



High Sugar and Fat Additives in Fast Food Restaurants: Is Whether Addiction or Consumer Loyalty?

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Abstract: The article will describe how chemicals in fast food and consumer loyalty to consume in high frequency. The chemical reality of fast food is suspected to cause addiction so that on the other hand consumers will appear loyal. This research applies a systematic review to examine studies exploring customer loyalty in the context of fast-food restaurants. The systematic review was chosen as the most appropriate method because its aim is to collect, critically evaluate, integrate, and present findings from various research studies relevant to the research question or topic. The findings offer significant theoretical implications for future research in this field and practical implications for practitioners in the fast-food industry. The initial relevance of each manuscript was determined based on its title. Manuscripts that appeared to discuss customer loyalty within the fast-food industry were selected for further evaluation. This study collected comprehensive information from these selected studies, including the author, year, title, and abstract. It's noteworthy that all references utilized in this study are derived exclusively from English-language literature. The research contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive and updated summary of the antecedents and their effects, and it offers actionable insights and recommendations on how to enhance customer loyalty, thereby providing a competitive advantage in the fast-food industry.

Keywords: Additives; Fat; Loyalty; Sugar

Introduction

In Indonesia, there are many outlets that offer fast food. Starting from international outlets to local outlets. A variety of fast food is offered with various delicacies. Occasional consumption of fast food is fine. However, if consumed continuously and becomes a habit, fast food can affect your health (Kee et al., 2021). Many fast foods contain quite a lot of sugar. Not only is this extra calorific, but the presence of this content also means that there are few nutrients in this type of food. The American Heart Association (AHA) suggests consuming only 100 to 150 calories of added sugar per day (Johnson et al., 2009; Van Horn et al., 2016). That's about six to nine teaspoons.

Many fast-food drinks contain more than 12 ounces of sugar calories (Marinello et al., 2020). One 12-ounce can of soda contains 8 teaspoons of sugar. That equals 140 calories, 39 grams of sugar, and no other nutrients in it. Trans fats are artificial fats created during food processing. They are also commonly found in fried pies, pastries, pizza dough, crackers, or biscuits. There is no good or healthy amount of trans fat. Eating foods that contain them can raise LDL (bad cholesterol), lower HDL (good cholesterol), and increase the risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

In other side Customer loyalty is a key determinant of business success, especially in the highly competitive and dynamic fast-food industry. Loyal customers tend to exhibit repeat purchase behavior, positive word-of-

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mouth, and resistance to switching to competitors (Reynolds & Arnold, 2020).



Figure 1. High sugar & fat (Google.com)

Therefore, understanding the factors that influence customer loyalty and their effects is crucial for fast-food restaurant managers and marketers to develop effective strategies to attract and retain customers. However, the literature on customer loyalty in the fast-food industry is fragmented and inconclusive, as different studies have adopted different conceptualizations, measurements, and analytical methods to examine this phenomenon (Arshi et al., 2023; Javed et al., 2021). Moreover, the fast-food industry has undergone significant changes in the past decade, such as the emergence of new technologies, consumer preferences, and environmental concerns, which may have implications for customer loyalty and its antecedents. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive and updated review of the existing literature on customer loyalty in the fast-food industry, to identify the main antecedents, their effects, and directions for future research (Borrego et al., 2015).

Method

This research applies a systematic review to examine studies exploring customer loyalty in the context of fast-food restaurants. The systematic review was chosen as the most appropriate method because its aim is to collect, critically evaluate, integrate, and present findings from various research studies relevant to the research question or topic (Caroline, 2023).

The type of research used in this study is descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The data taken, identified in the following order: data collection; data sorting; data analysis; and conclusion making. As for data analysis, there is a predetermined sequence in accordance with the empirical steps taken, namely as follows: examination of data; suspected data findings; data confirmation; diagnosis; and action.

The description of the data, presentation, analysis and findings that will be obtained from this study will be written in the paragraphs below, in the research

discussion segment. The light of the present research, relevant articles published in the last three years, specifically between 2020 and 2023, were compiled. The aim of this approach is to ensure that the research review incorporates the most recent literature, taking into account the current digital era in information gathering and synthesis.

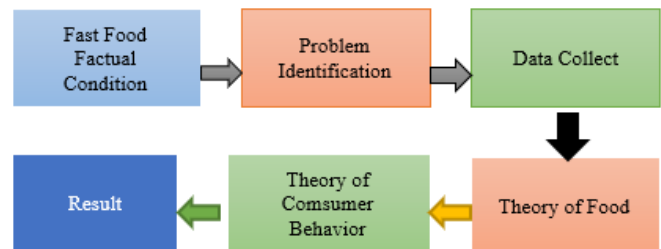


Figure 2. Flow method of study

The article sources used in this research were obtained from the Harzing’s Publish or Perish database from Google Scholar. The researchers selectively sourced from major publishers such as Elsevier, Emerald, and Sage Publisher, with a maximum limit of 50 search results from each publisher.

Result and Discussion

Food Chemistry and Delicious Flavours in Fast Food

Restaurants can also add to the calorie counting problem. In one study, people who ate at restaurants they associated as "healthy" still underestimated the number of calories in their meals by 20 per cent. The combination of fat, sugar and lots of sodium (salt) can make fast food taste better to some people. But high-sodium foods can cause water retention, which is why you may feel puffy, bloated or stuffed after eating fast food. High-sodium foods are also dangerous for people with blood pressure conditions. Sodium can increase blood pressure and put pressure on the heart and cardiovascular system. According to a study, about 90 per cent of adults underestimate how much sodium is in their fast food (Khan et al., 2021).

Fast food may satisfy hunger in the short term, but the long-term results are less positive (Nguyen & Singh, 2018). People who eat fast food and processed pastries are 51 per cent more likely to experience depression than people who do not eat these foods or eat small amounts. Restaurants that serve junk food or fast food are always in demand and visited by many consumers. The reason is because it tastes delicious and makes you crave for more (Quoquab et al., 2020). Many people can't resist the temptation of foods like pizza, fries, burgers and crispy fried chicken. Even though the nutritional content is very minimal and tends to be harmful to the health of

the body (Rhou & Singal, 2020). So what makes junk food addictive?

In fact, junk food stimulates the brain's reward system in the same way as addictive drugs like cocaine, according to Healthline. For vulnerable people, eating junk food can lead to severe addiction, which is similar to drug addiction. The human body has a system in the brain called the reward system. This system is designed to reward the brain when a person does things that promote survival, including eating. The brain knows that when someone eats, they are doing something right, and it rewards them by releasing feel-good chemicals. The problem is, when eating junk food, the brain system provides a much stronger reward than any reward from a healthy meal (Šerić et al., 2020).

Some Antecedents: Addiction and Loyalty

Have you ever eaten at a fast food restaurant and been left wanting more and more? It turns out that there are tactics too. There are at least three things that make it difficult for people to escape the delicious menu at fast food restaurants. Now want to know what is the 'magic' of the restaurant so that we become more hooked on eating. Here's the secret.

Sounds and Smells in the Restaurant

You know that in fast food restaurants, the smell is very distinctive. It tantalises the taste buds and reminds us of the crunchy or delicious food we're about to order. You won't get that smell at any other restaurant. There's also a cosy atmosphere when the music starts. We feel more comfortable there.

Comfort

Fast food restaurants that provide fast, practical services and delicious food make people sometimes prefer to buy food there (Siebert et al., 2020). Moreover, the food packages that are usually provided are quite compact. Food, drinks and snacks, or a bonus toy if you're lucky. A clean, bright and modern place also attracts people to come there.

Large Portion

Although there are differences in the appearance of the food we enjoy with what is displayed in the poster, but usually what is served is quite large and makes us full. Moreover, the standard flavours in fast food restaurants can always shake the tongue, difficult to find elsewhere. The large portions of these fast food restaurants also make us all feel that the portions served are normal or ordinary and can be eaten by someone. In fact, if you want to examine more carefully, fast food restaurant food portions are far more than we should need. Well, fast food is one of the food alternatives that many people enjoy today. But it all comes back to your

discretion. It's okay to eat fast food once in a while, but not every day to keep your health in check.

Service and Food Quality

This category, encapsulates elements such as food quality, employee service quality, and service quality consistency. These elements collectively form the backbone of customer expectations in fast-food establishments. They look forward to a harmonious blend of these factors, resulting in an experience that is not only satisfying but also memorable. The presence of high-quality service and food can boost customer satisfaction, instilling a sense of value and respect in them. This aligns with the findings of (Han et al., 2016), who discovered a positive influence of service quality in local food outlets on customer satisfaction and their loyalty. Consequently, this category is instrumental in cultivating customer loyalty in fast food restaurants.

Customer Satisfaction

This category, encompasses aspects such as customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. It suggests that customers, when satisfied with their experience at fast food restaurants, are likely to return and recommend the restaurant to others, thereby enhancing their loyalty. A multitude of research, underscores the profound influence of customer satisfaction on fostering customer loyalty (Abadi et al., 2020). The ripple effect of this satisfaction not only increases the frequency of their visits but also expands the customer base through positive word-of-mouth. This amplifies the restaurant's reputation, making it a preferred choice among potential customers. Therefore, this category is crucial for measuring and enhancing customer loyalty in fast food restaurants.

Price and customer perceived value. This category includes aspects such as price and customer perceived value. This category suggests that customers compare the price they pay with the benefits they get from fast food restaurants, and they are more loyal if they feel they get value that is equal to or more than the price they pay. The findings of the study are in harmony deeper exploration into customer loyalty. Their research discoveries indicate that the price and value perceived by customers have a significant positive influence on customer loyalty, even though it's in a different context, specifically the hotel industry (El-Adly, 2019; Slack et al., 2021). Therefore, Price and customer perceived value is very important to determine and adjust the price that is competitive and attractive for fast food restaurant customers.

Trust and reputation. This category, which encompasses aspects such as brand trust, trust, perceived reputation, brand love, and social trust, is

featured in four distinct articles. The implication drawn from this category is that customers exhibit greater loyalty towards fast food restaurants that not only hold a commendable reputation and are deemed trustworthy, but also foster emotional connections with their customers (Suley & Yuanqiong, 2019).

The same research findings have also been unveiled in a coffee shop setting, where customers' brand love, respect, and trust are found to have a positive correlation with their brand loyalty towards a well-known coffee brand (Song et al., 2019). In addition, these establishments are recognized for their social commitment towards the community and the environment. Therefore, this category is very important to build and maintain a positive image and credibility of fast-food restaurants in the eyes of customers.

Customer relationship management and strategic alliances. This theme includes aspects such as customer relationship management (CRM) and strategic use of interfirm alliances. This theme suggests that fast food restaurants can increase customer loyalty by using CRM technology to collect, analyze, and use customer data to provide more personal, relevant, and beneficial services, as well as by collaborating with other business partners to provide added value and strengthen loyalty. Customer relationship management (CRM) significantly impacts customer satisfaction, which in turn significantly impacts customer loyalty (Akhmedov, 2017). Therefore, this theme is very important to optimize and integrate the resources and capabilities of fast-food restaurants with their business partners (Sun et al., 2016).

CSR initiatives and environmentally friendly practices. This category, which is highlighted in a single article, specifically article 4, encompasses aspects such as CSR initiatives that focus on nutrition and well-being, and environmentally friendly practices. The inference from this category is that fast food restaurants can bolster customer loyalty by demonstrating their commitment to social and environmental responsibility. This can be achieved by offering nutritious, healthy, and halal food options, and by mitigating their environmental impact through the use of eco-friendly materials and waste reduction strategies. CSR positively and significantly impacts customer loyalty, with perceived service quality and trust acting as intermediaries between CSR and loyalty (Suley & Yuanqiong, 2019). Therefore, this theme is very important to increase awareness and engagement of customers with social and environmental issues related to fast food restaurants.

Other factors, encompasses aspects such as halal logo, physical environment quality, restaurant atmosphere, cultural differences, and personalized

experiences (Jung et al., 2024). It suggests that a myriad of factors, contingent on the context, preferences, and needs of customers, can influence customer loyalty in fast food restaurants. These factors serve as differentiators or attractors for customers, catering to their religious, cultural, or lifestyle needs. This includes providing a halal logo, ensuring a comfortable and appealing physical environment, fostering a warm and friendly restaurant atmosphere, and offering personalized experiences like birthday rewards (Gallarza-Granizo et al., 2020). Therefore, this category is very important to understand and meet the needs and expectations of fast-food restaurant customers.

Conclusion

Customer loyalty in fast food restaurants is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that is influenced by various factors or antecedents. These antecedents can be grouped into several main categories, such as service and food quality, customer satisfaction, price and customer perceived value, trust and reputation, brand experience and commitment, customer relationship management and strategic alliances, CSR initiatives and environmentally friendly practices, and other factors. These themes reflect the expectations and preferences of customers in fast food restaurants, as well as the strategies and practices of fast-food restaurants to attract and retain customers. By understanding and analyzing these themes, fast food restaurants can improve their performance and competitiveness, as well as create and maintain customer loyalty. Therefore, this research contributes to the literature on customer loyalty in fast food restaurants, as well as provides practical implications and recommendations for fast food restaurant managers and marketers. This study enriches the existing body of knowledge by providing a comprehensive overview of the antecedents influencing customer loyalty in fast food restaurants. It amalgamates findings from various articles published between 2020 and 2023, offering a contemporary perspective on the subject. The study underscores the multifaceted nature of customer loyalty, highlighting the role of service and food quality, customer satisfaction, price, trust, brand experience, customer relationship management, CSR initiatives, and other factors. Future researchers can leverage these insights to delve deeper into each antecedent and explore their interrelationships. Moreover, the study's limitations open avenues for further research, such as expanding the coverage of article sources and exploring more detailed aspects of customer loyalty.

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Author Contributions

This study was conducted by me personally, so the content presented is my full responsibility. The single author provides a space for free expression so that the satisfaction of pouring thoughts can be accommodated.

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Conflicts of Interest

There is no interest conflict in this research. This research is conducted for scientific studies that are widely disseminated through this journal. Writings that are free of conflicts of interest will be disseminated without fear of the author, so that they can be free to continue working.

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