Preferences of Fast-Food Selection Among Third-Year Students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with Honour at UMK City Campus.

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ABSTRACT

Fast food is a type of food produced in large quantities for commercial resale, with a strong emphasis on quick service. It is commonly found in restaurants or stores, offering frozen, preheated, or precooked ingredients packaged for take-out or take-away purposes. Understanding the factors influencing fast food selection, such as delicious, preparation, and price, is crucial. This research specifically focuses on third-year students pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honours at UMK City Campus. The study aims to collect data from a total of 161 respondents, with an expected target of 113 participants. The research methodology employed ensures a structured approach to ensure reliable and valid results. A study must have a clear purpose, maintain objectivity, and employ appropriate methods to yield the desired outcomes or answers.

Keywords: Fast Food Selection, Delicious, Preparation, Price

INTRODUCTION

Fast food, found in various establishments such as sit-down restaurants, counter service, take-out, drive-thru, and deliveries, is known for its quick preparation and service. It is popular due to its tastiness, accessibility, and convenience in the Health Guides (2022). However, it is important to note that fast food frequently relies on refined grains rather than whole grains and is often high in sodium for the purposes of flavor enhancement and preservation. Its nutritional value is generally lower compared to other foods, and it is frequently available at a low cost. Fast food is commonly associated with high levels of calories, fat, sodium, and sugar, while being deficient in essential vitamins, minerals, and nutrients. Common examples include burgers, pizza, French fries, fried chicken, and tacos.

According to Yong & Hee (2020), China's growth after joining the WTO in the early 2000s has been remarkable. The middle class has seen a significant increase in their consumption levels. Western-style fast food restaurants are rapidly expanding and gaining popularity among the younger population. This rise in competition poses a threat to Western fast food companies operating in China. Chinese consumers are becoming more discerning in their dining choices, considering factors like what, how, and where they eat. Consequently, both domestic and foreign businesses are facing inevitable competition. This trend extends beyond China to other countries like Malaysia, where fast food has become increasingly popular. Therefore, the goal of this study is to examine the preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus. There were three objectives for this study:

1. To investigate the relationship with the delicious with the preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus

2. To investigate the relationship between preparation with the preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus

3. To investigate the relationship between price with the preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study are expected to provide knowledge and awareness about fast food. More importantly, this study will help students limit fast food consumption, give knowledge about fast food consumption to their bodies and make them more careful about food to be healthier. Addiction scholars and academic researchers will benefit from this research because it will provide them with fascinating insights that will be the basis for future research. Furthermore, this study will be a starting point for future studies on the same topic and issue related to the preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Delicious

The deliciousness of food plays a crucial role as a determining factor for customers. Numerous research studies have emphasized the importance of food quality and its positive impact on purchase intention. When considering the effect of well-known food quality on customer retention, a significant body of literature emphasizes the joy experienced by customers when they receive exceptional service. According to Ma and Yang (2018), customers are likely to be satisfied when they purchase high-quality products. Therefore, there is a strong correlation between food quality and customer satisfaction, which in turn significantly influences consumer behaviour and loyalty.

Moreover, the quality of the cuisine has been recognized as a pivotal element in shaping the overall dining experience, as emphasized by Sulek and Hensley (2014). When it comes to food quality, purchasing intention significantly impacts the selection of restaurants. Susskind and Chan (2000) conducted a study revealing that the quality of the meal is the primary factor that drives individuals to visit fast food establishments. Fast food restaurants consider food quality as a fundamental factor in retaining customers. Sulek and Hensley (2014) concurred, stating that meal quality outweighs other restaurant-related factors, such as the environment and service quality, in influencing purchase intention. Consequently, fast food becomes the preferred choice for daily routine lunches among UMK students due to its excellent food quality.

Preparation

Atkins and Bowler (2001) state that "fast food" often refers to fully prepared food to be eaten and then served rapidly, either on- or off-site. This means that to ensure that food is prepared safely and adequately for delivery, enterprises must comply with established standards for food preparation facilities, food prep tools, food transport vehicles, and people responsible for handling and preparing food. While any meal that requires little preparation is considered fast food, the term is frequently used to refer to food that is served to consumers in a packaged form for eating in or taking away from a restaurant or store and contains components that have already been heated or cooked.

In other words, lifestyle—which is defined as the collection of recurring patterns of behaviour that each person voluntarily and consciously adopts throughout their daily lives— reflects one's values, way of thinking, personal style, and ultimate goals (Vyncke, 2002). As a result, lifestyle has a significant impact on how people behave as consumers. Due to time restrictions, many students have shifted their eating habits to accommodate their hectic schedules, they switch from healthy, home-cooked meals to fast food. This is due to the fact that for many young adults, their college years represent a crucial time of change. Most students are currently living independently for the first time after leaving their parents' houses. These changing living arrangements may have an impact on lifestyle elements like dietary preferences, diet quality, and exercise routines (Brevard & Ricketts). As a group, college students are particularly susceptible to the intake of "convenience" food.

Price

As stated by Jacoby and Olson (1977), price represents the subjective perception of
the objective cost of a product for consumers. In the fast food industry, price plays a pivotal role in shaping purchase intentions. When making food choices, consumers are influenced by the price associated with a particular brand. Brands often establish their own pricing standards, setting them apart from competitors. Moreover, price exerts a significant influence on purchase intentions, as changes in pricing can greatly impact customers, as emphasized by Liew (2015). Furthermore, when customers find a price point that aligns with their affordability and satisfies them, it enhances their willingness to make regular purchases of products from that brand in the future. This rationale applies to third-year students pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honours at UMK City Campus, as brand pricing influences their inclination towards selecting fast food options.

According to Yang and Mao (2014), the influence of a lower price on consumers' purchasing decisions is emphasized. Customers who are price-sensitive, as described by Wakefield and Inman (2003), actively strive to find the most affordable price available. If a student is on a budget, they may prefer lower-priced items such as burgers, fries, and soft drinks instead of more expensive items like steak or seafood. Moreover, if a fast food restaurant offers a lower price than its competitors, students may be more likely to purchase the item, as they feel like they are getting a better deal. Additionally, offering discounts and promotion can be a great way to entice students to purchase fast food items. These incentives can make UMK third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour feel like they are getting a good value, while also giving them an extra reason to try out a new product.

Research Hypothesis

Based on a review of the literature three hypotheses have been developed. The hypotheses are:

H1:   There is a positive relationship between the delicious and preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus.

H2:   There is a positive relationship between the preparation and preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus.

H3:   There is a positive relationship between the price and preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at UMK City Campus.

Research Framework

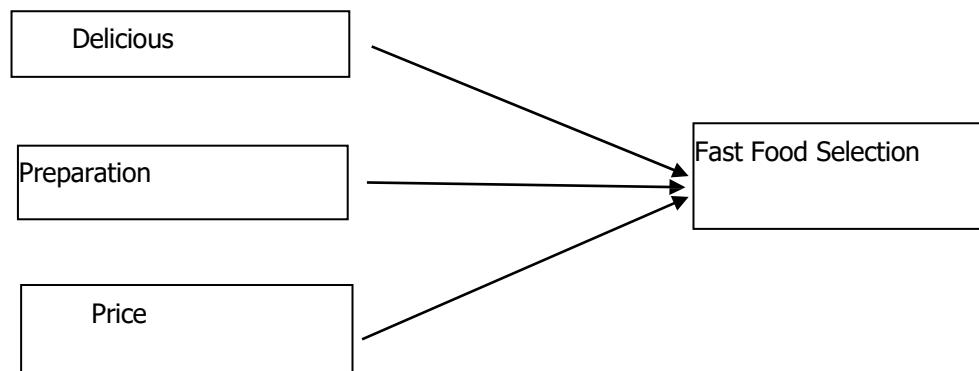**INDEPENDENT VARIABLE**   **DEPENDENT VARIABLE**

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review, a conceptual framework was developed to investigate the fast food selection preferences of third-year students pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honours at UMK City Campus. Figure 2.1 presents the proposed conceptual framework, which includes three independent variables: delicious, preparations, and price. The dependent variable is the preference for fast food selection among the aforementioned student group. From this, it can be inferred that the independent variables are expected to exert an influence on the dependent variable in this study.

METHODOLOGY Research Design

The researchers of this study using quantitative data methods to collect the data. Using quantitative data, the information can be collected quickly and easy to summarize the findings. Besides, the quantitative can also involve more respondent in one research study, than the qualitative data method.

Data Collection

A questionnaire is a specific tool or instrument for collective data. This questionnaire will be assigned to third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with honour at the City Campus of UMK. The purpose of this research endeavour will be explained first before respondents answer the questions. This questionnaire will be distributed through online plat platforms like WhatsApp, which are more aware and exposed to this kind of platform.

Sampling

Researchers used non-probability sampling techniques for this research. This is because non-probability sampling is best when a researcher wants to gain a greater understanding of a specific group of people or when it is challenging to establish a clear definition of the population of interest. Additionally, this sampling method is also proper when there is limited time and resources. Non-probability sampling can provide more in-depth and targeted information that may not otherwise be obtained through a probability sampling method.

Data Analysis

The analysis involves a series of steps, including data examination, cleaning, transformation, and modelling. These processes assist in breaking down large volumes of data into meaningful and manageable fragments. To facilitate this, researchers often utilize SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), which is a comprehensive software package that integrates various programs. SPSS is commonly employed for data analysis in the social sciences, including market research, surveys, and data mining. It enables researchers to analyse, transform, and identify patterns within different data variables, ultimately yielding valuable insights.

FINDING

Demographic Analysis

Table 1: Respondent Profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	80	70.8
Female	33	29.2
Age		
19-21 years old	0	0
22-24 years old	113	100
25 years old above	0	0
Marital Status		
Single	110	97.3
Married	3	2.7
Race		
Malay	98	86.7
Chinese	3	2.7
Indian	10	8.8
Others	2	1.8
Year of Study		
Year 1	2	1.8
Year 2	0	0
Year 3	109	96.5
Year 4	2	1.8

Among the respondents, 80 individuals (70.8%) identified as female, while 33 individuals (29.2%) identified as male. In terms of age, the study included 113 respondents, all falling within the range of 22 to 24 years old, making up the highest percentage of respondents (100%). Among the respondents, 110 were single, accounting for the majority (97.3%), while
3 respondents were married (2.7%). In terms of racial distribution, Malay respondents constituted the largest group, with 98 individuals (86.7%). The second largest racial group was Indian, comprising 10 individuals (8.8%). Chinese respondents accounted for 3 individuals (2.7%), while other racial groups contributed 2 individuals (1.8%). Among the respondents, the highest representation was from students in their third year of study, totalling 109 individuals (96.5%). Both first and fourth-year students were represented by 2 individuals each (1.8%). Notably, there were no respondents from the second year of study.

Result of Descriptive Analysis

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis

Variables	Items	Mean Score (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Delicious	The deliciousness increase the emotion of cheerfulness	3.61	.881
	The deliciousness increase the emotion of cheerfulness	3.63	.878
	The taste of fast food meets the taste of the middle class	3.42	.832
	The satisfaction of the deliciousness of fast food is guaranteed	3.47	.887
	The delicious taste of fast food can be shared with loved ones	3.65	.963
Preparation	Fast food is well prepared and neat	3.36	.955
	Fast food uses special plastic to easily carry food	3.50	.908
	Fast food provides a good variety of set menu options	3.52	.897
	Quick and time-saving food preparation	3.73	.887
	Fast food preparation is taken seriously by fast food restaurants	3.55	.886
Price	Promotions in fast food attract customers to buy	3.70	.875
	Fast food price is lower than other restaurants	3.34	.933
	Fast food option is seen as a good value for money	3.43	.877
	Fast food prices reflect the service quality of fast food restaurants	3.50	.846
	The price I pay for fast food guarantees my satisfaction	3.49	.857
Fast Food Selection	Fast food is easy to prepare	3.71	.831
	Fast food provides the latest menu	3.65	.864
	Fast food has the same quality and nutrients as other foods	3.16	.960
	Popularity of fast food getting increase due to easy and quick service	3.71	.903
	Eating too much fast food causes the risk of disease	3.60	.936

The result in Table 2 shows a descriptive analysis of independent variable which is delicious that shows the item " The delicious taste of fast food can be shared with loved ones" has the highest mean score (M=3.65, SD=.963) while the item " The taste of fast food meets the taste of the middle class" has the lowest mean score (M=3.42, SD=.832). The second independent variable which is preparation shows the item " Quick and time-saving food preparation " has the highest mean score (M=3.73, SD=.887) while the item " Fast food is well prepared and neat" shows the lowest mean score (M= 3.36, SD=9.55). Next, the third independent variable which is price show the item " Promotions in fast food attract customers to buy " has the highest mean score (M=3.70, SD=.875), while the item "Fast food price is lower than other restaurants"(M=3.34, SD=.933). Lastly, for the dependent variable which is fast food

selection shows the item "Popularity of fast food getting increase due to easy and quick service" has the highest mean score (M=3.71, SD=.903). However, the item " Fast food has the same quality and nutrients as other foods" has the lowest mean score (M=3.16, SD=.960).

Reliability Analysis

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Delicious	.773	5
Preparation	.729	5
Price	.717	5
Fast Food	.639	5

Table 3 showed the results of the reliability analysis based on the independent variable and dependent variable which include delicious (.773), preparation (.729), price (.717), and fast food (.639). According to Cronbach's Alpha coefficient scale, all these variables show acceptable coefficient.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Hypothesis	P-Value	Result
H1-There is a positive relationship between the delicious Preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with Honour at City Campus.	.000	H1 Accepted
H2-There is a positive relationship between the preparation preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with Honour at City Campus.	.000	H2 Accepted
H3-There is a positive relationship between the price preference of fast food selection among third-year students of Bachelor Entrepreneurship (Wellness) with Honour at City Campus.	.000	H3 Accepted

Table 4 presents the results of the Pearson correlation analysis conducted to test the hypotheses. The p-value for the association between the nature of deliciousness in fast food and the dependent variable is .000, which is lower than the significance level of .001. Consequently, the hypothesis is deemed valid and accepted. Similarly, the p-value for the relationship between the nature of preparation in fast food and the dependent variable is .000, indicating statistical significance below the level of .001. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted.

Furthermore, the p-value for the connection between the quality of price and fast food is .000, demonstrating significance below .001. As a result, the hypothesis is accepted

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between 3 independent variables (delicious, preparation, price) preferences of fast-food selection among third-year students of bachelor entrepreneurship (wellness) with honour at the City Campus of UMK. The main findings of the study revealed that delicious, preparation, price exhibits a significant relationship with the fast-food selection in this research.

To improve future research in this study, several recommendations have been made. Firstly, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies is suggested to enhance the investigation's effectiveness and precision. Secondly, when conducting online survey questionnaires, an official approach with a letter of approval should be utilized to ensure respondents' confidence and trust and prompt completion. It is also advised to narrow the scope of target respondents to eliminate imbalances and align the study with its title. Lastly, defining respondent characteristics can contribute to obtaining reliable results. These recommendations aim to improve the quality of future investigations and enhance the overall study.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, fast food offers a wide range of delicious options that are convenient and easy to prepare. The preparation of fast food is designed to be efficient and standardized. When it comes to pricing, fast food is generally considered to be affordable and budget friendly. Overall, fast food offers convenience and taste, but moderation and mindful eating are key to enjoying it without compromising well-being.

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