

A Study of Consumer Behaviour on Purchase Intention Toward McDonald's in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

McDonald's has more than 36,000 restaurants worldwide and is the world's leading quick-service restaurant chain. McDonald's has a strong vision of providing the finest fast-service eating experience in the international fast-food business. This study aims to survey determinants affecting consumer behavior on purchase intention toward McDonald's in Malaysia. We investigated whether service quality, pricing, product quality, and location preference affect consumer purchase intention toward McDonald's. Various sources, including an online survey, were used to obtain this investigation's primary and secondary data. A total of 150 loyal customers of McDonald's participated in the online survey via Google Forms. We tested the hypothesis using SPSS software. This study indicated that service quality, pricing, product quality, and location preferences are significant determinants affecting purchase intention toward McDonald's. This study provides new insights, and recommendations are presented.

Keywords: Location Preferences, Pricing, Product Quality, Purchase Intention, Service Quality

INTRODUCTION

An organization's direction, size, advantages, and environment will be defined by its strategy of an organization. In a competitive market setting, an organization's strategy serves as a guideline for effectively managing scarce resources to address the needs of the market and capital contributors (Tien, Dana, Santural Jose, Dat, & Duc, 2020). A clear understanding of consumers' purchase intention is essential for organizations to develop their marketing strategy enhancing their performance and keeping competitive in the market. Kee et al. (2021a; 2021b) studied the critical success factors affecting McDonald's and the impact of Covid-19 on McDonald's business. As a follow-up, our paper intends to examine what elements consumers will consider when making their purchase decision. This study aims to observe the five core determinants that affect consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia: service quality, pricing, product quality, location preference, and creativity.

McDonald's is a famous fast-food restaurant that ranks among the top fast-food restaurants globally (Singireddy, 2020). As of 2018, McDonald's operates among 37,855 outlets in more than 100 countries, serving over 69 million consumers every day. According to two reports published in 2018, McDonald's is the world's second-largest private employer, with 1.7 million employees. In 1940, McDonald's Corporation was established by Richard and Maurice in San Bernardino, California. The company's name was altered and transformed into a franchise in 1953, with the Golden Arches logo, which opened in Phoenix, Arizona (Jian et al., 2021).

Ray Kroc, who worked as a salesperson for a food business that served the two brothers Dick and Mac McDonald's customers and drivers, was responsible for McDonald's success. Ray Kroc was surprised by how the burgers were prepared, as each 15-cent burger with milkshakes and potatoes took only 15 seconds to prepare. He opted to join this potential firm after noticing its growth potential. Ray Kroc made an offer to purchase the "fast food restaurant" license for McDonald brothers, and they have accepted his offer. Ray Kroc successfully started his first McDonald's restaurant at Des Plaines in 1955, and in 1961, he purchased the company from McDonald brothers. Moreover, the one-billion sales of hamburgers achieved by McDonald's were presented live on television in 1963. Nevertheless, McDonald's is also well-known in international markets like Germany, Japan, and Malaysia, not only famous in the United States (Tien, Dana, Santural Jose, Dat, & Duc, 2020).

Golden Arches Sdn. Bhd. was awarded permission to open a McDonald's in Malaysia by McDonald's Corporation. The first McDonald's restaurant was started at Jalan Bukit Bintang, Kuala Lumpur, in 1982. Customers' preferred location and method of eating are the vision they want to accomplish. The fast food trend in Malaysia provides advantages to McDonald's since it enables them to expand their market share and attract more clients. The Malaysian Islamic Development Department has enforced Islamic rules, which are halal requirements in McDonald's restaurants in Malaysia. Thus, there are no pork ingredients included in McDonald's product. However, grilled chicken burger, iced milo drink, and spicy chicken Mc Deluxe are all famous menus in McDonald's. McDonald's Malaysia has introduced "Mekdi," a version of Malaysia's favourite food, Nasi Lemak, to adhere to the country's culture (Jian et al., 2021). Because McDonald's is expanding their business across various countries in this era of globalization,

localization is vital for them to adapt to the local market to match the countries' culture, tastes, and other needs (Singireddy, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Purchase Intention

Trust and convenience of use have a positive impact on satisfaction (Saputro, 2020). Customers' decision-making process and the motivations for purchasing a brand or product are referred to as purchase intention. Purchase intention is a metric that assesses a customer's desire to engage in a specific behavior or make a purchase decision. The willingness of a customer to acquire a product or service is referred to as purchase intention. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) categorized buying intent into five categories: awareness, information, interest, preference, persuasion, and purchase. McDonald's must comprehend customers' purchasing intentions in Malaysia to establish what their clients genuinely require.

Service Quality

The components of fast-food service quality function separately from the perceived value of the consumer (Slack et al., 2021). In the food and beverage (F&B) industry, service quality is a critical aspect in gaining a competitive edge. The elements influencing consumers' decisions while buying foods and discovered that service quality is one of them. Service quality is associated with consumer behavior on purchase intention. The level of service quality will affect consumer behavior toward McDonald's in Malaysia. The higher the service quality, the more the consumer is willing to purchase. Therefore, the researchers concluded that the relationship between service quality and consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia is positive. The following hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Service quality is positively related to consumer behavior on purchase intention.

Pricing

According to Santo and Marques (2022), the price can affect a consumer's purchase intentions. The price can be defined as the payment made by consumers in exchange for a service or product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). According to Huang, Bai, Zhang, and Gong (2019), price can also relate to a consumer's monetary expenses and is a major influencing factor in their purchasing decisions. Customers will only be willing to pay a price that they can afford and that is reasonable in comparison to the value they will receive. Many factors will influence customers' perceptions of price affordability, including their perspectives on product quality, competitors' prices, product value, and demographic backgrounds (Munnukka, 2006, 2008; Thabit & Raewf, 2018). Price justice positively influences customer purchase intention and customer loyalty (Cakici, Akgunduz, & Yildirim, 2019). As a result, this study aims to investigate the relationship between pricing and consumer behavior in Malaysian McDonald's purchase intention. The following hypotheses have been formulated:

H2: Price is positively related to consumer behavior on purchase intention.

Product Quality

Pandey et al. (2021) reported that product quality and price affect consumers' purchase decisions. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2012), customer satisfaction and value are thus related to the quality of a product, which has a major impact on service or product performance. However, according to Rust (2002), the term quality has become

so overused that its meaning has become difficult to establish due to the amount of attention given to it by academics and practitioners. In addition, most experts agree with Zeithaml's (1993) definition of product quality, which states that external or internal causes determine product quality. According to Sudit (1996), the dimensions of product quality are the entirety of product attributes that can or potentially satisfy consumer expectations. When a product matches their expectations, customers will be pleased and believe it is of higher quality and acceptable. As such, we predict the following hypothesis:

H3: Product quality is positively related to consumer behavior on purchase intention.

Location Preferences

Customers are more satisfied when the restaurant is at a good location, and the location should pay more attention to the traffic around the restaurant (Diah, Deasy, & Dewi, 2022). According to Parsa (1996), the location of a restaurant is a critical component that can affect the success or failure of a restaurant. A good location, on the other hand, incorporates geographic, demographic, and psychographic aspects, and any changes in these variables could significantly impact the area's attractiveness. Site infrastructure quality should be benchmarked and monitored against important competitors to acquire a durable competitive advantage and improve brand performance. According to Hanaysha (2016), one of the most important aspects of successful fast-food companies is location. Expert management and food quality may be unable to overcome operational issues without a proper location. As a result, this study aims to look at the relationship between location preferences and consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia. The following hypotheses have been formulated:

H4: Location preferences are positively related to consumer behaviour on purchase intention.

Research Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the framework used to conduct this study. The independent variables are service quality, price, product quality, and location preferences. Purchase intention is the dependent variable of the study.

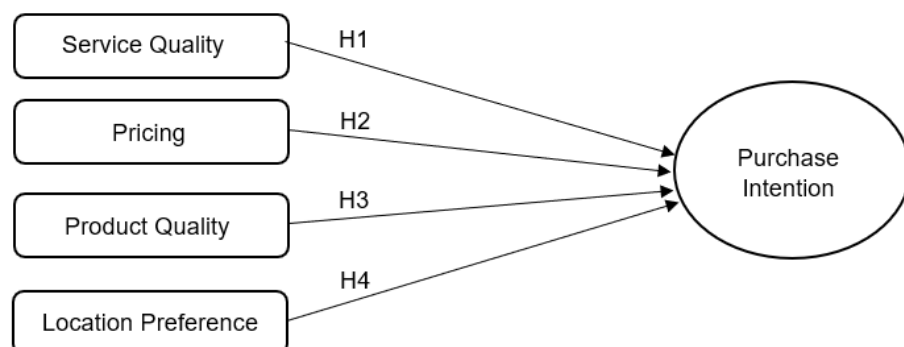


Figure 1. Our Research Model

RESEARCH METHOD

We conducted an online survey through Google Form to collect data about consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia. This survey involved a total of 150 McDonald's consumers. SPSS software has been used to analyze the data collected through the Google Form questionnaire.

There are six sections in the Google Form questionnaire: demographic characteristics, consumer behaviour on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia, service quality of McDonald's, pricing of McDonald's, product quality of McDonald's, and location preference of McDonald's.

The respondents' demographic characteristics were identified using the multiple-choice question, which contained gender, ethnicity, age, educational level, position, monthly annual income and the question "Have you purchased any products from McDonald's before?"

A 5-point Likert scale with ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree") has been used in Service quality of McDonald's, Pricing of McDonald's, Product quality of McDonald's, Location preference of McDonald's, and Consumer behaviour on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia.

We have prepared five items to determine how consumers perceive the service quality of McDonald's. An example of the item is "The employees are polite and patient when taking your order." Four items are prepared to identify how consumers perceive the pricing of McDonald's. An example of the item is "The prices of McDonald's products are affordable." Also, five items prepared to determine how consumers perceive the product quality of McDonald's, for example, "The taste of McDonald's products is delectable."

In addition, we prepared four items to identify how consumers perceive the location preference of McDonald's. An example of the item contained "McDonald's is located at an easily detectable and visible place." We prepared four items to determine how consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia. An example of the item is "I intend to continue support McDonald's in the future."

RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent's Demography Summary (N=150)

Construct	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	102	68.0
Male	48	32.0
Ethnicity		
Chinese	85	56.7
Indian	28	18.7
Malay	37	24.7
Age		
13-25 years old	67	44.7
26-41 years old	68	45.3

42-57 years old	12	8.0
58-76 years old	3	2.0
Educational level		
Secondary School	15	10.0
Diploma	5	3.3
Bachelor's Degree	112	74.7
Master's Degree	16	10.7
PhD	2	1.3
Position		
Student	64	42.7
Self-employed	31	20.7
Employed	52	34.7
Homemaker	1	0.7
Unemployed	2	1.3
Monthly annual income		
RM 0-RM 4850 (B40)	70	46.7
RM 4851-RM 10970 (M40)	69	46.0
RM 10971 and above	11	7.3
Have you purchased any products from McDonald's before?		
Yes	150	100
How often do you visit and purchase at McDonald's monthly?		
Not more than 2 times	8	5.3
3 to 5 times	76	50.7
6 to 8 times	58	38.7
9 times and above	8	5.3

Table 1 shows the summary of respondents' demographics. Most of the respondents are female (68%). By ethnicity, 56.7% of our respondents are Chinese. The majority of our respondents are aged between 26 to 41 years old (45.3%), followed by those between 13-25 years old (44.7%), and their educational level is bachelor's degree (74.7%). Most of our respondents are employed, either self-employed (20.7%) or employed (34.7%). Their monthly annual income is mostly between RM0 to RM4850 (B40) (46.7%) and followed by RM4851 to RM10970 (M40) (46%). All our respondents purchased products from McDonald's before, and most of them had visited McDonald's 3 to 5 times per month (50.7%).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients, and Zero-Order Correlations of Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Service Quality	0.807				
2. Pricing	0.866**	0.768			
3. Product Quality	0.914**	0.880**	0.851		
4. Location Preferences	0.905**	0.861**	0.909**	0.770	
Dependent Variable:					
Purchase Intention	0.877**	0.859**	0.890**	0.880**	0.853

Mean	4.393	4.385	4.440	4.440	4.515
Standard Deviation	0.520	0.527	0.563	0.524	0.573
No. of item	5	4	5	4	4
Note: N = 150; * p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; Diagonal entries in bold indicate Cronbach's coefficient alpha					

The descriptive statistics and correlations of the variables are shown in Table 2. A 5-point Likert scale has been used to determine all five variables. The Cronbach's alpha for the product quality ($\alpha=0.851$) and service quality ($\alpha=0.807$) show good internal consistency between the items in each variable, with values of α ranging between 0.8 to 0.9. On the other hand, location preferences ($\alpha=0.770$) and pricing ($\alpha=0.768$) show an acceptable internal consistency between the items in each variable, with values of α ranging between 0.7 to 0.8. This concludes that the correlation coefficient for all the relationships is positively related.

Table 3. Summary of Regression Analysis

Variables	Beta
Service Quality	0.191*
Pricing	0.217**
Product Quality	0.295**
Location Preferences	0.252**
R ²	0.839
F Value	188.469
Durbin-Watson Statistic	1.946
Note: N = 150; * p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001; Dependent variable: Purchase Intention	

The hypothesis was tested accordingly by using regression analysis. Table 3 shows the results of a multiple regression analysis used to test the variables. The independent variables include service quality, pricing, product quality, and location preference, whereas the dependent variable includes purchase intention. The R² value was 0.839, indicating that the service quality, pricing, product quality, and location preferences account for 83.9% of the variation in purchase intention. Other variables are not included in this regression model, so another 16.1% cannot be explained by these variables.

Based on Table 3, our hypotheses are fully accepted and shows that they have a positive correlation to the purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia. The most dominant variable influencing consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's is product quality, with the highest beta value of 0.295, followed by location preferences and pricing, with a beta value of 0.252 and 0.217, respectively. The last variable is service quality, with the lowest beta value of 0.191. In contrast, the findings demonstrated that product quality, location preferences, and pricing have a stronger significant relationship with consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's compared to service quality. Hence, all the hypotheses (H1, H2, H3 & H4) are supported.

DISCUSSION

This study's findings reveal that perceived product quality, pricing, location preferences, and service quality are favorably associated with purchasing intention.

First, perceived product quality is significant and has a direct positive influence on purchase intention, according to previous studies (e.g., Boulding, Kalra, Staelin, & Zeithaml, 1993; Carman, 1990; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1996). When the product quality is high, the customer's intention to purchase is high (Saleem et al., 2015). Given that perceived product quality is subjective, marketing strategies must incorporate components or qualities that customers value to influence perceived product quality favourably. Customers' perceptions of product quality and assessment have been connected to innovative design and in-depth descriptions of the product (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991; Rao & Monroe, 1989). For McDonald's products, consumers are considering their tastes and innovation of the product taste.

Furthermore, customer perceptions of servicing quality are not frequently recognized as the most important reason for making a purchase. Most customers look at the product's essential characteristics while evaluating its quality (Kirmani & Baumgartner, 2000). Customers are more inclined to buy high-quality servicing again (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). A brand's perceived service quality directly impacts consumer happiness and purchasing decisions (Ha, John, Janda, & Muthaly, 2011). Referring to our research, servicing quality is one of the critical factors in influencing customers' purchasing decisions but not the most at McDonald's.

In addition, price affordability has a substantial relationship with purchasing intention, according to this study. It is because the price can also refer to a consumer's monetary expenses and is a crucial factor in their purchase decisions (Huang et al., 2019). Customers will only pay the price within their means and appropriate in contrast to the value they receive. Customers' judgments of pricing affordability will be influenced by various elements, including their opinions on product quality, rival prices, their impression of product value, and their demographic backgrounds (Munnukka, 2006, 2008; Thabit & Raewf, 2018). For instance, many consumers will depend on their salary to consume their food at McDonald's, like the frequency of customers consuming food at McDonald's is influenced by price.

Last but not least, this study also revealed that location preferences significantly correlate with purchase intention. It is because a good location considers topographical, demographic, and psychographic aspects, and changes in these variables can significantly impact the area's attractiveness. Many customers will perceive ease in deciding where to consume their food as they will prefer the place not far from their current place or house. As stated by Hanaysha (2016), one of the most significant components of successful fast-food companies is location. Thus, location preferences are favorably associated with purchase intention.

CONCLUSION

According to the study, elements like service quality, pricing, product quality, and location preferences are statistically shown to influence consumer behavior on purchase intention towards McDonald's in Malaysia. It is due to all the consumers having varied attitudes and ideas about a product that has a huge effect on consumer behavior. These variables can be utilized as a frame of comparison, developing several new methods for a formidable reputation through different initiatives and advertising.

There are some recommendations to increase the number of customers and maximize profits. For example, promo rates must be provided to customers to maintain or grow the number of clients McDonald's with new and innovative ideas for high-value meals because some consumers have purchase intention as the price is valuable and cheaper. Consumer perceptions of McDonald's are shaped by their understanding of fast food. Most people eat fast food because it is inexpensive, convenient, and tasty. According to our findings, the majority of respondents frequently visit McDonald's once or twice a month. This implies that people are becoming more nutritious because of the widespread notion that fast food is bad and greasy.

As for conveniences, simple access and ready-to-eat meals are all essential elements. Since we determined that these factors have the biggest influence on consumer behavior, we believe that each buyer has their own attitude and belief around a product. These attitudes and ideas have a substantial effect on consumer behavior. McDonald's has recently integrated modern technology by introducing self-order kiosks and smartphone apps at its locations.

McDonald's recognizes that the ultimate purpose of all technology deployment is to establish customer relationships. The purpose of using technology is to provide customers pleasure by giving them what they want before they even realize it, as well as the power to influence what consumers order in real-time. Conclusively, McDonald's is doing an extremely decent job of achieving its aim, which is a big accomplishment since it increases consumer pleasure and attracts more consumers, raising brand value and influencing their fast-food preferences outlets.

LIMITATION

The limitation we encounter in doing this study is that we are having some difficulties utilizing SPSS software because it is our first time using it to acquire and interpret data. Therefore, we are unfamiliar with the system and made a mistake the first time. However, we successfully generated the result from SPSS software after two times of trying. In our research, we also faced some issues, which is in the finding of related journals, because we were required to use the latest year resources, 2020 to 2022, to do as our references.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest.

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