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## **Factors Influencing Customers Self-Service or Walk-in Ordering System**

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### **Abstract**

This study assessed the factors in the customer's self-service or walk-in ordering system in selected fast-food chain in Ormoc City. Using a descriptive survey design, data was collected and tabulated. The demographics and ordering habits of fast-food patrons who prefer walk-in or self-service interactions are profiled in this study. According to survey data, most respondents are unmarried women between the ages of 20 and 29 who are enrolled in college, make less than Php 10,000 a month, and frequently depend on parental allowances. The total mean score ( $M = 3.30$ ) indicates a strong preference for in-person or self-service ordering over digital options. This group mainly visits stores during leisure or school vacations. The quick processing of takeout orders and the highly accommodating staff ( $M = 3.50$ ) are important factors affecting this habit. Even though the mean scores for other service indicators were lower, overall consumer ordering behavior is still positively impacted. In conclusion, the results indicate that attracting youthful, cost-conscious student demographics to physical shop locations continues to depend heavily on frontline staff hospitality and operational speed.

### **Keywords:**

*Fast food chain, walk-in ordering system, self-service ordering system, customer ordering behavior, operational speed.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

When it comes to experiencing fast-service meal preparations, fast-food restaurants are one of the most popular options in the Philippines. Fast restaurants occasionally draw in more patrons. Many distinct fast-food franchises have opened throughout time in response to the growing and quick demand for fast-food establishments. My observations and experiences indicate that clients must wait in a lengthy line to make their orders and receive service at the tables of their choice. It is essential to specify how these fast-food establishments can stay up to date with current technological advancements to meet the needs of their patrons, given the speed at which these products are being upgraded.

Depending on the available options and regulations of the business, there are many ways to order fast food. Visiting the restaurant in person and placing your order at the counter or via a self-service kiosk is one popular method. Customers may view the menu and tailor their orders to their tastes using this way. Placing an order via a mobile app or online is an additional

choice. This service, which is provided by many fast-food companies, enables patrons to place their meals ahead of time and pick them up at the restaurant's specified location. Time may be saved and in-person interactions can be minimized using this strategy, which is beneficial in busy times or when health issues arise.

Primarily, customer satisfaction has been the top concern since the later part of the 20th century. Organizations in every market segment, including the food service, hotel, tourist, and aviation industries, have shown a keen interest in customer satisfaction. But most firms weren't customer-focused until the 1980s. Their focus was mostly on products, and any attempt to gauge customer satisfaction was often conducted informally. A customer's contentment or discontentment with a good or service is referred to as customer satisfaction (Raduzzi et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Rajput & Gahfoor, (2020) said that a consumer's positive experience with a transaction is measured by customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is defined by the industry as a comparison of the level of performance, quality, or other outcomes perceived by the consumer with an evaluative standard. Customer satisfaction is the unbiased assessment of a certain experience by a customer. Client satisfaction is a reaction.

This study is anchored on three major theories. The Service Quality Model by Parasuraman et al. (1988) is used to assess the overall influence of the service provided to its customers. It emphasizes that the service quality helps the establishment in assessing the quality of services that the company is providing to its customers such as the physical appearance of the product or the tangibility, the reliability of the company in offering variety of menus. Responsiveness in of the staff in processing take out and dine-in food orders. Assurance in terms of its accuracy in the processing dine-in and take out orders, and the empathy of the employees in accommodating its customers who avail the order. Also, the Technology Acceptance Model by Davis (1989) supports the study. According to TAM, a visual operational tool that shows the complete walk-in process from the viewpoint of the customer, in parallel to the staff's backstage activities. It aids in identifying the exact places of delays or failures in communication between the kitchen and front desk. Clients will only utilize self-service kiosks in your walk-in system if they find them to be practical and user-friendly. Because of this, your digital ordering interfaces must be far easier to use, more accessible, and quicker than speaking with a human cashier. Additionally, The Psychology of Waiting Lines by Maister (1985) while clients are waiting in line, provide them with digital screens or tangible menus to peruse. While clients are waiting in line, provide them with digital screens or tangible menus to peruse. To lessen annoyance, ask employees to explain any delays in the kitchen right away.

Rashed et al. (2018), noted that there are situations in which customers would not always have the luxury of extra time to wait to buy meals, such as at weekday lunchtime or just before classes. Customer satisfaction and monthly income have a positive correlation but waiting time satisfaction and monthly income have a negative correlation. Higher earners like to do their household tasks as quickly as possible, thus they do not want to wait in line at fast food restaurants or retail stores.

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According to Sunaryo et al. (2019) when it comes to consumer loyalty, businesses in the local fast-food industry face more intra-industry issues. Local fast-food establishments typically offer limited services and minimal physical settings to keep prices down. Due to low switching costs resulting from low product prices and a lack of product variety among local fast-food businesses, the local fast-food market is more competitive.

In the study conducted by Lee and Cranage (2011), states that service assurance in the food service industry refers to the client's confidence that the staff will accurately complete the order, remedy any errors, and handle special requests. Because they are better able to comprehend and manage needs, human employees offer a higher perceived level of assurance for complex or customized orders than kiosks. Also, Vimalkumar et al. (2021) states that the Digital Divide in Service Consumption is the preference for conventional ordering. Factors like as age, self-efficacy, and technological phobia generate groups that are routinely left out of Self-Service theory (SST) and hence depend on walk-in.

The Experience Economy 2.0: Human Touch Framework by Morosan and Bowen, 2022, Customers value memorable interactions in the experience economy. With staff conversation, suggestions, and acknowledgment, traditional ordering promotes a co-creation moment. Compared to transactional kiosks, this personal touch offers a competitive advantage.

The researcher's prior experience working as service crew in a fast-food chain for a span of time and being in the academe teaching hospitality Management Program, streamline the different perspectives necessary in evaluating the factors influencing self-service or walk-in ordering system of the fast food.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is to assess the factors that influence customer self-service or walk-in ordering system in selected fast-food restaurants in the Ormoc City and use the findings in proposing a business model to deliver best services.

Particularly, this study aims to:

1. Describe the respondent's profile their age, gender, civil status, educational attainment and income.
2. Asses the factors that influence customers' self-service or walk-in ordering system.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study employed a descriptive method of research design to evaluate the factors influencing self-service or walk-in ordering system of the customers as evaluated by the customers. The study was conducted in five (5) selected fast-food chains in Ormoc City.

There were fifty (50) respondents who are customers who place their order by visiting the selected fast-food chain. A purposive random sampling is being used in this study because they are the customers who avail the services in which they can assess the services. The respondent's profile was described in terms of age, gender, civil status, educational attainment and income.

Using a researcher-made survey questionnaire the data were gathered and tabulated. The questionnaires have two parts: the respondent's profile and the factors influencing self-

service or walk-in ordering system in terms of how accommodating the employees, the fast order processing, the availability of menu, the queue of customers, and the serving of the dine-in and take out order. A four-point rating scale is being used where 4 for highly preferred and 1 for not preferred. A pilot testing was conducted to verify its reliability which generate a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.09707

After the researchers secured permission to conduct the study to the identified fast-food chain. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire and administered the survey. Conformance to data privacy act the researchers carefully observed and follow the ethical requirements by securing the consent form and remain the respondent’s information confidential.

The following statistical tools were used by the researcher in analyzing and interpreting of the data. Using Simple percentage and frequency were used to describe the respondents’ profile who availed the services of a fast-food chain. The Weighted mean was used to describe the factors influencing customers service preference for self-service or walk-in ordering system.

**RESULTS**

*Table 1.* Profile of the Respondents

	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency (N=50)</b>	<b>Per Cent (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	20-29	25	50
<input type="checkbox"/>	30-39	5	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	Below 20 years	20	40
<b>Gender</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	29	58
<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	21	42
<b>Civil Status</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Married	5	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single	45	90
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Postgraduate	3	6
<input type="checkbox"/>	College Graduate	8	16
<input type="checkbox"/>	College Level	31	62
<input type="checkbox"/>	High School Graduate	5	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	High School Level	3	6

Income			
•	Less than 10,000	40	80
•	10,000-14,999	5	10
•	15,000-19,999	1	2
•	20,000-24,999	2	4
•	25,000 and above	2	4

Most of the respondents were ages 20-29 years old (50%) and with 10% who belongs to below 20 years old age bracket, presenting that mostly these ages were individuals who highly preferred to order foods via face-to-face interactions. Most of the respondents were female (58%) which dominates male respondents (42%). Most of the respondents were single (90%), college level (62%), and with an income of less than Php 10, 000. 00. This indicates that a humongous fast-food customers are single that generates a greater data in the sample. The sample presents that most of the college students highly preferred to order via walk-in or self-service. Most of the customers of the fast-food restaurant are college level, which means that they are mostly coming from their class and have leisure or vacant time to spare. This indicates that most individuals who ordered foods had an income, and mostly a wage minimum earner or dependent on the parents' allowances.

**Table 2.** Factors Influencing Self-Service or Walk-in Ordering System

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. The employees are very accommodating.	3.50	Highly Preferred
2. The processing of orders is very fast.	3.28	Highly Preferred
3. All the menus are available	3.30	Highly Preferred
4. There is no long queue of customers.	3.08	Moderately Preferred
5. The dine-in orders are served fast	3.26	Highly Preferred
6. The take-out orders are served fast	3.36	Highly Preferred
<b>Overall Mean:</b>	3.30	Highly Preferred

The overall mean score of Highly Preferred (M = 3.30) for self-service or walk-in ordering revealed that most customers prefer to visit the store to have their orders. Employees who are accommodating (M = 3.50), followed by the quick serving of the takeout orders greatly influenced customer to prefer walk-in ordering. Other indicators may receive a lower mean score however; it still contributes on customers ordering behavior.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of a study on the service preferences of respondents regarding a food ordering system, focusing on self-service and walk-in options. The overall mean score of 3.30, *highly preferred*, indicates that the respondents had a highly preferred experience with the food ordering system. The top three rated indicators were accommodating employees with

a mean score of 3.50, *highly preferred*, speed of service for take-out orders with a mean score of 3.36, *highly preferred*, and the availability of all menus with a mean score of 3.30, *highly preferred*. These findings highlight the importance of friendly and helpful staff, efficient order processing, and a diverse menu selection.

On the other hand, the least rated indicators were the absence of long customer queues with a mean score 3.08, *moderately preferred*, the speed of service for dine-in orders with a mean score of 3.26, *highly preferred*, and fast order processing with a mean score of 3.28, *highly preferred*. While these aspects were still highly preferred, they were less prioritized than other indicators. The findings imply that businesses should prioritize accommodating employees, quick order processing, and menu variety to meet customer expectations and enhance the food ordering experience. Addressing waiting times and improving service speed can further optimize customer satisfaction. This indicates that customers favor fast-food restaurant that have staff who are accommodating.

Regarding gender, most customers are female, it only signifies that females are fond of eating and ordering in the fast-food compared to men. Most of the respondents were single. This indicates that a humongous fast-food customers are single that generates a greater data in the sample. Majority of respondents are at college level, making that degree the most common in the sample. This indicates that most of the customers of the fast-food restaurant are college students, which means that they are mostly coming from their class and have leisure or vacant time to spare.

For the respondents' income distribution, there are lower-income individuals in the sample than higher-income individuals. This demonstrates that while a small fraction of respondents had incomes ranging from moderate to higher, the majority had relatively modest earnings. This indicates that most individuals who ordered foods had minimum income and mostly a wage minimum earner or dependent on the parents' allowances.

Frequency and percentage, and weighted means were used in analyzing the data.

## CONCLUSIONS

Customers are highly influenced with self-service or walk-in ordering with very accommodating employees during the visit off the customers by genuinely helping. The fast-food restaurant has the capacity to serve take-out and dine-in order as fast as possible, and the processing of orders were very fast with a complete menu availability. The Service Quality Model, Technology Acceptance Model, and The Psychology of Waiting Lines are all important factors in influencing customer self-service or walk-in ordering system.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cross train your staff regularly so they can cover a variety of respq and continue to provide great service speeds.
2. Use loyalty program to reward returning customers and keep traffic consistent during off-peak times.
3. Teaching your workers to upsell menu items could allow you profit from accommodating workers.
4. Reward the best performer with praise for those who maintain wait times well, to avoid burn-out.
5. Run a quick lunch campaign to ensure local workers are served on time.

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