Abstract

In the present era, the hospitality industry has emerged as one of the most recognised industries of the globalised world. There are different categories of the hotels and all of them are targeting specific type of the customers. This is due to the increased demand of the customers that various categories and types of the hotel services have emerged; hence the level of competition has also increased. In this situation, it has become imperative for hotels to develop a large customer base which is loyal to their brand. The loyal customer stays with one brand for a longer period of time. The benefits associated with the customer loyalty are numerous and all of them are remarkable. Therefore, all hotels strive to introduce such programs which could create the loyal customers for them. This research is about the customer loyalty where it is examined that how the customer loyalty could be developed through the marketing strategies. As mentioned previously, there are various categories of the hotels, but it was also observed that luxury hotels are increasing in demand and supply, therefore, this research only focused on the this category. For this purpose, one luxury hotel namely Double Tree by Hotel Hilton has been selected. This research aims to analyse the role of marketing strategy in the customer loyalty of the luxury hotel i.e. Double Tree by Hilton. This hotel's marketing strategies are examined in a great detail. For fulfilling this aim, this research has relied on secondary methods. Through thematic analysis conducted on secondary data, it is concluded that marketing strategies are significant for developing the customer loyalty. At the end, the future research directions are also provided.

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1.Chapter One: Introduction

1.1.Background and Rationale

In today's world, the hotel industry has been recognised as a global industry as it has the consumers and producers from all over the world. Now, the use of many hotel facilities like night club, rooms, restaurants, health clubs, bars and hotel facilities have become the integral part of lifestyle. Furthermore, in the last few years, there has been observed a significant increase in the demand and supply of hospitality services which has escalated the growth of global hospitality industry. This has also raised the level of competition in the hotel industry. Osman et al., (2009) states that one the most significant challenges for the hospitality industry is about the fast pace and volume of competition which has resulted in three outcomes i.e. increased choice for customers, improved value for money and enhanced level of customer

service. Likewise, there are very few factors that could allow distinguishing the offering of one hotel from another. In this situation, to gain a competitive advantage has become of utmost importance for all hotels.

According to Gallo (2012), for gaining the competitive advantage, two commonly used strategies are of low-cost leadership and development of customer loyalty. Low cost leadership is developed through offering price discounting while customer loyalty is developed through offering unique benefits to customers (Graham, 2013). The hotels which opt for the first option encounter the risk of having a negative image in the mind of customers along with low profitability in the long run. In this situation, it is the quality instead of the price which is the important factor for differentiation and customer loyalty. Therefore, the hotel industry strives more for developing the customer loyalty instead of focusing on its pricing strategies. It has been proved by research studies (e.g. Lee et al., 2012; Ou et al., 2014) that a five percent change in the customer loyalty has the potential to bring the increase of twenty five to eight five percent in the profitability of the hotels. This indicates that all hotels must strive for developing the customer loyalty instead of any other aspect. For the survival of hotels, it is imperative to focus on the customer loyalty, otherwise, the sustainability is in danger (Bowen and Chen McCain, 2015). Therefore, the present research focuses particularly of customer loyalty and it analyses how customer loyalty could be developed for the hotels.

It is believed by the hotel managers that they can improve the profitability by having the satisfied clientele but this is not sufficient in today's environment (Fraering and Minor, 2013). Therefore, it is important to focus on the customer loyalty in all marketing efforts of the hotels. As said by El-Manstrly (2016), customer loyalty is more critical for the success of hotels than the other parameters like customer satisfactio as customer satisfaction is part of customer loyalty In this era of tough competition and increased sophistication of customers' demands, it has become more important for marketers to understand the factors which could influence the customer loyalty. Therefore, the present research directly focuses on the customer loyalty to better understand how this could be developed through marketing efforts of the hotels.

Though, there exists all kinds of hotels in the U.K. hospitality industry but as time is passing, customers are becoming more inclined towards the usage of

luxury hotels (Thanh et al., 2015). The role of luxury hotels has become quite dominant in the hospitality industry of the U.K.. There are various aspects which attract the customers towards the luxury hotels. However, it is not fully explored that how and why customers are attracted towards the luxury hotels. From the brand positioning till its marketing strategy, there are various aspects which has influence over the luxury hotels. According to Aaker (2008), the success of luxury hotels is influenced with the marketing strategy. Marketing strategy helps to increase the sales and achieve a long term and sustainable competitive advantage. So taking the perspective of marketing strategy and customer loyalty for hospitality industry, this research focuses on how marketing strategies could help to develop the customer loyalty in the luxury hotels.

1.2.Research aim

This research aims to analyse the role of marketing strategy in the customer loyalty of the luxury hotel i.e. Double Tree by Hilton.

1.3.Research Objectives

This research has the following objectives:

- 1 To review the literature on marketing strategy and luxury branding
- 2 To construct a definition of luxury brandingand customer loyalty
- 4To critically evaluate the literature on the role of marketing strategy in the customer loyalty.
- 5 To examine the impact of marketing strategy on the customer loyalty of luxury hotels.
- 6 To conclude how marketing strategy and luxury branding could be used by Double Tree by Hilton.

2.Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1.Theoretical Framework

The aim of present research is to analyse the role of marketing strategies on the customer loyalty of the luxury hotels. There are various models and theories which falls under the category of the marketing strategies and it is not possible to use all of those model and theories in one research. Therefore, to have a limited scope of this research, the present research focuses on two models on loyalties and marketing theories. In this research, the focus is on examining how the marketing strategy could influence the customer loyalty.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Source: Developed by the author (2016)

2.1.Conceptualising 'Luxury Branding'

One of the objectives of this thesis is to present the definition of luxury branding. Therefore, this section fulfils this objective and it analyses various aspects and dimensions of the term 'luxury branding'. According to Dall'Olmo Riley and Lacroix (2003), luxury good is a good whose demand increases more than proportionally as income rises. It is opposite to the necessary food whose demand usually increases less than the increase in income. These luxury goods are also known as Veblen goods and superior goods (Farah and Fawaz, 2016).

As mentioned by MacInnis, Park and Priester (2014), in this globalised world which is highly competitive, luxury brands must have to be in connection with the customers in a creative manner. There are many brands which have become of premium category and they are still targeting the mass market, it has become important for luxury brands to be distinguished from others in a clever manner. As said by Okonkwo (2016), the luxury brands must have the especial mystique and cachet which should differentiate these brands from other brands. Luxury branding is all about being close to the customers and doing those things that they will love.

According to Beverland (2006), in luxury branding, another important dimension is to develop the customised offer with the intention to provide the unique experience to customers. Initially, luxury concept was introduced

where craftsmen were developing the products as per the specifications of the customers. This was something which was quite expensive as compared to the mainstream products and it was only used by those customers who were known as super-wealthy (REF). Therefore, as also demonstrated by Arrigo, (2015), branding of luxury products must incorporate these elements where this customisation must be offered in one way or the other. Through the customisation, luxury brands could distinguish themselves from others and the quality and creativity of the manufacturer could be reinforced only through this customisation (Kapferer, 2015).

Further to this, according to Seo and Buchanan-Oliver (2015), it is of utmost importance that the luxury brands should heighten the sense of emotional connection. The foundation of luxury branding is on sensory branding and it is a commonly used concept in the hospitality industry as well. Therefore, luxury brands must have to strive for building the connections with customers at different levels with the intention to differentiate themselves from the mainstream brands. As discussed by Fionda and Moore (2009), there are numerous examples of such luxury brands which have developed such an emotional connection with the customers and this has helped them to be a successful luxury brand. Eton and Rolls Royce have developed this emotional connection with the customers through the power of scent which they have integrated into their products (Barrett et al., 2015). Though many mainstream brands also use sounds for differentiating themselves, for example Soundwich in Portugal where boxes in which sandwiches are received contain special music that is chosen by the chef within them. In a similar manner, Westin hotel chains have a customised soundtrack which is being offered to provide a relaxed environment to their customers (Chakravarty, 2015). So from these examples and discussion, it becomes observable that luxury branding also involves the process through which the senses are tapped for developing the associations and connections with the customers.

According to Daswani and Jain (2011), the luxury brands must have to present their category in a different manner. For example, Apple took high-tech products and they developed them in a manner that these high-tech products match the lifestyle of customers. Likewise, Starbucks has introduced the coffee through which it has changed the relation of customers with the drinks where now customer do not only visit Starbucks to have some coffee

but they visit to have the experience of environment of third home where they can relax and work at the same time (Mitzi, 2015). Similarly, Laduree has taken the inspiration from the connections and they have launched the beauty products which are prepared from almond. Therefore, it is important for the luxury brands to assess whatever they are offered and see how they can present their product or service category in a different manner. For this, they can also take the inspiration from other products and services which are from a different category.

Further to this, Moore and Birtwistle (2005) have stated that the luxury brands must have to immerse their customers in the ethos provided by the particular luxury brand. They need to develop such environment through which the brand's cachet could be crated. This cachet will also help to develop a strong emotional connection with the customers. There are the examples of such brands in the real life. Viktor & Rolf developed an upside-down store in Milan where they proclaimed their anarchic design approach. Likewise, Abercrombie & Fitch has taken help from the mainstream preppy clothing and used them to be dressed up for nightclub experience. Jimmy Choo has created a high tea hotel which the name of Hong Kong's Landmark Oriental Hotel. They develop scones, macaroons and sandwiches in the shape and style of their exquisite handbag and shoe shapes. Bentley Suite was opened up by the super-luxury car brand and it conveyed the special cocooning through the leather and colours which could easily be felt by the passengers and drivers of the luxury car when they visited it (Okonkwo, 2009).

According to Brioschi (2006), another dimension of luxury branding is that its access must be limited. There was a time where logos and labels of the brands were used discreetly but now time has changed and these logos are used for attention grabbing and customers want them to be easily visible such that they could announce the ownership of an expensive item REF. So, such labels must have to be used wisely by the luxury brands. Moreover, as said by Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon (2010), it must also have to be ensured that the supply of their products is not in access. For example, HermèsBirkin bag has a waiting list of up to five years. Likewise, many high street brands have limited supply. For example H&M always have very limited edition of their products which it creates with the collaboration of famous entities like Marc Jacobs and Karl Lagerfield. This limited supply depicts the exclusivity of the

brands. As observed in the case of fashion show of Tom Ford, there was very limited audience and all of them were personally invited by the phone and there whereno press photographers present (REF). It was being compered by Tom himself while the models of this show were Pals Beyoncé and Julianne Moore. This was quite opposite to the mainstream fashion shows who strive for coverage of maximum media. Truong et al., (2008) suggests that it is with the limited supply that the product or service becomes more valuable. Hence, it could be argued that luxury branding must demonstrate the element of exclusivity through limited supply of the offered products and services.

According to Atwal and Williams (2009), luxury branding must make the products special. There are many luxury brands who have misunderstood this concept and they are moving towards targeted the mass market where they also offer the cheaper lines for having more sales of their products. The true luxury brands have to stand out with the assurance that the quality is always special and high and it should not be within the access of everyone. This exclusivity of brands must have to be communicated to the customers in one way or the other. The purpose of luxury branding should not be only to capture the higher level of sales but this luxury branding is all about developing a deep emotional connection with the customers for their whole life.

On the basis of this discussion about luxury branding, it could be defined in the following manner.

> *"Luxury branding is the process through which brands could be differentiated from others on the basis of attached mystique and cachet. Luxury branding must provide the customised experience to the customers through which the quality and creativity of the products must be reinforced. It is about developing the emotional connection with the customers and presenting the products and services in a different manner than the mainstream category. Luxury branding immerses the customers in the brand ethos and such brands have the special appeal. Most importantly, luxury branding is about having the control over the supply of the offerings."* *(Author, 2017).*

2.2.Luxury hotels of U.K.

According to Dorsey (2015), in the last five years, the hotel industry's performance has remained quite good. Though, the performance of luxury hotels was not encouraging in 2010-2011 due to the economic downturn (Thanh et al., 2015). This resulted in curb spending on travel by the tourists and business persons. However, after 2011-2012 the conditions of the U.K. economy has improved and things have become more favourable (Lai and Hitchcock, 2016). One of the factors has been events like London Olympics which attracted more international and domestic tourists in the United Kingdom. This resulted in the increased demand for hotel accommodation. Other factors like strengthening economy, the Rugby World Cup and the popularity of London as a business and tourists destination has improved the prosperity of luxury hotels of the U.K (IBIS, 2016).

The hotel industry is heavily dependent on capital and labour inputs. As it is a service based business, therefore, the customer service level is considered critical for its success. For attracting and retaining the customers, the quality and level of provided service is considered of utmost importance (Rahimi and Gunlu, 2016). Moreover, this industry demand a large capital base as development of building, vehicles, equipment and other assets need significant investment. Therefore it can be said that success of the luxury hotel industry of U.K. is heavily dependent on customer service skills (IBIS, 2016). Though, this industry is flourishing and lots of luxury brands exist in the hotel industry, there are few theoretical studies conducted on this sector. Examining the prevalent literature, this research also presents the definition of luxury branding for hotels. The present research is also about hospitality industry which is part of service based businesses.

2.3.Customer loyalty

The term customer loyalty is defined in a different manner by the marketing experts. According to Wang (2015), customer loyalty is the state where customers start feeling attached so strongly with the particular brand. They start believing that only a particular brand could fulfil their needs and the competitors are virtually out of the consideration set of the customers. The

loyal customers only buy from that particular brand without considering the alternatives. Coelho and Henseler (2012) stated that customer loyalty is when customers come back to the same hotel and they are willing to become a partner of the particular brand by spending more on that brand. According to Czarniewski (2014), in customer loyalty there are two important factors; one is emotional attachment and the other is repeat purchase behaviour. Loyal customers are highly attached to a particular brand so that they make repeat purchases and do not turn to other brands when they have to make a purchase. There are four types of customer loyalties which can be developed for a particular brand. The names of these types of customer loyalties are premium loyalty, inertia loyalty, latent loyalty and no loyalty. These four types of loyalties are plotted on the degree of repurchase and degree of attachment (Tasci, 2016). Figure 2 depicts the loyalties level of customers on the dimension of repeat purchase and relative attachment.

Figure 2: Customer Loyalty Model

Source: Tasci (2016)

When there is a high level of attachment and high repeat purchases by a customer, it is known to have the premium loyalty. The firms strive for gaining the level of loyalty as this is the most resistant loyalty against the offerings of the competitors. On the other hand, Duiveman(2016) has presented another type of loyalty which is inertia loyalty and it is quite high on being susceptible to competitors' offerings. This is the loyalty state where customers do have the high level of repeat purchase but there exists no emotional attachment with the brand. Though, it is important to mention that firms' efforts could work well for converting the inertia loyalty into the premium loyalty (Gray et al., 2016). Likewise, Tanford and Baloglu (2013) mentioned that the other type of loyalty is latent loyalty which is the state where customers only make the infrequent purchases but they are strongly attached with the brand. The repeat purchase is not caused by the attitudinal influences but from the situational factors. From this, it could be analysed that marketers first have to find out why their purchase frequency is low. Once found the cause of low purchase frequency, marketers can develop the appropriate strategies for making them loyal. The last type of loyalty is no loyalty where customers are neither emotionally

attached nor they have repeat purchase behaviour. Usually, loyalty programs of hotels are not at all targeted towards this group (Chocarro et al., 2015). Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, it is only Tasci's (2016) 'premium quality' that will be considered when discussing this concept.

As per definition of Martins Gonçalves and Sampaio (2012), customer loyalty is defined as the state of customers where they are willing for repurchasing of the same brand whenever and wherever possible, they recommend it to other customers and they develop a positive attitude towards the brand. According to Cossío-Silva et al., (2016), the loyalty has two dimensions which are known as behavioural and attitudinal. The behaviour of customers which is depicted through the repeat purchases of particular brand is known as the behavioural dimension of loyalty. Such customers prefer the certain brand over others and they purchase again and again for the same brand. On the other hand, the attitudinal dimension of loyalty is about intention of repurchasing and recommending it to other customers (Bowen and Chen McCain, 2015). The person who has the intention of repurchasing and who keeps on recommending to other customers have higher chances of being retained by the certain brand (Esmark et al., 2016). From this, it could be analysed that both behavioural and attitudinal dimensions of the loyalty are important for marketers. Hence, they strive to develop both dimensions of loyalty in the customers for retaining them for longer period of time

Though, customer loyalty is a separate concept than other variables but the marketing researchers and practitioners has agreed upon the argument that customer satisfaction and service quality are antecedents of the customer loyalty. Another study was conducted by Martins Gonçalves and Sampaio (2012) in a quantitative manner. this study was based on mail surveys and it was concluded the authors that for developing customer loyalty, marketers first has to strive for developing the customer and improving the service quality of their hotels. Moreover, another study was being conducted by El-Manstrly (2016) in which a survey was being conducted where 360 questionnaires were collected. Using the structural equation modelling, it was found by the authors that the role of economical, psychological and technical factors that adversely influence the customers when they switch from one service provider to another are also considered important. In a similar manner,

other pre-requisites for customer loyalty are customer delight, enthusiasm and value (El-Manstrly, 2016).

From this section, it could be analysed that customer loyalty is a state of mind which refers to the associations to a particular brand. The feelings of attachment to a certain brand where repurchasing is certain is the customer loyalty. From the customer loyalty model, it is concluded that there are four types of loyalties. In the present research, the focus will be on premium loyalty only as that is the loyalty in its actual sense. Moreover, loyalty could be attitudinal or behavioural. Basically, customer loyalty is more about purchase intention and recommending to others. Moreover, in customer loyalty role of service quality, customer satisfaction, economical, psychological and technical factors are quite important.

2.4.Loyalty programs in Hospitality Industry

This research is about the customer loyalty and trend of using the loyalty programs in hospitality industry is quite obvious, therefore relevance of loyalty programs for this study is high. Loyalty programs refer to the structure strategies of the marketers which are designed to encourage the customers to purchase again from the associated product or service offering company. The loyalty programs of all industries have their own feature generally it refers to the plastic or paper card (like debit and credit card) which is about identity of the card holder (Uncles et al., 2003). Further to this, Evanschitzky et al., (2012) mentioned that these loyalty cards are provided to the frequent purchasers of the brands. It provides the advanced access to customers with new products, merchandise, sales coupon or trail services. Through such programs, information of customers is being taken and this information is used for further marketing and promotional activities. In case of hospitality industry, the importance of loyalty programs is high and they are used on frequent basis.

2.5.Importance of Marketing Strategy

Basically, marketing strategy involves both short and long term marketing activities which are linked with the formulation, evaluation and implementation of market oriented strategies. The marketing strategy ultimately helps the companies (e.g. luxury hotels) to achieve their business objectives in an effective manner (Aaker, 2008). The first step is about scanning the business environment where both internal and external environment is scanned to understand the strategic opportunities and constraints. The external environment involves political, economic, technological, cultural and legal aspects. For having a sustainable future, it is important for luxury hotels to grasp the external environmental aspects in an effective manner as this could ensure their future sustainability (Coughlan et al., 2001). Then goals have to be developed which are eventually translated into the marketing strategy where it is decided which actions have to be taken for achieving the objectives. The marketing strategy can cover many years with sub-plans for short term period (Chaffe and Ellis-Chadwick, 2012). However, according to Lin and Wu (2008), with a fast changing external environment, time horizons for marketing plan are becoming shorter. The marketing strategies need to be both interactive and dynamic. Most of the time, marketing strategy and plans are planned but they can also be partially planned in which the uncertain conditions of environment are incorporated. The marketing strategy also sets the foundation for marketing mix where marketing mix modelling is used to allocate the scarce resources in an effective manner. It also involves the performance analysis, competitor analysis, customer analysis and target market analysis. Basically, mainly the marketing strategy helps to make an alignment between the overall objective of the company and marketing objective. With the alignment and consistency among marketing objectives and the organisational objectives, the future development of the luxury hotels improves. This research is going to explore that how marketing strategy is useful for improving the customer loyalty in the luxury hotels.

2.6.3 Cs in marketing strategy

As said by Leonidou et al., (2013), there are various strategies which are part of the marketing strategies. There are various ways through which its categorisation is being done. According to Walker et al., (2010), the 3Cs of marketing are Customer, Corporation and Competitors. The 3Cs are important

components of effective marketing strategies. Customers are the key to the success of every business; without them, no business can sustain in the market. Therefore, there is a need for continuous efforts for developing and retaining both domestic and international tourists by the luxury hotels. The corporation factor is about maximising the strengths of the business such that the relevant areas of the competition could be influenced by the business for achieving the success in the industry (Angulo-Ruiz et al., 2014). As it is suggested by Walker et al., (2010), the competition level should never be neglected. At all stages i.e. purchase, design, image and maintenance, the competition level should be considered. There must be appropriate marketing strategies for dealing with the existing and potential competition in the market.

2.7.3 C's in marketing strategy of Hotels

The 3Cs are important components of effective marketing strategieshence, they must be adopted by luxury hotels for their future development and success. The success of the strategy is dependent on how effectively these 3 Cs are managed by the luxury hotels. Therefore, this research focuses on these 3 Cs of the selected luxury hotel to analyse how marketing strategy has an influence over the customer loyalty. If there is any discrepancy in handling any of the 'C', it can have devastating impact on their future development. Discussing about customers, Hooley et al., (2011) said that as currently, international tourists has reduced their orientation towards U.K. Therefore, there must be extra efforts by the luxury hotels for attracting the international tourists towards them. For this, the needs, demands and wants of the customers should be effectively studied. The marketing strategies should tackle the needs, demands and wants of the customers. As mentioned by Brown et al., (2000), the cooperation is about setting the right focus of the business and designing appropriate strategies, mission, vision and values of the business. For hotels, they must ensure that they keep appropriate focus over their strategies. Moreover, the factor of competition is about considering the strategies of other luxury hotels while designing the strategies. When all three factors are combined and made part of the market strategy, results are

attractive in terms of effectiveness of marketing strategy. Therefore, the combination of 3Cs could be proved helpful for improving the customer loyalty of luxury hotels of U.K.

2.8.4P's of marketing

According to Lovelock et al., (2009), as per the marketing mix model, there are 4Ps of the marketing which are named as price, product, place and promotion. These 4Ps help the firms to turn the marketing planning into the action. This marketing mix is helpful for finding and meeting the needs of customers. This could have both long and short term focus. As per the needs of the firms, this model allows the firms to alter the product, price, promotion and price for each offering. In this situation, this marketing mix model helps the luxury hotels to design the marketing mix as per the needs of the international and domestic tourists of U.K. On the other hand, the critical analysis reveals that there also exists the extended marketing mix where there are four more P's, but this research analyses the core P's of the marketing for analysing the influence on the customer loyalty (Lovelock, 2011).

According to the marketing mix model, product refers to the physical object or service which is offered for selling with a set of benefits for the customers which help them to meet their needs. This component of the marketing mix model involves the procedures and policies which are related to the product line, like product design and product quality. Moreover, the research and development about the new product is also part of this component of the marketing mix model.

The component of price is about the procedures and policies which are about the pricing of the product. Moreover, the price maintenance, promotional offers related to pricing, credit, specials and repayment terms and conditions are also part of this component (Mucai et al., 2013). The next component i.e. promotion refers to the all efforts of the marketers which are related to the direct marketing, advertising, promotional work and personal selling for the product. Moreover, the selection of trademarks and branding efforts are also part of this component of the marketing mix model. At the end, place refers to the market coverage, distribution channels, transportation, product inventory

and distribution sites. Likewise, the selection of wholesalers and retailers is also covered under the component of place (Fanning and Ogle, 2014). As said by Buttle and Bok (1996) and Stepchenkova (2015) it is important to design all Ps of the marketing mix such that the needs of the customers are fulfilled and marketing objectives are also accomplished. Once, the whole model of marketing mix is effectively applied, it has potential to promote the sustainable future development of luxury hotels in U.K. By this, it could be analysed that importance of 4Ps is undeniable for luxury hotels.

2.9.The impact of marketing strategies on customer loyalty

In the above section, it has become clear that the role of marketing strategy is important for the business. Though, marketing strategy could be analysed and studied through various models, the present research has used two models i.e. 3Cs and 4P's. The following section helps to establish the arguments that how marketing strategies are influencing the customer loyalty of the luxury hotels.

2.9.1.Customer and Customer Loyalty

As per 3C's typology of marketing strategy, most important element for every business is its customers. Therefore, every hotel strives to focus on targeting the right kind of customer for its right kind of offerings (Pranata and Skinner, 2015). As it is not possible to target all of the customers at the same time, therefore, hotels are required to target those customers which they believe are more appropriate for their offerings. Once the right segment from the group of customers is targeted, there are better chances to fulfil the needs of the customers such that they are not only satisfied but they are also loyal to the brand (Cui et al., 2015). Harrison-Walker (2010) has conducted a study in which the authors have studies the importance of targeting the right customers. They have explained that it is of utmost importance for all organisations to target the right customers. This particular study was being conducted in another service sector i.e. higher education. They used the survey research strategy where they used the questionnaire for data collection process. The study concluded that to target the right customers is critical for

the success of all organisations. Similarly, the research study conducted by Wu et al., (2005) found that targeting customers is important and they recommended the use of knowledge management and data management techniques to find out the right customers. This study was organised in another service sector i.e. insurance. On the basis of statistical analysis, it was concluded that the techniques like knowledge discovery in data and data mining (i.e. process through which data is converted into valuable information), this can help to increase the loyalty as it could help in targeting the correctly needs of the customers. Therefore, the present research has focus on examining how the rightly targeted customers and their needs could become a source of developing customer loyalty in the luxury hotels. This will be further examined with the respect to the selected luxury hotel case study.

2.9.2.Cooperation and Customer Loyalty

The corporation is never established without taking some key steps. Therefore, when a new service is introduced in the market, it must answer few questions regarding it. These questions are regarding the vision, mission and values of the company (Hollensen, 2015). The strength and weaknesses of the corporation must be analysed appropriately. The corporation must have a focus on certain aspects related to its offered services. As the study of Rust et al., (2004) also proved that it is important to have a focus in the marketing strategy and this help in improving the effectiveness of the marketing efforts. As the present research is about the luxury hotels, so a clear focus on offering the premium service is mandatory for developing the loyalty of customers. Moreover, it must be ensured that strengths of the corporation are used for attracting and retaining the customers. The core values of the brand should be matched with its offerings as this will help to retain the customers and gain their loyalty for a longer period of time (Becker et al., 2016). The research study conducted by Michell et al., (2001) also states that it is important to communicate the core values of the brand and there must be consistency in offerings and core brand values. Their study was conducted on industrial goods sector and that study was based on secondary data. It was concluded that the core brand values must be demonstrated by the efforts of the marketers where alignment with products should not be ignored. As this aspect is not being analysed in the hospitality sector, especially in the luxury

hotels, therefore, the present research examines how this C of Double Tree Hotel is managed effectively for gaining the customer loyalty. Therefore, this research examines how the elements of 'Cooperation' including mission, vision, core values and consistency in them help the luxury brands to retain their customers and for developing the loyalty within them. This will be of significant importance for marketers of luxury hotels, as they will become able to analyse whether or not they need to emphasise the element of Corporation while developing their marketing and branding strategies.

2.9.3.Competitor and Customer Loyalty

Once a firm is in the market, it must have to deal with the competition in an appropriate manner. Every business must be aware of the offerings of its competitors. It must develop its plans after analysing its competitors in an effective manner. The customer loyalty is to gain the attention of customers where the customers consideration set must exclude all the competitors (Rothaermel, 2015). So for excluding the other competitors from the consideration set of the customers, as recommended by Babin and Zikmund (2015), it is of utmost importance for service brands that they should be aware of the fact that what are the current strategies of their competitors and how they are providing value to the customers. If service firms become aware of the strategies of their competitors, only then they could introduce such programs and strategies which are beneficial for gaining the customer loyalty(Zhang and Pan, 2015). It was found by Srinivasan et al., (2002) that many of the loyalty programs are introduced in response to the competitors' strategies. Another study was conducted by Kim and Yoon (2004) on the mobile sector and loyalty of customers for brand loyalty. The research was based on the case study analysis. It was proved that competition is one of the main factors which have helped the mobile brands to improve the loyalty of their customers. Chen et al., (2015) also tried to examine the competition's role in developing customer loyalty. It was found that between process of delivering value to customers and customer loyalty, competition acts as the moderator which means that the strength of the relationship between process of delivering value to customer and customer loyalty may increase with the competition(Chen et al, 2015). The study of Chen et al., (2015) was based on questionnaire data where both employees and customers were the sample of

the study. For analysis of dyad data, statistical tests like logistic regression, ordinary least squares and ANOVA were used. The same study (ibid) also reported that from employees' point of view for the competition level is determinant of the customer loyalty. Analysing the current literature about the competition and the customer loyalty, the present research examines how the Double Tree Hotel is managing/could manage its competitors for developing the customer loyalty. This will be examined in the case of Double Tree Hotel that which competitors are used for developing the customer loyalty. GOOD

2.9.4.Product and Customer Loyalty

In the service business, the product which is offered is the combination of products and services. In luxury hotels, there are various core and supplementary products which are being offered to customers. For gaining the customer loyalty, it is important to deliver the best quality level of the service and products (Lonial and Raju, 2015). As the marketers, this should not be forgotten that only those hotels are able to attract and retain the customers that provide the high quality services and products to their customers. Therefore, the offered product or service of the luxury hotel must be clearly defined and its quality should be superior. The offered product must fulfil the promise of the customers (Epuran et al., 2015). Moreover, the needs of the customers must be fulfilled through the offered products and services. As highlighted by the study Selnes (2013) that product performance helps in improving the customer loyalty. Otherwise, customers will never come back for repurchasing and it will be impossible to develop the attitudinal and behavioural loyalty in the customers.

2.9.5.Price and customer loyalty

The pricing decision is the most critical one for the service businesses. Whatever the pricing strategy is selected, it must deliver the value to the customers. The pricing strategy must be determined after analysing the willingness and purchasing power of the targeted customers. Otherwise, if prices are set unrealistically then only latent loyalty could be developed where customers show the emotional attachment but they do not depict the repurchase behaviour (Carmen and Marius, 2016). Therefore, the feasibility of pricing must be analysed before offering the products to the customers. As

per the study of Wieseke et al., (2014), it was found that loyal customers expect more discounts. Therefore, if a brand has to attract and retain its loyal customers, it must have to provide them with price discounts. Another study examined the pricing and customer loyalty relationship in the context of the Indian market where the retail banking sector was explored. The research has established that fair pricing strategy leads towards the customer loyalty. The critical analysis shows that this term 'fair pricing' is quite subjective and it may vary customer to customer. But companies must put effort into providing value for the price the customers pay. This will help them in developing the customer loyalty. Furthermore, as highlighted by Wahab et al., (2016), in the case of luxury hotels, service providers are in better position to charge premium prices, however, it should not be forgotten that unrealistic prices could harm the customer loyalty. Therefore, even if one service provider is offering the premium services, it must look at the pricing strategies of its competitors. The present research will analyse that how pricing strategy of the selected luxury hotel is influencing the customer loyalty.

2.9.6.Place and Customer Loyalty

The distribution channel must be selected after considering all important factors like ease and convenience of the customers. The luxury hotels target the business and international tourists, therefore, it is important to ensure that its location is near to those facilities which are demanded by such customers (Sukamto and Lumintan, 2015). Moreover, the decision of placing strategy considers the factor like distributing the service through electronic modes like official website. Therefore, the ease and convenience attached with the official website of the business is also important (Li, Wang and Yu, 2015).This research examines that how the placing strategy of Double Tree Hotel has influence the customer loyalty. Nevertheless, intermediate parties like wholesalers, suppliers and distributors are also important factors of placing strategy, but those are not examined in this research as it can further enhance the scope of this research and it might not be possible to give required attention to all aspects.

2.9.7.Promotion and Customer Loyalty

There are various promotional alternatives that could be adopted for attracting and retaining the customers. The customer loyalty is most frequently developed through promotional programs, therefore, it could be said that there exists direct link of promotional activities of the hotel firm and its customer loyalty level (Sukamto and Lumintan, 2015). But, it must be noted that only those promotional activities are beneficial for customer loyalty which are directed towards developing the customer loyalty. The examples of such activities are the loyalty programs, membership offers and other similar promotional activities. Zakaria et al., (2014) examine the loyalty programs in the retail industry and it was found that the role of loyalty programs is not substantiated and they are not helping in creating loyalty. The reason was that such loyalty cards were not offered by one supermarket but all of the competitors offer similar loyalty cards, hence they were unable to result in any customer loyalty. However, it was found that few unique loyalty programs like Rebate Gift Voucher (i.e. prepaid stored value money card offered by retailers or hotels to their customers to be used as substitute to cash), Shopping Partnership Programs (i.e. systems which are designed for understand the customers, their brand preferences, their shopping and spending habits), Special Price (i.e. the promotional activities where customers are provided special discount offers because of their repeat purchases) and Member's Day(i.e. promotional activities specified for routine or loyal customers on specific days of months and years)helped in improving the customer loyalty. The loyalty programs named Gift Redemption, Magazine and Insurance Coverage has not helped in improving the customer loyalty. Usually, as said by O'Cass and Heirati, (2015), luxury hotels mainly invest their marketing budget on the loyalty programs as they believe that they are quite beneficial, but this still needs the empirical support. It could be analysed that the promotions efforts like loyalty programs must be designed in a unique manner that hotels are differentiated from the competitors. This will help in enhancing the customer loyalty. Therefore, this research aims to examine that how the promotional activities of the Double Tree Hotel are influencing the customer loyalty of this luxury hotel.

2.10.Literature matrix

Theme	Themes	Description	Authors
1	Customer loyalty	• Attachment to particular brand • Competitors become out of consideration set of customers	Wang (2015); Coelho and Henseler (2012); Czarniewski (2014),
2	Marketing mix	• Product, price, place, promotion	Lovelock et al., (2009), Mucai et al., 2013).
3	3C's	• Customers, competition and corporation	Leonidou et al., (2013); Walker et al., (2010)
4	Customer and customer loyalty	• Target those customers which are appropriate • Meet the needs of the customers in a way that they become loyal • Use feasible techniques to know the customers right	Wu et al., (2005) Cui et al., (2015); Harrison-Walker (2010); Pranata and Skinner (2015)
5	Cooperation and customer loyalty	• Vision, mission and values must depict consistency • Strengths and weaknesses should be used to develop loyalty • Communication of core values	Michell et al., (2001); Becker et al., (2016); Rust et al., (2004); Hollensen, (2015)

6	Competition and customer loyalty	- Be aware of the ways through which competitors are developing customer loyalty - Introduction of loyalty programs in response of competitors	Srinivasan et al., (2002); Rothaermel, (2015); Zhang and Pan (2015)
7	Product and customer loyalty	- High quality core and supplementary products develop customer loyalty - Needs must be fulfilled through offered products and services to develop customer loyalty	Lonial and Raju, (2015); Epuran et al., (2015)
8	Price and customer loyalty	- Pricing must provide value to customers - Price must consider willingness and purchasing power - More discount pricing develop loyalty - Fair pricing develop customer loyalty - Only realistic prices develop customer loyalty	Wahab et al., (2016); Wieseke et al., (2014); Carmen and Marius, (2016)

| 9 | Promotion and customer loyalty | • Direct link among promotional activities and customer loyalty
• Loyalty programs are helpful for customer loyalty
• Uniqueness of promotional activities especially loyalty programs is helpful for customer loyalty | Sukamto and Lumintan, (2015); Zakaria et al., (2014); O'Cass and Heirati, (2015) |
| 10 | Place and customer loyalty | • Distribution strategy which provides ease and convenience to customers develop customer loyalty
• Electronic distribution should also consider this ease and convenience for developing customer loyalty | Sukamto and Lumintan(2015); Li, Wang and Yu (2015) |

2.11.Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to review the literature about customer loyalty and understand how it is being influenced by the marketing strategies. This chapter has established that customer loyalty is influenced with marketing mix i.e. price, place, product and promotion and 3C's i.e. customers, competitors and corporation. In this chapter, the linkage between these marketing strategies and customer loyalty is examined, in the light of hospitality industry.

3.Chapter Three:Research methods

3.1.Introduction

This research is about the marketing strategy of luxury hotels of U.K., where the case study of Double Tree by Hilton Hotel is used for this research. The purpose of this chapter is to devise the research methods for fulfilling the aim and objectives of this research. Mainly, this research analyses how various marketing strategies are helping the Double Tree hotel to develop customer loyalty, therefore, this research uses the secondary methods. This chapter provides rationale of selecting secondary research design where the assessment schematic and sampling methods along with exclusion and inclusion criteria are discussed. At the end of this chapter, ethical considerations of this research are also considered.

3.2.Choice of research design

According to Matthews and Ross (2014), there are two alternatives for research design that could be adopted by any researcher. This research has relied on the secondary research design which is common method and it involves relying on the information which is already collected by some other researcher for some other aim and objectives. This research has opted for secondary research design as it is a low cost and quick alternative because it relies on readily available information hence its cost is quite less and it is less time consuming as compared to the primary methods (Seidman, 2013). This research must be completed in a limited time period and it was not a funded research project, therefore, considering the time and budget constraints, this was the most feasible research design. Therefore, for clarifying the research question of present research, this was the most feasible method for the current research.

Another reason for using the secondary data methods is the access of secondary data. With the help of internet technology and digital libraries, it has become easier to access the secondary data. Now, this is not the time where

the researcher has to travel hundreds of miles for collecting secondary data. It has become possible to access the relevant secondary data with one click of button (Silverman, 2013). The ease associated with the access of secondary data has motivated the researcher to answer the research question using the secondary research design. This research was about the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, and there were many potential difficulties which were attached with the collection of primary data from the selected luxury hotel (Marshall and Rossman, 2014). Moreover, it was not mandatory to collect primary data for answering the research questions of this study. Therefore, the choice of secondary research design was made for analysing the marketing strategies of luxury hotels. Further to this, there was extensive data which was available for this research issue, so it was not required to rely on primary data.

3.3.Construction of the methods

3.3.1.Process of collecting secondary data

As per recommendation of Collis and Hussey (2013), this research relies on the secondary methods and this whole processing of using secondary design is based on four stages. First of all, the data related to the subject domain was identified. It was identified that the researcher has to collect the data about the marketing strategy of Double Tree which is a luxury hotel. Moreover, it is also identified that previous studies about customer loyalty and luxury branding has to be analysed for first two objectives. In this stage, it was also decided that from where this data and information has to be acquired. This research has collected the relevant data about Double Tree from online articles, customer reviews, blogs, official reports, journals and books. Once this was decided, the research moved towards the second stage where the actual data was gathered. Majorly, the data is being collected from digital library of UCB. Once the data was gathered, as suggested by Creswell (2013), at the third step, the researcher compared the data which was collected from various sources. The purpose of this comparison was to validate the findings of one secondary source with other. This technique has helped to get the true picture of marketing strategies by luxury hotel brands. At the forth step, the collected data is analysed. For analysing the data, thematic and content analysis is used where the data is read again and again. The collected data is analysed

for common patterns and themes and these themes are used for answering the research questions of this research (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000).

3.3.2.Schematic assessment of secondary data

In this research, following the recommendation of Angen (2000), secondary data is collected but it was not collected without having any criteria. This research has collected the data on the basis of assessment schematic which has guided the decision of researcher to select or reject the data for this research. Using this assessment scheme, the secondary data is being collected for this research.

Objectiveness	The claims of the authors are checked for the bias and objectiveness. It is ensured that those secondary sources are used for this research in which there is no bias and personal error by the author of the source.
Relevance	Moreover, as suggested by Bryman (2015), the relevance of the source was also a part of the assessment schematic.It was ensured that the selected data is directly relevant to the research issue which is marketing strategies of the Double Tree hotel.
Holistic	The authors' claims were examined for providing a complete picture which means those authors' secondary data is used for this research who have provided both positive and negative aspects of the marketing strategies of Double Tree Hotels. Likewise, other parts i.e. arguments about customer loyalty and luxury branding are also critically analysed to incorporate both positive and negative aspects. As suggested by Bryman and Bell (2015), the secondary sources which were only having one stance i.e. either positive or negative were not considered for this research.

Use of primary method	As the secondary data is about using the primary research studies of the other authors, therefore, the primary data collection procedure of other authors was critically examined. This is not considered a good practice to consider those primary research studies in the secondary studies which has not used the rigorous research methodology. Therefore, the assessment schematic also included the rigorous methods using by other authors.
Rigorous Research Methods	The secondary data is examined for the research methods and it was analysed how rigorously the research study is being conducted. If there was any ambiguity regarding the adopted research methods, the particular source was not considered for this research. The research methods were examined for adopted approach, research strategy, sample size and sampling technique and analysis procedure. If there was problem in any of these elements, that particular research study did not become part of this research.
References and citations	Zikmund et al., (2013) has stated that it is important to use appropriate number of references in one research study. The core studies of the particular discipline must be used and the number of references must be optimal. Therefore, before selecting any secondary source for this research, it was checked whether or not the authors have used optimal number of references and citations in their study. The studies which have used less than 5 citations per page were considered inappropriate for this research.
Customer feedback authenticity	This research also relies on customers' feedback; therefore, it is ensured that those customer reviews are taken which are published by authentic and official sources. Moreover, the recent customer reviews were preferred for this study

Table 1: Assessment Scheme of Secondary Sources

Source: Created by author

3.4.Sample

The secondary research study does not use all of the secondary sources which are available on the databases. It is not possible to use each and every secondary source in the research study. Only few of the secondary sources could be used for the research and the selected sources are known as the sample of the study. The sample is selected on the basis of particular exclusion and inclusion criteria. When a particular criterion is developed for a selection of sample, this is known as the purposive sampling method (Bryman and Bell, 2007), hence, the present research has used the purposive sampling method for this research. Other than the above mentioned assessment schematic, following criteria is used for this research. If particular study was considered appropriate as per the following criteria, only then it became the sample of this study.

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Relevance to aim and objectives	This research is about the marketing strategy of luxury brands. Only the research studies which were about 3C's and 4P's of marketing are being considered for this research.	The secondary sources which were about marketing strategy of luxury brands but were covering the aspect other than 4P's and 3C's are not considered for this research.
	Further to this, there are numerous luxury hotel brands; it was not possible to study all of them. Therefore, this study has only focused on Double Tree hotel. Hence, the relevance with the Double Tree hotel was another	The research studies or secondary sources discussing the marketing strategies of luxury hotels other than Double Tree are not included in this research.

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
		criterion for inclusion of secondary sources.
Year of publishing	It is always encouraged to rely on updated secondary sources. Therefore, this research has utilised those research studies which are published in last 10 years. The limit of last10 years was considered as the inclusion criteria.	If any research study was being published before the limit of last 10 years, then that study was excluded from this research. This was being adopted to ensure that the present research is based on updated data.
Online Access	This research is based on secondary data which is collected from digital libraries like UCB digital library. This research has only considered those studies which were available online. The studies which are available online are included in the sample of this study.	It was not possible to visit physical libraries for accessing the secondary sources. Due to time and cost limitation, the resources which are only available in physical libraries are not part of the sample of this research.
Authentic sources	This research is based on secondary sources collected through authentic sources. It was ensured that those websites are used for collecting data which are authentic and reliable.	The inauthentic and unreliable websites are not used for accessing the secondary data for the present research.

Table 2: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria of Sample

3.5.Ethical considerations

In this research, secondary data methods are used. As highlighted by Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010), usually, the ethical concerns for secondary research design are not severe, but it is still important to ensure that the research is completed in an ethical manner. The secondary data is not misrepresented in any manner. The researcher has avoided its personal opinion and preconceived notions while analysing the collected data. The objective view is being presented in this research. Moreover, the researcher has not presented any data without acknowledging the original author of the data. Using UCB referencing guidelines, proper citations and referencing is being done in this research.

3.6.Data Analysis

For analysing the data, thematic analysis is being conducted where the common patterns and themes emerging from data are identified. These patterns and themes are used for answering the research questions of this research. Moreover, while analysing the data, it was ensured that everything is cross referenced to ensure that logical and rigours analysis is performed.

3.7.Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to explain which methods are being selected for this research for examining the role of marketing strategies in the customer loyalty of Double Tree Hotel. This chapter has provided all details about the selected methods and justification for their selection is also provided. The research relies on secondary data so all necessary details about sample, analysis are provided in this chapter. Moreover, ethical aspects are also discussed.

4.Chapter Four: Findings, Analysis and Evaluation

4.1.Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the secondary data which is collected for the purpose of achieving aim and objectives. Mainly, it reviews the marketing strategies and customer loyalty of the Double Tree. At the end, it examines the impact of marketing strategies on customer loyalty.

4.2.Double Tree by Hilton Hotel – A luxury hotel of U.K.

This is located in the heart of the central business district among the U.S. Steel Tower and BNY Mellon Complexes. It is in downtown Pittsburgh where it has drive of 25 minutes from Pittsburgh International Airport. It is famous for its convenient location as compared to all of hotels of Pittsburgh. It is a great alternative for family time and it is also a better opportunity for sporting events and city's conventions. It attracts customers with the help of its thoughtful touches and friendly services. From check in to the check out point, it ensures to provide the nicest experience to its customers (Double Tree by Hilton, 2016).

4.3.4 P's of Double Tree

As this research considers 4P's for analysing the marketing strategies, therefore, this section critically evaluates the marketing mix / 4P's of Double Tree Hotel by Hilton.

4.3.1.Product Element of Double Tree by Hilton

Like many other luxurious hotels, the products offered by the Double Tree hotel are the deluxe rooms, restaurants and bars. It is not only targeting the leisure travellers but it is also providing solutions for business meetings and events. It attracts both business guests and leisure travellers. Its rooms are designed with the advanced amenities and modern diligence. It offers exotic

food along with the drinks in its menus (Visit Bristol, 2016). It also provides free wi-fi to its customers along with the membership discounts and room services. As someone arrives the hotel, he/she is provided with warm welcome from room service personnel along with the unique room facilities and décor (Anonymous, n.d). According to Hoovers (2015), it also has services like audio-visual equipment, meeting rooms, business centres, modems and faxing for its business customers. It provides services like high chair and cribs, babysitting services for attracting the family travellers. It has elevators, newsstand, multilingual staff, laundry, saving deposits, luggage storage and many other services and all of such services are meant for comfort and convenience (Hotel News Resource, 2017).

There are various types of hotel services, the service which is offered by Double Tree is known as 'full service hotel' where it is offering a wide range of services. Its diverse range of services includes facilities of weddings, business meetings and banquet and special events. Further to this, it also provides the services of lounges and restaurants along with the food and beverage services(Fountain, 2016). It also has swimming pools, retail facilities, gift shops and many other miscellaneous services which are offered to the customers. This depicts that it is a full service hotel where a large range of services are being offered (Anonymous, 2015).

Its services are divided into three elements which are named as core, facilitating and enhancing or supporting products.

- Its core products are basic products which are attractive for the customers. Mainly the core products are those which attract customers to this hotel and fulfil their needs. The main reason of visiting the hotel is dealt with the core products of Double Tree Hotel by Hilton. So the hotel rooms of Double Tree Hotel are the core products (Fountain, 2016). The customers visit the Double Tree for staying in these hotels for a particular period of time. Likewise, peripheral services are the additional services and products which are provided to customers for gaining the competitive advantage in the competitive marketplace (Lamb, Hair and McDaniel, 2011).
- Facilitating products are those products which assist or aid the customers for consuming the core products which are offered to the customers. There are various facilitating services which are offered at

Double Tree by Hilton; examples involve bars and restaurants, customer service and online reservation facilities (Walsman et al., 2014). As told by Lovelock (2011), these facilitating services are also known as supplementary services.

- Supporting products are also the additional services and products which are offered for differentiating the services from competitors. These supporting products allow to gain competitive advantage. It offers 24/7 room service to its customers. It provides few magazines and newspapers for business travellers. Moreover, the concierge services are provided to customers (Lamb, Hair and McDaniel, 2011).

- In a similar manner, augmented products are offered to customers as the combination of core and peripheral services. The examples of augmented products offered at Double Tree by Hilton Hotels are luxurious room, exterior designs, membership discounts, relaxed hotel atmosphere and high class restaurants (Byrd, 2016).

4.3.2.Place

The purpose of distribution strategy which is adopted by Double Tree Hotels is to reach the customers. So the placing strategy is about specifying where, when and how the services are being offered to customers. Though, intermediate parties also include in placing strategy but those are not examined here as they are not directly linked with customer loyalty in hospitality industries.Double Tree Hotel by Hilton is located at various locations and territories and it provides the services to its customers in a direct manner where customers directly interact with the service provider which is named Double Tree Hotels by Hilton (Hotel News Resource, 2017). The distribution strategy of this luxurious hotel heavily relies on internet and information technology in various formats. First of all, it is the official website which acts as the effective platform for service distribution. It supplies wide range of capabilities and features where practice assistance is provided to customers through website. The official website allows the customers to book a room, plan weddings and events, schedule meetings and arrange pickups from booking airport (PODI, 2015). Further to this, the mobile friendly applications are used for facilitating the distribution of the services. Double Tree by Hilton Hotels has their own application which is available on iPhone

and Android platforms for the customers of this luxury hotel. Similarly, social media is also used for facilitating the distribution strategy of Double Tree by Hilton Hotels (Lim, 2016). The analysis of distribution and placing strategy of Double Tree tells that the internet platform is being selected by this hotel for providing the services in a convenient manner. It provides the opportunity to its customers to book the services in advance. Moreover, the services could be availed and booked in a quicker manner (Byrd et al., 2016)

While selecting the location, the delight of travellers along with the business destination concerns is examined. It is ensured that hotels are not only near the major vacation spots but it is also ensured that airports are near to the Double Tree by Hilton Hotels. This makes it possible for both business and leisure travellers to access the Double Tree Hotels. The customised needs of the population are also analysed and fulfilled. The location is selected after doing the proper analysis and it is ensured that calmness, peace, beach-side facilities are also available to customers (Fountain, 2016).

It focuses on reverse logistics and inventory management practices as well for ensuring the services and products are delivered to customers in the best possible manner.

4.3.3. Pricing

According to Lovelock (2011), there are four categories which could be selected by any organisation. The framework of pricing is also known as the framework which means economy, penetration, skimming and premium pricing strategies. In economy pricing, the products are offered to customers in low budgets. In penetration strategy, higher quality products are offered at the lower prices when compared to the offerings of the competitors. This strategy helps to enhance the market share.

Figure 3: Pricing Strategies

Source: Lovelock (2011).

As told by Coughlan et al., (2001),in skimming strategy, higher prices are charged to customers in comparison with the competitors. It is expected that the high price will indicate the exclusiveness and higher quality of the offerings. Likewise, in premium pricing strategy, higher level of quality is offered at higher level of prices, hence the offered services or products are known to be of excellent quality where additional features and characteristics are offered. The majority of rooms of Double Tree by Hilton Hotels are of high quality and they are using the upscale pricing strategies (PODI, 2015). Hence, it is reasonable to classify the offerings of Double Tree as following the premium strategy as it is a luxury hotel and as mentioned in literature review section, luxury hotels follow the premium pricing strategy.Double Tree only has five star and four star rooms and it is able to charge the premium prices to its customers. Other than tangible benefits, it provides intangible benefits like high status, luxuriousness and sense of achievement and these aspects allow this hotel to successfully follow the premium strategy (Ruddick, 2013). From the analysis, it can be observed that a well-researched approach is used for its pricing strategy. It does not provide the stay and dinning services, rather it sells the sense of status and luxury which tells that it is effectively priced. It also takes help of price flexibility and seasonal pricing strategies and this enables this hotel to be fair with the prices all over the year (Garrido, 2014).

4.3.4.Promotion

It uses the unique promotional activities which are helpful for differentiating it from other competitors. It offers exclusive membership to its customers. The marketers of this hotel strive to enhance the experience of customers through their well-designed promotion strategies. It is said by Hoover (2016), that it keeps a strong record of its marketing strategies by using the feedback of promotional efforts. It also modifies its strategies as per the feedback and performance record. It has a dedicated team working on promotional strategies. Majorly, internet is used for its promotional efforts. However, public relations and publicity techniques are also used to promote its products and services (Euromonitor, 2013). This hotel has also started various loyalty programs which are helping it to improve. It offers membership offers and rebate gift vouchers to its customers. The member's day is also celebrated in this hotel where customers get one day in month in which very attractive

promotional offers are given to them. The purpose of these promotional activities is to enhance loyalty of their customers (Fountain, 2016).

4.4.3C's of Double Tree

4.4.1.Customers

It targets the needs of customers in various manners. It has analysed what is required by the targeted customers. Hence, it introduces the strategies as per the needs of the customers which are targeted by this hotel i.e. affluent customers visiting from other countries or cities. It has set the sales targets and to achieve those targets, it continuously introduces time bound offers which are helping it to reach the desired targets of the sales. It is using well written catalogues and purpose of these catalogues is to provide detailed information about the offered services. Moreover, it offers the customer care services to retain the customers for longer period. It has employed well-established and fully groomed and developed staff which is hired for providing the best possible services to the customers. Through its customer services, it tries to achieve the customer loyalty (Shetty, 2010). The target market is continuously communicated about the services which are offered to the business person, families, tourists and delegates going for vacations. Following its effective communication strategy, it remains in contact with their customers in a continuous manner. It strives to ensure that needs of the customers are fulfilled in an effective manner (Leonardo, 2015). Any links?

4.4.2.Corporation

It has a wide range of contemporary upscale accommodations which are spread in 240 cities, vacation destinations and metropolitan areas worldwide. The Double Tree hotels are especially designed for providing the actual comfort to its leisure and business travellers. It strives to provide the satisfying stay to all the guests who visit this hotel. It is located in various places as it is having more than 450 hotels and resorts. At all of its hotels, its aim is to create meaningful moments for its customers (Double Tree by Hilton, 2016). It is a major service provider which has branches and hotels and resorts all over the

world. It is continuously expanding with the intention to increase the market share. It is spread in a wide range of regions, hence, its loyal customers prefer to select the same hotel over different territories when they move around. It has employed the highly trained and professional staff which helps it to further work on the mission and vision of this hotel (Leonardo, 2015). LINKS

4.4.3.Competition

While discussing about pricing strategies, Nikitenko (2014) suggeststhat Double Tree uses competitive pricing where it is observes that what is being done by their competitors. Likewise, it also follows the strategy of its competitors for its promotional efforts even it benchmarks their promotional efforts. As said by Hoovers (2016), it is of utmost importance to know what is being done by the competitors at a particular time and place. Competitors are also an asset for the businesses. Its most direct competitors are International Hotels Group Plc., Marriot International Inc., and Radisson Hotels Internationals Incas they are also the premium hotels of U.K. and they also target the same customers which are targeted by Double Tree. Double Tree by Hilton Hotels keeps an eye on the strategies of its competitors. Through its business intelligence program, it obtains the maximum information about their competitors and it modifies its strategic moves as per the strategies of competitors. It is believed by the top management of Double Tree that it is of utmost importance to consider the competitors as close partners and learn from their strategies(Pigden, 2015).The internet is used heavily by its business intelligence team to analyse the strategies of the competitors (Saker-Clark, 2016). It is having a healthy competition where luxurious hotels are learning from each other and they are modifying their strategies for gaining the loyalty of their customers. This competition which is helping this hotel to manage their loyalty programs eventually helps out in developing a large base of loyal customers.

4.5.Role of Marketing Strategies in developing Customer Loyalty at Double Tree

According to O'Neill and Xiao (2006), marketing is the most important strategy for any business, so it is for Double Tree by Hilton Hotel. It keeps it focus on specifying the available services such as accommodation services, transportation and communication for providing the clear picture to its targeted customers. Through its marketing strategies, customers are able to understand the vision, purpose and direction of this hotel. Its marketing efforts are directed towards giving the picture of providing best services and hospitality. Its marketing efforts are aimed to differentiate the services from other hotels. It has employed adequate and highly expert marketing staff who are responsible for designing and implementing the marketing strategies. According to Business Wire (2010), themarketing strategies of Double Tree are continuously monitored to ensure that they are achieving the objectives. Though, it tries to get the feedback of its customers and it also tried to incorporate their feedback in its marketing strategies, the below section analyses how the marketing strategies of Double Tree are helping to gain the customer loyalty. It continuously responds to the needs of customers with the intention to fulfil their needs and develop a better relationship with them. The below section is analysing the customer feedback available on official and authentic websites regarding the services of Double Tree (Leonardo, 2015). This section will also analyse which aspect of marketing has lead towards the particular feedback from customers.

The overall the customer loyalty at Double Tree, the below figure represents the overall rating of this hotel as per the reviews of its customers.

Figure 4: Traveller Rating of Double Tree

Source: Trip Advisor (2016)

From the above given figure, it could be analysed that the majority of customers have rated it as 'very good'. There were 1230 customers who said it is a very good hotel for their stay. After this, 990 customers have rated it as 'excellent'. This shows majority of the customers of Double Tree are satisfied and loyal with this luxury hotel.

Further to this, the below figure represents the satisfaction of all customers collectively from various point of factors. It could be observed that majority of customers has given it good rating for its cleanliness, customer service and food quality.

Figure 5: Customer Reviews

Source: Late Rooms (n.d.)

However, from the above results it could not be ignored that there are customers who were not loyal or satisfied, hence, while reviewing the customers' feedback, both positive and negative comments are considered.

For analysing the customer loyalty at Double Tree, the feedback of customers is analysed. From the official website, it was found that one customer mentioned that it is the one of the best hotels in the city of Pittsburgh. It was said as the most favourite hotel due to its convenience attached with it. For sports and social events, this was liked by the customer. It was mentioned that its staff and management is quite accommodating. The quality of food and interior design was highlighted as good where the staff is said to be attentive and friendly (Toik, 2016)which is part of the product in marketing mix strategy. One of the customers mentioned that it will not be recommended to anyone in future due to the fact that its price and value does not match. It was mentioned by the customer that its price per night is $300 but it's worth is only $125 (Wjohnb, 2016). This response of the customer highlights that this particular customer was not satisfied with the marketing strategies. To be particular the pricing strategy is the problematic and as per 4P's of marketing strategy, the pricing strategy must focus on the value which will be provided.

Another customer mentioned that the staff of hotel is great and its location is quite convenient and it is quite clean hotel. He mentioned that he stays there a lot. The public transportation access is also very easily available. It has walking distance from all major companies. This is part of placing strategy in marketing mix that location of hotel must offer conveience to customers.This customer also mentioned that he has the loyalty program membership and it helps it to gain the maximum advantage from the services of this hotel (Greenwood, 2016). This customer response highlights the effectiveness of

the placing strategy of Double Tree Hotel. From this response, it could also be analysed that customer loyalty exists as the customer mentioned that he stays there a lot.

Another customer highlighted again that staff of Double Tree is great, but its product needs significant attention which is not being provided by the marketers. The design of rooms is great however the floor plan is following quite traditional and old style. It seems like the same room which was being visited five years ago by the customer. Though few aspects of the rooms are modified but majorly changes are not being made in the last five years. It was mentioned by the customer that switch covers were not at all changed and they were quite old. It was being mentioned by the customer that there was smoke in hallway and the room was quite dirty (Ferriswitt, 2016). As per the marketing mix strategy, the product strategy must be focusing on offering those products or services to customers, which fulfils the needs of customers.This highlights that there is a need for doing improvements in the product strategy. These all problematic areas highlighted by this customer are components of the product strategies. This depicts that the product strategy needs refinement.

According to Motclain (2015), the stay for wedding was above expectation and customer found that lobby is gorgeous and it was mentioned as that there is a need for refurnishing the rooms. It was also highlighted that rates were high due to the corporate policy of this hotel. This feedback comment of the customer is depicting that the product and pricing strategy needs to be revisitedas marketing mix theory says that product should be focusing on needs of customers while pricing must be as per the value delivered to customers. Doreen (2016) mentioned that it provides excellent service and its rooms are spacious and beautiful. This customer also appreciated the professionalism and friendliness of staff. The onsite of Double Tree is also liked by the customers. Moreover, it has close proximity to other nice restaurants which has made it more attractive for travellers who like to visit various places when they are staying in a particular hotel. Its location is quite convenient. Its attached convenience store is also source of satisfaction for customers. From this, it could be analysed that Double Tree has the effective placing and distribution strategies as marketing mix strategies tell that convenience should be considered while selecting the location of

hotels.Moreover, its employees and staff are quite professional and these aspects are helping this luxury hotel to attract and retain customers.

Ujohnm (2016) said that Double Tree is a nice place to stay but its cost is not worth to pay. Usually, it is important to provide the services which depict the core values of the brand. The present response of this customer shows the core value of luxury hotel is not communicated through its products and services, hence, the focus on 'corporation' is missing where this brand is unable to work on its core values, mission and vision. This is said in 3C's strategies that vision, mission and core values must be delivered through the offering (Babin and Zikmund, 2015).The same customer further mentioned that for experiencing Pittsburgh and attending the football game, this customer was attracted towards this hotel. It was told by the customer that hotel garage was great and rooms were clean. However, there was element of discomfort which was attached with the bed. The price paid for the services was not matched with the value which was provided to this customer. From this response, it could again be analysed that customer found problem in product and pricing strategy. Perhaps, the loyalty of customers is influenced with the bad impact of pricing and product strategies from the marketing mix of Double Tree.

Another customer mentioned that he experienced the bad stay in this hotel. The quality was low and building is poorly constructed. Walls are thin like papers as conversations could be hear from other rooms. Likewise, there was noise in the hallway which disturbed this customer (William, 2016). It could be analysed that there was problem in providing the customers what was demanded by them. Their needs are not effective targeted. Therefore, there is a problem in managing the 'Customer' which is part of 3C's strategies of Double Tree.

According to Hnob (2016), the Double Tree hotel has a desired level of comfort and it has easy walk to football stadium. It was quite easy to access the football stadium from this hotel. The customer mentioned that if even he has to come again for sports tourism he will prefer this hotel as its location is very attractive for him. This response also highlighted the effective placing strategy of Double Tree hotel. From this, it is reasonable to state that its placing strategy is helping it to obtain the loyalty of its customers.

According to Phillips (2016), this hotel is an amazing hotel which provides the value for the money, it charged £100 for room for two people and it provided the value which was being expected from that. The staff of hotel was quite polite and helpful. Its food quality was good and location is attractive which is about placing strategy in marketing mix (Hollensen, 2015). This has led to this customer to return to the same hotel again.

Fiona (2016) has highlighted various aspects of this hotel which depicts her satisfaction and dissatisfaction from distinct elements of 4P's and 3C's. Like other customers, it staff is appreciated for its efficiency, excellence and friendliness. But it was highlighted that the level of its room and service was not like four star hotels and this is the aspect of product strategy (Hollensen, 2015). At the advertisement given on Facebook and its official website, different expectations were being developed but these are not being delivered. This shows that core values of the luxury hotel are communicated but these are not reinforced through its services and products which is part of 3C's strategies of the marketing (Mullin, Hardy and Sutton, 2014).It charges the price of luxury hotels but it is somehow unable to provide the core brand value of luxury hotels.

Wishart (2015) said that initially on arrival, the hotel's reception was quite clean and attractive, staff is welcoming and friendly. But room size is not as per expectations. Room was dirty and it was not comfortable. It is a luxury hotel, but its services and products were not up to the standard as luxury branding mainly focuses on providing the best possible services and this has resulted in sheer disappointment. This hotel has remained unable to provide the standard services which must be provided by luxury hotels. This is highlighting that the hotel is unable to deliver what is promised as per the core values of this brand. This shows that 'corporation' strategy is not effectively managed and implemented.

4.6.Discussion on Analysis

For further analysis of the customer review, the following matrix is developed on the basis of information gathered from various secondary sources.

For final hand in please colour code these P's, C's and analysis otherwise it all looks the same!

Themes from the customer reviews	4 P's	3 C's	Analysis
It has become best due to its convenient location	Placing	Customers	Effective
Location is quite convenient	Placing	Customers	Effective
Public transportation is easily accessible	Placing	Customers	Effective
It is located quite near the football stadium	Placing	Customers	Effective
It has walking distance from all major companies	Placing	Customers	Effective
Attractive for sports persons due to its location	Placing	Customers	Effective
Its staff and management is accommodating	Product	Corporation	Effective
Staff of hotel is great	Product	Corporation	Effective
It has attentive and friendly staff.	Product	Corporation	Effective
The interior design is liked by customers	Product	Customers	Effective
It has attached convenient store	Product	Customers	Effective
It is quite clean	Product	Customers	Effective
Products are not provided significant attention	Product	Customers	Ineffective
Hotel reception is clean	Product	Corporation	Effective
Room design is great	Product	Corporation	Effective
Room was dirty and uncomfortable	Product	Corporation	Ineffective
Floor plan is not modern	Product	Corporation	Ineffective
Smoke in hallway and rooms are dirty	Product	Customers	Ineffective
Lobby is gorgeous	Product	Corporation	Effective
Rooms need renovation	Product	Corporation	Ineffective

Rooms were not comfortable	Product	Customers	Ineffective
Service is excellent	Product	Customers	Effective
It has spacious and beautiful rooms	Product	Customers	Effective
Building is poorly constructed.	Product	Corporation	Ineffective
Its walls are thin, like there is no or little privacy	Product	Customers	Ineffective
Food quality was good	Product	Customers	Effective
Hotel did not provide the expected service level.	Product	Corporation	Ineffective
Staff was quite helpful	Product	Corporation	Effective
Staff is professional and friendly	Product	Corporation	Effective
Loyalty program membership helps to gain the maximum advantage from the services of this hotel	Promotion	Customers	Effective
At the advertisement given on Facebook and its official website it is advertised as an luxury brand which differentiates it from others	Promotion	Competitors	Effective
Price and worth do not match	Pricing	Customers	Ineffective
It charged £100 for room for two and provided the expected service for money charged hence competitors will not be preferred in future.	Pricing	Competition	Effective
Cost not matched with value	Pricing	Corporation	Ineffective
Price and value does not match	Pricing	Corporation	Ineffective

Table 3: Customer loyalty Matrix of Double Tree

Source: developed by the author (2017)

The purpose of this matrix is to examine which of the elements from 4P's and 3C's need to be further improved for enhancing the customer loyalty. The first column of this table is identifying the themes which have been emerged from the secondary data collected through the customer reviews. The second column identifies the relevance of the customer response with one of the strategies from 4 P's (i.e. price, place, product and promotion). This is specifically reviewing the linkage of customer loyalty with marketing mix, as discussed in literature review.The third column relates the response with one of 3C's strategies (i.e. customers, competitors and corporation) as discussed in literature review that these 3C's have a linkage with customer loyalty. The forth column simply summarises the analysis in one word i.e. effective or ineffective. If the particular strategy is implemented correctly that it is leading towards the customer loyalty, it is declared 'effective' and vice versa. From the analysis, it could be observed that this hotel has effectively implemented the placing strategy. The convenience which is attached with the location of this hotel is attracting many customers and this is also helping these customers to become the loyal customers of this brand. It could be analysed that the product strategy has mixed results where few of its aspects are effective while others are ineffective. For example, its rooms are not always clean and comfortable while there is smoke in the lobby. This tells that its product strategy is not effective which is causing the trouble for customer loyalty. On the other hand, few of the aspects are managed well, as their staff is quite professional and providing excellent customer service and this is helping this hotel to increase the customer loyalty. Moreover, the promotional strategy is effective to some extent as it is communicating the core values but this is not being delivered to the customers hence the delivery of the service must be improved. Further to this, there is a problem in its pricing strategy as customers have complained that the value for money is not being provided to them. Moreover, the analysis of 'customers' tell that majority of the needs of the customers are effectively managed, but this hotel lacks in few areas. Likewise, the 'corporation' is also managed appropriately but it needs further improvement. The importance of managing 'competition' is not dominantly highlighted through this research. So from the overall results, it could be concluded that marketing mix and 3C's are important for developing the customer loyalty.

5.Chapter Five: Final Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

I would prefer this section to reflect and be structured around your objectives. This would tehn demonstrate exactly what you have achieved.

Links to theory and earlier discussions still required

5.1.Conclusions

Through the analysis conducted about marketing strategies of the Double Tree Hotel and its impact on customer loyalty, following conclusions are provided. There were four objectives of this research and all of them are successfully accomplished. First objective was to review the literature on marketing strategy and luxury branding. This objective is being accomplished in the second chapter of this dissertation. The second objective of this research is to construct a definition of luxury branding. This objective is accomplished in second chapter of this dissertation where definition of luxury branding is being presented. The third objective is to critically evaluate the literature on the role of marketing strategy in the customer loyalty and this is also accomplished in second chapter where association among marketing strategy and customer loyalty is examined. The fourth objective is to examine the impact of marketing strategy on the customer loyalty of luxury hotels and to conclude how marketing strategy and luxury branding could be used by Double Tree by Hilton. This objective is attained in the fourth chapter of this dissertation where analysis of marketing strategies of Double Tree is conducted and it is examined how it is leading towards the Double Tree.

1. **Luxury branding is defined as a process for developing differentiated, special and customised experience through**

emotional connection could be developed with the brand ethos and supply of products could be controlled.

As a result of the secondary research the following definition about luxury branding is provided by the author. Luxury branding is the process through which brands could be differentiated from others on the basis of attached mystique and cachet. Luxury branding must provide the customised experience to the customers through which the quality and creativity of the products must be reinforced. It is about developing the emotional connection with the customers and presenting the products and services in a different manner than the mainstream category. Luxury branding immerses the customers in the brand ethos and such brands have the special appeal. Most importantly, luxury branding is about having the control over the supply of the offerings.

1. **Price, promotion, place and pricing strategies are important for developing customer loyalty for luxury hotel brands.**

It is clearly known that the majority of customers are loyal to this hotel brand, therefore, the strategies which are effectively implemented are considered as the reason of this customer loyalty. It has been observed that its placing strategy is quite effective and it could be declared as the most important effective marketing strategy which has converted its customers into the loyal customers. It is preferred by the customers owing to its convenient location. It is placed at that location where public transport is easily accessible. Moreover, all of major companies are from walking distance of this hotel. Moreover, it is attractive for sports persons as it is near to the sports stadium as well. From this, it becomes obvious that it is attractive for both business class and leisure class travellers due to its effective placing strategy.

Further to this, it is found that product strategy is also leading towards the customer loyalty. The customers who were loyal have appreciated the product and service quality while the customers were not satisfied and loyal has complained about the quality of products and services. It is concluded that its staff and management of Double Tree is accommodating, they treat customers in a friendly manner, provides excellent service, they are professional. Moreover, the interior design in good and liked by customers. Hotel reception is clean. Room design is great and lobby is gorgeous. It has

spacious and beautiful rooms. However, there was problem in design and cleanliness of the rooms as well. All of its products (including core and supplementary) are not provided equal attention. Therefore, there were few customers who were not satisfied with services. From this it could be concluded that with the help of effective product strategy, customer loyalty could be developed.

Further to this, promotion which is done through social media, internet and loyalty programs is also important for developing the customer loyalty. But this must have to be ensured that whatever is being communicated through the promotional tools must be delivered to customers. So if there is consistency in the promotional strategy and delivery of those promised level of product and service quality, then the customers' loyalty could be developed. This should not be forgotten that in case of mismatch this could hurt the customer loyalty severely therefore the alignment must exist. Furthermore, it is also concluded that pricing of the luxury hotels must match the services and products which are delivered to customers. Double Tree Hotel is facing the problem of customer loyalty owing to its mismatch in its prices and value delivered to customers. Therefore, if this brand has to increase its customer loyalty, it needs to ensure that it provides the value for money. The luxury branding is not all about over-charging; it is about providing the value to the customers. Therefore, pricing strategy of this luxury hotel must be effective if the firms have to develop the large base of loyal customers.

1. **Customers, corporation and competitors are important for developing customer loyalty in the respective ranking.**

All 3C's are important to developing the customer loyalty for the luxury brands. But this research has found that 'Customers' is most important element. For having the loyal customers, luxury hotels must have to fulfil the needs of the targeted market, if their needs are not fulfilled then they can never be loyal to them, irrespective of any loyalty programs started by the hotels. It is analysed that this hotel is fulfilling the needs of customers by providing the convenience to both leisure and business travellers due to its location. Customers prefer friendly, hospitable, accommodating and professional staff and this is being offered at this hotel, which has led towards the customer loyalty. However, few of the needs of the customers are not fulfilled like quality food and cleanliness. With the improvement in this strategy which focuses on targeted customers,

the customer loyalty of Double Tree hotel could be improved. Corporation is also important but less than 'Customers'. For the case of luxury hotels, it is important to only have those employees which could work on the mission and core values of the organisation. Moreover, the product quality needs to be high. It was found that customers of Double Tree complained and showed dissatisfaction from the design of the rooms. So, rooms which are one of the core products of the luxury hotels must be managed effectively, in terms of their design, cleanliness, spaciousness and floor plan. This could further enhance the customer loyalty. Another important aspect of 'corporation' is that the core values must be delivered in a visible manner to have the loyal customers. There were few customers who complained about the mismatch which exists in this four star hotel and its service. So the luxury brands like Double Tree are obliged to communicate the core values through their service. To manage the 'competitors' is relatively less important than the other two C's. The purpose is to differentiate from the offerings of the competitors which could effectively be done if focus is on first 2 C's. Therefore, it is concluded that though all 3C's are important but rank of their importance is Customers, Corporation and Competitors hence these must be considered by Double Tree by Hilton if it wants to increase customer loyalty.

5.2.Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

In this research, there were few limitations which could not be ignored. This research is being completed in the limited time period and with limited budget, therefore, certain limitations were encountered while completing this research. The research quality could has been further enhanced with the use of mixed methodology where both quantitative and qualitative data is used. But due to the accessibility of quantitative secondary data, it was not possible to select this research methodology. But it is recommended to future researchers that they should organise the similar study with the mixed research methods. This will further enhance the practical utility of the research. Further to this, this research is about luxury branding in hotels but it has selected the Double Tree by Hotel Hilton as the case study. Therefore, its findings are specific to the context of this particular hotel. Before transferring the results to other luxury

brands, its context cannot be ignored. It is recommended to future researchers that they should use the other luxury hotels which are from different context. It is recommended to take the luxury hotels from developing countries as it is expected that luxury branding will work differently in the developing countries. For the purpose of analysis, this research has relied on two frameworks i.e. 4P's and 3C's. Other than these two frameworks, there are also many other marketing strategies' frameworks and theories, the researchers are recommended to add more frameworks and examine the marketing strategies' through a different perceptive.

Any specific recommendations to Double Tree?

Overall some very good work, however, greater linkages to theory and your literature review discussion are required.

Please see my comments around the restructuring required – objective 2 must be embedded into your lit review.

Methodology needs primary analysis of secondary data procedures included.

Keep going you are nearly there!

I cannot read any more of your work until final hand in now however you can email me questions if required.

Good luck

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