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**THE THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF CONSUMER LOYALTY  
MANAGEMENT IN RESTAURANT ESTABLISHMENTS  
ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ УПРАВЛІННЯ ЛОЯЛЬНІСТЮ СПОЖИВАЧІВ В  
ЗАКЛАДАХ РЕСТОРАННОГО ГОСПОДАРСТВА**

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**Abstract.** *This paper explores the multifaceted concept of consumer loyalty management in the context of restaurant businesses. It examines various theoretical approaches to defining and managing loyalty, drawing on management and marketing perspectives. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding consumer behaviour, emotions, and expectations in developing effective loyalty strategies. Fundamental principles for managing restaurant consumer loyalty are outlined, including focusing on customer emotions, ensuring product quality and service excellence, implementing personalized loyalty programs, effective communication, and leveraging innovative technologies. The paper contributes to understanding building long-term customer relationships in the restaurant industry.*

**Keywords:** *consumer loyalty, strategy, restaurants, consumer loyalty management*

### **Introduction.**

Managing consumer loyalty in restaurant establishments is essential to their successful development and provides the best competitive positions in the restaurant business market. Today, the restaurant services market is represented by various formats and types of restaurant establishments, each of which provides a typical range of restaurant products and services with approximately the same price strategies. That is why developing and implementing a loyalty management strategy aimed at increasing the emotional component of consumer satisfaction, as well as increasing the frequency of their visits, is an urgent issue.

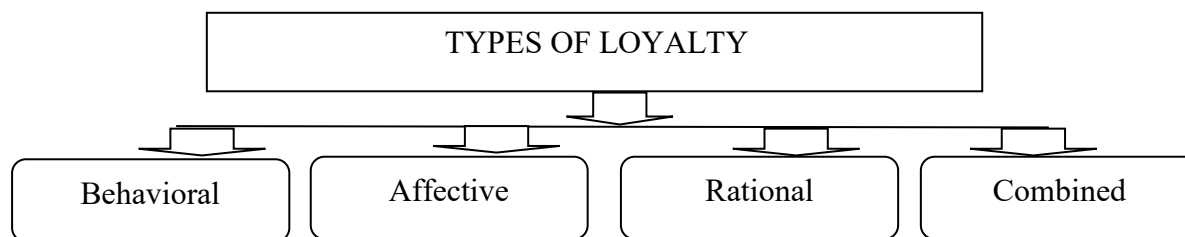
### **Main part.**

The research of available scientific works in the loyalty study showed that scientists use many definitions of loyalty. Each approach emphasises different aspects of loyalty. Loyalty is associated with attachment, interest, satisfaction or so-called "affection" to a certain product, service, or brand. It has been established that most definitions of loyalty are based on the behaviour of consumers and their emotional attitude towards the establishment and its services. Regarding the typology of loyalty, four types are distinguished (Fig. 1).

Each of these types of loyalty determines emotional attachment to the establishment and the number of repeated visits to the establishment, which is directly related to consumer behaviour patterns. Therefore, in our opinion, an important aspect



of developing a strategy for managing consumer loyalty is the analysis of the consumer portrait. It should also be noted that each of the mentioned types of loyalty is evaluated based on a system of indicators, which makes it possible to determine real and potential purchases.



**Figure 1 – Types of consumer loyalty of restaurant establishments**

Managing consumer loyalty in restaurant business enterprises is a complex process aimed at forming a stable positive attitude of consumers towards the establishment, which is expressed in repeated purchases, emotional attachment and the formation of a positive image. In the work of V.M. Netkova gives the following main approaches to the process of managing consumer loyalty: 1) depending on the level of perception of the product (goods, services/brand); 2) depending on the subjects; 3) depending on the "global coverage"; 4) depending on the stage of development of relations with the consumer [3, p. 314]. We believe that such a division is formed taking into account the marketing component of the formation of the definition of this concept. That is why we suggest considering the concept of "customer loyalty management" through the prism of established management and marketing concepts.

Thus, we will single out the main conceptual approaches to defining the essence of management:

- From the management standpoint, this concept considers functional and process concepts. Thus, from the standpoint of the functional concept, loyalty management is defined through the implementation of the main functions of management: planning, organisation, motivation and control. From the standpoint of the process - as a process of forming a specific, stable, long-term and positive commitment of the client to the market offers of the enterprise through the successful integration of compatible values in order to achieve optimality in the complex product-market and socially responsible relationships [1, p. 139].

- From the marketing point of view, the management of consumer loyalty in restaurants was studied from the following points: assessment of the level of perception of the product (goods, services/brand), taking into account the subjects of this process and taking into account the stage of the life cycle of the product/service.

Common to these approaches is that the main goal of effectively implementing the strategy of managing consumer loyalty in restaurant establishments is the continuous process of implementing a set of measures aimed at forming a positive image of the enterprise on the market, taking into account the behaviour of restaurant service consumers.

It should be noted that taking into account the specifics of the motives for visiting restaurants, which is not so much the organisation of food but rest, communication, spending free time, and others, when forming a loyalty management strategy, special



attention should be paid to the emotional component, the creation of positive impressions from the visit institution [4]. Thus, the following are the main principles of managing consumer loyalty in restaurants:

1. Mandatory focus on the feelings and emotions of the consumer, which is manifested through a deep understanding of the needs, expectations and behaviour of the institution's target audience, as well as the creation of a general atmosphere of hospitality and a sense of care for guests.

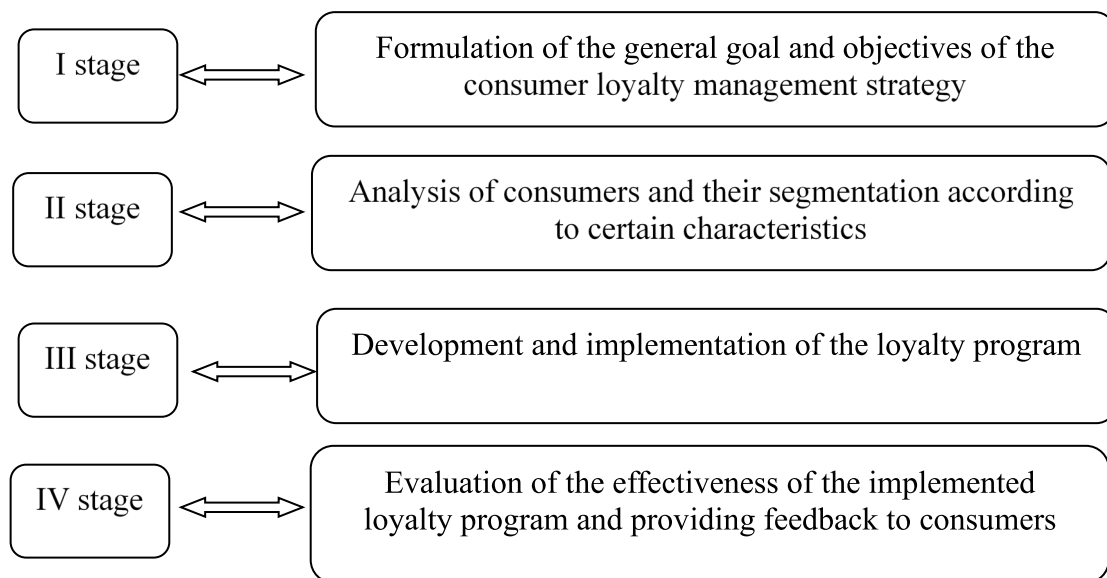
2. The requirements regarding the quality of restaurant products and compliance with service standards are formed through producing delicious and original dishes from high-quality raw materials and impeccable service.

3. Continuously review and improve consumer loyalty programs through the offer of bonus programs, accumulation systems, special promotions, and discounts; that is, use personalised loyalty programs based on the analysis of data about visitors to the establishment.

4. Develop an effective communication policy for the institution by using various communication channels to communicate with guests and provide feedback, forming a clear brand message.

5. Constantly monitor and implement innovative technologies to improve consumer loyalty management, which will improve the results of the institution's activities and strengthen its competitive position in the market [2].

In modern business conditions, we will form the main stages of managing consumer loyalty in restaurants (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2 – The main stages of managing the loyalty of consumers of restaurant establishments**

Each of these stages has its characteristics. First, it is necessary to form the main goal and objectives of the strategy for managing restaurant consumer loyalty. The following main goals for the development and implementation of a strategy for managing consumer loyalty in restaurants can be noted: improving the restaurant's image and brand, increasing market share and winning market positions, expanding the



network of restaurant establishments, increasing profits from business activities, and other economic and social goals.

In the second stage, a consumer portrait is formed based on a detailed study of the needs, requests, habits, traditions and preferences of the institution's target audience, segmenting them according to defining attributes, usually of a behavioural, demographic and psychological nature.

In the third stage, based on a detailed analysis of consumers, the process of developing and implementing a loyalty program is carried out. The development of a loyalty program is not a one-time promotion but a constant monitoring of changes in the consumer preferences of its guests, as well as constant information about the developed programs and their novelties. It should be noted that it is important to personalise the developed loyalty program with each guest, considering their individual preferences and previous experience. At this stage, an effective communication policy should be formed through various communication channels, which helps maintain interest in the restaurant business and attracts consumers to participate in loyalty programs.

The last stage involves evaluating the effectiveness of implementing the developed program, providing feedback, and working with consumer feedback and sentiments. At the same time, indicators of the effectiveness of implemented loyalty programs can include an increase in the frequency of visits, an increase in the average check, attracting new customers, etc. If the loyalty program's implementation does not produce an effect, corrective, adaptive measures should be taken to achieve better results, ensure higher customer satisfaction, and increase customer loyalty.

### **Conclusions.**

Customer loyalty is a dynamic process that requires constant attention and improvement. This article defines consumer loyalty management in restaurant establishments as a process aimed at forming a stable positive opinion about the establishment, which leads to repeated visits, emotional attachment, and a positive image. The main conceptual approaches to forming this concept are defined based on the generalisation of existing points of view. The main goal of loyalty management is the development and implementation of measures aimed at forming a positive image of the institution, taking into account the behaviour of consumers. When forming a loyalty management strategy, it is vital to consider the emotional component because visiting a restaurant is not only about food but also about rest, communication and spending free time.

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**Анотація.** Дане дослідження містить основні підходи щодо розуміння сутності та значення формування лояльності споживачів для успішного розвитку закладів ресторанного господарства. Встановлено, що лояльність споживачів – це ключовий фактор успіху в ресторанному бізнесі, що ґрунтується на емоційній прихильності до закладу та визначає кількість повторних відвідувань. Особливу увагу приділено визначенню управління лояльністю споживачів в закладах ресторанного господарства як процесу, спрямованого на формування стійкої позитивної думки про заклад, що веде до повторних відвідувань, емоційної прихильності та позитивного іміджу.

**Ключові слова:** лояльність споживачів, заклади ресторанного господарства, управління лояльністю споживачів.