

Driving Customer Satisfaction: The Influence of Product Quality, Service Efficiency, and Restaurant Atmospherics Among Young Consumers

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of Product Quality, Service Efficiency, and Restaurant Atmospherics on Customer Satisfaction among young KFC consumers in Malaysia. A quantitative research design was employed, using purposive sampling to collect data through a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The results show that the regression model explained 39.8% of the variance in Customer Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.398$). Service Efficiency had the strongest significant positive effect on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.351$, $p < .01$), followed by Restaurant Atmospherics ($\beta = 0.340$, $p < .01$). In contrast, Product Quality showed a positive but non-significant effect ($\beta = 0.079$). These findings indicate that young consumers' satisfaction is influenced more strongly by efficient service and the restaurant environment than by Product Quality. The study suggests that KFC should prioritize service efficiency and restaurant atmospherics while maintaining consistent product quality to enhance Customer Satisfaction and strengthen its competitiveness among young consumers.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction; KFC; Product Quality; Restaurant Atmospherics; Service Efficiency; Young Generation

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-moving and highly competitive fast-food industry, customer satisfaction plays an important role in determining the success of brands such as KFC. Customers, particularly younger consumers, are no longer satisfied solely with good food. They increasingly expect a comprehensive dining experience that includes high-quality food, efficient service, and a comfortable restaurant environment. Young consumers tend to have greater awareness and higher expectations regarding their dining experiences, making it important for companies to understand the factors that contribute to their satisfaction (Aminuddin, 2021).

Customer satisfaction refers to the extent to which customers feel satisfied with their dining experience based on whether their expectations are met or exceeded (Yo et al., 2021). Previous research has demonstrated that various factors, including product quality, service efficiency, and the restaurant environment, can significantly influence customer satisfaction. In fast-food restaurants, these factors may also influence customers' intentions to revisit or recommend the restaurant to others.

Among these factors, product quality is considered an important determinant of customer satisfaction. Product quality encompasses several aspects, including food taste, freshness, presentation, and variety. When customers consistently receive high-quality food, they are more likely to be satisfied and develop trust in the brand (Aminuddin, 2021). Previous studies have also indicated that satisfied customers are more likely to develop loyalty and revisit the restaurant. Therefore, maintaining consistent food quality is essential for KFC to remain competitive in the fast-food industry (Singh & Nanda, 2022).

Service efficiency is another important factor affecting customer satisfaction. It primarily concerns the speed and accuracy with which services are delivered. Customers generally expect prompt service, short waiting times, and accurate orders. Employee behavior is also important, as polite and helpful staff can contribute to a positive customer experience. Conversely, slow service and order inaccuracies may result in customer dissatisfaction (Oh et al., 2021).

Restaurant atmospherics also play an important role in shaping the overall dining experience. Factors such as cleanliness, seating comfort, lighting, temperature, and background music contribute to the restaurant environment. A clean and comfortable atmosphere can enhance customers' comfort and enjoyment during their dining experience. Previous studies suggest that these environmental factors can influence customers' feelings and their intention to revisit a restaurant (Han et al., 2022).

Although previous studies have examined product quality, service efficiency, and restaurant atmospherics individually, limited research has investigated these factors simultaneously, particularly in relation to customer satisfaction among young consumers in fast-food restaurants such as KFC (Bire et al., 2021). Therefore, this study examines the influence of product quality, service efficiency, and restaurant atmospherics on customer satisfaction among young consumers. By examining these factors collectively, the study aims to provide a better understanding of the key determinants of customer satisfaction within the fast-food industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a key factor in determining business success in the fast-food industry. It refers to the extent to which customers' expectations are met or exceeded by a product or service. Previous studies have defined customer satisfaction as customers' overall evaluation of their experiences with a product or service (Bire et al., 2021). When customers are satisfied, they are more likely to revisit a restaurant and recommend it to others through positive word-of-mouth. In fast-food restaurants such as KFC, customer satisfaction can be influenced by several factors, including product quality, service efficiency, and the restaurant environment (Amoako et al., 2025). Maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction is essential for achieving a competitive advantage and improving business performance (Abeykoon, 2024).

Product Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Product quality is consistently recognized as an important driver of customer satisfaction, purchase decisions, and loyalty. Product quality can be evaluated based on several attributes, including taste, freshness, consistency, portion size, presentation, hygiene, and the extent to which products meet customer expectations (Singh & Nanda, 2022). In the fast-food industry, maintaining consistent taste and quality is particularly important for strengthening customer satisfaction and loyalty.

High product quality is reflected in attributes such as taste, crunchiness, and spice level, which can significantly influence consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Khairunnisa et al., 2025). Research on sensory branding has also demonstrated that taste and smell can strongly influence consumer perceptions and satisfaction. In the context of KFC, taste and smell are important sensory factors that contribute to brand recognition and customer preferences. Therefore, high-quality food not only fulfills customers' basic consumption needs but may also create memorable experiences that encourage repeat visits.

Food hygiene is another important component of product quality. Appropriate food-handling procedures, including the use of clean uniforms, hairnets, gloves, and face masks when handling food, can contribute to maintaining appropriate hygiene standards (Ganatra et al., 2021). In Malaysia, product quality is also closely associated with halal assurance, as compliance with halal standards can increase consumer trust and willingness to purchase (Mahendri et al., 2020).

Young consumers may be particularly attentive to food quality because of their increasing awareness of health, hygiene, and value for money (Hanaysha, 2016). When perceived product quality does not meet their expectations, dissatisfaction may arise and potentially result in negative word-of-mouth (Yanti et al., 2025). Overall, these considerations indicate that product quality plays an important role in enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

H1: Product quality positively influences customer satisfaction among young consumers at KFC.

Service Efficiency and Customer Satisfaction

Service efficiency, particularly in terms of speed, accuracy, and responsiveness, is widely recognized as an important determinant of customer satisfaction in the fast-food industry (Tiangco et al., 2026). Service efficiency refers to the ability to serve customers quickly and accurately, including efficient order processing, staff responsiveness, and

the minimization of service errors. In fast-food settings, speed and convenience represent important customer expectations, particularly among young consumers.

Efficient service can enhance customer satisfaction by reducing waiting times and improving the overall dining experience. Conversely, service delays, incorrect orders, and unresponsive employees may lead to frustration and dissatisfaction. Younger consumers, who are accustomed to fast-paced digital services such as online food delivery applications, may have particularly high expectations regarding service speed and convenience.

In the context of service quality, responsiveness refers to employees' ability to provide accurate and timely services while maintaining effective communication with customers. Previous studies have identified several dimensions of responsiveness, including employees' willingness to assist customers, speed of service, and effective communication (Ahmed et al., 2026). Abeykoon (2024) further identified responsiveness as an influential factor affecting customer satisfaction and loyalty at KFC.

According to Rumagit et al. (2022, as cited in Abeykoon, 2024), establishing trust between customers and employees is important for achieving an appropriate level of service quality. Employees should support customers by delivering prompt services and demonstrating responsive attitudes. Furthermore, providing high-quality services in a fast and efficient manner can enhance customer satisfaction and strengthen the restaurant's reputation (Abeykoon, 2024).

Friendly and helpful interactions between employees and customers can also contribute to perceived service quality. Even within quick-service restaurant settings, interpersonal interactions remain important in shaping customers' perceptions and experiences. Overall, service efficiency is essential for enhancing customer satisfaction, building trust, and encouraging customer loyalty.

H2: Service efficiency positively influences customer satisfaction among young consumers at KFC.

Restaurant Atmospherics and Customer Satisfaction

Restaurant atmospherics, also referred to as the physical environment or servicescape, represent an important determinant of customer behavior in the fast-food industry. The servicescape encompasses the human-made physical surroundings of a service setting, including ambient conditions, spatial layout, signs, and symbols (Han et al., 2022). Kotler (1973) proposed that atmospherics can generate emotional responses that may increase the likelihood of purchase. Consequently, the restaurant environment can influence customer experiences and satisfaction, potentially leading to positive behavioral intentions such as revisit intention (Han et al., 2022).

The concept of sensory marketing further emphasizes how multiple sensory elements, including sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, can enhance the customer experience. Research in the context of KFC indicates that sensory elements such as visual design, aroma, and background music can contribute to customer perceptions and brand identity. Similarly, Soma Nath and Agarwal (2023) found that servicescape can influence customer perceptions, emotional responses, and satisfaction in restaurant settings.

Physical environmental cues may also influence trust and purchase intentions, particularly among young consumers. Younger generations increasingly expect restaurant environments that extend beyond basic functional seating by emphasizing

cleanliness, comfort, and modern design (Shanika W. G. C., 2025). Previous research has also demonstrated that perceived crowding and other aspects of the restaurant environment can influence customers' evaluations and perceptions of restaurant popularity (Ali et al., 2021).

Overall, restaurant atmospherics play an important role in enhancing customer satisfaction and strengthening the overall dining experience. Elements such as hygiene, lighting, spatial layout, seating comfort, and restaurant facilities can contribute to customers' perceptions of service quality and may encourage positive behavioral responses.

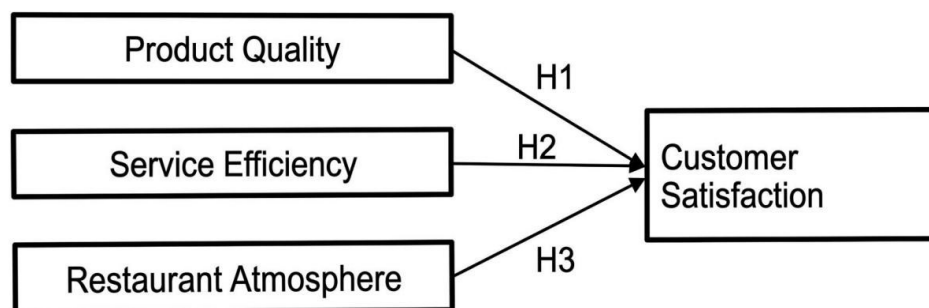
H3: Restaurant atmospherics positively influence customer satisfaction among young consumers at KFC.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 1. The framework illustrates the proposed relationships between product quality, service efficiency, restaurant atmospherics, and customer satisfaction among young consumers at KFC. Product quality, service efficiency, and restaurant atmospherics are positioned as the independent variables, while customer satisfaction is positioned as the dependent variable.

The framework proposes that higher perceived product quality, greater service efficiency, and more favorable restaurant atmospherics are associated with higher levels of customer satisfaction. Accordingly, the framework comprises three hypothesized relationships: product quality and customer satisfaction (H1), service efficiency and customer satisfaction (H2), and restaurant atmospherics and customer satisfaction (H3).

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHOD

Sample and Procedure

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the relationships between product quality, service efficiency, restaurant atmospherics, and customer satisfaction among young consumers at KFC. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic measurement of variables and statistical analysis of the proposed relationships.

The target population consisted of young Malaysian consumers who had previously visited or dined at KFC. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that respondents met the criterion of having prior dining experience at KFC. Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire administered via Google

Forms. The survey link was distributed through social media platforms, including WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, and Threads, to reach respondents from diverse demographic backgrounds.

A total of 161 valid responses were collected and subsequently analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the respondents' characteristics and study variables, while regression analysis was conducted to examine the proposed relationships and test the hypotheses.

Measures

This study employed a structured questionnaire consisting of 23 items. The questionnaire was divided into several sections to assess the respondents' demographic profiles and the study variables, namely product quality, service efficiency, restaurant atmospherics, and customer satisfaction. The measurement items were adopted from established studies in the fast-food and service industry literature (Bulochova et al., 2024). The items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to capture respondents' perceptions.

Product quality was measured using six items (Items 4–9), assessing food freshness, preparation, taste, variety, presentation, and consistency, with a mean score of 3.83. Service efficiency was measured using five items (Items 10–14), covering order speed, staff responsiveness, order accuracy, waiting time, and complaint handling, with a mean score of 3.85.

Restaurant atmospherics were measured using five items (Items 15–19), reflecting cleanliness, seating comfort, ambience, suitability for socializing, and the overall enhancement of the dining experience, with a mean score of 3.98. Customer satisfaction served as the dependent variable and was measured using four items (Items 20–23), assessing overall satisfaction, fulfillment of expectations, revisit intention, and likelihood of recommending KFC to others, with a mean score of 3.99. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using SPSS to obtain descriptive statistics and examine the relationships among the study variables.

RESULTS

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=161)

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
Below 18	6	3.7
18–20 years old	19	11.8
21–22 years old	55	34.2
23–26 years old	52	32.3
Above 26	29	18.0
Gender		
Female	113	70.2
Male	28	17.4
Prefer not to say	20	12.4
Frequency of Visiting KFC		
Frequently (once a week)	36	22.4
Occasionally (1–2 times a month)	49	30.4
Rarely (less than once a month)	59	36.6
Very frequently (more than once a week)	17	10.6
Total Respondents	161	100.0

The sample was predominantly concentrated in the younger age groups, with respondents aged 21–22 years representing the largest proportion (N = 55, 34.2%), followed by those aged 23–26 years (N = 52, 32.3%), above 26 years (N = 29, 18.0%), 18–20 years (N = 19, 11.8%), and below 18 years (N = 6, 3.7%). In terms of gender, female respondents constituted the majority of the sample (N = 113, 70.2%), followed by male respondents (N = 28, 17.4%) and those who preferred not to disclose their gender (N = 20, 12.4%).

Regarding the frequency of KFC visits, most respondents reported visiting KFC rarely, defined as less than once a month (N = 59, 36.6%). This was followed by respondents who visited KFC occasionally, approximately 1–2 times a month (N = 49, 30.4%), frequently, approximately once a week (N = 36, 22.4%), and very frequently, more than once a week (N = 17, 10.6%).

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

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Product Quality	0.740			
2. Service Efficiency	0.463**	0.779		
3. Restaurant Atmospherics	0.494**	0.587**	0.793	
4. Customer Satisfaction	0.398**	0.535**	0.449**	0.496
Number of Items	6	5	5	4
Mean	3.5747	3.8513	3.9758	3.6566
Standard Deviation	0.48418	0.60359	0.62444	0.41940

Note. N = 161; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. The diagonal entries represent Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha coefficients, and zero-order correlations among the study variables. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.496 to 0.793. Product Quality ($\alpha = 0.740$), Service Efficiency ($\alpha = 0.779$), and Restaurant Atmospherics ($\alpha = 0.793$) demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. However, Customer Satisfaction showed a relatively low Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.496$), indicating that the internal consistency of this construct requires further consideration.

The correlation analysis revealed positive and statistically significant relationships among all study variables. Service Efficiency was positively correlated with Customer Satisfaction ($r = 0.535$, $p < .01$), while Restaurant Atmospherics was also positively correlated with Customer Satisfaction ($r = 0.449$, $p < .01$). Product Quality showed a positive correlation with Customer Satisfaction ($r = 0.398$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, Service Efficiency was positively correlated with Restaurant Atmospherics ($r = 0.587$, $p < .01$). Product Quality was also positively correlated with Service Efficiency ($r = 0.463$, $p < .01$) and Restaurant Atmospherics ($r = 0.494$, $p < .01$). Overall, the correlation results indicate significant positive associations among the constructs and provide a basis for further hypothesis testing using multiple regression analysis.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

Predictor	Customer Satisfaction (β)	Hypothesis	Decision
Product Quality	0.079	H1	Not Supported
Service Efficiency	0.351**	H2	Supported
Restaurant Atmospherics	0.340**	H3	Supported
Model Summary			

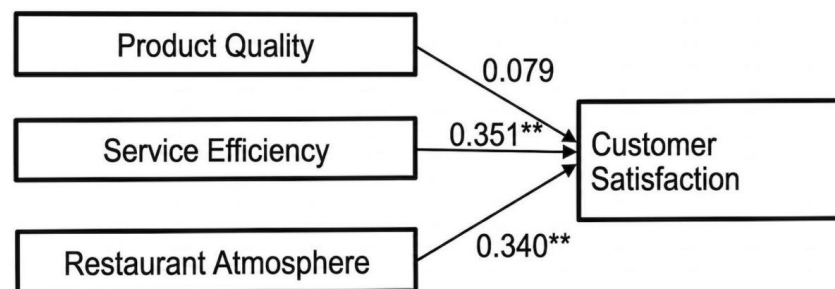
R ²	0.398
F-value	13.205
Durbin-Watson	2.492

Note. N = 161; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Table 3 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to examine the influence of Product Quality, Service Efficiency, and Restaurant Atmospherics on Customer Satisfaction at KFC. The regression model yielded an R² value of 0.398, indicating that 39.8% of the variance in Customer Satisfaction was explained by the three predictors.

H1 proposed that Product Quality positively influences Customer Satisfaction. Although Product Quality showed a positive regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.079$), the result was not statistically significant based on the information reported in Table 3. Therefore, H1 was not supported. H2 proposed that Service Efficiency positively influences Customer Satisfaction. The results showed a significant positive effect of Service Efficiency on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.351$, $p < .01$), supporting H2. Similarly, H3 proposed that Restaurant Atmospherics positively influences Customer Satisfaction. Restaurant Atmospherics had a significant positive effect on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.340$, $p < .01$); therefore, H3 was supported. Among the significant predictors, Service Efficiency demonstrated the strongest effect on Customer Satisfaction, followed by Restaurant Atmospherics.

Figure 2. Overview Result



DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of product quality, service efficiency, and restaurant atmospherics on customer satisfaction among young consumers at KFC. The findings indicate that Service Efficiency and Restaurant Atmospherics significantly influence Customer Satisfaction, whereas Product Quality does not demonstrate a significant effect. Among the significant predictors, Service Efficiency showed the strongest effect on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.351$), followed by Restaurant Atmospherics ($\beta = 0.340$). Product Quality showed only a relatively weak positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.079$).

These findings indicate that customer satisfaction among young consumers is shaped not only by the food itself but also by the overall service and dining experience. In the contemporary fast-food industry, young consumers increasingly expect efficient service, convenience, comfort, and an enjoyable restaurant environment. Consequently, fast-food businesses need to consider multiple dimensions of the customer experience when developing strategies to enhance satisfaction.

The findings also reflect changes in the expectations and consumption behavior of younger consumers. Fast-food restaurants traditionally emphasized quick and affordable

meals; however, restaurants increasingly function as spaces where young consumers can socialize, relax, study, and engage in other activities. This development highlights the importance of providing an overall dining experience that extends beyond the core food offering.

Furthermore, competition within the fast-food industry provides consumers with numerous alternatives. Dissatisfaction with service or the restaurant environment may encourage customers to consider competing brands. Therefore, understanding the factors that significantly contribute to customer satisfaction is important for maintaining competitiveness and developing stronger customer relationships.

Influence of Product Quality on Customer Satisfaction

H1 proposed that Product Quality positively influences Customer Satisfaction. The regression analysis showed a positive but relatively weak coefficient for Product Quality ($\beta = 0.079$). However, based on the statistical results presented in Table 3, the relationship was not statistically significant. Therefore, H1 was not supported.

Although Product Quality did not significantly predict Customer Satisfaction in the regression model, food quality remains an important component of the overall dining experience (Akmal et al., 2023). Customers generally expect food to be fresh, appealing, hygienically prepared, and consistent across their visits. Failure to meet these basic expectations may negatively affect customers' perceptions of the restaurant.

The non-significant effect may indicate that Product Quality functions as a basic expectation among KFC customers rather than as a primary factor differentiating their level of satisfaction. In other words, young consumers may already expect an established fast-food brand such as KFC to provide a consistent level of food quality. Consequently, variations in service efficiency and restaurant atmospherics may play a greater role in determining overall satisfaction. Nevertheless, this interpretation should be considered cautiously and within the context of the present sample.

Young consumers may also pay attention to hygiene, freshness, presentation, and value for money when evaluating their dining experiences. The increasing use of social media enables consumers to communicate their experiences rapidly through reviews, photographs, and other forms of electronic word-of-mouth. Therefore, maintaining consistent product quality remains important for protecting customer trust and brand reputation even though its direct effect on Customer Satisfaction was not statistically significant in this study.

From a managerial perspective, KFC should continue maintaining food quality standards across its outlets. Fresh ingredients, standardized preparation procedures, appropriate hygiene practices, and employee training remain important for ensuring consistency and meeting customers' fundamental expectations.

Influence of Service Efficiency on Customer Satisfaction

H2 proposed that Service Efficiency positively influences Customer Satisfaction. The results showed that Service Efficiency had a significant positive effect on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.351$, $p < .01$). Therefore, H2 was supported. Among the variables examined in this study, Service Efficiency demonstrated the strongest effect on Customer Satisfaction.

This finding suggests that speed, accuracy, responsiveness, and convenience are important elements of the customer experience at KFC. Young consumers may

particularly value services that are efficient and convenient because they are accustomed to rapid digital communication, mobile applications, online ordering, and other technology-enabled services. Consequently, long waiting times, inaccurate orders, or inadequate staff responsiveness may negatively affect their satisfaction.

Interactions between employees and customers may also contribute to perceptions of service efficiency. Although customer–employee interactions in fast-food restaurants are generally brief, prompt responses, effective communication, and courteous behavior can contribute to a positive dining experience. Conversely, poor responsiveness or ineffective communication may negatively influence customers' evaluations of the service (Jannah et al., 2023).

The increasing adoption of digital ordering and food delivery platforms may further influence customer expectations regarding speed and convenience. Customers increasingly expect their orders to be processed accurately and efficiently regardless of whether they dine in, purchase takeaway meals, or use digital ordering services. The significant effect identified in this study therefore emphasizes the importance of operational efficiency in meeting the expectations of young consumers.

From a managerial perspective, KFC should continuously improve its service processes through employee training, effective operational procedures, and appropriate digital technologies. Self-service kiosks, mobile ordering systems, and other technology-enabled services may contribute to shorter waiting times, improved order accuracy, and greater convenience. Customer feedback regarding service performance should also be regularly evaluated to identify areas requiring improvement.

Influence of Restaurant Atmospherics on Customer Satisfaction

H3 proposed that Restaurant Atmospherics positively influence Customer Satisfaction. The results revealed a significant positive effect of Restaurant Atmospherics on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.340$, $p < .01$). Therefore, H3 was supported. This finding indicates that the physical environment of the restaurant represents an important component of customer satisfaction among young consumers.

Restaurant atmospherics include various physical and environmental elements, such as cleanliness, lighting, seating comfort, temperature, ambience, and interior design. These elements can shape customers' perceptions and emotional responses during their dining experiences. A clean, comfortable, and pleasant environment may consequently contribute to higher levels of satisfaction (Achmadi et al., 2023).

The importance of restaurant atmospherics may be particularly relevant among younger consumers, who may perceive restaurants not only as places to consume food but also as social spaces. Restaurants can provide environments in which consumers interact with friends, relax, study, or participate in other social activities. Therefore, the physical environment may influence their overall evaluation of the dining experience.

Digital and social media trends may further increase the importance of restaurant aesthetics among younger consumers. Visually appealing and contemporary restaurant environments may contribute to positive customer experiences and enhance perceptions of the brand. Nevertheless, the significance of Restaurant Atmospherics in the present study should primarily be interpreted in terms of its demonstrated relationship with Customer Satisfaction rather than assumed effects on other behavioral outcomes that were not directly examined.

From a managerial perspective, KFC should maintain clean, comfortable, and visually appealing restaurant environments. Appropriate seating arrangements, lighting, temperature, interior design, and other facilities can contribute to a more satisfactory dining experience. Restaurant facilities should also be periodically evaluated to ensure that they remain aligned with the expectations and preferences of young consumers.

Managerial Implications

The findings provide several managerial implications for KFC. First, Service Efficiency should receive substantial managerial attention because it demonstrated the strongest significant influence on Customer Satisfaction. Improving service speed, order accuracy, employee responsiveness, and digital ordering processes may contribute to a more efficient and satisfactory customer experience.

Second, Restaurant Atmospherics should also be prioritized because they demonstrated a significant positive influence on Customer Satisfaction. Maintaining cleanliness, comfortable seating, appropriate lighting, and an appealing restaurant environment can contribute to positive evaluations of the dining experience, particularly among young consumers.

Third, although Product Quality did not significantly predict Customer Satisfaction in the regression analysis, it should not be considered unimportant. Product quality represents a fundamental component of the fast-food offering, and maintaining consistent standards of taste, freshness, hygiene, preparation, and presentation remains essential for meeting customer expectations.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that customer satisfaction in the fast-food industry is influenced by multiple dimensions of the customer experience. For the respondents examined in this study, Service Efficiency and Restaurant Atmospherics emerged as significant predictors of Customer Satisfaction, whereas Product Quality did not demonstrate a significant independent effect. Accordingly, KFC should maintain its core product standards while placing particular emphasis on efficient service delivery and the quality of the restaurant environment.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the factors influencing Customer Satisfaction among young consumers at KFC, focusing on Product Quality, Service Efficiency, and Restaurant Atmospherics. The findings demonstrate that the three predictors collectively explained 39.8% of the variance in Customer Satisfaction. However, their individual effects differed. Service Efficiency and Restaurant Atmospherics significantly influenced Customer Satisfaction, whereas Product Quality did not demonstrate a significant independent effect.

Among the significant predictors, Service Efficiency emerged as the strongest factor influencing Customer Satisfaction. This finding highlights the importance of speed, accuracy, responsiveness, and convenience in meeting the expectations of young consumers. As younger consumers are increasingly accustomed to digital ordering systems, mobile applications, and food delivery platforms, efficient service has become an important component of their overall dining experience. Delays, inaccurate orders, and inadequate responsiveness may therefore negatively affect Customer Satisfaction.

Restaurant Atmospherics emerged as the second significant predictor of Customer Satisfaction. This finding indicates that young consumers consider the restaurant

environment an important part of their overall dining experience. Cleanliness, seating comfort, ambience, and a welcoming environment can enhance customers' perceptions and contribute to greater satisfaction. For young consumers, restaurants may also function as social spaces where they can interact with friends, relax, and enjoy their time beyond the primary purpose of consuming food.

Product Quality showed a positive but non-significant effect on Customer Satisfaction. Although the relationship was not statistically significant, Product Quality remains an important component of the overall dining experience. Taste, freshness, consistency, presentation, and hygiene represent fundamental expectations when customers visit a fast-food restaurant. Therefore, maintaining consistent product standards remains important for meeting customer expectations and protecting the restaurant's brand reputation.

Overall, the findings suggest that KFC should maintain its product quality standards while placing particular emphasis on improving Service Efficiency and Restaurant Atmospherics. Enhancing service speed and accuracy, ensuring responsive customer service, and maintaining a clean and comfortable restaurant environment may contribute to higher levels of Customer Satisfaction among young consumers. By integrating these aspects of the dining experience, KFC can better respond to the evolving expectations of younger consumers and strengthen its competitiveness in the fast-food industry.

LIMITATION

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample was limited to young Malaysian consumers who had visited KFC, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to consumers from other age groups, countries, and cultural contexts. Second, the study examined only Product Quality, Service Efficiency, and Restaurant Atmospherics as factors influencing Customer Satisfaction, while other potential determinants were not included. Therefore, future research should involve broader and more diverse samples and incorporate additional variables that may influence Customer Satisfaction. Expanding the research scope may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape customer satisfaction in the fast-food industry.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the study, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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