Consumers' Satisfaction Toward McDonald's during Covid-19 Pandemic in Malaysia

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ARTICLE INFORMATION

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to find out the consumers' satisfaction towards McDonald's during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Malaysia based on their service through dine-in, drive-thru, McDonald's delivery, application, staff, and the food that McDonald's served to customers. The majority of the information for this study came from the internet. To gain a better knowledge of the study's issue, we looked at a variety of literature reviews, publications, websites, online journals, and paper analyses. As a result, the majority of the customers were satisfied when they dined at McDonald's because of the environment and the good service from the staff. Most of them are also satisfied using the drive-thru and the delivery that has been provided by McDonald's because both of them were convenient to use especially during pandemic. Customers are also satisfied using McDonald's application because there are plenty of offers from McDonald's for the user. Because of the minority of customers who are dissatisfied with the delivery that have been provided from McDonald's, the strategy to overcome this problem is to increase the number of delivery points nationwide and make more social media engagement to improve the way how to promote McDonald's in the future.

Keywords: Convenient, Covid-19, Customers, Environment, Satisfaction, Social Media.

INTRODUCTION

Ray Kroc established the McDonald's Corporation in 1955 and opened the first location in Des Plaines, Illinois. He bought out the McDonald brothers in 1961, and the rest is history. McDonald's has grown to become the world's largest restaurant corporation. McDonald's restaurants can now be found in more than 119 countries. Ray Kroc passed away in 1984, yet his legacy lives on. McDonald's employees, franchisees, and suppliers are all part of his roaring success. His devotion, commitment, and accomplishments are still remembered at McDonald's locations throughout the world. The first McDonald's branch in Malaysia opened at Jalan Bukit Bintang, KL in April 1982. The first Drive-Thru restaurant opened at Jalan Pahang, Titiwangsa in December 1988. In March 1994, McDonald's Delivery Service (McDelivery) was introduced in February 1995, McDonald's was the first Quick Service Restaurant Malaysia to obtain the Halal Certification from JAKIM (McDonald's, n.d.).

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) Malaysia was founded in February 1990 as a non-profit organization to develop, locate, and support programs that directly benefit Malaysia's underprivileged children's health and well-being. With over RM35 million in support over the previous 30 years, RMHC Malaysia has significantly influenced the lives of over 85,000 children in the areas of health, education, and welfare. In order to support their primary pillars of health, education, and welfare, RMHC Malaysia runs four main projects. Ronald McDonald House, Ronald McDonald Sensory Room, Gift of Smile, and Back to School Packs are the programs involved. Individual donors, through their coin-boxes found in McDonald's restaurants, and corporate sponsorship/donations are how RMHC Malaysia funds these projects (McDonald's Malaysia, 2016).

McDonald's Malaysia received one of eight coveted Best Employer Awards at the Aon Best Employers in Malaysia Awards 2017 in appreciation of its commitment to its people. McDonald's Malaysia also has now won the coveted accolade four times since 2009, confirming its status as one of the most dedicated and sought-after employers in the country. In 2015, the company was named Best Employer for Women, and in 2013, it was named Best Employer for Generation Y, highlighting its commitment to diversity and inclusion (McDonald's, 2016). It is clear that McDonald's is a very successful firm and a market leader in Malaysia's fast-food industry, with millions of customers visiting its locations every day. The focus of this study is on consumer satisfaction towards McDonald's.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Satisfaction
Customer satisfaction is a measurement that determines how properly the organization's products or services meet consumer expectations. Maisarah et al. (2020) state that customer satisfaction is the relationship between customer perceptions of the performance of the services and the expectation that they had for those particular services. It is one of the most crucial signs of buy intentions and consumer loyalty. As such, it enables them to predict commercial enterprise growth and gain revenue. Customer delight refers to the individual's feelings of satisfaction or unhappiness as compared to his or her expectancies. Consumer pleasure has most possibly been an important key to achievement because the first types of buying and selling and financial alternatives existed. In contemporary

concept and practice, customer delight is considered as one of the most crucial drivers of organizational achievement and a key aspect of advertising. The significance of customer pleasure in advertising affects its function as a predictor of client shopping behavior.

The corporation can be doing the whole thing it could to create purchaser satisfaction, but organizations have most effectively restricted management over the method; client belief is also a key determinant in patron delight. As referred to above, purchaser pride has been a crucial part of any alternate economy seeing that people first started giving something of a fee to acquire something wished or desired (Sudiarta & Karini, 2017; Weber, 1981). Modern research started much more recently. Purchaser pleasure has normally been the purview of advertising scholars and practitioners. The first studies in the marketing field began within the latter part of the 20th century. Advertising studies and ideas have supplied conceptual and operational definitions of consumer satisfaction that revolve around expectancies (Saleh, 2015). To put it sincerely, patron pride is performed while the expectations of the patron are met. According to Patel, purchaser pleasure is all approximately expectations. He states that the expectancies that clients have these days had been fashioned with the aid of their preceding reports. Corporations want to fully fill or exceed these clients' expectations (Patel, n.d.). Operationally, client pride is a measure of the way your agency's overall product plays in relation to a set of customer necessities (Hill & Alexander, 2006; Shankar, Smith, & Rangaswamy, 2003). The requirements of customers are therefore antecedents of patron pleasure (Matzler, Andreas, & Fuller, 2015). Groups gain happy clients when patron expectations are translated into the organization's working procedures and systems (Hill & Alexander, 2006).

McDonald's is one of the largest fast-food chains in the world and has been following innovations and using different technologies to provide a good quality of products and services to the consumers. To satisfy their customers, they have to perform different activities. McDonald's also thinks according to the consumer's taste, value systems, lifestyles, language, and perceptions that reflect the commitment of the business to increase and improve customer satisfaction. Employees of McDonald's have been focusing on the particular perceptions and demands of the consumers to increase and improve their level of satisfaction with the products and services of the business. In relation to increasing McDonald's consumers' satisfaction, they need to develop a business policy to reduce consumers' complaints compared to the other competitors in the fast-food industry. McDonald's also always provides training to make sure their company has immediate improvements in consumers' satisfaction. It is miles all approximately effective in running each restaurant and the way each apprentice can make a contribution to enhance and increase consumer satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHOD

Consumer satisfaction has been a topic of great interest to businesses across all organizations, including those in the foodservice industry. The goal of this study is to focus on and find out how satisfied McDonald's customers are with McDonald's beverages and services during the Covid-19 pandemic in Malaysia. McDonald's operated and franchised a total of 39,198 outlets in over 120 countries as of 2020. This report covers all the information required to meet the project's objectives.

Some data collection methods have been observed in order to conduct an opinion study on customer satisfaction towards McDonald's. Most of the sources of this study are mainly acquired from the internet. We looked through a range of literature reviews, publications, websites, online journals, and paper analyses to get a better understanding of the study's topic. The information was gathered from McDonald's Malaysia and the official McDonald's website. Both websites have useful information that we need. Information, findings, and conclusions about McDonald's customer satisfaction are gathered along with the methods. We also looked through research writing related to McDonald's. Furthermore, the data provided by past studies have assisted us in gaining a deeper and wider understanding of the subject. One of the benefits of using the internet is that it provides more up-to-date and relevant information.

A good amount of the information gathered and reviewed was not directly used in the study. It has, however, supplied more general knowledge about the subject. As previously said, we went through a thorough selection method since it is vital to critically review and evaluate secondary data. As a result, throughout our work on this study, we set out to find as broad a literature base as possible in order to provide various authors' perspectives on the issues involved.

RESULTS

The research questions were based on our understanding of consumers' satisfaction with McDonald's. The questions were all included in both qualitative and quantitative questions. The results were based on a literature review from other articles and we focus on consumer satisfaction towards McDonald's. Based on the article, there were 100 respondents from the age of 15 to 45 years old. 53% of them were female and the majority 60% were from 16 to 24 years old.

Table 1. Demographic of respondents (N=100)

Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	
Female	53
Male	47
Age	
15 years old and below	6
16-24 years old	60
25-34 years old	18
35-44 years old	9
45 years old and above	7

Table 2. Customer's Satisfaction Level during Covid-19

	Percentage (%)				
	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied
How well do you like your dine experience at McDonald's?	0	0	19	45	36
How well do you like your drive thru	0	0	31	44	25

experience at McDonald's?					
How well do you like your food delivery experience at McDonald's?	1	0	30	39	30
Are you satisfied with McDonald's product?	0	1	27	47	25
Are you satisfied with the McDelivery application?	0	6	34	36	24
How well do McDonald's staff solve your problems?	0	2	38	38	22
Are you satisfied with how McDonald's promotes their products on social media?	1	0	14	44	41

Of 100 respondents, 45% of them were satisfied with their dining experience at McDonald's while 36% were very satisfied and 19% were neutral. There were no respondents that were very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with their dining experience at McDonald's. The fourth unbiased variable is the physical environment of the restaurant. The physical environment includes all factors of the physical establishment that affect consumer satisfaction, along with ambient conditions which are light, color, shapes, fragrance, spatial layout, signs, symbols, and artifacts (Morales, Velazques, Partida, & Franco, 2015). These elements are designed by the organization to create a photo, direct customers via their experience, and deliver them the risk to create a relationship with the status quo (Shen & Bae, 2018). The importance of the exceptional bodily environment in the fast-food enterprise has been established by preceding research (Kurian & Muzumdar, 2017; Mason, Jones, Benefield, & Walton, 2016). Given the key role the physical surroundings perform within the fast meals industry, the present-day research assesses the relationship between the physical environment and customer pleasure. Much research has been performed to understand the relationship between surroundings quality and client satisfaction, but the effects from the ones study range. Some studies have observed no full-size dating between consumer pleasure and surroundings first-class whilst other studies have discovered a fine courting between the two (Shen & Bae, 2018). Andaleeb and Conway (2006), for instance, discovered that the eating place design had no impact on the purchaser's satisfaction. Han and Hyun (2017), but found that physical surroundings are a key determinant using consumer's delight.

About 44% were satisfied with their food delivery experience at McDonald's while 31% were neutral and 25% were very satisfied with their food delivery experience. The majority 39% of the respondents were satisfied with their drive-thru experience at McDonald's. About 30% of them were either very satisfied or neutral with their drive-thru experience at McDonald's. It is very convenient for customers to use

their drive-thru, especially during a pandemic where they just make an order contactless. Most of the customers were satisfied using this way to buy McDonald's food. Of 47% of the respondents were satisfied with McDonald's products while 27% of them were neutral and 25% were very satisfied with McDonald's products. Most customers are satisfied with McDonald's products because it is quick and simple. They focused on improving the quality of their core product to satisfy the consumers.

About 36% were satisfied with using the McDelivery application while 34% of them were neutral and 24% were very satisfied with using the McDelivery application. McDelivery is a McDonald's carrier that delivers meals to the customer's door. There are many deals that McDonald's offers in the McDelivery application. Customers can get a promotion every day during their breakfast, lunch, and supper. Most consumers use these apps because the price is cheaper than the actual price. Once they order their food, their rider will send it to the customer in about 30-45 minutes. They can make payments by cash or credit. The total number of customers that are using the McDelivery application is increasing day by day because of the Covid-19. It is more comfortable to order from home without being exposed to that virus.

About 39% of the respondents were satisfied with how McDonald's staff responded to their problems while 34% were neutral and 25% were very satisfied. Service high-quality is defined as the extent of carrier-provided through the employer and whether that service seems to have met a consumer's expectations (Saeidi, Rasli, Saedi, Saaeidi, & Saeidi, 2017). Therefore, the difference between the perceived provider and the predicted provider is the service excellence furnished (Hyun, 2010). Manifestly, whilst the expected provider is better than the acquired provider high-quality by using the enterprise, the client will not be happy or at least not as content as he or she could be if expectations have been met (Hamari, Hanner, & Koivisto, 2017). Preceding research of Chow, Lau, Lo, Sha, and Yun (2007) have confirmed the significance of service high-quality in rapid food restaurants and found that the first class of the provider appreciably impacts patron delight and emblem loyalty. Several different types of research have been manipulated. It is confirmed that the critical role of providers is exceptional on consumer pride.

About 44% of the respondents were satisfied with how McDonald's promotes their products on social media while 41% were very satisfied and 14% were neutral with the promotion on social media. Of 1% of the respondents were very dissatisfied with how McDonald's promotes their products on social media. Commercials are the most remarkable among McDonald's merchandising strategies. The company uses television, radio, print media, and online media for its commercials. However, sales promotions are used to attract extra customers to the company's restaurants. For instance, they give cut price coupons and freebies for certain products and product bundles, as a way of attracting extra customers. Further, the company's public family members' activities assist promote the commercial enterprise to the goal marketplace through goodwill and brand strengthening. For example, the Ronald McDonald residence Charities and the McDonald's international excellent or inexperienced environmental program support communities at the same time as boosting the value of the company brand. Sometimes, the company uses direct advertising and marketing, including for company clients, local governments, or community events and parties. In this element of its marketing mix, McDonald's

company emphasizes advertising and marketing as an important approach to promoting its products.

Strategies to improve consumer satisfaction toward McDonald's:
1. Upgrading the drive-thru system
   Increase the number of staff at the drive-thru checkpoints
   Varying outdoor digital drive-thru menu displays
2. Increase the number of food deliveries
   Increase the number of delivery points nationwide
   Increase the number of delivery points nationwide
3. Incorporating technology
   Cashless and contactless scheme
   Upgrading the McDelivery application and website
4. Maximizing digital marketing
   Campaign videos
   Social media engagement

Table 3. Strategies to Improve Consumer Satisfaction with McDonald's

	Percentage (%)				
	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Upgrading the drive-thru system					
Increase the number of staff at the drive-thru checkpoints	4	3	13	39	41
Varying outdoor digital drive-thru menu displays	4	3	20	39	34
Increase the number of food deliveries					
Increase the number of delivery points nationwide	4	2	15	33	46
Increase the number of delivery points nationwide	4	2	16	35	43
Incorporating technology					
Cashless and contactless scheme	5	3	14	37	41
Upgrading the McDelivery	4	3	20	36	37

application and website					
Maximizing digital marketing					
Campaign videos	4	3	25	38	30
Social media engagement	4	3	19	44	30

Upgrading The Drivethru System

Section 1 of Table 3 showed the strategies to improve consumer satisfaction on the drive-thru system. 39% and 41% of the respondents were satisfied and very satisfied respectively with the increase in the number of staff at the drive-thru checkpoints. 13% were neutral and another 7% were dissatisfied with the strategy. 39% and 34% of the respondents were satisfied and very satisfied respectively with the varying outdoor digital drive-thru menu displays. 20% were neutral while the other 7% were dissatisfied with the strategy.

Drive-thru is a system whereby customers purchase items from a given outlet by driving in their vehicles through an available window where waiters (or waitresses) attend to customers as they drive through without stepping out of their vehicles (Kiron & Unruh, 2017). The drive-thru encounter is unique in that the entire encounter takes place in a strictly defined queue. It is obvious who should be served first (Schau & Gilly, 1998). Drive-thru systems are really convenient for consumers, especially who have limited time. Consumers can order the food, pay, and receive it without leaving their car. Service encounters are purposive and task-oriented (Solomon et al., 1985), with customers and employees entering the interaction with expectations concerning their own role. For drive-thru to run smoothly, consumers must order properly and smoothly. Staff must record the consumer's order accurately. For employees, roles and scripts are explicitly communicated to them via training (Leidner, 1993), yet customer scripts are not well understood. Consumers learn service behaviors from repeated exposure, advertisement, and observation (Schau & Gilly, 1998).

Increasing the number of staff at drive-thru checkpoints can help the service faster. This will prevent the consumers from waiting longer. Customers' perception of service quality is a function of waiting time. If customers observe the service times to be less than expected, their satisfaction increases monotonically during the wait (Kumar, Kalwani, & Dada, 1997). Every organization that directly interacts with its customers confronts the issue of the queue (Davis & Heineke, 1993).

McDonald's should vary outdoor digital drive-thru menu displays. The digital menu displays can help in faster service. For example, when lunchtime comes, the digital menu displays should show the products available and remove the breakfast items. This will help to speed up the service so as to not confuse the consumers while ordering. McDonald's has created a drive-thru digital menu board that will be patterned based on the weather, traffic, time of the day, and trending menu. They are using real-time analytics and data to change the menu based on weather conditions. For example, McDonald's will highlight McFlurries when it's a hot day. This new technology has been proven to add extra value to the overall

service offering and is used to evoke customer delight and total service experienc e (NaijaTechGuide, 2020). Digital menus and drive-thru are increasingly gaining momentum and have been thought of as leading digital strategies in recent years (Dixon, 2020).

DISCUSSION

Increase The Number of Food Deliveries
Section 2 of Table 3 showed the consumer's satisfaction with the increase in the number of food deliveries. 79% were satisfied and very satisfied with the increase in the number of delivery points nationwide. 15% were neutral while the other 6% were dissatisfied. Around 78% of the respondents were satisfied with the increase in the number of McDonald's delivery riders. 16% were neutral while the other 6% were dissatisfied. The majority of the respondents were satisfied with the increase of the number of food deliveries. McDonald's strategy to increase the number of delivery points nationwide is great because consumers can receive their orders near their place. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers have been more interested in online delivery, so increasing the delivery points is a great idea. Delivery riders can now go to rare areas to deliver consumer orders. Nowadays, McDonald's delivery can even go to rural areas. This can help widen the McDonald's consumers and bring more new customers.

The increase in the number of McDonald's delivery riders helps faster the order to be delivered. Consumers don't have to wait long because there are many riders that are available to send their orders. Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, food riders continuously increased, including McDonald's delivery riders because the demand for online delivery keeps on rising. Increasing delivery drivers is an innovative way to reduce the delivery time during unexpected rush hours. Consumers don't need to wait for the riders to finish others' orders first. An increase in the number of delivery riders means that more orders can be accepted at the same time. This can ensure consumers' delivery orders can be delivered on time. McDonald's also had a partnership with FoodPanda and GrabFood to help delivery riders to grow.

Incorporating Technology
Section 3 of Table 3 showed the consumer's satisfaction towards incorporating technology. 78% of the respondents were satisfied with the cashless and contactless scheme while the other 14% were neutral. 8% were dissatisfied with the strategy. Around 73% were satisfied with the upgraded McDelivery application and website. About 20% were neutral while the other 7% were dissatisfied.

A cashless and contactless scheme is a secure payment method using a debit or credit card or other payment devices that use technology. Cashless payment transactions are always recorded. Manoj Nagpal said that if all transactions are on record, it will be very easy for people to keep track of their spending (Dave, n.d.). Cashless societies and technological innovation have become increasingly popular around the world (Fabris, 2019). Cashless payments offer convenience and speed (Teo, Tan, Ooi, Hew, & Yew, 2015). This is a faster and safe payment method than using cash. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers and staff don't have to be in contact with each other.

McDonald's had been adapting to the use of technology in delivering it is fast food products to their consumers. McDelivery is a McDonald's service that delivers food to the customer door. McDelivery started in the United States in 1993 and the success of it brought McDelivery too many other countries like Asia and Latin America. Majority of the respondents were satisfied with the McDelivery service. Majority of the respondents were satisfied with the upgraded version of McDelivery application and website. This showed that the McDelivery application helps the consumers to check the new menu or place an order easily. Consumers can also track their orders and the rider location using this application. McDonald's needs to establish criteria that may allow it to differentiate itself from other competitors (Schiffman, et al, 2008). Therefore, the McDelivery application is really different from other fast food applications.

Maximizing digital marketing
From section 4 Table 3 summarizes consumers' satisfaction with the maximized digital marketing. 68% of the respondents were satisfied with the campaign videos while the other 25% were neutral. 7% were dissatisfied with the strategy. Around 74% of the respondents were satisfied with their social media engagement. Another 19% were neutral and the other 7% were dissatisfied with the strategy.

Digital marketing is a type of marketing that uses the internet or online-based technology to promote products and services. Digital marketing has become part of an organization's marketing strategy as an effort to reach a wider range of consumers. Even though McDonald's is a well-known brand, it still needed to be promoted to build brand trust. Brand trust is really important to maintain loyal consumers. Trust can influence consumers in buying a brand, meaning that a brand can create an emotional feeling with customers (Moorman et al., 1992). Oliver (1999) described customer loyalty as a passionate commitment and willingness to purchase or repurchase a preferred product or service more than a competitor offering. Customer loyalty is the relationship between attitude and patronage behavior (Dick & Basu, 1994).

Campaign videos will help McDonald's to give a positive impact on the consumers. McDonald's USA imported a very successful YouTube campaign called 'Our Food, Your Questions' in October 2014. After 5 months after it was launched, the video became one of the most influential videos on the topic of food. In 2012, Canada launched the original campaign video "Our Food, Your Questions" to give Canadians a chance to ask McDonald's anything about their products. McDonald's also conducted an awareness campaign aligned with the World Cup on Facebook. The video has 6.3 million views, 323 million impressions, and a reach of 290 million unique people. This just showed how the campaign video helps to build a bigger audience for McDonald's.

Social media is really important for McDonald's to promote and engage with its consumers. Social media is a tool that helps companies to build brand loyalty through networking, conversation, and building community (McKee, 2010). The significant purpose of social media sites is to relationships, which are basically consistent with people and their relationships (Zeng et al., 2009). The features on mobile phones nowadays allow customers to communicate with others and share their opinions easily (Mayfield, 2008). Some social media examples are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. McDonald's needs to actively promote their products and engage with their consumers to improve its products and service.

Virtual communities are an important network that will influence consumer behavior (Fotis, Buhalis, & Rossides, 2012; de Valck, Kozinets, Wojnicki, & Wilner, 2010). Through social media, McDonald's can maintain their current consumers and attract new consumers by engaging and promoting their products in a creative way. Marketing in social media is considered an effective tool for developing relationships with customers (Choi & Thoeni, 2016). Social media allows consumers to share information with their peers about the brands of products and services (Stileman, 2009; Mangold & Foulds, 2009). Social media marketing helps increase consumers' trust and loyalty toward McDonald's. It also helps consumers to get information about McDonald's on social media.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research above, it can be concluded that most consumers, whether they eat at McDonald's, drive-thru, or food delivery, are satisfied both in terms of service and the dishes or products they ordered. However, there is 1 response that is very dissatisfied with the food delivery service, 1 response is not satisfied with the product from McDonald's, 2 responses are not satisfied with the service staff in helping consumers solve their problems or desires. 1 response is very dissatisfied with the promotions carried out by McDonald's, and there are at most 6 dissatisfied responses to the McDonald's delivery application. As for the reasons for customer dissatisfaction, namely, due to the delivery time being too long, then the cause of dissatisfaction in the drive-thru on average is a misunderstanding of the customer order script by the staff of employees from McDonald's (Leidner, 1993), which has an impact on dissatisfaction with the product received and the assessment of the from employees service (Saeidi, Rasli, Saeidi, Saaeidi, & Saeidi, 2017). Some customers also don't like the way McDonald's promotes their products on social media, they think the strategy used is less attractive. For the application from McDonald's itself, customers consider that there is a need for an update by adding several features such as cashless and contactless schemes. Therefore, several strategies are needed to improve it. There are several strategies that can be applied. First, in upgrading the drive-thru system, McDonald's may increase the number of staff at drive-thru checkpoints and vary the appearance of the outdoor digital drive-thru menu. Second, increasing the number of McDonald's delivery points can increase the number of delivery points nationally and increase the number of delivery points nationally. Then for the McDonald's delivery application, you can include technology, cashless and contactless schemes, and upgrade the McDelivery application and website. To maximize digital marketing McDonald's can create campaign videos and use social media engagement.

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