

## A Case Study of Consumer Satisfaction That Leads to Loyalty towards McDonald's

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to review the satisfaction of consumers in McDonald's (the foodservice industry) that leads to loyalty to the brand. It also reviews how McDonald's reacts to changes in the environment and consumer behavior. McDonald's has a strong ambition of providing the best fast service eating experience in the global fast-food market as a world fast-food enterprise. Being the best implies providing exceptional value in both quantity and quality of the product and services, ensuring that every customer is delighted with the brand. In addition, McDonald's believes that job happiness and motivation are some of the biggest influences on consumer satisfaction. The study is organized by collecting the data from consumers through a self-administered questionnaire survey and was distributed to 100 respondents. The results show that for overall satisfaction, most respondents slightly agree that McDonald's has given great services to satisfy their customer needs.

**Keywords:** Consumer Satisfaction, McDonald's, Foodservice, Marketing Research

## **INTRODUCTION**

We are choosing McDonald's as our case study, the largest and leading global food service retailer in the world. McDonald's was founded in 1940 as a barbecue restaurant run by Richard and Maurice McDonald (Timestravel, 2014). They began restructuring their business as a hamburger stall using production line principles in 1948. Ray Kroc became a franchise agent for McDonald's in 1955 (McDonald's, n.d.). McDonald's restaurants are operated by the franchisee, affiliate, or corporation. In 2012, the company had annual revenue of \$27.5 billion and a profit of \$5.5 billion. According to a BBC article from 2012, McDonald's is the world's second-largest private employer, following behind Walmart, with 1.9 million employees, 1.5 million of whom work for franchises. McDonald's was famous worldwide and known by everyone.

McDonald's has around 36,000 locations globally, serving over 69 million customers daily in 119 countries (McDonald's Malaysia, n.d.). McDonald's is known for its beef hamburgers and French fries served with soda beverages as a set meal and its poultry goods, breakfast series, and desserts. Burgers, cheeseburgers, chicken, French fries, breakfast dishes, soft drinks, milkshakes, and desserts are the most popular things sold at McDonald's. In addition, the firm has expanded its menu to include salads, seafood, wraps, smoothies, fruit, and seasoned fries in response to changing consumer interests. A lot of types of food attract the attention of customers and make the business become better. Income will increase and make a profit. Moreover, McDonald's nowadays is more than just a fast-food restaurant but it has launched a specialty coffee and beverage chain McCafé (Kee et al., 2021).

For our projects, we investigate customer satisfaction that leads to loyalty to the brand McDonald's. Customer satisfaction (shortly known as CSAT) is a metric that indicates how satisfied (or dissatisfied) customers are with a company's products, services, or overall experience. Customer satisfaction is defined as a customer's perception of your company's quality, value, and expectations for what you deliver. In business, loyalty refers to the relationship between the company and its customers (Burnett, 2020). Meanwhile, loyalty is more than a customer's liking for a brand. Instead, it is a concept that, when well-managed, may help businesses boost profitability and win more customers. According to Chambers (2020), Customer loyalty is the act of continually choosing one company's products and services over competitors. Customer loyalty is at the forefront of the industry and has positive or negative value based on customer support level (Edeh et al., 2021). A loyal customer isn't easily influenced by price or availability. They would rather pay extra for the same quality service and product. Throughout the projects, we will analyze the relationship between consumer satisfaction and loyalty toward McDonald's.

As we all know McDonald's is a well-known company worldwide. Almost anywhere we go it is likely to have McDonald's at it. So there are a lot of reasons that could lead to loyalty. The study's objective is to detect the reasons for consumer satisfaction. What satisfied the consumer the most? Is it the menu? Is it the services they provided to the customers? Or maybe it is the quality of the food that they provide or even the price of the food. We believe that it is not easy to gain the customer's trust or even their loyalty towards McDonald's. Therefore, knowing why

customers choose McDonald's over any other F&B company and what satisfies them the most will give a lot of benefits to McDonald's. Not only McDonald's but also any other fast-food companies will gain many benefits from this research. Knowing will help the company come up with a better service convention where it contributes to effective and efficient service (Cousins & Weekes, 2020).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **An overview of McDonald's**

According to Fontinelle (2021), he states that McDonald's was the first international fast-food restaurant. As Britannica (n.d.) confirms that Chicago was the company headquarters of McDonald's. McDonald's was a popular fast food and known by everyone (123helpme, n.d.). Customers can find McDonald's everywhere. McDonald's employs more than 2 million employees because they have many departments in each restaurant including crew members, cooks, cashiers, and shift managers. McDonald's was best known for its burgers, french fries, nuggets, and many types of foods. Most people will know their menu and choose to purchase it because it is convenient for the customers. Customers can buy easily and have many choices. There are four types that people can use to buy McDonald's include dine-in, delivery, pick-up, and drive-thru. Drive-thru is the most used by people.

### **Consumer Behaviour towards McDonald's**

Nowadays, McDonald's has become the first choice of the people. Advertisement has become the promotion tactic that McDonald's uses (Meyer, 2020). We can see advertisements through television, newspapers, and social media including YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and others. These advertisements can attract the attention of more people and make a business become better. The pictures of McDonald's also will be posted on social media by teenagers. Besides that, McDonald's also offers many choices for customers to choose from. It makes customers easier and more convenient. The menu of McDonald's includes McChicken, Mc Nuggets, Happy Meals, French fries, and others. Customers prefer to buy McDonald's because it is fast and cheap. Customers can buy the foods by drive-thru, delivery, pick up or dine in. Customers prefer to use drive-thru because it is easiest compared with others. Sometimes, people will get discount coupons and spend the next time. This is also an effective way for McDonald's to attract more customers to purchase their food and promote it to others. McDonald's also can do promotions using social media to get more customers.

### **Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is one of an organization's most common and important aspects, especially in the fast-food industry (Edeh et al., 2021). According to Hansemark and Albinson (2004), satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some needs, goals, or desires. Customer satisfaction is the outcome felt by people that have experienced a company's performance that has fulfilled their expectations. It is also one of the most important things that need to be taken care of so the business can maintain a good image. Customer satisfaction is equal to a good quality product, service, cleanliness plus value (Kee et al., 2021). This is in line with Rajawat et al. (2020) who state that Customer satisfaction can only be reached if consumers are served quickly with a portion of good quality food at the minimum

price. That means, good customer service could form loyal customers and make purchases on McDonald's continually.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Sample and procedure**

A questionnaire is a research tool that comprises questions designed to elicit information from respondents. It may be administered in a variety of methods, including face-to-face, over the phone, and so on. In terms of research technique, the questionnaire may be characterized as a quantitative approach. We can collect data and gain a better understanding of customers' thoughts, opinions, and comments with this questionnaire, and it may help us address our challenges in this study. Questionnaires are one of the best ways to collect data from customers since they are a low-cost, rapid, and effective way to collect big amounts of data from many individuals. We can collect data and gain a better understanding of customers' thoughts, opinions, and comments with this questionnaire, and it may help us address our challenges in this study.

In this study, we chose the questionnaire survey to collect data. We randomly distributed an online survey questionnaire with 20 questions using Google Form. This questionnaire explores the consumer satisfaction that leads to Loyalty toward McDonald's. This questionnaire includes demographic profile, consumer perspective towards McDonald's, and consumer satisfaction towards McDonald's based on previous experience of the respondent in the google form. Besides, we had chosen different sample areas to let consumers fill in our google form, such as Malaysian and non-Malaysian. All people, even how many years old also can fill out this google form. The sample size of this survey is 100 respondents to get a more accurate result.

### **Measures**

We employed a three-section questionnaire which are demographic profile, consumer perspective, satisfaction towards McDonald's, and consumer behavior towards McDonald's. All the sections, excluding demographic details, employed a 5-point Likert scale to measure responses. We have asked the respondent to specify "1" for strongly disagree and "5" for strongly agree in the section on consumer satisfaction towards McDonald's. A scale-like poor, fair, good, very good, and excellent was used to measure questions about consumer perspectives towards McDonald's.

Section 1 (demographic profile) contains five items to access the respondents' personal information such as gender, age, nationality, occupation, and monthly income. Section 2 (consumer perspective towards McDonald's) contains nine questions to assess the respondent's consumer perspective towards McDonald's, such as "how often do you order at McDonald's in a month", "when did you go", and how you get your McDonald's, etc. Next, section 3 (consumer satisfaction toward McDonald's) contains six questions to assess the respondent's consumer satisfaction towards McDonald's. It took us about one week to complete this survey and reach out to as many respondents as possible. A total of 100 respondents were collected for customer satisfaction towards McDonald's.

## RESULTS

The questionnaire has been distributed to 100 respondents. We have collected all the information from these 100 respondents and now the tables below present the results.

**Table 1.** summary of respondents' demographics (N=100)

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	27	27.00
Female	73	73.00
Age		
Below 20 years old	64	64.00
21 – 30 years old	36	36.00
31 – 40 years old	0	0.00
41 years old and above	0	0.00
Nationality		
Malaysian	99	99.00
Non-Malaysian	1	1.00
Occupation		
Student	95	95.00
Employed	4	4.00
Unemployed	1	1.00
Self-employed	0	0.00
Monthly income		
No income	90	90.00
RM 1500 and below	10	10.00
RM 1501- RM 3000	0	0.00
RM 3001- RM5 000	0	0.00
RM 5000 and above	0	0.00

Table 1 shows McDonald's customer demographics profile. As we can see from the above table, it is stated that among 100 respondents, 27 of them are males and 73 respondents are females, which consist of 27% and 73%, respectively. The number of female respondents was slightly more than the number of respondents, which is male. The data projected in the table above shows the age percentage of 100 respondents. Sixty-four respondents were below 20-year-old, making it a percentage of 64%, which was the highest among the four age groups. There are no respondents out of 100 respondents which occupy 0% at the age 31-40 years old and 41years old and above. The other respondents were aged 21-30 years old, making it a percentage of 36%. This can be clearly shown that McDonald's is young teenagers' favorite all the time. Next, the table shows McDonald's nationality. It is clearly shown that most of the respondents which were 99 respondents representing 99% are from Malaysian and there is only one respondent from non-Malaysian which occupy 1%.

Most of the respondents were students who had no income but were frequent visitors to McDonald's. Since most respondents were students, about 90% of the respondents had no income. However, 4% of respondents are employed and 1% are unemployed. Only 10 (10%) of them had earned RM1500 and below per month. While another 10% had income between RM1500 and below. This means

that the segment of consumers in our study is mostly made up of young people who use their allowances or money they do not earn to live.

**Table 2.** Survey of consumer perspectives towards McDonald's (N=100)

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
How often do you order from McDonald's in a month?		
Once a week	7	7.00
2-3 a week	10	10.00
Once a month	50	50.00
2-3 month	32	32.00
Never	1	1.00
When did you go to McDonald's?		
Morning	6	6.00
Afternoon	19	19.00
Evening	42	42.00
Night	33	33.00
How you get your McDonald's?		
Dine-in	38	38.00
Drive-thru	65	65.00
Delivery	28	28.00
Pick up	18	18.00
Where did you know about McDonald's?		
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	85	85.00
YouTube Ads	11	11.00
Newspaper/ Magazine	4	4.00
Which among the following is your favorite product at McDonald's?		
McChicken	45	45.00
McNuggets	23	23.00
Happy Meals	14	14.00
French Fries	29	29.00
Burgers	67	67.00
McFlurry	70	70.00
McCafe	32	32.00
Spicy Chicken McDeluxe	1	1.00
Apple Pie	1	1.00
Chicken Spicy 3X	1	1.00
The quality of McDonald's food:		
1. Taste and flavor?		
Poor	0	0.00
Fair	12	12.00
Good	35	35.00
Very good	34	34.00
Excellent	19	19.00
2. Temperature of food?		
Poor	1	1.00
Fair	24	24.00
Good	42	42.00
Very good	22	22.00

Excellent	11	11.00
3. Overall quality?		
Poor	1	1.00
Fair	16	16.00
Good	34	34.00
Very good	32	32.00
Excellent	17	17.00
The service given by the McDonald's crew/ staff:		
1. Service speeds?	3	3.00
Poor	16	16.00
Fair	36	36.00
Good	26	26.00
Very good	19	19.00
Excellent		
2. Friendliness?	1	1.00
Poor	18	18.00
Fair	43	43.00
Good	25	25.00
Very good	13	13.00
Excellent		
3. Well-trained staff?	1	1.00
Poor	13	13.00
Fair	41	41.00
Good	32	32.00
Very good	13	13.00
Excellent		
4. Overall service rate that staff provided?	0	0.00
Poor	16	16.00
Fair	37	37.00
Good	28	28.00
Very good	19	19.00
Excellent		
The rate of McDonald's restaurant in your area:		
1. Cleanliness of dining area?		
Poor	1	1.00
Fair	9	9.00
Good	41	41.00
Very good	31	31.00
Excellent	18	18.00
2. Cleanliness of serving area?		
Poor	0	0.00
Fair	11	11.00
Good	44	44.00
Very good	27	27.00
Excellent	18	18.00
3. Interior design?		
Poor	0	0.00
Fair	12	12.00
Good	41	41.00
Very good	30	30.00

	Excellent	17	17.00
4.	Convenience to do work		
	Poor	2	2.00
	Fair	19	19.00
	Good	28	28.00
	Very good	34	34.00
	Excellent	17	17.00
5.	Price of McDonald's food?		
	Poor	5	5.00
	Fair	30	30.00
	Good	40	40.00
	Very good	17	17.00
	Excellent	8	8.00

Table 2 shows the consumer perspective toward McDonald's. Based on 100 respondents who answered the survey, most (50%) respondents went to McDonald's once a month. The result shows that the customers were not often going to the McDonald's and the other half of respondents went to the McDonald's like once a week, 2-3 times a week, 2-3 times a month, and only one respondent never went to the McDonald's. Out of 100 respondents, only 42 respondents went to McDonald's in the evening. Only a few respondents (six respondents) went to McDonald's in the morning as McDonald's menu does not have many choices for breakfast. While 42 respondents go to McDonald's in the afternoon and 33 respondents choose a night to go to McDonald's. Then, most (65%) of respondents also got their McDonald's by using the drive-thru service because it is more convenient than other services. Drive-thru has the highest frequency compared with dine-in (38%), delivery (28%), and pick-up (18%). Leibovitz (2012) found that social media had a huge influence on consumer purchasing decisions. 85% of respondents know about McDonald's through their social media. Only 11% know McDonald's through YouTube Ads and 4% from the newspaper or magazine. Other than that, among 100 respondents, many respondents chose McFlurry (70%) and burgers (67%) as their favorite menu in McDonald's. Besides, the menu that got the least vote which is only 1 respondent is spicy chicken McDeluxe, apple pie, and chicken spicy 3x.

## DISCUSSION

Based on 100 respondents, 35 respondents voted Good as their choice on the quality of McDonald's food for the taste and flavor. Twelve respondents voted for fair, 34 votes for very good and the balance voted for excellent. For food temperature, most respondents (42%) vote for good. Only 25 respondents voted "poor" and "fair" on the temperature of the food. For the overall quality of McDonald's food, most of the respondents vote for excellent, very good, good, and fair. Only one respondent has chosen poorly. This shows that the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the quality of McDonald's food because the percentage of people that chose poor as their choices was not in a big percentage. Besides the quality, we also collected a survey about the service given by the crew or staff at McDonald's. 36 and 26 respondents vote good and very good for the service speeds given by the staff of McDonald's in their area. Only three people voted for the poor service speeds. Due to the great services given by McDonald's crew, many respondents choose good for their friendliness and the well-trained



staff, and only one percent of the respondent choose poor for both. The overall service rate got many respondents (37%) to vote for good, 28% voted for very good, and 19% voted for excellent. Another 16% of respondents voted for fair service, and no respondent voted for the poor. Delivering quality service means conforming to customer expectations consistently (Angelova & Zeqiri, 2011). The collected responses show that most of the McDonald's crew in their area had given good services to their customers and were satisfied with it.

For the cleanliness of the dining area in the McDonald's restaurant, 41 respondents rated good, 31 respondents rated very good, and 18 respondents rated excellent. Only one person chose poor and another nine chose fair. Besides the restaurant's dining area, the serving area is also important to keep it clean as a dining area because it is where they pack and serve the food to the customer. The majority (44%) of respondents chose good for the cleanliness and no respondent chose poorly. While 27% of respondents choose very good and 18% of respondents choose excellent. Only 11% of respondents voted "Fair" on the cleanliness of the serving area. The interior design is also one thing that can attract people to dine in, and a good interior design may give comfort to the customer. For this category, 41 respondents rated good and 30 respondents rated very good. There is 34 respondents' rate for very good because the place is very convenient to do work. Then, 40% of respondents vote good for the price of McDonald's food, and there are five respondents who vote for poor. Most people can accept the price of McDonald's because it is reasonable and voted good in this question.

**Table 3.** Survey of consumer satisfaction towards McDonald's (N=100)

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I will always choose McDonald's food as my first choice whenever I am going to dine out		
Strongly disagree	8	8.00
Slightly disagree	25	25.00
Neutral	34	34.00
Slightly agree	20	20.00
Strongly agree	13	13.00
McDonald's is cheaper than other fast-food restaurant		
Strongly disagree	6	6.00
Slightly disagree	35	35.00
Neutral	36	36.00
Slightly agree	11	11.00
Strongly agree	12	12.00
McDonald's food always is my second option if my first option was canceled		
Strongly disagree	6	6.00
Slightly disagree	16	16.00
Neutral	34	34.00
Slightly agree	31	31.00
Strongly agree	13	13.00
I will buy the food when McDonald's has promotions		
Strongly disagree	1	1.00
Slightly disagree	2	2.00
Neutral	16	16.00
Slightly agree	41	41.00
Strongly agree	40	40.00

Please rate your overall satisfaction with McDonald's service		
Strongly disagree	0	0.00
Slightly disagree	2	2.00
Neutral	21	21.00
Slightly agree	59	59.00
Strongly agree	19	19.00
I will recommend McDonald's food to my family members and friends		
Yes	61	61.00
No	35	35.00
Maybe	4	4.00

The survey about consumer satisfaction with McDonald's has been made and presented in Table 3. Based on the table, 8% of respondents have chosen strongly to disagree and 25% of respondents have chosen slightly disagree for the category of always choosing McDonald's food as their first choice whenever they were going to dine out. 34% of them are neutral about the topic, 20% are slightly agreed and 13% strongly agree with it. 36 respondents choose neutral about the price of McDonald's and 35 respondents are slightly agree with that too. Only 11 respondents choose slightly agree and 12 respondents choose strongly agree that McDonald's is cheaper than other fast-food restaurant. It is because they maybe have another favorite fast-food restaurant that has a lower price than McDonald's. Then, most (34%) respondents chose neutral for McDonald's would be the second option if the first option got canceled. A total of 31 respondents choose slightly agree and 13 respondents choose strongly to agree with this category, which shows the customer's loyalty towards McDonald's. The past researcher (Weng & de Run, 2013) discovered that financial promotions in food and beverage products significantly influence customers' decision-making. When McDonald's is having promotions, they will buy the food, so 40 respondents are strongly agreeing and 41 slightly agree with it. One respondent chooses strongly disagree and 2 respondents choose slightly disagree. The promotion made by McDonald's helps boost sales as fans of McDonald's has increased nowadays. For the overall satisfaction, most respondents (59%) slightly agree that McDonald's has given great services to satisfy their customer needs, and 61 respondents also will recommend McDonald's food to their family members and friends. However, 35 respondents choose not to recommend McDonald's to their family members and friends. While 4% voted "maybe" for the recommendations of McDonald's for the family members and friends. 21 respondents have chosen neutral for the overall satisfaction with McDonald's.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, McDonald's has been chosen to become our case study. This study reviews the satisfaction of consumers in McDonald's that leads to loyalty to the brand and how McDonald's reacts to changes in the environment and consumer behavior. We can learn how satisfied consumers are with a company's products, services, environment, prices or overall experience. The questionnaire method has been used in this study to collect data. This is the best way for us to collect data from many individuals at the same time, it is also very effective and saves time. We didn't need to spend much money and it was low cost. The sample size of this study is 100 respondents to get a more accurate result. There are 20 questions

asked in the questionnaire. The questions are to explore the consumer satisfaction that leads to loyalty towards McDonald's. Twenty questions have been divided into three sections which are demographic profile, consumer perspective and behavior towards McDonald's, and consumer satisfaction towards McDonald's. According to the survey, McDonald's is teenagers' favorite all the time. This is because 90% of the respondents were the students and another 4% were employed and 1% were unemployed. Students have the highest percentage of 100 respondents. The time that most people prefer to buy McDonald's is in the evening. Mostly they get the McDonald's by drive-thru compared with pickup, delivery, and dine-in. Social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram is the most popular way for consumers to know about McDonald's. There are many choices provided in McDonald's, but McFlurry and burgers are most likely compared with others. 34% of respondents have voted "good" for the overall quality of McDonald's food from 100 respondents. While 28 respondents have voted "very good" and 19 respondents voted "excellent" for the service rate that the McDonald's staff provided. Only 35 respondents voted "poor" and "fair" for the price of the McDonald's food and another 65 respondents felt that the price was reasonable. Nevertheless, we have five recommendations for improving the business and service of McDonald's. First, good services can attract more customers to buy. In contrast, bad customer service will get a bad reputation and will not be purchased again. Second, every employee needs to receive professional training to provide excellent services for the consumers. Third, McDonald's needs to develop more ideas for the new products and services. Fourth, the cleanliness of the space also needs to be paid attention to by McDonald's. Lastly, McDonald's can provide promotions sometimes to get more customers. Regarding the result, most respondents will purchase when having promotions. This is a suitable opportunity for McDonald's to improve their business.

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