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Impact of Motivators of Spreading Food and Beverage Rumors of Fast Food Restaurants' Brand Name on Customers' Loyalty

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Keywords

- Food and Beverage Rumors
- Motivators of spreading Rumors
- Customers' Loyalty
- Fast-food Restaurants' Brand Name

Abstract

Rumors are often happen unexpectedly and can cause substantial damage to brand name, including loss of reputation, reduced sales, damaged corporate credibility, and impacted on customers' loyalty. Rumors are often shared in the marketplace about fast food restaurants brand name. These rumors have got communicated from customer to customer and social media. This research aims to assess the impact of motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors on customers' loyalty of fast-food restaurants' brand names. A quantitative approach was adopted in this research. A web-based questionnaire for a sample of customers by using stratified random sampling (700 participants) of fast-food restaurant's brand names (326 restaurants) in Greater Cairo (Internal Trade Development Authority, 2022, Egyptian Hotel Association, 2022). These restaurants were in MDS, KEF, DOP, PIH, SW, BK, WE'S, HA'S, ST'S, CHL'S and TAB restaurants located in Greater Cairo. SPSS V. 22 was used to analyze data. Descriptive statistics, One-sample T-test, and linear regression coefficients were used to analyze the research data. The results revealed that the motivators of food and beverage rumors as anxiety management motivators ($\beta = 0.361$, Sig. = 0.000), information sharing motivators ($\beta = 0.474$, Sig. = 0.000), relationship management motivators ($\beta = 0.528$, Sig. = 0.000), and self enhancement motivators ($\beta = 0.556$, Sig. = 0.000) have a positive statistically significant influence on customers' Loyalty of fast-food restaurants' brand names. This research provided valuable recommendations to enhance loyalty for customers of these restaurants.

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1. Introduction

It is fundamental for brand name to keep their customers loyal and rumors has the ability to endanger customer loyalty. However, how rumors has impacted customer loyalty is not known. There were studies that investigated the effect of rumors on customers attitude (Sanyal and Datta, 2011; Emari et al., 2012; Abdullah and Singam, 2014; Tseng and Nguyen, 2020; Demestichas et al., 2020), however research on how rumors have influenced consumer loyalty in particular have not been done yet. For fast food restaurant brand name, it is significant to gain loyal customers and to keep their loyalty. This is because having loyal customers has various advantages, for instance it is more cost effective to keep a sustainable customer base (Bassegy, 2014). Rumors has various unwanted consequences for fast food restaurants' brand name, since it can damage multiple aspects of it (Cheung and Lee, 2012; Fox, 2013; Parikh 2014), For example, rumors could change the way a customer has thought about a restaurant in a negative sense. Unfortunately, in today's society brand name scandals become more and more evident and as a result, incidents of rumors are widely prevalent in the marketplace (Yang, 2016) Through mass media, the internet and social media, a restaurants crisis and rumors cannot be hold secret for very long (Hegner et al., 2017).

However, information shared among customers often included highly harmful rumors on brands. Well-known companies, like McDonald's, Proctor and Gamble have suffered significantly in terms of lost sales, lack of confidence as well as damaged reputation due to the spread of wrong rumors (Aditya, 2014; Friggeri et al., 2014, McCreadie et al., 2015; Choi and Seo, 2019).

For instance, McDonald's suffered from a wrong news statement that they used ground worms as filler in their all-beef patties to minimize cost and as a consequence customer became infected with parasitic round worms. Kentucky Fried Chicken dealt with a trick claiming that they applied converted chickens for their products (Tseng and Nguyen, 2020).

Mills and Robson (2019) declared that both the rumors were revealed to be hoaxes, they had a sharply negative effect on the financial performance and brand image of the company. While discussing food rumors. Zhu et al. (2017) illustrated that major giant restaurants, like Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's were using Sudan red dye and poisonous oil, respectively. These components were reported to cause cancer to the customers, as well as other deadly diseases. These incidents significantly affected customers' perception and total image of these brands that lastly resulted in reduced sales.

Rumors led customers to not patronize the target brands, and resulted in devastating consequences, such as damaged reputation consumer confidence, damaged brand image and sometimes, complete boycott of the target company's brands (Choi and Seo, 2021). Managing the rumors in like troubled market cases was therefore, one of the most challenging tasks that have encountered marketing managers and public relations practitioners as they try to recover the trust of customers in like crisis cases (Tilbury, 2017).The current research aims to assess the impact of motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors on customers' loyalty of fast-food restaurants' brand names. This aim could be divided into two objectives as follows:

1. To identify the motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors of fast-food restaurants' brand name.
2. To examine the influence of food and beverage rumors' motivators of fast-food restaurants' brand name on customers' loyalty.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Motivators for Rumors Sharing

These motivators have been specified based on the motivations for people to engage in rumor sharing. These motivators become the foundation for this research. Literature suggested that the major motivator's rumor were (i) relationship management, (ii) anxiety management, (iii) information sharing, and (iv) self enhancement (Sudhir and Unnithan, 2019). These motivators are explained as follows:

2.1.1 Anxiety Management Motivators

The anxiety management motivation proposed that the people shared a rumor as a mechanism to manage their anxiety and to have a better control over the case (Zhang et al., 2022). In situations of uncertainty and decrease of formal information, people engaged in informal information sharing and collective problem solving. Uncertainty is defined as a psychological case of unbelief about what current events, mean or what future events are likely to occur (Bordia and DiFonzo, 2004; Kumar & Nayak, 2019; Hofman, 2020).

2.1.2 Information Sharing Motivators

People usually share rumors to link to a process of sense making and discovering explanations. In cases where there is no official explanation, people will have shared rumors to make sense of the situation, in many cases rumors acted as a readymade explanation to the situation. Often rumors are used by small groups to share information and expand explanations of uncertain cases (Ansari, 2019). Rumor transmission is also a process for sharing valued data (Gan et al., 2016). Information sharing motivation is one of the most essential motivators to communicate a rumor between customers (Qin et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2022). Rumors were shared as they encouraged anxiety and interest and hence became good conversation subjects. This, in turn, has aided in the development of the best relationships (Hofman, 2020).

2.1.3 Relationship Management Motivators

Rumor sharing activity would be motivated depending on the impact it would have on the relationship goals. People have shared rumors to boost the chances of a long-term relation (Difonzo & Bordia, 2017).

A negative rumor would be shared with a friend if considered beneficial to the friend – in preventing bad outcomes (Choi & Seo, 2021). In cases of low information availability, people would share rumors with objective to be socially accepted for possessing this information (Hofman, 2020).

2.1.4 Self Enhancement Motivators

The self-enhancement objective indicated the desire feel good about oneself. Gan et al. (2016) & Sudhir and Unnithan (2019) have highlighted the role of aware spread of rumors as well as rumor spread for propaganda. It is clear that these rumors are used to gain the goal of the person or company engaged in rumor sharing. Rumor sharing has also been established to be enhancing self-esteem or self-confidence. Although, the previous quote is in the context of organizations the same is relevant in the marketplace (Loxton et al., 2020).

2.2 Customers' Loyalty

According to the American Marketing Association, a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a mix of them, intended to recognize the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to distinguish them from those of competition (Shrestha et al., 2013; Aftab et al., 2016; Bandyopadhyay and Martell., 2017). For brands, that work to make different kinds of strategies to keep customers, brand

loyalty has a critical value, since the brand is the most important item that a company possesses to differentiate from others (Pourdehghan, 2015).

According to Shobri et al. (2012) declared that brand loyalty is the correlation or deep obligation to a brand, being acknowledged as one of the major drivers of brand equity. Dua et al. (2013) added that brand loyalty presented customer preferences to buy a specific brand; customers believe that the brand offers enjoyable advantages, images, or standards of quality at the correct price. Furthermore, Sanyal and Datta (2011) and Tuan and Rajagopal (2017) declared that brand loyalty reflects the ratio of regular buyers to satisfied buyers who like the product. This is more useful in marketing the product to existing customers because of good brand loyalty it will cost less efforts and money than to attract new customers.

Shobri et al. (2012) stated that the development, keeping, and enhancement of a customer's loyalty across the products are central objectives in marketing activities. Moreover, customer loyalty is a significant determinant in acquiring a sustainable competitive advantage and is a key factor for being profitable as a restaurant (Alexandra and Cerchia, 2018; Susilowati and Novita Sari., 2020). Holding a loyal customer can be ten times cheaper than catching a new one (Milanloo et al., 2016). Hyun and Kim (2011) stated that customer preference across a specific brand relying on the term brand loyalty if a customer purchase a product consistently.

Customer loyalty is one of the most valuable assets of a brand, contributed to the growth of brand equity in various styles: reduced marketing costs, trade leverage, attracting new customers (the word of mouth effect) by recommending the brand to new customers. It has resulted in a rise of brand awareness, and of perceived quality through reinforcement of the brand's high standards (Sanyal & Datta, 2011; Emari et al., 2012; Keller, 2013).

2.3 The influence of spreading rumors of fast food restaurants' brand names on customers' loyalty

Several rumors linked to marketing have been shown on social networks, which have driven financial losses for some restaurants. Marketing rumor is information connected to the marketing performance of the organizations, which are usually tender and wrong, and easily credible by the customers. Some reasons for marketing rumors involved negative customer loyalty across restaurants (Aditya, 2014; Friggeri et al., 2014).

Choi and Seo (2019) added that some brands have done unethical practices to damage their competitors through rumors. The brands themselves, which have made the environment for the emergence of such rumors, as to select a brand name for its product, which has boosted doubts, or did not follow market reactions.

Unluckily, facing the rumor one should sometimes detect more information than otherwise would (Qazvinian et al., 2011; Pal et al., 2017). The company should set priorities, such as maintaining the reputation and averting further damage or keeping information secret. (Mills & Robson, 2019).

2.4 Research Hypothesis

H1: There is a statistically significant positive influence of anxiety management motivators of food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand name on customers' loyalty.

H2: There is a statistically significant positive influence of information sharing motivators of food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand name on customers' loyalty.

H3: There is a statistically significant positive influence of relationship management motivators of food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand name on customers' loyalty.

H4: There is a statistically significant positive influence of self enhancement motivators of food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand name on customers' loyalty.

2.5 Research Conceptual Model

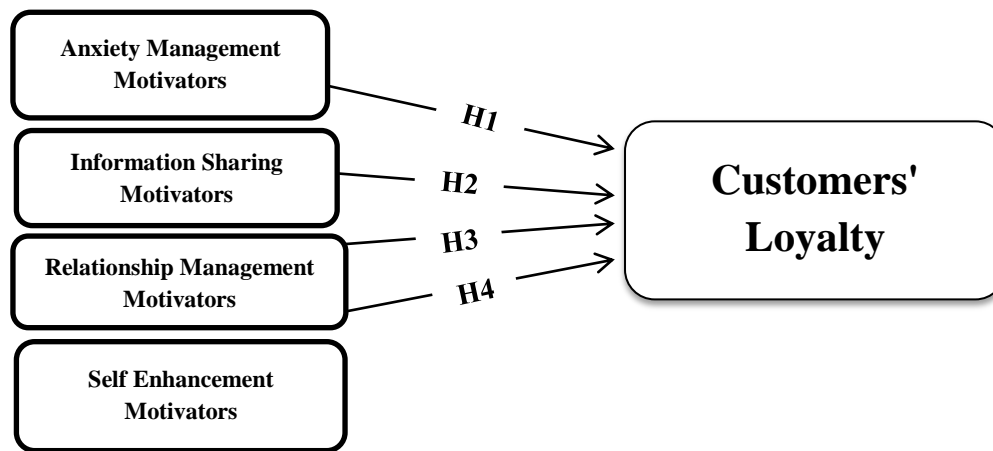


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Model

Source: The Researchers

3. Methodology

The research methodology adopted to test research hypotheses. It presents the research population and sample, data collection tool, data analysis procedures and the statistical tests used. Validity and reliability issues were also addressed in this section. According to Bouvier (2013), Tashakkori et al., (2020) and Gaciu (2021) the quantitative approach was adopted to know the degree of a phenomenon or a specific behavior happened or not, and testing hypotheses. Therefore, the researchers applied the quantitative approach in the current research to assess the aim of the research.

3.1 Research population and sample

The population was a set of people, items, or objects from among which samples were taken for measurement (Bouvier, 2013; Tashakkori et al., 2020). The study population included customers who have visited fast-food restaurants' brand name in Greater Cairo (Cairo, Giza, 6th of October, Qalyubia). The current research used the stratified random sampling method as a sampling technique to collect data from a representative sample. According to Zikmund et al. (2013), stratified random sampling has let researchers to gain a sample population that better performs the whole population being studied. Stratified random sampling has allowed the researchers to make decisions about which elements will best enable to answer the research questions and meet the study objectives.

Stratified random sampling gives you a systematic track of obtaining a population sample that takes into consideration the demographic make-up of the population, which leads to stronger research results (Saunders et al., 2012). This style is equitable for participants as the sample from every stratum can be randomly elected, meaning there is no bias in the process (Adam, 2020; Saunders, 2021).

To gain a statistically representative sample size of the population to generalize the results of the research, Cochran's formula was the common formula for determining the infinite population sample size (Stamatopoulos, 2019) as follows:

$$n = \frac{z^2 p (1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Where: n = sample size; p = variance of the population 50%; e = acceptable sampling error ($e = 0.05$); z = Standards value of 1.96 for confidence level at 95%. Saunders (2021) mentioned that a 5% margin of error was acceptable in the social research. Traditionally, previous social researches have used the 95 percent confidence level (Pearl et al., 2020).

Pilot study is one of the most effective ways in estimating population variance (Azungah, 2018). In this research, the researchers conducted a pilot study consisting of 30 questionnaires to gain the estimated variance value of the population, The researchers relied on motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants variable as one of the most important variables of the research. The variance value of it was 0.50.

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 50\%(1 - 50\%)}{(0.05)^2} = 385 \text{ Respondents}$$

According to El Banaway (2018), Chang and Young (2021) fast food restaurants chains dominated the 25th fast food restaurants ranking in 2021. These fast food chains represented to MDS (fast sandwiches), KEF (Fried Chicken), DOP (Pizza), PIH (Pizza), SW (fast sandwiches), BK (fast sandwiches), WE'S fast sandwiches, HA'S (fast sandwiches), ST'S (fast sandwiches, drinks and desserts), CHL'S (fast sandwiches) and TAB (fast sandwiches). Internal Trade Development Authority (2022), Egyptian Hotel Association (2022) illustrated that the total number of brand name fast food restaurants in greater Cairo is 326 restaurants. In Cairo, there are 202 restaurants which are represented the biggest number of them (61.96 %), followed by Giza that included 63 (19.32 %) restaurants. While in 6th of October, there are 41 restaurants that represents 12.57 %, followed by Qalyubia that involved 20 (6.13 %) restaurants.

3.2 Pilot study

The pilot study was conducted during March 2022 whereby of Arabic questionnaires were distributed before the final ones. The aim of the pilot study was to assure that the questionnaire was well designed; easily understood; to check the reliability of the research tool, refine the statements of the questionnaire.

3.3 Questionnaire Design

A self-administered questionnaire was adopted because it was the most effective and convenient data collection tool for achieving research aim and objectives (Saunders et al., 2016). The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

Section 1: Personal data such as, gender, age, and educational level.

Section 2: Restaurant's information (favorite fast-food restaurant brand name, where do you visit fast-food restaurant brand name in Greater Cairo, how often do you visit a famous fast food restaurant brand name and what are the methods of spreading rumors).

Section 3: It consisted of 27 rating questions by asking each respondent about he/she disagreed/ agreed with these statements which covered the research's main constructs, on a five-point Likert-style rating scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The main constructs were represented in four variables. All of them were shown in table three. The main variables were motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants. They involved 21 statements were designed according to Sudhir and Unnithan (2019); Hashim and Kasana (2019); Hendricks and Lu (2020) consisted of four dimensions as anxiety management motivators, information sharing motivators, relationship management motivators and self enhancement motivators.

Section 4: It was directed to customer to know the extension of disagreement or agreement about loyalty after hearing rumor about a brand name fast-food restaurant.

This part was designed based on the loyalty scale (Hashim and Kasana, 2019) study. This part involved six statements that were measured by the five-point Likert scale. These statements were shown in table 5.

3.4 Data collection procedures

A total of 1000 questionnaires were distributed online via Google forms link, or printed copy to customers of fast food restaurants' brand names in Greater Cairo. Online questionnaire was directed to customers on fast food restaurants' Facebook groups, while the printed questionnaire was distributed to them face to face after visiting the restaurants. The researchers gave customers a written questionnaire. The respondent finished the questionnaire on the spot and returned it to the researchers. The questionnaire form was written and distributed in Arabic, during the period between April 2022 and May 2022. The returned forms were 800 forms, which represented 80 % (response rate) of distributed forms. The valid forms were 700 forms which represented 87.5 % from the returned forms. The invalid forms were 100 forms, which represented 12.5 % from the returned forms.

3.5 Validity of the research

The questionnaire was validated using the peer review technique, which involved a panel of experts in the fields of hospitality management discussing and reviewing the research variables and statements. Face validity was also used in this research to ensure the validity of data collection instrument. Each research objective was matched with its hypothesis using this method. Factor analysis was also used to improve the component strength as shown in table 4 and 5.

3.6 Reliability of the Research

Table 1: Reliability Analysis of the research Variables

The Axis	No. of statements	Alpha Coefficient
Anxiety Management Motivators	6	0.90
Information Sharing Motivators	6	0.89
Relationship Management Motivators	5	0.95
Self Enhancement Motivators	4	0.92
Customers` Purchasing Decisions	11	0.94
The Overall Cronbach's Alpha	32	0.92

Alpha Coefficient is a measure of the internal consistency of a test or scale, which ranges between 0 and 1 (Saunders, 2021). More than 0.9 is considered excellent, more than 0.8 is good, more than 0.7 is considered acceptable, more than 0.6 is considered questionable, more than 0.5 is considered Poor, and less than 0.5 is considered unacceptable (Jr. et al., 2019).

The Cronbach's Alpha test was used to ensure the questionnaire's reliability. For all scale items, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated and found to be 0.92. It means that all items were reliable as shown in table 1.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 2: The Sample Characteristics Statistics

Variable	Response	Freq.	%	Rank
Gender	Male	307	43.9	2
	Female	393	56.1	1
	Total	700	100	-
Age	Less than 20 years	100	14.3	3
	20 - 30 Years	266	38.0	1
	>30- 40 Years	263	37.6	2
	>40-50 Years	60	8.6	4
	>50-60 Years	7	1.0	5
	More than 60 Years	4	0.6	6
	Total	700	100	-
Educational level	High school	114	16.3	3
	Bachelor`s degree	370	52.9	1
	Diploma	45	6.4	4
	Postgraduate (Master, Doctoral)	171	24.4	2
	Total	700	100	-

According to gender, the results in table 2 showed that the percentage of females (56.1%) was more than males (43.9%) in the investigated sample. In addition it was observed from table 2, the respondents' ages ranged from less than 20 to over 60 years old. The majority of the respondents were between 20 - 40 years old represented 75.6%, while other age categories of the respondents represented 24.5 % of the sample. It means that youth age categories represented the majority of fast food restaurants' customers. On the other hand, the majority of the respondents who have got high education levels and post graduate (Bachelor`s, Diploma, Master, and phd) represented 83.2 %, while the respondents who have got high school represented only 16.3 % of the respondents. It referees that the majority of the fast food restaurants' customers have got high education levels and post graduate. This result was incompatible with the result of Mammadli (2021) who asserted that the respondents who have got high school.

Table 3: The Restaurant's Information Statistics

Variable	Response	Freq.	%	Rank
What is your favorite fast-food restaurant brand name that you continuously visit in Greater Cairo?	MDS	150	21.4	2
	KEF	199	28.4	1
	DOP	53	7.6	5
	PIH	101	14.4	3
	SW	37	5.3	7
	BK	59	8.4	4
	WE'S	5	.7	10
	HA'S	32	4.6	8
	ST'S	40	5.7	6
	CHL'S	21	3.0	9
	TAB	3	.4	11
	Other please specify	-	-	-
Total	700	100	-	
Where do you visit fast-food restaurant brand name in Greater Cairo?	Cairo	400	57.1	1
	Giza	155	22.1	2
	Qalyubia	50	7.1	4
	Sixth of October	95	13.6	3
	Total	700	100	-
How often do you visit a famous fast food	Daily	32	4.6	4
	Two to Three times weekly	159	22.7	2

Continued

Variable	Response	Freq.	%	Rank
restaurant brand name?	<i>Table 3: Continued</i>			
	Once per week	321	45.9	1
	Once Per month	153	21.9	3
	Rarely	35	5.0	5
	Total	700	100	-
What are the methods of spreading rumors?	Social Media platforms	353	50.4	1
	Rumors mongers	121	17.3	3
	Mass Media (T.V- Press- Radio)	90	12.9	4
	Word of Mouth from Customer to Customer	125	17.9	2
	Others	11	1.6	5
	Total	700	100	-

Table 3 illustrated that the most favorite fast food restaurants' brand names to the customers were KEF (28.4%), MDS (21.4%), PIH (14.4%), and then BK (8.4%). In other words, 72.6 % of the respondents preferred KEF, MDS, PIH, and BK, while only 27.4 % of them preferred other fast food restaurants' brand names (DOP, SW, ST'S, HA'S, CHL'S, WE'S, TAB). It means that KEF, MDS, PIH, and BK were more famous and favorite restaurants than other fast food restaurants' brand names.

On the other hand, more than half of the participants (57.1%) have visited fast food restaurants in Cairo, followed by 22.1% have visited these restaurants in Giza, then 13.6% of the respondents visited fast food restaurants in 6th of October, while only 7.1 % of them visited Qalyubia. Thus, the research involved all of restaurants' regions to be represented in the survey.

Regarding to the frequency of visiting fast-food restaurants' brand name, 45.9% of the respondents have visited once per week, followed by 22.7% of them have visited these restaurants two to three times weekly. It means that 68.6 % of the respondents visited these restaurants repeatedly from once to three times per week, while 21.9% of them have visited fast food once per month.

Moreover, more than half of the respondents (50.4 %) selected that social media platforms was the first method of spreading food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand names, followed by 17.9 % of them selected word of mouth as a second method. Furthermore, 17.3 % of the respondents selected rumors monger, while 12.9 % selected mass media (T.V- Press- Radio) as the third and fourth methods of spreading rumors respectively. It revealed that social media and word of mouth were the most important information sources to customers about food and beverage rumors spreading.

Table 4: Factor Analysis and Statistics of the Motivators of Rumors

Motivators of Spreading Food and Beverage Rumors of fast food restaurants	Mean*	SD	Sig.	Factor Loading	Rank
Anxiety Management Motivators					
1-1 I will feel relaxed after sharing this rumor.	3.05	1.50	0.00	.58	6
1-2 I am worried about others and sharing this rumor will help to keep them safe.	3.41	1.21	0.00	.61	2
1-3 Sharing this rumor will make me feel in control of the situation.	3.07	1.10	0.00	.75	5
1-4 Sharing this rumor will create a pleasant mood in me	3.16	1.12	0.00	.83	4
1-5 Sharing this rumor will make me feel confident	3.38	1.18	0.00	.75	3
1-6 I am motivated to share this rumor and reduce my	3.48	1.10	0.00	.56	1
Overall	3.25	1.18	0.00		-
Information Sharing Motivators					
2-1 I will share this rumor to inform others.	3.73	.897	0.00	.61	4
2-2 I will share this rumor as it will be useful to others.	3.80	.904	0.00	.59	2
<i>Continued</i>					
<i>Table 4: continued</i>					

Motivators of Spreading Food and Beverage Rumors of fast food restaurants	Mean*	SD	Sig.	Factor Loading	Rank
2-3 By sharing the rumor, I will be able to help others make wise choices.	3.74	.993	0.00	.71	3
2-4 I am motivated to find out if this rumor is true or not.	3.89	.895	0.00	.78	1
2-5 I will share this rumor to get feedback on the rumor.	3.66	.936	0.00	.61	5
2-6 I will be able to help others by sharing this rumor.	3.63	1.02	0.00	.61	6
Overall	3.75	.95	0.00		-
Relationship Management Motivators					
3-1 I will share this rumor to be in touch with others.	3.06	1.31	0.00	.76	5
3-2 Sharing this rumor will make others want to talk to me more often	3.28	1.33	0.00	.89	3
3-3 Sharing this rumor will help me communicate with others.	3.37	1.27	0.00	.84	1
3-4 Others will consider me an expert if I share this rumor.	3.32	1.26	0.00	.81	2
3-5 Others will respect me more if I share this rumor.	3.17	1.23	0.00	.85	4
Overall	3.24	1.28	0.00		-
Self Enhancement Motivators					
4-1 I will share this rumor to pass time.	3.01	1.31	0.00	.79	4
4-2 I will share this rumor to let others know about my activities.	3.36	1.23	0.00	.88	2
4-3 Sharing this rumor will help others know about my interests.	3.46	1.11	0.00	.66	1
4-4 I will share this rumor because it's enjoyable to me.	3.34	1.29	0.00	.91	3
Overall	3.29	1.23	0.00	.74	-

* Mean of motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants. SD = Standard Deviation and Sig. = significance degree of one-sample T-Test.

Rady and Atia (2019) as well as Hashim and Kasana (2019) asserted that the suitable level of loading value was 0.6 for the variables. As shown in table 4, according to factor analysis, 21 statements were responsible for changes in the variables of the motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand name with a percentage of 74%.

Table 4 indicated that the overall mean score of the “anxiety management motivators”, overall mean score was 3.25, and STD. was 1.18. The first assessment criterion was “I am motivated to share this rumor and reduce my anxiety regarding the product”, (M= 3.48, SD. = 1.10). This result was consistent with Bordia and DiFonzo (2004) who suggested support for the role of uncertainty. In cases with high uncertainty and participation, it is suggested that people will have high anxieties and they will thus use rumor sharing as a mechanism to minimize this anxiety. The last assessment criterion was “I will feel relaxed after sharing this rumor”, (M= 3.05, SD. = 1.50). The mean scores ranged from 3.05 to 3.48 that means neutral to agree. The P-value of the one-sample T-test was (0.00) which indicated that there were significant differences between anxiety motivators and the test value (4) that referred to a degree of agreement. In other words, respondents’ responses of all statements were less than the test value. This result means that anxiety management motivators were less than standard level.

The previous result conformed to Roberts and Roberts (2012) and Sharif and Yeoh (2018) who ascertained that the role of anxiety in marketplace behavior between young customers. Hence rumors evoking stronger state anxiety will be shared more often. The researcher founded that this result may be due to rumors in the marketplace cause heightened anxieties between customers as they portray harmful to dangerous news like; anxieties cause sharing the rumor to manage these emotions.

As shown in table 4, according to the variable of “information sharing motivation” overall mean score was (M=3.75; SD. = 0.95). It means respondents agreed that the information sharing has motivated customers to spread food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand names. This result was consistent with (Ansari, 2019) who

stated that people usually share rumors to link to a process on sense making and discovering explanations, especially when there is no official explanation.

Also, the current result agreed with Gan et al. (2016) that rumor transmission is a process that people share valued data. Often rumors are used by small groups to share information and expand explanations of the uncertain cases.

The first assessment criterion was "I am motivated to find out if this rumor is true or not", ($M=3.89$; $SD. = .895$), the latest statement was "I will be able to help others by sharing this rumor" ($M=3.63$; $SD. =1.02$). The research found that ability to share unknown information sources combined with low levels of social presence and low accountability created a setting of uncertainty. Therefore, information sharing motivators is one of the most fundamental motivations to contact a rumor between customers.

The p-value of the one-sample T-test was (0.00) of all statements of the variable. It indicated that there were significant differences between means of information sharing motivators dimension and the test value 4. This value was selected because it was a suitable value that referred to a degree of "agreement". In other words, respondents' responses of all statements of were less than the test value; this result means information sharing motivators' statements were less than standard level.

The tabulated data also illustrated that in the "relationship management motivators", variable was 3.24, and STD. was 1.28. The first assessment criterion was "sharing this rumor will help me communicate with others" ($M= 3.37$; $SD. = 1.27$). The last statement was "I will share this rumor to be in touch with others" ($M=3.06$; $SD.=1.31$). The mean scores ranged from 3.06 to 3.37 that means neutral responses. The p-value of the one-sample T-test was (0.00) of all statements of the variable. It indicated that there were significant differences between means of relationship management motivators dimension and the test value 4. In other words, respondents' responses of all statements of were less than the test value; this result means relationship management motivators' statements were less than standard level.

This result agreed with Difonzo and Bordia (2017) who mentioned that the rumor sharing activity would be motivated by the relationship goals. People shared rumors to boost the chances of a long-term relation. This result also, agreed with Kumar and Nayak (2019) who revealed that relationship management motivators were one of the key drivers to share rumors in the marketplace. The research found that customers shared rumors to allow others know what information is contained in the rumor. This is interesting as often rumors haven't had evidential basis for the claims they made.

Referring to the variable of "self enhancement motivators ", overall mean score was 3.29, and STD. was 1.23. The first assessment criterion was "Sharing this rumor will help others know about my interests.)", ($M= 3.46$, $SD= 1.11$), and the last statement criterion was "I will share this rumor to pass time" ($M=3.01$, $SD=1.31$). The mean scores ranged from 3.01 to 3.36 that means neutral to agree responses. The p-value of the one-sample T-test was (0.00) of all statements of the variable. It indicated that there were significant differences between means of self enhancement motivators dimension and the test value 4. In other words, respondents' responses of all statements of were less than the test value; this result means self enhancement motivators' statements were less than standard level.

This result agreed with Gan et al. (2016), Sudhir and Unnithan (2019) who rumor sharing has also been established to be enhancing self-esteem or self-confidence. Furthermore, Sudhir and Unnithan (2014) Alden et al, (2016) Kumar and Nayak (2019) conformed self enhancement motivators of rumor sharing indicated to the motivators of a customer to contact a rumor with another customer to enhance his own self-image and thereby his self-esteem. The research found that customers might

post and judge the rumors if the substance of the rumors contradicts their faiths to increase their trust. When customers thought that the rumor concurred with their values, they strengthened their ideas and became willing to believe that the rumor has been true. This boosted their self-image and self-esteem when customers used rumors to promote their favorite brands.

The p-value of the one-sample T-test was (0.00) of all variables. It pointed that there were significant differences among means of anxiety management, information sharing, relationship management, and self enhancement and the test value "4". This value was selected because it was a suitable value that referees to a degree of "agreement". It was observed that these motivators played a significant role in rumor propagation. Customers share rumors to manage their emotions or to share information present in the rumor. According to respondents response research found that the first motivators spread food and beverage, that information sharing motivators with (M=3.75), self enhancement motivators with (M=3.29), anxiety management motivators (M=3.25), the last criterion was relationship management motivators (M=3.24).

Hence, the previous results achieved the first objective that identify the motivators of spreading rumors about the fast-food restaurants` brand name.

Table 5: Factor analysis and statistics of customers' Loyalty

Customers` Loyalty `	Mean*	SD	Sig.	Loading	Rank
6.1.1 I am disgusted by brand after spreading rumors.	4.16	.877	0.00	.76	1
6.1.2 I do not tolerate brand and its company after spreading rumors.	4.11	.987	0.00	.86	2
6.2.3 The world would be a better place without brand after spreading rumors.	4.05	1.12	0.00	.91	3
6.2.4 I am totally angry about brand after spreading rumors.	4.01	1.16	0.00	.91	4
6.2.5 Brand names are awful.	3.98	1.20	0.00	.86	5
6.2.6 I hate brand names after spreading rumors.	3.97	1.19	0.00	.86	6
Overall	4.04	1.08	0.00	.86	-

* Mean of customers` loyalty. SD = Standard Deviation and Sig. = significance degree of one-sample T-Test

Table 5 illustrated that all eleven statements was responsible for changes in the variable of customers' loyalty after hearing food and beverage rumors of the fast-food restaurants' brand name with a percentage of 86%.

The tabulated data in table 5 involved that there were six statements whenever hear a rumor about a brand name fast-food restaurant. The tabulated data in table 8 involved that there were six statements about loyalty whenever hear a rumor about a brand name fast-food restaurant. The first one according to participants` responses was "I am disgusted by brand after spreading rumors" (M= 4.16, SD= .877), the current result agreed with Kucuk (2016), brand hate involves feelings of disgust which result in stronger emotions and sharper behaviors. Kucuk (2016) further explained brand hate as the severe anger and anxiety feelings toward the target brand. Brand hate happens when one feels frustration and helplessness after experiencing some fail from the brand. On the other side, "I hate brand names after spreading rumors " was ranked as last statement (M= 3.97, SD= 1.19), The overall (M= 4.04, SD= 1.08). The mean scores ranged from 4.16 to 3.97 that means agree to strongly agree.

These results were compatible with Johnson et al. (2011) conceptualize brand hate as a powerful consumer` resistance across target brands in the form of revenge. Later

Zarantonello et al. (2016) and Hegner et al. (2017) studied the idea of brand hate in depth and found brand avoidance, brand revenge and negative word of mouth as the outcomes of brand hate after spreading rumors. Also, Alba and Lutz (2013) used the expression true brand disgust to realize brand hate referring to the situations in which consumers become prisoners to the brands with monopolies. The results demonstrated that consumers continue to spread brand rumors talk about brand damage. In the long run, brand damage leads to loss of brand loyalty and brand trust. In the worst case, the company loses market share and, in the end, has to close.

The p-value of the one-sample T-test was (0.00) which indicated that there were significant differences between about loyalty whenever hear a rumor about a brand name fast-food restaurant and the test value (4), this value was selected because it was a suitable value that referees to a degree of “agreement”. In other words, respondents’ responses of all statements were high than the test value; this result means customers loyalty after hearing rumors were high than the standard level.

The research adopted the linear regression coefficients for testing the hypotheses as follows:

Table 6: Linear Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Anxiety Management Motivators on Customers' loyalty.

Dependent Variable		Independent Variable
		Anxiety Management Motivators
Customers loyalty	R	0.256
	R ²	0.066
	Sig.	.000
	Constant	3.191
	β	0.263

Table 6 showed that there was a significant low correlation between anxiety management motivators and customers' loyalty (R=0.256). R² that referees to the determination coefficient was 0.066. Moreover, Sig. value was 0.00 which less than 0.05 suggesting that, the null hypothesis of the study wasn't accepted. On the other hand, there was a significant impact of anxiety management motivators of food and beverage rumors (independent variable) on customers' loyalty to fast food restaurants' brand name (dependent variable). Furthermore, the statistical constant (α) has equaled 3.191 with a significance level of less than 5%, whereas (β) has equaled 0.263, with a significance level of less than 1%. The current results was aligned with Tilbury (2017) who verified that anxiety management motivators had a positive effect on customers' loyalty. From the previous result, the following equation was suggested:

Customers' loyalty= 3.191+ (0.263* Anxiety Management Motivators)

Hence, the first hypothesis was supported. There was a statistically significant impact of anxiety management motivators of food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand name on customers' loyalty.

Table 7: Linear Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Information Sharing Motivators on Customers' loyalty

Dependent Variable		Independent Variable
		Information Sharing Motivators
Customers loyalty	R	0.297
	R ²	0.088
	Sig.	.000
	Constant	2.562
	β	0.397

Table 7 referees that there was a low significant correlation between information sharing motivators and customers' loyalty (R=.297). R² that referees to the determination coefficient was 0.088. Moreover, the Sig. value was less than 0.05 (0.000). The research did not accept the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. Furthermore, the statistical constant (α) has equaled 2.562 with a significance level less than 5%, whereas β has equaled 0.397, with significance level less than 1%. Information sharing motivators of food and beverage rumors had a significant positive effect of customers' loyalty to fast food restaurants' brand name. The result of DiFranzo and Garcia (2017) was concurred with the findings of the current research. From the previous result, the following equation was suggested:

Customers' loyalty = 2.562+ (0.397* Information Sharing Motivators)

Hence, the second hypothesis was supported. There was a statistically significant positive impact of information sharing motivators of food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand name on customers' loyalty.

Table 8: Linear Regression Coefficients for the Impact of Relationship Management Motivators on Customers' loyalty

Dependent Variable		Independent Variable
		Relationship Management Motivators
Customers loyalty	R	0.480
	R ²	0.230
	Sig.	.000
	Constant	1.000
	β	0.554

Table 8 referees that there was a moderate significant correlation between relationship management motivators and customers' loyalty (R=0.480), as well as R² that referees to the determination coefficient was 0.230. Moreover, the Sig. value was less than 0.05 (0.000). The research did not accept the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. Furthermore, the statistical constant (α) has equaled 1.000 with a significance level less than 5%, whereas β has equaled 0.554, with significance level less than 1%. These results also concurred with Choi and Seo (2021) who revealed that relationship management motivators had a significant effect of customers' loyalty. From the previous result, the following equation was suggested:

Customers' loyalty = 1.000+ (0.554* Relationship Management Motivators)

Hence, the third hypothesis was proved. There was a statistically significant positive impact of relationship management motivators of food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants' brand names on customers' loyalty.

Table 9: Linear Regression Coefficients for the Self Enhancement Motivators on Customers' loyalty

Dependent Variable		Independent Variable
		Self Enhancement Motivators
Customers loyalty	R	0.485
	R ²	0.235
	Sig.	.000
	Constant	1.129
	β	0.534

Table 9 showed that there was a moderate significant correlation between self enhancement motivators and customers' loyalty (R=0.485). R² that referees to the determination coefficient was 0.235. Moreover, Sig. value was less than 0.05 (0.000). The null hypothesis of the study was not accepted. On the other hand, there was a significant impact of Self Enhancement Motivators of food and beverage rumors (independent variable) on customers' loyalty to fast food restaurants' brand name (dependent variable). Furthermore, the statistical constant (α) has equaled 1.129 with a significance level of less than 5%, whereas (β) has equaled 0.534, with a significance level of less than 1%. These results also concurred with findings Gan et al. (2016); Sudhir and Unnithan (2019) who have highlighted that self enhancement motivators had a significant effect of customers' loyalty.

From the previous result, the following equation was suggested:

Customers' loyalty = 1.129+0. 534* Self Enhancement Motivators)

Hence, the fourth hypothesis was proved. There was a statistically significant positive impact of self enhancement motivators of food and beverage rumors on customers' loyalty to fast food restaurants' brand names.

The Empirical Research Model

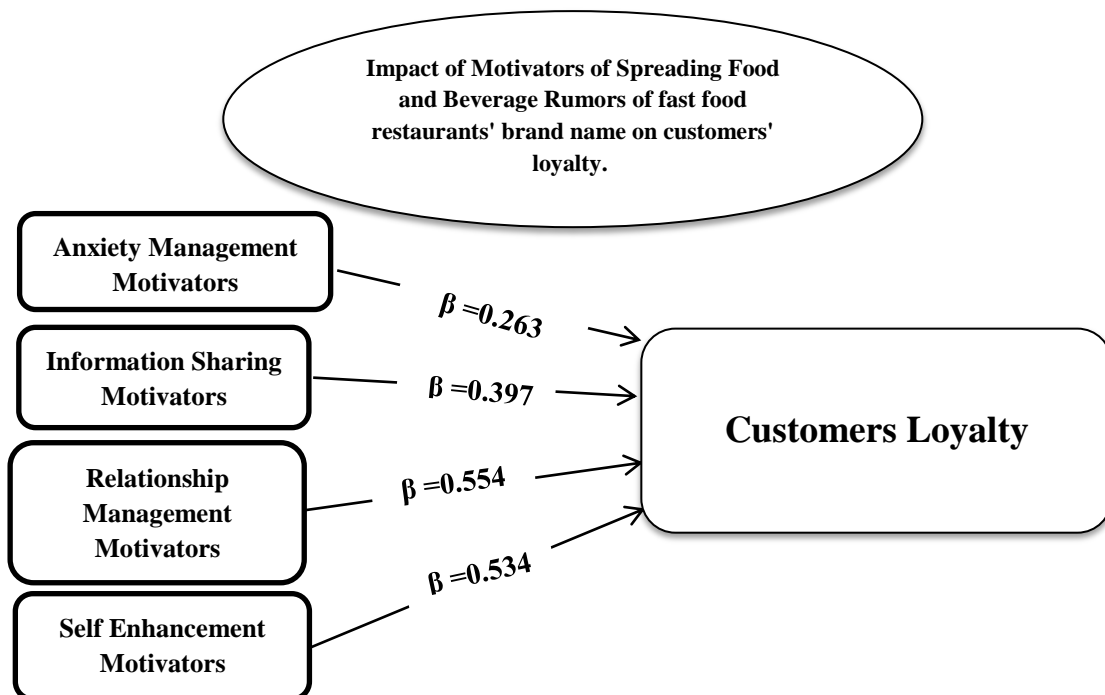


Figure 2: The Empirical Research Model

As shown in figure 2 the results revealed that anxiety management motivators ($\beta = 0.263$, Sig. = 0.000), information sharing motivators ($\beta = 0.397$, Sig. = 0.000), relationship management motivators ($\beta = 0.554$, Sig. = 0.000), and self enhancement motivators ($\beta = 0.534$, Sig. = 0.000) have a statistically significant positive influence on customers' loyalty.

5.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

The research aims to explore the impact of motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors on customers' purchasing decisions to of fast-food restaurants' brand names. It applied a quantitative approach by conducting a web-based self-administered questionnaire. A total of 1000 questionnaires were distributed online via Google forms link, or printed copy to customers of fast food restaurants' brand names in Greater Cairo. These restaurants were MDS, KEF, DOP, PIH, SW, BK, WE'S, HA'S, ST'S, CHL'S and TAB restaurants. The returned forms were 800 forms, which represented 80 % (response rate) of distributed forms. The valid forms were 700 forms which represented 87.5 % from the returned forms. The invalid forms were 100 forms, which represented 12.5 % from the returned forms.

To assess the research tool's reliability and validity, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and the factor analysis test were used. To gain a statistically representative sample size of the population, Cochran's formula for determining the infinite population sample size was applied. The data was statistically analyzed using SPSS version 16.

The results indicated that most of the respondents were females, between 20 - 30 years with Bachelor degree. Approximately 28.4% of the respondents have visited K, 21.4% of them have visited M, more than half of the participants 57.1% have visited Cairo restaurants. There were 45.9% of the respondents have visited once per week fast food restaurants' brand name. More than half of the participants 50.4% have knew food and beverage rumors by social media platforms.

Concerning the motivators of spreading food and beverage rumors of fast food restaurants as anxiety management, information sharing, relationship management, and self enhancement, the attitude of participants' responses ranged from neutral to agree. On the other hand, participants' responses attitude of loyalty dimension ranged from agree to strongly agree.

The findings of the research indicated that anxiety management, information sharing, relationship management and self enhancement motivators of food and beverage rumors influenced significantly on customers' loyalty.

5.2 Recommendations

The current research suggested some recommendations to management of fast food restaurants' brand name and customers as follows:

5.2.1 Recommendations for Fast Food Restaurants' Customers

- Customers should ensure from published food and beverage rumors of the fast food restaurants through restaurants official channels (websites, social media etc.) or other governmental supervisory channels.
- Customers should manage their motivators of spreading rumors of fast food restaurants objectively to not harm the restaurants' image by having right information from the restaurants' official channels or other governmental supervisory channels.

- Customers should not publish or share rumors of fast food restaurants among their relatives and friends, or in social media channels to not influence negatively on other customers' purchase decision and restaurants' reputation and sales.

5.2.2 Recommendations for Fast Food Restaurants' Managers:

- Fast food managers should adopt strategies for combatting spreading food and beverage rumors to manage customers' motivators for providing right information about rumors and protecting the restaurant image.
- They should develop an action plan and procedures to eliminate food and beverage rumors spreading among customers.
- They should release a campaign through media means to correct rumors among fast food customers to maintain restaurant image, reputation, and sales.
- Fast food managers should publish the right information about food and beverage rumors speedily and widely through restaurants' official channels (website and social media) and governmental supervisory channels.
- Fast food restaurants' companies could establish a hotline, or interactive chat room in their website, Facebook, and YouTube channel to respond to customers during spreading the rumors about the restaurants.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

The time limitations were the time of conducting the practical part of the research. It was from April to May 2022. The place limitations were fast food restaurants' brand name located in Greater Cairo as places for conducting the research. The researcher faced some barriers during the research. These barriers were related to literature review, where there was a lack of books and data sources about food and beverage rumors in the restaurant industry. Moreover, further research could be conducting to examine. Future research should also identify other customers' linked characteristics that may impact rumor transmission and its impact on their purchasing decision in different types of restaurants as fine dining, upscale, casual restaurants, or in luxury and upscale hotels.

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تأثير دوافع نشر شائعات الأغذية والمشروبات على ولاء عملاء مطاعم الوجبات السريعة ذات العلامة التجارية

الملخص العربي

غالبًا ما تحدث الشائعات بشكل غير متوقع ويمكن أن تسبب ضررًا كبيرًا لاسم العلامة التجارية لمطاعم الوجبات السريعة، بما في ذلك فقدان السمعة، انخفاض المبيعات، الإضرار بمصداقية الشركة والتأثير على ولاء العملاء. غالبًا ما يتم مشاركة الشائعات في السوق حول الاسم التجاري لمطاعم الوجبات السريعة. يتم نقل هذه الشائعات ما بين العملاء وبعضهم البعض وومن خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقييم تأثير دوافع نشر شائعات الأغذية والمشروبات على ولاء العملاء لمطاعم الوجبات السريعة ذات العلامة التجارية. تم اعتماد المنهج الكمي في هذا البحث وتم كذلك إجراء استبيان على شبكة الإنترنت وورقيًا على عينة من العملاء المترددين على مطاعم الوجبات السريعة ذات العلامة التجارية في القاهرة الكبرى (القاهرة والجيزة والقليوبية والسادس من أكتوبر). تم الحصول على 700 استمارة استبيان من المستجيبين. تم تحليل بيانات البحث باستخدام مقاييس الإحصاء الوصفي واختبارات T ومعادلات الانحدار الخطي باستخدام برنامج SPSS V. 22. أظهرت النتائج أن هناك تأثيرًا لدوافع نشر شائعات الأغذية والمشروبات على ولاء العملاء لمطاعم الوجبات السريعة ذات العلامة التجارية. كذلك أشارت نتائج البحث إلى أن القلق ($\beta = 0.263$ ، $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$)، مشاركة المعلومات ($\beta = 0.397$ ، $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$)، إدارة العلاقات ($\beta = 0.554$ ، $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$)، وتعزيز الذات ($\beta = 0.534$ ، $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$) كدوافع انتشار الشائعات كان لها أثرًا إيجابيًا ذو دلالة احصائية على ولاء العملاء في مطاعم الوجبات السريعة. قدم هذا البحث مجموعة من التوصيات اللازمة لتقليل الآثار السلبية للشائعات و ولاء العملاء في مطاعم العلامات التجارية.

الكلمات الدالة: شائعات الأغذية والمشروبات، دوافع نشر الشائعات، العلامات التجارية، مطاعم الوجبات السريعة، ولاء العملاء