Customer Satisfaction of Fast-Food Chains in San Carlos City, Pangasinan

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Abstract - *The customer is the foundation of any business's success. This study entitled "Customer Satisfaction of Fast-food Chains in San Carlos City" sought to determine the factors behind customer satisfaction. Specifically, it described the profile of the respondents, the level of satisfaction in terms of food quality, price, physical environment, sanitation, and service of staff/crew, and the problems encountered by the respondents.*

The study employed Descriptive Survey research. It involved three fast-food chains in San Carlos City, Pangasinan namely Jollibee, Chowking, and McDonalds. It only took one hundred fifty (150) customers as respondents. A checklist survey questionnaire has been used as the data-gathering tool. Frequency counts, percentages, and means were the statistical tools employed.

Based on the study, many of the respondents belonged to the age 14-20 years old, or 32%. In terms of sex, the majority are female having a frequency of eighty-three (83). Many of the respondents were College graduates with a frequency of forty-eight (48) or 32%. The level of customer satisfaction which has the highest mean is in terms of the physical environment with 4.22 as Very Much Satisfied. Moreover, in terms of price and service crew/staff has a mean of 4.07 as Much Satisfied. The problems encountered with the highest percentage were long waiting lines and that some staff/service staff are not friendly/courteous.

The study recommended that fast-food chains must observe cleanliness and orderliness at all times, strengthen food safety and sanitation practices, improve their queuing service to minimize or even avoid long waiting lines, and continuously improve quality service delivery by training staff to provide quick service to customers and to treat them fairly, positively, and consistently. Further research should also be conducted on Customer Satisfaction of Fast Food chains in a wider scope to vindicate the results of the study.

Keywords - *Customer, Satisfaction, Customer satisfaction, Fast-food Chains*

INTRODUCTION

Building customer satisfaction is considered to be a key priority for business success. Customer satisfaction is a measurement used to quantify the degree to which a customer is happy with a product, service, or experience. Customer satisfaction is a term frequently discussed in marketing because it is normally used as a key performance indicator of many businesses. It is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or exceed customer expectations. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are becoming paramount factors in businesses for their long-term and short-term survival. It is the degree to which a product or service fulfills or exceeds the expectations of the customers. A higher degree of customer satisfaction will lead to better economic returns, such as return on investment, profitability, and market share.

In this competitive era, strengthening customer satisfaction is viewed as a key strategic issue for organizations. According to Sabir et al. (2014), customer satisfaction has become the most significant aspect in the field of business, because satisfied customers have a significant impact on the profits of business.

Hui and Zheng (2010) described satisfaction as the overall evaluation or judgment of customers towards the quality of products or services offered by a service provider. Hansemark and Albinsson (2004) also referred to customer satisfaction as the overall assessment of customers towards the products or services of a brand and their emotional reactions regarding the capability of that brand in fulfilling some of their needs and desires.

Similarly, Kotler (2000) thought about satisfaction as "a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations".

Customer satisfaction is established as one of the most widely researched constructs in marketing studies. In general, customer satisfaction is related to two primary aspects; the customer's assessment of product or service quality, and his/ her perception of the interaction experience with the brand's service provider (Dapkevicius & Melnikas, 2009).

Rahman et al. (2012) demonstrated that customer satisfaction can be explained based on the feelings of happiness, acceptance, relief, delight, and pleasure. The authors added that customers" satisfaction is likely to be established after evaluating the products and services of a brand in meeting certain needs and wants.

Namkung and Jang (2007) regarded food quality as a key factor that affects customers' overall evaluations of a restaurant and repurchase intention.

The quality of food is deemed to be evaluated based on the taste, freshness, and how the food is presented to customers. The physical environment is another important factor that gets the attention of customers in the restaurant industry. Ryu et al. (2012) stated that the quality of a restaurant's food and its physical environment were significant factors in predicting the perceived value and satisfaction of customers. Additionally, the perception of a fair or affordable price has a positive impact on consumer brand associations (Beristain & Zorrilla, 2011)

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The research study focused on the Customer Satisfaction of Fast-Food Chains in San Carlos City, Pangasinan. Specifically, it described the profile of the respondents, level of satisfaction in terms of food quality, price, physical environment, food safety, and sanitation, service of staff/crew, and the problems encountered by the respondents

Given the research problem, the study will adopt the Quantitative Descriptive Survey of research.

Table 1
Total Distribution of Respondents

Name of Fast-food Chain	Number of Respondents
Jollibee	50
Chowking	50
McDonald's	50
Total	**150**

The data in this study were gathered by using a checklist survey questionnaire from the customers of fast-food chains in San Carlos City, Pangasinan. The researcher's criteria for selecting the respondents were based on the accessibility and willingness of the respondents to answer the checklist survey questionnaire.

The questionnaire contained three parts:

Part 1 aimed to gather the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, and highest educational attainment.

Part 2 dealt with the level of satisfaction in terms of food quality, price, physical environment, food safety and sanitation, and service crew/staff.

Part 3 gathered data regarding the problems encountered by the customers.

A letter of permission to conduct the survey was requested from the respective Branch/Store Managers. Data gathered were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

For the statistical treatment of data, the researchers used descriptive analysis such as percentage distribution, frequency counts, and average weighted mean.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was carried out to determine the Customer Satisfaction of Fast-Food Chains in San Carlos City, Pangasinan. The respondents are the customers of Jollibee, Chowking, and McDonalds.

The data in this study were gathered by using a checklist survey questionnaire from the customers of fast-food chains in San Carlos City, Pangasinan.

The table summarizes the profile of the respondents. It shows that many of the respondents belonged to the age 14-20 years old or 32%. In terms of sex, the majority are female having a frequency of eighty-three (83). Many

of the respondents were College graduates with a frequency of forty-eight (48) or 32%.

Table 2
Profile of the Respondents

Age	Total	
	f	*%*
14-20 years old	48	32.00%
21-30 years old	45	30.00%
31-40 years old	29	19.33%
41-50 years old	10	6.67%
51-60 years old	13	8.67%
61 years old and above	5	3.33%
Total	**150**	**100%**
Sex	*f*	*%*
Male	67	44.67%
Female	83	55.33%
Total	**150**	**100%**
Highest Educational Attainment	*f*	*%*
Elementary Undergraduate	2	1.33%
Elementary Graduate	2	1.33%
High School Undergraduate	13	8.67%
High School Graduate	28	18.67%
College Undergraduate	42	28.00%
College Graduate	48	32.00%
With Masteral Units	6	4.00%
Masteral Degree Holder	4	2.67%
With Doctoral Units	3	2.00%
Doctoral Degree Holder	2	1.33%
Total	**150**	**100%**

Level of Customer Satisfaction in Terms of Food Quality

As shown in the table below, the respondents' level of satisfaction in terms of the taste and flavor of the food was very much satisfied. Next is the quality of food is excellent with a mean of 4.25 as much satisfied. According to Soriano (2002); Zopiatis and Pribic (2007), the role of food quality is also recognized as one of the key determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 3
Level of Customer Satisfaction of the Respondents in Terms of Food Quality

	Indicators	AWM	Description
1	The food is served presentably.	4.18	Much Satisfied
2	The menu has a good variety of items.	4.02	Much Satisfied
3	The quality of the food is excellent.	4.25	Much Satisfied
4	The food is tasty and flavorful.	4.27	Very Much Satisfied
	Overall Average Weighted Mean	**4.18**	**Much Satisfied**

4.21 - 5.00 VERY MUCH SATISFIED
3.41 - 4.20 MUCH SATISFIED
2.61 - 3.40 MODERATELY SATISFIED
1.81 - 2.60 FAIRLY SATISFIED
1.00 - 1.80 POORLY SATISFIED

Similarly, Vangvanitchyakorn (2000) indicated that food quality represents the foremost important criterion in a consumer's overall evaluation of a restaurant. Furthermore, Peri (2006) demonstrated that food quality is an important ingredient that should be provided by restaurants to meet the needs and satisfaction of customers.

Level of Customer Satisfaction in Terms of Price

As manifested in the table below, the customers were found to be very much satisfied in terms of value

meal/combo meals offered at affordable prices. This was shown by a mean rating of 4.28.

According to Tam (2004) and Qin and Prebutok (2008), pricing on the perceived value of the restaurants is another factor that has been studied about customer satisfaction and patronage intentions.

Table 4
Level of Customer Satisfaction of the Respondents in Terms of Price

	Indicators	AWM	Description
1	Healthy food choices are sold at competitive prices.	4.05	Much Satisfied
2	The prices of food items are affordable.	3.98	Much Satisfied
3	The food is a good value for the money.	3.95	Much Satisfied
4	Value meals/combo meals/ are offered.	4.28	Very Much Satisfied
	Overall Average Weighted Mean	**4.07**	**Much Satisfied**

4.21 - 5.00 VERY MUCH SATISFIED
3.41 - 4.20 MUCH SATISFIED
2.61 - 3.40 MODERATELY SATISFIED
1.81 - 2.60 FAIRLY SATISFIED
1.00 - 1.80 POORLY SATISFIED

Moreover, this confirms the study of Anderson et al. (1994), the prices of a product or service can affect the degree of satisfaction among customers, because whenever they assess the given value of a purchased product or service, they tend to consider its price.

Level of Customer Satisfaction in Terms of Physical Environment

Gleaning at the table is the level of customer satisfaction in terms of the physical environment. The temperature and lighting in the dining area provide comfort to customers has the highest mean rating of 4.28 as very much satisfied. In general, the customers are very much satisfied in terms of this factor.

This adheres to the study of Wall and Berry (2007) that the physical environment may affect a customer's physical comfort and movement.

Table 5
Level of Customer Satisfaction of the Respondents in Terms of Physical Environment

	Indicators	AWM	Description
1	The ambiance, ventilation, and facilities create a great impression on customers.	4.30	Very Much Satisfied
2	The fast-food chain observes cleanliness and orderliness.	4.20	Much Satisfied
3	The temperature and lighting in the dining area provide comfort.	4.28	Very Much Satisfied
4	The chairs and tables are well-arranged.	4.08	Much Satisfied
	Overall Average Weighted Mean	**4.22**	**Very Much Satisfied**

4.21 - 5.00 VERY MUCH SATISFIED
3.41 - 4.20 MUCH SATISFIED
2.61 - 3.40 MODERATELY SATISFIED
1.81 - 2.60 FAIRLY SATISFIED
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According to Canny (2014), the physical environment is a key marketing factor for differentiating a restaurant by establishing a remarkable customer experience with a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere. Therefore, the physical environment has a greater effect on maintaining existing customers as well as attracting new ones.

Level of Customer Satisfaction in terms of Food Safety and Sanitation

As illustrated in the table is the level of satisfaction in terms of food safety and sanitation. This indicates the overall weighted mean of 4.12 as much satisfied. Proper cleaning and sanitizing of food equipment has the highest mean rating of 4.27.

One of the competencies that was highlighted in tourism education is sanitation and safety course. According to Walker (2002), additional management

skills like supervisory training, a sense of urgency, sanitation, and safety are also essential as the level of professionalism rises in the twenty-first century.

Table 6
Level of Customer Satisfaction in terms of Food Safety and Sanitation

	Indicators	AWM	Description
1	Proper cleaning and sanitizing of all food contact surfaces and utensils.	4.02	Much Satisfied
2	Proper cleaning and sanitizing of food equipment.	4.27	Very Much Satisfied
3	Proper personal hygiene, including frequent hand and arm washing and covering cuts.	3.98	Much Satisfied
4	Food storage for the proper time and at safe temperatures.	4.20	Very Much Satisfied
	Overall Average Weighted Mean	**4.12**	**Much Satisfied**

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3.41 - 4.20 MUCH SATISFIED
2.61 - 3.40 MODERATELY SATISFIED
1.81 - 2.60 FAIRLY SATISFIED
1.0 - 1.80 POORLY SATISFIED

Level of Customer Satisfaction in terms of Service Crew/Staff

As shown in the table, the results revealed that the staff are approachable and give prompt feedback with the highest mean rating of 4.28 as very much satisfied. The average weighted mean for service crew/staff is 4.07.

This confirms the study of Wong (2004) that service quality positively affects emotional satisfaction which in turn would have a positive effect on both customer loyalty and relationship quality. According to Caceres (2007), service quality also may affect loyalty through mediating variables of trust and commitment.

Table 7
Level of Customer Satisfaction in terms of Service Crew/Staff

	Indicators	AWM	Description
1	The staff are friendly/courteous.	4.05	Much Satisfied
2	The staff provides quick quality service to the customers.	3.98	Much Satisfied
3	The staff welcomes and accommodates the customers politely and positively.	3.95	Much Satisfied
4	The staff is approachable and able to give feedback promptly.	4.28	Very Much Satisfied
	Overall Average Weighted Mean	**4.07**	**Much Satisfied**

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Furthermore, the friendly attitude and courteous behavior of the service workers at service firms leave a positive impression on the customer which leads to customer satisfaction. (Soderlund and Rosengren, 2008).

Summary of the Level of Customer Satisfaction

As shown in the table is the summary of the level of customer satisfaction wherein the highest mean rating is in terms of the physical environment. Furthermore, in terms of price and service crew/staff has a mean of 4.07 as Much Satisfied. The overall weighted mean is 4.13.

Table 8

Summary of the Level of Customer Satisfaction

	AWM	Description
Food Quality	4.18	Much Satisfied
Price	4.07	Much Satisfied
Physical Environment	4.22	Very Much Satisfied

Food Safety and Sanitation	4.12	Much Satisfied
Service Crew/Staff	4.07	Much Satisfied
Overall Average Weighted Mean	**4.13**	**Much Satisfied**

Problems Encountered by the Respondents

The problems encountered with the highest percentage were long waiting lines and that some staff/service staff are not friendly/courteous. Moreover, some foods that are not garnished and served well have the lowest percentage.

Table 9
Problems Encountered by the Respondents

Indicators	Yes		No	
	f	**%**	**f**	**%**
Unavailability of food ordered	34	22.67%	8	5.33%
Incomplete and incorrect order.	40	26.67%	24	16.00%
Long waiting lines.	65	43.33%	31	20.67%
The store lacks crew/staff who will serve the customer.	53	35.33%	27	18.00%
Some foods are not garnished and served well.	15	10.00%	9	6.00%
Uncomfortable dining area	39	26.00%	28	18.67%
Some staff are not friendly/courteous.	60	40.00%	23	15.33%
Some staff delivers poor service to customers.	41	27.33%	17	11.33%
Some staff shows favoritism to some customers.	57	38.00%	18	5.33%
Improper waste disposal.	29	19.33%	14	9.33%

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study entitled "Customer Satisfaction of Fast-food Chains in San Carlos City" sought to determine the factors behind customer satisfaction. Specifically, it described the profile of the respondents, level of satisfaction in terms of food quality, price, physical environment, sanitation and service of staff/crew, and the problems encountered by the respondents.

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Fast-food chains must always observe cleanliness and orderliness, strengthen food safety and sanitation practices, continuously improve quality service delivery by training staff to treat customers fairly, positively, and consistently, improvement of queuing service to minimize or even avoid long waiting lines, and further research should also be conducted on Customer Satisfaction of Fast-Food chains in a wider scope to vindicate the results of the study.

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