (Zineldin and Philipson, 2007).

With regard to the consumers' decision-making process, the target market that is offered the total product is constantly involved in processing information and making decisions on whether to maintain or improve its lifestyle (Hawkins et al., 2004). Marketers should therefore, attempt to continuously ensure high levels of customer satisfaction, since satisfied customers are more profitable in the long term. Customers form an image of the total product from the manner in which it is offered to them by the business. The impact on the customer may result in need satisfaction, financial expenditure, attitude development or change. For the broader society, the marketing process has an impact on economic growth and social benefits or problems (Cant et al., 2006). Consumers therefore, play an important role in the South African economy, since their support of fast-food retailers can influence the profitability level, future survival, as well as employment creation capacity of the industry. It is

therefore, essential to understand consumer behaviour, because their support for a business can ensure increased profits, whilst their lack of support can lead to its eventual closure (Blackwell and Miniard, 2006).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The fast-food industry in South Africa is experiencing numerous market-related changes, ranging from intense globalisation forces to heightening competition levels. Consequently, as a result of these forces, fast-food outlets in South Africa are intensifying their production and mostly their marketing strategies as a defensive way to counter the impact imposed by these environmental changes. Therefore, this implies that almost every fast-food outlet is capable of offering high quality products which satisfy the needs of customers in a similar way, and with the availability of modern information technology they can reach their customers efficiently. It therefore, becomes imperative for fast food retailers in South Africa to understand the importance of the elements of the extended marketing mix in creating and maintaining a competitive advantage. Such a competitive strategy must also incorporate the demographics of the South African fast-food consumer in terms of race, gender and age. The reason for this is that different race, gender and age groups in South Africa could perceive the role played by the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase from a fast-food outlet differently. The development of an effective marketing strategy involves the consideration of the marketing mix and the elements of the extended marketing mix are primarily considered during the consumers' decision-making process (Carter and Chitturi, 2009).

It is a challenge for organisations to understand how customers might respond to the elements of the extended marketing mix. This is especially important considering the increased competitive nature of the fast-food industry in South Africa, the change in target market demographics of fast food retail groups since 1994 as well as a proportionate decline in fast-food product sales of 5% since 2005. Furthermore, the Gauteng province also represents the largest consumption of fast food products on an annual basis since 1994 and also reflects the largest diversity amongst fast food consumers in South Africa (Welgens, 2006; Steward, 2004). Carter and Chitturi (2009) states that the study of consumers provides clues for developing new products, product features, prices, communication channels, messages, as well as the most convenient location for the positioning of outlets or branches to ensure continued customer support. It was against this background and the ever-increasing competitive nature of the fast-food industry in South Africa that this study intends to investigate the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on consumers' intention to purchase in a fast food retail

environment.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARTICLE

The study was motivated by marketers in the fast-food retail industry who were facing a challenge of understanding the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on consumers' intention to purchase in a fast-food retail setting. The fast-food industry is one of the fastest growing industries' globally. This growth is fuelled by factors such as the rising income amongst middle class consumers in the developing world, the willingness of consumers to purchase fast-food products and the rising tide of fast-food retail chains entering developing country markets. Fast-food businesses are increasing their number of outlets annually (Bhuiyan, 2000). Fast-food products are popular amongst a large number of consumers in developed economies, with fast-food businesses differentiating their offering through the range of food products on offer. Many businesses in the industry invest heavily in brand building, through advertising and the uniform visual style of their outlets. These businesses attempt to increase customer loyalty through features such as reward programmes and competitions. Substitutes for fast-food such as food retail (Woolworths and PicknPay) that offer a much broader range of food products, present a threat (Schröder and McEachern, 2005). Against this background, the article would assist the management of KFC fast food retailer chains in South Africa with an understanding of the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on consumers' decision-making about fast-food purchases. This influence will furthermore be addressed from a race, gender and age perspective to enhance the level of research depth in the field.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Primary objective

The primary objective is to explore the influence of the elements of extended marketing mix on consumers' intention to purchase from KFC.

Secondary objectives

1. To establish whether race groups perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase KFC food products differently.
2. To determine whether gender groups perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase from a KFC outlet differently
3. To establish whether age groups perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase from KFC differently.

Table 1. The number of KFC outlets selected per stratum in the greater Johannesburg Metropolitan area.

| Stratum | Total number of outlets (Sampling units) | Selected number of outlets (Sampling units) | Total number of selected respondents (Sample elements) per stratum |
|-----------------|---|--|---|
| Northern region | 22 | 5 | 55 |
| Eastern region | 32 | 7 | 77 |
| Southern region | 11 | 2 | 22 |
| Western region | 13 | 2 | 22 |
| Central region | 17 | 3 | 33 |
| Total | 95 | 19 | 209 |

Source: Researcher's own construct.

4. To determine whether a relationship exists between the elements of the extended marketing mix and consumers' intention to purchase from KFC.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Ho₁: Race groups do not perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase KFC food products differently.

Ha₁: Race groups do perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase KFC food products differently.

Ho₂: Gender groups do not perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase from a KFC outlet differently.

Ha₂: Gender groups do perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase from a KFC outlet differently.

Ho₃: Age groups do not perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase KFC food products differently.

Ha₃: Age groups do perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase KFC food products differently.

Ho₄: A relationship does not exist between the elements of the extended marketing mix and consumers' intention to purchase from the KFC brand.

Ha₄: A relationship does exist between the elements of the extended marketing mix and consumers' intention to purchase from the KFC brand.

METHODOLOGY

Research approach

This study made use of a quantitative research approach and applied a descriptive research focus, since it primarily depended on the interviewing of respondents (consumers of KFC fast food products). A descriptive research approach also empowers the researcher to investigate the research problem with greater clarity and to measure the stated objectives more successfully. The study was furthermore cross sectional since the respondents were only interviewed once.

Population and sample

The population for this study included all visitors to a fast-food retail brand in the greater Johannesburg Metropolitan area of the Gauteng province. The stratified random sampling technique was used in this study. The reason for selecting this sampling technique was that the sampling frame of the study was divided into sub-groups (strata) and the sampling process was performed separately on each stratum (Reis and Judd, 2000). The greater Johannesburg Metropolitan area was divided into five regions namely, Johannesburg Central, Johannesburg East, Johannesburg West, Johannesburg North and Johannesburg South. As these regions are not equal in size and do not have an equal number of KFC fast food outlets, a proportionate number of outlets were randomly selected from each region. The sample size for the study was two-fold. The first sample was based on the number of KFC fast food outlets selected per stratum. A total of 20% of sample units were selected for each of the five strata in the study. For the purpose of the study, a convenience sample of 209 sample elements was selected. From the convenience sample, 11 sample elements were selected per outlet. This is illustrated by Table 1.

Research instrument

The questionnaire consisted of a structured format and incorporated two types of questions. Closed-ended questions were used to gather demographic data on the profile of the respondent, and Likert-type statements to determine the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on consumers' intention to purchase at fast-food retail outlets. Open-ended questions were used to obtain additional information from respondents on each element of the extended marketing mix. The questionnaire for this study was pre-tested among fifteen respondents at two KFC fast food outlets in Johannesburg. The respondents who participated in the pre-testing of the questionnaire provided feedback on the clarity of statements used in the questionnaire. Aspects such as the wording of statements, spelling errors, the sequence of the statements and the layout of the questionnaire were addressed. The validity of the questionnaire was secured through the performance of a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test for item validity. The KMO is equal to 0.865 indicating that the degrees of common variance among the variables are very good.

Furthermore, all the items on the questionnaire also illustrated a significance of .000, which is smaller than the required level of .05. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the measurement sets in the study. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) recommend Cronbach alpha scores above the 0.7 cut-off value. Table 2 illustrates the Cronbach alpha values for the different constructs.

Table 2. Cronbach alpha values.

| Construct | Cronbach alpha value |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Product | 0.788 |
| Price | 0.756 |
| Place | 0.750 |
| Promotion | 0.788 |
| Physical evidence | 0.774 |
| Processes | 0.781 |

Data gathering procedure

Personal interviews were used in this study to complete structured questionnaires. To ensure the participation of the maximum number of population elements, interviews were arranged on the premises of KFC fast food outlets.

Data analysis

Data processing and analysis was executed by using the computer programmes SAS (SAS Institute, 1990) and SPSS (SPSS Version 12.0, 2004). The Independent sample T-Test and the Pearson chi-square test was used to determine whether significant differences exist between the responses of the different race groups in the study. Considering that the researcher relied on a 95% level of confidence, or a 5% level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$), a p-value of less than or equal to 0.05 indicates a significant influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The overall mean and p-values were used to show which construct is more important when consumers makes a decision to purchase from the fast food retailer in the study.

MAJOR FINDINGS

It becomes increasingly important for fast-food retailers to apply the elements of the extended marketing mix in a strategic manner to ensure the future survival of the fast-food group within a highly competitive environment. The major findings of the study are as follows.

Demographic data

Here, three demographic factors that relate to the target market of a KFC fast food retailer, namely race, gender and age will be discussed. Each of these demographic factors will be discussed according to the elements of the extended marketing mix to emphasise its relevance to that specific element. Tables 3a and b illustrate the individual mean and p values for the different race groups in the study.

Race

Demographic factor 1 examines the race of the respondents.

This information is necessary to enable the researcher to obtain information on the differences which the four identified race groups have regarding the elements of the extended marketing mix.

Race and product: Black respondents put the largest emphasis on the importance of product quality and product variety when making a purchase decision at a KFC fast food outlet. There is a strong relationship between the black race group and the construct "product" in the study, where the p-value = 0.001. This implies that this race group primarily considers aspects such as the quality, packaging and variety of food products offered by KFC, and the health status of fast food products when making a purchase decision at a KFC outlet. Furthermore, white, coloured and Indian respondents do not put a strong emphasis on product quality and product variety when making a purchase decision (table 3a). This therefore, indicates that these race groups make a purchase decision at KFC outlets irrespective of product quality and product variety. The factors that are important to black consumers of KFC products do not necessarily have a direct influence on the purchasing decisions of the other three race groups in the study. The decision by white, coloured and Indian respondents to purchase at a KFC outlet is more habitual in nature, motivated by necessity, rather than product quality and product variety offered by these outlets.

Race and price: According to the findings, black respondents in the study are sensitive towards the price charged for KFC products when making a purchase decision. Table 3a indicates a strong relationship between the black race group and the construct "price", where the p-value = 0.000. This race group therefore, expects the price of KFC products to reflect value through quality and variety to meet their expectations. It could further be argued that the price sensitivity of black consumers could also be the result of a lower disposable income available to spend on fast-food products. This consumer group will expect to purchase the largest available quantity for money spent, especially if promotions are available. The white, coloured and Indian race groups however, indicated a smaller sensitivity towards price as a determining factor when making a decision to purchase from a KFC supplier. This indicates a weaker relationship between these race groups and the construct price (Table 3a). This implies that these race groups would be more easily motivated to purchase KFC products irrespective of the prices charged. The economic conditions in South Africa, as well as special price promotions, would not necessarily encourage or demotivate these race groups to purchase from a KFC retailer.

Race and place: All the race groups in the study

Table 3. The individual mean and p values for the different race groups in the study.

| Race | Product | | Price | | Place | | Promotion | | Personnel | | Physical evidence | | Process | |
|----------|---------|---------|-------|---------------|-------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value |
| Black | 3.977 | *0.001 | 3.887 | *0.000 | 4.001 | *0.000 | 3.997 | *0.002 | 4.112 | *0.000 | 4.334 | *0.001 | 4.055 | *0.000 |
| White | 2.888 | 0.054 | 2.766 | 0.042 | 3.889 | *0.002 | 3.988 | *0.000 | 3.001 | 0.047 | 3.111 | 0.033 | 4.123 | *0.005 |
| Coloured | 2.978 | 0.063 | 2.999 | 0.032 | 3.775 | *0.005 | 3.669 | *0.001 | 3.044 | 0.049 | 3.177 | 0.044 | 2.997 | 0.056 |
| Indian | 2.799 | 0.052 | 3.000 | 0.038 | 3.887 | *0.004 | 3.769 | *0.000 | 3.115 | 0.044 | 3.002 | 0.027 | 3.006 | 0.060 |

* A relationship exists between the construct and the biographical variable “race”.

indicated that ‘place’ has a definite influence on their decision to purchase at a KFC outlet. It furthermore illustrates a relationship between the different race groups and the construct “place” (Table 3), where the p-value = 0.000, 0.002, 0.005, 0.004). This implies that these race groups consider four factors before a decision is made to purchase at a KFC outlet. Factor 1 refers to the location of the KFC outlet. The closer the outlet is located to a consumer in these race groups, the higher the possibility of purchase. This implies that the outlet must be easily accessible to the consumer. Factor 2 includes the availability of food products on demand. Consumers in all the race groups will be more inclined to purchase when their preferences are satisfied, whilst factor 3 refers to the availability of customer parking and a drive-through option at a KFC fast food outlet.

Race and promotion: All the race groups in the study are of the opinion that ‘promotion’ has a direct influence on their decision to purchase at a KFC outlet. A strong relationship exists between all the race groups in the study and the construct “promotion”, where the p-value = 0.002, 0.000, 0.001, 0.000. This implies that these race groups

consider different factors before a decision is made to purchase from a KFC retailer. Factor 1 refers to the availability of promotions at the fast food outlet. The number of promotions, as well as the duration of the promotions, will influence the level of support which the different race groups in the study have towards KFC outlets. The second factor relates to the product variety that is available through the promotional offerings at these outlets. Factor 3 refers to word-of-mouth recommendations from friends, family or colleagues based on promotional offerings from the fast food retailer, and internal promotions that could change the consumer’s original purchasing decision and which directly impacts on consumer’s decision to purchase.

Race and personnel: A strong relationship exists between the black race group and the construct “person-nel”. This race group indicated the largest sensitivity towards the influence of staff attitude and their product knowledge on their decision to purchase at a KFC outlet (Table 3), where the p-value = 0.000). This implies that black consumers consider different factors before a decision is made to purchase at a KFC outlet. One factor is

whether personnel are committed to creating a service-oriented culture. This includes the ability of personnel to deliver a service in a fast and efficient manner with a friendly smile, whether they are motivated to perform their tasks, and whether they are visible in a clean uniform. Furthermore, the white, coloured and Indian race groups indicated a lower level of sensitivity towards the influence of KFC personnel on their decision to purchase at a KFC outlet. This implies that a weaker relationship exists between these race groups and the construct personnel compared to the black race group (Table 3). These race groups will continue to purchase from KFC even when the customer service level offered by its personnel falls below the accepted standard. The decision to make a purchase by the white, coloured and Indian race groups is out of preference for the KFC brand.

Race and physical evidence: The different race groups in the study vary with regard to the influence of physical evidence on their decision to purchase products at a KFC outlet. The black race group indicated strongly that physical evidence will have an influence on their decision to purchase

from KFC. A strong relationship therefore, exists between this race group and the construct "physical evidence" (Table 3a), where the p-value = 0.001). This group will consider various aspects relating to physical evidence before a decision to purchase is made. These aspects are whether a KFC outlet has a parking area for motor vehicles, whether the menu board inside an outlet clearly indicates the different prices for food products, whether the layout of furniture inside the outlet encourages the consumer to eat inside the outlet, and whether the temperature inside the outlet is well controlled to create a positive climate for purchases. In addition, although white, coloured and Indian race groups do consider physical evidence to make a purchase decision at a KFC outlet, these race groups will continue to purchase from the fast food brand even when their needs are not satisfied in terms of the factors previously listed. This is an indication that there is a smaller relationship between these race groups and the construct physical evidence (Table 3b). The decision to make a purchase by the white, coloured and Indian race groups could be more out of necessity, convenience or support for the fast food brand.

Race and processes: Both black and white respondents are influenced by service delivery and customer complaint management procedures of KFC outlets. A strong relationship exists between these two race groups and the construct "processes", where the p-value = 0.000, 0.005. These race groups further highlighted a broad spectrum of factors that will influence them to purchase from KFC. These factors are whether KFC (through its available outlets) has the ability to shorten the customer waiting time during the food delivery process; whether it supports their service delivery process through the use of new technology; whether it offers a high quality service in a friendly and professional manner; whether its service delivery processes are able to meet service demand variations; and whether the drive-through service at a KFC outlet provides customers with a shorter waiting time. The coloured and Indian race groups stated that their purchase decision is not directly influenced by the factors previously listed. These race groups stated that their decision to make a purchase at a KFC outlet was influenced by friends and the availability of money to spend. There is therefore no relationship between these two race groups and the construct "processes".

Gender

Gender and product: Females stand out in their agreement that product quality and product variety influences their decision to purchase products from KFC outlets. The reasons being that both married and single females consider the nutritional value of KFC products (that is, how

healthy is it?) and the preferences of family members (for example a husband, children, brother, sister, father and/or mother) and friends for whom they make purchases at these outlets. The males said that their decision to purchase from KFC outlets was influenced by the quality of the products available at the time of purchase, as well as the variety of food products. However, males indicated that their decision to purchase could be more strongly influenced by the time they have for lunch and the availability of money. A strong relationship therefore, exist between both female and male customers of KFC products and the construct "product", where the p-value = 0.001, 0.023.

Gender and price: From the results, it became clear that females are more sensitive than males to prices charged for food products when making a purchase from KFC. This illustrates that females are sensitive towards price increases, as well as product promotions that include price discounts and price differentiation when making a KFC fast food purchase. Males indicated that their decision to purchase from KFC outlets was influenced by the price charged for their food products. However, price is just one indicator that influences the decision of male consumers to purchase from a KFC outlet. The decision of male consumers to purchase KFC food products could also be influenced by factors such as the need for food (for example the consumer being driven by hunger), the location of the outlet (for example a closer outlet would be selected due to convenience, although prices might be higher than those of competitors), product preference, as well as product variety. The results indicate that a relationship exists between both female and male customers of KFC products and the construct "price", where the p-value = 0.017, 0.010.

Gender and place: The female respondents in the study indicated that they consider the location of a KFC outlet to be an important factor when making a decision to purchase. This implies that females consider specific aspects relating to the location of a KFC outlet when making a purchase decision. These aspects are the location of an outlet in relation to other shops regularly visited, the availability of parking for motor vehicles at the outlet, and the visibility and accessibility of an outlet from the road. A strong relationship exists between female customers of KFC food products and the construct "place", where the p-value = 0.001. The study further indicates that males do not seem to consider the location of a KFC outlet when making a purchase decision. Males will therefore, make a purchase decision to purchase from an outlet whether or not such an outlet is closely located to their homes or place of work. The factors relating to place that are important to female respondents in the study do not necessarily have an influence on the

Table 4. The individual mean and p values for the different gender groups in the study.

| Gender | Product | | Price | | Place | | Promotion | | Personnel | | Physical evidence | | Process | |
|--------|---------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value |
| Male | 3.788 | *0.023 | 3.988 | *0.017 | 2.677 | 0.059 | 2.996 | 0.061 | 2.445 | 0.069 | 4.233 | *0.010 | 2.877 | 0.067 |
| Female | 4.223 | *0.001 | 4.337 | *0.010 | 4.022 | *0.001 | 4.336 | *0.000 | 4.006 | *0.005 | 4.245 | *0.000 | 4.533 | *0.000 |

* A relationship exists between the construct and the biographical variable "gender".

purchasing decisions of the male respondents. There is therefore, no relationship between the male consumers of KFC products and the construct "place" (Table 4).

Gender and promotion: Female respondents indicated that their decision to purchase from a KFC retailer is influenced by the promotional campaigns of the KFC brand. This implies that females consider various factors when making a purchase at a KFC outlet. These factors are the advertisements of KFC food products in news articles and on national television, promotional information inside a KFC outlet, the incentives available at KFC outlets (for example price discounts), and positive word-of-mouth recommendations from friends, relatives and colleagues when making a purchasing decision. A strong relationship can be identified between the female gender group and the construct "promotion", where the p-value = 0.000. The decision of males to purchase from a KFC outlet is not directly influenced by promotions. This indicates that males do not wait for promotions to make a purchase from a KFC outlet. The factors that are considered to be essential by females do not have a direct influence on the purchasing decisions of males in the study. The decision amongst male consumers

to purchase from a KFC outlet is influenced by factors such as the convenience of a prepared meal, quick access to a fast food meal (that is it does not take a long time to prepare the meal), as well as the value for money principle where males perceive the portions of fast food products to be in relation to the price paid. A relationship between male consumers and the construct "promotion", could not be identified (Table 4a).

Gender and personnel: The manner in which personnel deliver a service to customers influences females more than males when making a purchase decision from a KFC outlet. Female consumers of KFC products are more sensitive towards certain factors relating to personnel when making a purchase from a KFC fast food retailer than their male counterparts. These factors are the cleanliness of personnel, the willingness of personnel to assist customers, the ability of personnel to deliver a fast and efficient service to customers, the knowledge of personnel regarding new products that are available, and the ability of personnel to provide customers with information about menu items, ingredients and preparation. Females will be encouraged to make a purchase from a KFC retailer when they perceive its personnel to have sound product knowledge, as

well as positive people management skills. Females gather information from many sources such as children, news articles and magazines before making a purchase decision from a KFC supplier. Females will also be motivated to purchase or increase their purchase volume from a KFC outlet when promotions are communicated to them by personnel of the outlet. From the results, a relationship could be identified between the female gender and the construct "personnel", where the p-value = 0.005. Male consumers are not directly influenced by the communication skills and the level of professionalism of personnel when making a purchase from a KFC outlet. Therefore, this illustrates that males will purchase from a KFC fast food retailer even if they are not satisfied with the manner in which personnel interact with them. The decision among males to make a purchase is the availability of a ready meal, since they do not have to cook. A relationship between the male gender and the construct "personnel" could therefore, not be identified (Table 4b).

Gender and physical evidence: The results illustrate that both males and females are influenced by physical evidence when making a purchase decision from a KFC retailer, although female consumers are more sensitive to such an

influence. Both genders consider two pertinent factors relating to physical evidence in their decision to make a purchase from a KFC outlet. These factors are that the surroundings around the outlets should be clean, and signage should be clearly visible.

The responses from both male and female respondents further indicated that their consideration of factors of physical evidence is influenced by aspects such as the occasion for making a purchase decision, and the season in which the purchasing decision is made. The season of a year when a purchase is made can encourage or discourage consumers from eating inside the KFC outlet. The atmosphere inside the outlet (the type of music played, the length of a queue, the crowdedness of the outlet) has an influence on the decision-making ability of a customer to make a purchase. Both male and female respondents highlighted that a lack of available facilities for children to play at a KFC outlet encourages them to purchase from a competing fast-food brand that does offer such facilities. According to the results, a relationship between both genders and the construct "physical evidence" could be identified, where the p-value = 0.010 and 0.000.

Gender and processes: The decision of female consumers as opposed to male consumers to purchase from a KFC outlet is more pertinently influenced by the quality of service delivery by employees. Females consider two aspects of service delivery before a decision is made to purchase from a KFC fast food retailer. These aspects are whether the KFC retailer offers a high quality service in a friendly and professional manner to customers, and whether customer complaints are well managed to ensure a high level of customer satisfaction. Male respondents, on the other hand, illustrated that their purchase decision is not directly influenced by the factors previously highlighted. A relationship could be identified between female consumers and the construct "processes", where the p-value = 0.000. The male respondents indicated that their decision to purchase from a KFC outlet is influenced by aspects such as hunger, the variety of food products offered by the KFC retailer, as well as the availability of an already prepared meal. Male respondents stated that processes such as service delivery do not have a direct influence on their decision to purchase from a KFC supplier. According to the results, a relationship does not exist between the male consumers of KFC products and the construct "personnel" (Table 4).

Age

Demographic factor 3 examines the age of the respondents. This information is necessary to enable the researcher to obtain information on the differences which

the different age groups have regarding the seven elements of the extended marketing mix. This is illustrated by Table 5.

Age and product: The age group 20 to 35 was the most prominent in their agreement and disagreement that the quality and variety of food products on offer directly influence their decision to purchase products at a KFC outlet. In addition, consumers in the age groups younger than 19 and between 36 and 50 years of age indicated a lower level of sensitivity towards the influence of product quality and product variety on their decision to purchase KFC food. They did, however, indicate that this depends on the time of purchase, their reason for purchasing, as well as their mood at the time of making the purchase. From the results a relationship could be identified between the age groups younger than 19, 20 to 35 and 36 to 50 years and the construct "product", where the p-value = 0.033, 0.003 and 0.044. The group 51 years and older was the least influenced by the quality and variety of KFC food products on offer when making a purchase decision. A relationship between this age group and the construct "product" could therefore, not be identified.

Age and price: The age group 20 to 35 is the most sensitive to price when making a KFC fast food purchase. This indicates that this age group is sensitive towards price increases, as well as product promotions that include price discounts, when making a purchase at a KFC outlet. Consumers who are in the age groups younger than 19 and between 36 to 50 years indicated that their decision to purchase KFC food products is influenced by the price charged for their products. This implies that during times of special price promotions on products, these age groups strongly consider buying from a KFC retailer or even to purchase more volumes from a KFC outlet at any given time. A relationship could be identified between the age groups younger than 19 years, 20 to 35 and 36 to 50 years and the construct "product", where the p-value = 0.022, 0.000 and 0.033. The age group 51 years and older was the least influenced by price as a factor that influences their decision to purchase KFC fast food products. This therefore implies that this age group indicated a stronger inclination to be loyal towards KFC brand, even when it increases the price charged for a product. Special price promotions would also not motivate or deter this age group to purchase more or less from a KFC supplier. A relationship could not be identified between this age group and the construct "price".

Age and place: The age group 20 to 35 puts the most emphasis on the location of the KFC outlet when making a purchase decision. This implies that this age group

Table 5. The individual mean and p values for the different gender groups in the study.

| Age (years) | Product | | Price | | Place | | Promotion | | Personnel | | Physical evidence | | Process | |
|-------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value | Mean | P-value |
| <19 | 3.001 | *0.033 | 3.122 | *0.022 | 2.988 | 0.644 | 2.777 | 0.062 | 2.774 | 0.057 | 3.005 | *0.033 | 2.445 | 0.077 |
| 20-35 | 4.010 | *0.003 | 3.998 | *0.000 | 4.112 | *0.000 | 4.221 | *0.001 | 4.332 | *0.000 | 3.112 | *0.042 | 4.133 | *0.001 |
| 36-50 | 3.111 | *0.044 | 3.007 | *0.033 | 2.887 | 0.555 | 2.788 | 0.074 | 2.667 | 0.066 | 3.334 | *0.027 | 3.001 | 0.053 |
| ≥51 | 2.554 | 0.614 | 2.886 | 0.588 | 2.665 | 0.613 | 2.554 | 0.066 | 2.884 | 0.062 | 3.067 | *0.033 | 3.112 | 0.063 |

* A relationship exists between the construct and the biographical variable “age”.

considers different aspects when making a purchase decision from a KFC supplier. These aspects are the proximity of the KFC outlet to their home or work place, the suburb in which the outlet is located, the emotional effort, the physical effort and the psychological effort it would take to reach the outlet, whether friends, family members or colleagues purchase from the outlet in a specific location, the safety aspect related to the environment in which the outlet is located, and the accessibility of the outlet in terms of human and motor vehicle traffic. A relationship therefore, exists between the age group 20 to 35 years and the construct “place”, where the p-value = 0.000.

In addition, the age groups younger than 19, between 36 to 50 and 51 years and older do not seem to consider the location of a KFC outlet when making a purchase decision. This therefore, illustrates that these age groups will make a purchase decision from a KFC supplier irrespective of its location. The factors that are important to consumers in the 20 to 35 years age group, do not have a direct influence on the purchasing decisions of the other three age categories in the study. The decision to make a purchase by the age groups younger than 19, 36 to 50 years and older than 51 years is more habitual in nature,

motivated by necessity rather than the location of the KFC retailer. There is therefore, no relationship between the age groups younger than 19, 36 to 50 years and older than 51 years and the construct “place” (Table 5).

Age and promotion: The age group 20 to 35 is the most sensitive to KFC promotions when making a purchasing decision. This age group is therefore, the most strongly influenced by promotions, and will pertinently consider promotions when making a purchasing decision from a KFC supplier. This age group considers various aspects when making a purchase decision at a KFC outlet. These aspects are the context of the promotion offered by KFC retailers (for example price or product promotional), the added advantage to the consumer that will be derived from the promotion (for example decreased prices, additional value through a larger portion of meat; an added soft drink, entry into a competition), whether the promotion adds value to the individual purchasing the product, or whether the value is extended to the whole family, and whether the promotional effort of a KFC retailer includes the introduction of new products. A relationship

therefore, exists between the age group 20 to 35 years and the construct “promotion”, where the p-value = 0.001.

It is furthermore important to note that the age groups younger than 19, between 36 to 50 and 51 years and older are not motivated to make a purchase from a KFC supplier based on a KFC promotional campaign. Therefore, these age groups will make a purchase at a KFC outlet irrespective of whether there is a promotion running. The factors that are important to consumers in the 20 to 35 years age group do not have a direct influence on the purchasing decisions of the other three age categories in the study. The decision to make a purchase by the age groups younger than 19, 36 to 50 years and older than 51 years is more out of habit and supported by the primary need to purchase food for survival, than a promotional initiative by a KFC retailer to stimulate purchases. No relationship could be identified between the age groups younger than 19, between 36 to 50 and 51 years and older and the construct “promotion” (Table 5).

Age and personnel: The finding stipulates that the approach of personnel, working in a KFC retail

setting, towards the age group 20 to 35, influences their decision to purchase from the retailer. This age group is the most sensitive towards the manner in which personnel address aspects such as their service requirements (Do employees deliver a fast and efficient service?), the approach of employees towards their friends and family making a purchase, the product knowledge of the personnel (for example knowledge on menu items, ingredients and preparation procedures and time), and the friendliness of employees (for example willingness to serve a customer with a smile).

The 20 to 35 age groups will also be motivated to make a purchase at a KFC outlet if they are able to identify with the people skills, behaviour and hygienic standards of personnel. There is a definite indication amongst the members of this age group to gather information on the aspects previously highlighted, before a purchase decision is made. Such information can be obtained from family members, friends or colleagues who have purchased a product from the KFC brand before. The concept of word-of-mouth is therefore, relevant and the reason being that customers between 20 and 35 years of age indicated that they will respect the opinion of others when making a purchasing decision. This is especially relevant if it relates to the level of service being offered by personnel working at the different outlets of a KFC supplier. A relationship therefore, exists between the age group 20 to 35 years and the construct "personnel", where the p-value = 0.000.

The results further state that the age groups younger than 19, between 36 to 50 and 51 years and older are not influenced to make a purchase at a KFC outlet based purely on the level of service delivery by personnel. These age groups will therefore, purchase at an outlet even if the level of service delivery by employees is not at a standard which they prefer. The decision to make a purchase by the age groups younger than 19, 36 to 50 years and older than 51 years is therefore, more out of need (for example hunger) or because they have a pertinent preference for a specific meat type (for example chicken or beef). A relationship could therefore, not be found between the age groups younger than 19, between 36 to 50 and 51 years and above and the construct "personnel" (Table 5).

Age and physical evidence: All the age groups in the study consider specific aspects in terms of physical evidence. These aspects directly influence their decision-making to purchase products from a KFC retailer. The aspects are the ability of the menu board inside a KFC outlet to clearly indicate the different prices for food products, whether the furnishings inside the outlet are attractive or not, whether the layout inside an outlet encourages the consumer to eat inside the outlet, the architectural design of outlets, and the ability of the temperature inside the outlet to create an environment

that is conducive to purchasing. However, the responses from all four age group categories specified that their ability to consider the aspects above are influenced by their mood at the time of decision-making, the time available for purchasing and eating, the time of day or night that the purchase is made, and whether they purchase for themselves, with or for family, friends or colleagues. When a purchase is made with children, they might motivate or necessitate the parent to consume the food inside the outlet, or the request of a friend or colleague might motivate the purchaser to dine inside an outlet rather than at home. Therefore, a relationship could be established between all the age groups and the construct "physical evidence", where the p-value = 0.033, 0.042, 0.027 and 0,033.

Age and processes: The decision-making ability of the age group 20 to 35 to purchase from a KFC retailer is influenced by the efficiency of procedures it implements in the service delivery process. This age group places an extensive emphasis on specific aspects that will influence their willingness to purchase from a KFC supplier. These aspects are the level of friendliness when a service is delivered, the manner in which customer complaints are addressed and managed, the level of professionalism in the service delivery process and the customer complaint management process, the application of technology to enhance the experience of the customer in the service delivery process, and the time it takes to purchase food and drinks from the drive-through counter at an outlet. According to the results, a relationship could be identified between this age group and the construct "processes", where the p-value = 0.001.

The age group younger than 19, 36 to 51 years and older than 51 years indicated that their purchase decision is not influenced by the aspects previously highlighted. When these age groups need to make a purchase decision from a KFC retailer, the decision will be influenced more pertinently by aspects such as a need for the product, convenience of outlet location, the time frame within which the product can be obtained, as well as recommendations from friends, family and colleagues. All these age groups indicated that a negative previous experience at a KFC outlet (for example unfriendly and uncooperative staff) or the unavailability of the drive-through option at an outlet would motivate them to rather support a competitive fast-food brand. No relationship could therefore, be established between these age groups and the construct "processes" (Table 5).

Relationship between the elements of the extended marketing mix and consumer's intention to purchase at a KFC outlet

The ranked means and overall p values of the different

Table 6. The overall means and p-values for the constructs in the study.

| Construct | Mean | P-value |
|-------------------|--------|---------|
| Product | 3.8607 | 0.000 |
| Price | 3.7177 | 0.000 |
| Place | 3.6649 | 0.000 |
| Promotion | 3.6286 | 0.000 |
| Personnel | 3.6001 | 0.000 |
| Physical evidence | 3.4920 | 0.027 |
| Processes | 3.3120 | 0.041 |

constructs in Table 6 are illustrated. The means indicate which element of the marketing mix has a larger influence when the respondents in the study make a decision to purchase at a KFC outlet. The p-values for the seven constructs in the study indicate that there is an overall relationship between the elements of the marketing mix and consumers' intention to purchase from a KFC supplier.

With regard to the element "product", factors such as the quality of KFC food products (for example the temperature of the food when presented to the consumer, the size of the food offering and the extent to which the spiciness of the food satisfies the needs of the consumer), as well as the packaging in which the food is provided (for example Is the consumer provided with information on product composition and recipes?) are important to the consumer before a decision is made to purchase from a KFC retailer. The provision of a variety of healthy food products also motivates consumers to purchase KFC food products. Against this background, it would seem that the quality, variety and packaging of KFC food products have a large influence on consumers' intention to purchase from a KFC retail chain. This, therefore, emphasises that the management of KFC retail chains should continually ensure that their product quality is of a high standard, that consumers are informed-through the packaging of the product contents of the nutritional value of the food, and that the variety of food products on offer satisfies the needs and wants of consumers. Considering a p-value of 0.000 for this construct, it can be stated that a relationship exists between the construct "product" (product quality, the variety and packaging of food products) and the intention of consumer's to purchase from a KFC supplier.

The respondents in the study have indicated that they are price sensitive and that price discounts (including price coupons) offered at KFC outlets could have an influence on their decision to purchase from the retail chain. The results further illustrate that consumers do consider the "value for money" offering that they receive for the price that they pay. The results of the price construct indicate to the management of KFC fast food

outlets that they could increase their market share if they have more regular price discount offerings to attract consumers. This is especially relevant to consumers in the black market segment, female and 20 to 35 years of age. This finding is consistent with the strong support that respondents in this race, gender and age groups provided towards KFC retailers when promotional campaigns relating to the price are introduced to the market. Considering that a p-value of 0.000 was obtained for this construct, it can be stated that a relationship exists between the construct price and the intention of consumer's to purchase from a KFC outlet.

In terms of place, the accessibility of a KFC outlet by car or on foot, whether the retailer is in close proximity of the consumer, and whether KFC outlets are available in shopping malls are important considerations when a decision is made to purchase a meal from a KFC supplier. In addition, the decision-making ability of consumers is also influenced by the availability of their preferred food products. Finally, it is essential for the management of the KFC retail brand to ensure that their outlets are in close proximity to their target market to ensure continued support and market growth. Considering that a p-value of 0.000 was obtained for this construct, it can be stated that a relationship exists between the construct "personnel" and the intention of consumer's to purchase from a KFC supplier.

In terms of promotion, respondents indicated that they prefer to obtain information about KFC food products from various advertising mediums. Such mediums should create awareness of available food products at KFC outlets, should raise the knowledge of the general public on the food products on offer by a KFC retailer, and should clearly indicate which sales promotional offerings are available, the time period, as well as from which outlet (that is where the outlet is located?). It is also important for KFC suppliers to use internal promotions to inform consumers about new food products on offer, as well as special price offerings. This could enhance the sales turnover of the KFC supplier over a specified time period. The management of the KFC retail group therefore needs to advertise in different advertising media to inform their whole target market (that is in terms of race, gender and age), and should also use internal promotions to inform consumers about the different product offerings on special. The age group 20 to 35 specifically indicated a strong preference for word-of-mouth as a medium to influence their decision to purchase from a KFC outlet. Interestingly, the age group younger than nineteen stated that their interest in a KFC supplier could be enhanced if new technology communications mediums such as Facebook and Twitter were used to communicate promotions on products. Considering that a p-value of 0.000 was obtained for this construct, it can be stated that a relationship exists between the construct "place" and the intention of consumer's to purchase from a KFC outlet.

With regard to personnel, the research results indicate

that consumers are influenced by the ability of employees to deliver a fast and friendly service. The knowledge of staff on menu items, product ingredients as well as the maintenance of high hygienic standards when preparing and serving food products to consumers, have an influential role on consumer's decision-making to purchase from a KFC outlet. Considering this information, the management of KFC retail needs to consistently focus on hiring only qualified and experienced staff members to ensure that the aforementioned expectations are met. It is furthermore evident from the results that KFC outlets should also have personnel who are clean and neat, as well as professionally dressed. Considering that a p-value of 0.000 was obtained for this construct, it can be stated that a relationship exists between the construct "place" and the intention of consumer's to purchase from the KFC brand.

Relating to physical evidence, respondents stated that aspects such as the architectural design of the KFC outlet, the type of furniture inside the outlet, the temperature and the music played inside an outlet at the time of purchase do have a direct influence on consumers' decision to purchase KFC food products. Therefore, considering that a p-value of 0.027 was obtained for this construct, it can be stated that a relationship does exist between the construct "physical evidence" and the intention of consumers to purchase from a KFC outlet.

Finally, with regard to processes, the results illustrate that, considering all the elements in the extended marketing mix, consumers place the least emphasis on the complaints handling process and the availability of new technology to deliver a customer service. Despite this outcome, the management of the KFC brand should not neglect their responsibility to resolve customer complaints in a fast and efficient manner to ensure increased customer satisfaction and support. Although respondents did not place a high value on this element of the extended marketing mix, it remains a competitive, differentiating factor in the fast-food industry. Therefore, considering that a p-value of 0.041 was obtained for this construct, it can be stated that a relationship does exist between the construct processes and the intention of consumers' to purchase from a KFC outlet.

The empirical results therefore suggest that:

1. H_{01} be rejected and H_{a1} be accepted. Race groups do perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase KFC products differently.
2. H_{02} be rejected and H_{a2} be accepted. Gender groups do perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase from a KFC outlet differently.
3. H_{03} be rejected and H_{a3} be accepted. Age groups do perceive the influence of the elements of the extended marketing mix on their intention to purchase KFC food products differently.

4. H_{04} be rejected and H_{a4} be accepted. There is a relationship between the elements of the extended marketing mix and consumers' intention to purchase from the KFC brand.

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The increased competitiveness of the fast-food industry in South Africa necessitates the management of KFC retail chains in South Africa to become more aware of the influence which the elements of the extended marketing mix have on consumers' intention to purchase from them. There should be a greater awareness amongst KFC retail management of the importance to continuously be involved in the development of new products, the purpose of which should be to meet the specific needs of consumers. It is furthermore, also essential for the management of the KFC brand in South Africa to improve on the quality of their products, and also to experiment with product ingredients to create new tastes. Such experimentation must be done in conjunction with consumer research to ensure that consumer needs are satisfied over the long-term. This is especially important considering that the black race group, females and consumers between the ages of 20 and 35 clearly indicated a strong focus on healthy food products when deciding to purchase from a KFC outlet. A greater awareness of the health preferences of these consumer groups when marketing KFC food products could enhance their level of customer satisfaction and retention. South Africans have become increasingly health conscious over the past decade, and the adaptation of the KFC product menu to reflect a wider variety of products with a health focus (for example a larger variety of salad products, ice cream offerings with a lower sugar content and chicken pieces prepared with steam rather than baked in oil) could enhance customer support amongst health conscious consumers. Furthermore, the marketing management team of the KFC brand should also ensure that a stronger focus on food product variety could involve the introduction of different varieties of mash potato and gravy options, an increase in the flavour options for the twister meal, the use of different cheese types, or a combination thereof (for example Mozzarella, Feta and blue cheese) for the production of veggie bites as well as an increase in both the size and flavour options for their ice cream offerings. In addition, packaging should also display information on both the ingredients and nutritional value of food products for the perusal of consumers. The logo of the KFC brand should also be different from the colour of the box to eliminate the use of coordinating colours on the box, and to promote the food products. It is important therefore, to develop packages that maintain the freshness of the food products for a longer time. Managers at KFC outlets also need to be aware that the colour of the bags that are

used by consumers to carry the food products purchased is not perceived as attractive. It is therefore, recommended that these bags should be produced in colour and with handles to ensure better carrying ability. In terms of price, KFC should become more conscious of the sensitivity of the black race, female gender, and 20 to 35 age groups towards the prices charged for food products. These consumer groups indicated a strong willingness to purchase from KFC outlets when discounts are offered (for example price promotions) or when prices charged are perceived as affordable. To stimulate growth in this market segment, KFC needs to consider revising the prices of food products such as burgers, twister meals and cold drinks, because they are considered to be expensive by these consumer groups. Furthermore, married females also indicated that the size and the price of the kid's meal offered by KFC need to be reduced, since the current size is too large for children to consume, resulting in wastage. By considering this recommendation, KFC illustrates an awareness of consumer suggestions to improve product development which could enhance consumer satisfaction levels, thereby customer loyalty. It is therefore, necessary for the management of the KFC brand to become increasingly proactive in ensuring continued growth and customer support through the offering of increased product promotions and price discounts at their outlets.

To enhance brand awareness amongst customers, the management of KFC need to strengthen the visibility of their outlets. This is especially relevant in areas such as SOWETO where the purchasing power of black consumers has increased over the past decade. The management of KFC also needs to consider accessing student centres at university campuses in South Africa to enhance their presence amongst generation Y consumers. Currently, this consumer group is a growing market segment of KFC fast food products and needs to be stimulated by providing convenient access for purchasing. Furthermore, both female consumers as well as consumers in the age group 20 to 35 also indicated that aspects such as the proximity of a KFC outlet to their work place or home influence their decision to purchase from the fast-food retail chain. The management of KFC also needs to ensure that all their outlets offer a drive-through option to enhance the speed of service delivery. The introduction of mobile KFC outlets for hospitals, prisons and office blocks can also be considered by the management of KFC to strengthen the competitive position, visibility and accessibility of the fast-food retailer in a highly competitive market. It is therefore, emphasised that the approach of KFC in South Africa should be to bring outlets to the consumer, rather than the consumer to it. The marketing managers of the KFC brand also need to rigorously advertise in local news articles and use price discounts to promote their food products against those of competitors. These promotional media are relevant when the KFC brand wants to strengthen

their relationship with current female consumers, as well as customers between the ages of 20 and 35. The reason being that they specifically, consider local news article advertisements and price discounts when a decision to purchase from a KFC outlet is made. In addition, females also indicated that they use word-of-mouth recommendations from friends, relatives and colleagues to influence their decision to purchase from a KFC outlet. The management of KFC in South Africa therefore, needs to ensure that the level of service delivery to consumers, as well as the quality and variety of products available (especially where the target market becomes more health conscious) is based on the preferences of the target market. It is only when the needs and wants of customers are satisfied, that they would be willing to communicate their experience to colleagues, family and friends in a positive manner. Therefore, considering the competitive nature of the fast-food industry in South Africa, it is also recommended to the management of KFC to use creative mediums such as electronic billboards on freeways and highways, new-age mediums such as cellular phone advertising and community promotions (for example at schools, universities and shopping centres) to promote products to the public. Increased community involvement to enhance the KFC brand amongst the South African public through sponsorships, donations and fund-raising initiatives, can stimulate the awareness of KFC products amongst the local population. Through these efforts, KFC can enhance the support of South Africans for their products.

To ensure its survival in an ever-changing market environment, KFC should secure the continuous training of employees on aspects such as product knowledge (inclusive of aspects such as the ingredients used in the production of a specific product – specifically if requested by a health conscious consumer) and interpersonal and communication skills. This is especially relevant when considering that consumers in the black race group, who are female and in the age group 20 to 35 indicated that service delivery has a direct influence on their decision to purchase from a KFC outlet. To enhance a relationship with these consumer groups, KFC would need to ensure that its staff delivers a service to consumers in an efficient and friendly manner, that their knowledge on products offered to the market is comprehensive and that products are delivered in an environment that is perceived to be hygienic by the consumer. In addition, this is furthermore important considering that KFC could use service delivery as a competitive advantage over competitors when product quality and variety are widely used as a means of differentiation in the industry. It therefore, remains important for the management of KFC in South Africa to ensure that employees are professionally trained to deal with demanding customers during peak business hours (for example between 13:00 to 14:00 and 17:00 to 20:00). It is in the interest of KFC to take cognisance of this, since the largest proportions of

purchases are conducted during these hours. The ability of KFC to satisfy customer needs will be primarily tested during this time segment. In addition, it is furthermore recommended that the management of KFC should ensure the hiring of employees who illustrate initiative by being sensitive to customer needs and wants, and who do not only rely on policies and procedures.

To enhance the customer experience inside a KFC outlet, the use of audio-visual aids on the menu board in all outlets should be enhanced. This would allow KFC to provide more information on the menu board to inform customers about special offerings, as well as new products to be introduced. The management of KFC also needs to ensure that their outlets are more spacious to allow for easier movement of people inside the outlet, and to introduce large tables and comfortable chairs for more convenient dining. In addition, an increased number of play rooms for children need to be introduced to eliminate congestion. A video screen with sound options could also be attached to the dining room tables inside the outlet to enable parents to monitor their children inside the play room whilst enjoying their food products. To strengthen their competitive edge, the management of KFC also need to introduce a delivery option to customers who want to place an order and have it delivered to their homes. This would enhance the customer service experience of consumers and also increase the market share of KFC in the long term. To enhance the strong level of support currently provided by the black, middle-income target segment for KFC products, the management of KFC in South Africa should ensure that the needs of this consumer group are addressed. A pertinent focus need to be provided on aspects such as the availability of sufficient parking at KFC outlets, the layout of furniture inside an outlet should encourage the consumer to eat inside the outlet, and the temperature inside the outlet should be controlled to stimulate a positive experience when visiting the fast-food retail chain. By addressing these issues, the management of KFC would be able to strengthen their relationship with this growing segment of the market and secure long-term customer loyalty. Furthermore, KFC also needs to consider the installation of vending machines within KFC outlets to ensure that customers are not standing in long queues for cold drinks when deciding to purchase them. This is especially relevant when consumers decide to purchase a cold drink after they have purchased their food products.

Finally, to secure a competitive advantage through service delivery, the management of KFC needs to ensure that employees deliver a service in a professional manner, characterised by friendliness and efficiency. A stronger sensitivity is also required by both employees and management of KFC in South Africa towards customer complaints, and that such complaints are managed in a manner that will secure customer satisfaction. At outlet level, customer complaints should be privately

handled by the outlet manager, outside of the public view to secure privacy. If a complaint cannot be resolved at outlet level, it should be directed to the head office to secure a speedy resolution. Customers should be provided with an answer to a complaint within 24 h. Technology should also be applied more pertinently to enhance the experience of the customer in the service delivery process. This could be in the form of SMS or e-mail notification to the consumer after a complaint was lodged and assessed. Finally, the time it takes to purchase food and drinks from the drive-through counter at a KFC outlet needs to be decreased to ensure a faster turnover of customers. However, this needs to be managed in a manner that will still secure the delivery of a friendly and professional service to ensure long-term customer satisfaction.

Conclusion

The management of KFC in South Africa should be aware of the fact that race, gender and age groups are influenced differently by the elements of the extended marketing mix when considering a purchase from a KFC outlet. In terms of race, the results clearly illustrate that the black race group is the most sensitive towards the quality and variety of products offered, as well as the price charged for food products. A stronger focus on promotional campaigns that focus on price discounts should be considered to stimulate product purchases. This is especially relevant considering that the black consumer group in South Africa is the largest supporters of KFC products in the country. Female consumers illustrated a strong focus on the quality of food offerings, indicated sensitivity towards price, viewed the level of service delivery by employees as having an important influence on their future decision making of KFC food purchases and prefer a fast food outlet that provides a play room for their children.

Finally, in terms of age, the age group 20 to 35 illustrated a pertinent focus on product quality as well as product choice before they make a purchase at a KFC outlet. This age group is also price sensitive which could indicate that they would be more interested to purchase from a KFC outlet during promotional campaigns that focus on price discounts. Strategies to improve the health component of KFC food products, as well as a continuous advancement of product variety to reach an ever growing diverse target market, is necessary to stimulate demand and thereby enhance target market growth. Ultimately, this will contribute to the success of the KFC brand, which will ensure a growth in outlet numbers and ultimately also contribute to job creation.

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