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## Perceived Price and Services on Customer Satisfaction: A Perspective from Mixed-Income Consumers

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### Abstract

Customer satisfaction reflects how customers feel about the products and services provided. This can be a comparison between expectations and experiences from the goods or services they have already received from others. A satisfied customer means that expectations are met by the provided performance of goods and services. The main objective of this study is to identify the level of customer satisfaction with the perceived price and customer services at Kowloon House. Purposive sampling was used to identify 90 dined-in customers who answered checklist-type surveys. Customers strongly agreed on the indicators under perceived price, food, and service quality, with computed weighted means of 3.57, 3.61, and 3.59, respectively. Only the physical environment was rated Agree with 2.91 mean value. The ANOVA results revealed no significant difference in perceived price and customer services between and within groups ( $F(5, 24) = [0.827]$ ,  $p = 0.543$ ). Furthermore, perceived price and customer service were moderately correlated ( $r(4) = .64$ ,  $p = .17$ ). The computed p-values of .17 are greater than the set .05, at 95% level of confidence. The results cannot confidently assert that there is a real relationship between perceived price and customer service.

**Keywords:** *customer satisfaction, perceived price, customer services*

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### INTRODUCTION

A customer satisfaction reflects how customers feel about the products and services provided. This can be a comparison between expectations and experiences from the goods or services they have already received from others. A satisfied customer means that expectations are met by the provided performance of goods and services. This may encourage them to visit or order products. Therefore, understanding customer satisfaction is key to business success. Competition in the food industry is one way to survive is to win the customer by letting them feel satisfied and happy with the foods and services provided to them. As the owner of Kowloon House (a franchise) and the researcher, this study investigated the level of customer satisfaction in relations to price, food quality, service quality and physical environment of store in San Roque, Antipolo City since the mother company has no reported study on this matter despite decades of existence.

### METHODS

#### Design

This study used a descriptive design to describe the characteristics of the population. It collects data used to answer specific research questions pertaining to a particular population. The focus of this method is to describe the behavior and nature of the population (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). The advantage

of this design is that it can define population characteristics, measure trends in data, perform a comparison analysis, and validate the existing current condition (Edgar & Manz, 2017). This design uses observation (survey responses) to gather data, so the variables in the research are not influenced by the researcher. A purposive sampling technique was incorporated into the study because it is one of the most straightforward methods for gathering information from the entire population. This technique provides every member of the subset with an equal chance of being chosen as part of the sample process.

### **Participants**

This research focused on the assessment of customer satisfaction based on the price and customer services provided by the store with the business name Kowloon House, which is located in San Roque, Antipolo City. This branch with only dine-in will be chosen because the overall store appearance is one of the variables in the study.

Due to the current situation in which food establishments are partly open for dine-in, the implementation of social distancing, and the partial capacity of customers to dine, only ninety (90) respondents were selected by the researcher. The respondents in the study were mixed-age customers dining in a branch. The researcher asked the participants if they were interested and able to participate in the survey. This was performed to identify sincere respondents and guarantee the validity of the data.

### **Instruments**

The instrument used in the study was validated using a structured questionnaire in the form of 4-point Likert Scale. The questionnaire consists of two sections: the first is about the background information of the customer and the second is about their satisfaction as the outcomes of goods and services provided by selected franchises. The first section consisted of questions on place of residence, age, and monthly income. The second section includes criteria such as perceived price, customer services (food and service qualities), and the physical environment. These consisted of seven indicators (7) to ten (10) to better present the criteria.

### **Procedures**

Approval from the franchisee owner of the store in conducting the survey was secured. This was performed to avoid possible conflicts and inconveniences. After permission was granted, the survey questionnaires were prepared and submitted to experts for validation. After validation of the questionnaires, the schedule from the branch was secured for administering the survey. The survey was purposively distributed to dine-in customers of a store in San Roques, Antipolo City. The survey was administered during peak hours, from 11:00 am to 1:00 PM and from 4:00PM-6:00PM. The target number of respondents (90) was obtained on four Saturdays.

Responses were collected and tabulated. Data cleaning was performed to ensure a better interpretation of the results. Descriptive statistics were used to interpret and analyze the data. The final step was to relate the findings from existing literature and conduct presentations and recommendations of the results. Approval from the respondents was considered part of ethical practices.

## RESULTS

### Demographic Profile of Respondents in Terms of Age

The age brackets of the 90 respondents are listed in Table 1. Among ages, 30% of the respondents are 21-25 years old, 16% were below 20 years old and 26-30 years old. The groups that obtained the lowest number (8) were 31-35 years old and 36-40 years old. Twelve (12) out of 90 respondents aged 41 years and above.

**Table 1.** Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Above 41 years	12	13.33
36 – 40 years old	8	8.89
31 – 35 years old	8	8.89
26 – 30 years old	16	17.78
21 – 25 years old	30	33.33
below 20 years old	16	17.78
N	90	100.00

### Income

The distribution of respondents' income is illustrated in Table 2. Those with income below the Php 20,000 dominated the responses, by obtaining an approximately of 55%. There are 29 respondents that answered their income from the Php 20,000 up to Php 39,999. Moreover, 11 out of 90 respondents or an estimated of 12%) received salary from Php 40,000 and above.

**Table 2.** Frequencies of Income Brackets of Respondents

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Above Php 50,000	7	7.78
Php 45,000 to 49,999	1	1.11
Php 40,000 to 44,999	4	4.44
Php 35,000 to 39,999	1	1.11
Php 30,000 to 34,999	8	8.88
Php 25,000 to 29,999	8	8.88
Php 20,000 to 24,999	12	13.33
Php 15,000 to 19,999	20	22.22
Below Php 15,000	29	32.22

### Level of Customer Satisfaction in Terms of Perceived Price

The survey was administered to store customers while they were waiting for their order to serve. The first section of the survey identifies customers' opinions relative to the Perceived Price of the products being served by Kowloon House According to the survey (Table 3), among the 10-item indicators in the criteria, price is at best price relative to food quantity garnered the highest mean of 3.68. The price that met the food value was ranked second (3.67), while the price at the best price relative to food quality was the third highest (3.61). The Price is reasonable on the 4<sup>th</sup> rank with a mean value of 3.6. The price is cheaper than other similar food products that received the lowest rank, with a mean value of 3.41.

**Table 3. Perceived Price**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
The following are the indicator to measure Customers Satisfaction on San Roque Kowloon Branch in Antipolo City based on the:			
<b>1. Perceived Price</b>			
1.1. Affordable Price.	3.54	6	SA
1.2. Price is Cheaper than other similar food products.	3.41	10	SA
1.3. Price is at good value compare to alternative/competition.	3.57	5	SA
1.4. Price is commensurable.	3.56	7.5	SA
1.5. Price is an indication of buying the product.	3.56	7.5	SA
1.6. Price is an indication of rebuying/retention.	3.5	9	SA
1.7. The price is at best price relative to food quality.	3.61	3	SA
1.8. The price is at best price relative to food quantity.	3.68	1	SA
1.9. The price is reasonable.	3.6	4	SA
1.10. The price meets the food value.	3.67	2	SA
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.57</b>		<b>SA</b>

### Customer Services

Customers also consider the quality of food when repurchasing food and services. Table 4 illustrates the indicators based on food quality, as assessed by Kowloon House customers. There are four (4) indicators that tied in the top spot and here are the following: the food is clean, the food is served hot and fresh, the food is tasty and rich in flavor, and the food is well prepared. On a scale from 1 to 4 (4 is the highest score), they obtained a mean value of 3.68, which was categorized as strongly agree. The table also suggests that Kowloon House customers strongly agreed with all indicators of food quality. The ingredients that were ranked lowest were of standard quality.

**Table 4. Food Quality**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
The following are the indicator to measure Customers Satisfaction on Customer Service of Kowloon House San Roque Kowloon Branch in Antipolo City based on the:			
<b>2.1. Food Quality</b>			
2.1.1. The food is clean	3.68	2.5	SA
2.1.2. The food is served hot and fresh.	3.68	2.5	SA
2.1.3. The food is healthy and nutritious.	3.58	10	SA
2.1.4. The food preparation is appealing and palatable.	3.62	7.7	SA
2.1.5. The ingredients used are at standard quality.	3.6	9	SA
2.1.6. The food package is presentable and clean.	3.63	6	SA
2.1.7. The food is tasty and rich in flavor.	3.68	2.5	SA
2.1.8. The food quality is consistent.	3.67	5	SA
2.1.9. The food is well prepared.	3.68	2.5	SA
2.1.10. The menu has a good variety of choices.	3.62	7.5	SA
<b>Weighted Mean</b>		<b>3.61</b>	<b>SA</b>

Service quality is also important for customer satisfaction. The indicators of these criteria are not limited to the services provided by the staff but also include the availability of essential elements in serving food such as condiments, napkins, sanitized utensils, and store promotion. As shown in Table 5, among the indicators, the appearance of staff had the highest mean. The staff is clean and neat looking, and they wore appropriate dresses, including hair nets and gloves, to those in-charge in the kitchen. The service is prompt, quick, and on time, serving food fell on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> rank. In dealing with customers, the staff was kind in answering questions, courteous, and always on smile, and always provided correct orders with a garnered mean of 3.6 (strongly agree). Store promotion ranked the lowest among the indicators of service quality, with a mean value of 3.48.

**Table 5. Service Quality**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
The following are the indicator to measure Customers Satisfaction on Customer Service of Kowloon House San Roque Branch in Antipolo City based on the:			
<b>2.2. Service Quality</b>			
2.2.1. The service is prompt and quick.	3.64	2	SA
2.2.2. The staff is clean, neat, and dressed appropriately.	3.69	1	SA
2.2.3. The food is served on time,	3.62	3	SA
2.2.4. The staff is kind in answering questions	3.6	5	SA
2.2.5. The staff is courteous, always on smile.	3.6	5	SA
2.2.6. The utensils such as spoon, fork, glass, and tables are clean.	3.58	7	SA
2.2.7. The condiments and napkins are readily available.	3.52	9	SA
2.2.8. The staff is capable in entertaining customers on queue.	3.57	8	SA
2.2.9. Correct orders are always provided to the customer.	3.6	5	SA
2.2.10. Promotion of store	3.48	10	SA
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.59</b>		<b>SA</b>

In this period, the number of food establishments continued to increase, despite competition to attract and retain customers. One of the factors in customer service that mostly works with business owners is the physical environment. Table 6 shows the responses of the 90 Kowloon House customers. The indicators that received a strongly agreed interpretation of means in order of rankings were: the store is attractive in and out, the store is well decorated, the store uses nice background music, and the store provides relaxing ambiance and comfortable seats. The remaining indicators were graded as agree, in which the air conditioning and ventilation of the store had the lowest mean of 2.33. The weighted mean of physical environment was 2.93.

**Table 6.** Physical Environment

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
The following are the indicator to measure Customers Satisfaction of Kowloon House San Roque Branch in Antipolo City based on the:			
<b>2.3. Physical Environment</b>			
2.3.1. The store is attractive in and out.	3.22	1	SA
2.3.2 The decoration of store.	3.14	2	SA
2.3.3. Lightning condition of the store	2.91	7	A
2.3.4. Relaxing seats and ambiance of store	3.06	4	SA
2.3.5. Background music of the store.	3.07	3	SA
2.3.6. Location of store.	2.97	5	A
2.3.7. The store is clean and regularly sanitized	2.96	6	A
2.3.8. The amenities of the store	2.56	8	A
2.3.9. Air conditioning and ventilation of store	2.33	9	A
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.91</b>		<b>A</b>

The indicators of the two factors were strongly agreed upon by respondents (Table 7). The perceived price had a higher weighted mean of 3.57, while customer service had a 3.37 weighted mean. Among the customer service criteria, food quality had the highest weighted mean of 3.61. Moreover, only the physical environment received a score of 2.91 from the respondents which was interpreted as agree.

**Table 7.** Perceived Price and Customer Services for Customers Satisfaction

<b>Criteria for Customers Satisfaction</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
1. Perceived Price	3.57	Strongly Agree
2. Customer Services	3.37	Strongly Agree
2.1. Food Quality	3.61	Strongly Agree
2.2. Service Quality	3.59	Strongly Agree
2.3. Physical Environment	2.91	Agree

**Is there a significant difference between the customers satisfaction on perceived price and customer services when grouped according to profile?**

Table 8 and 9 illustrate the results of the computed ANOVA for the perceived price and customer services on the profile (age and income) of the respondents. As shown in Table 8, one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the effect of age on perceived price and customer services (food quality, service quality, and physical environment). The results revealed no statistically significant difference in perceived price and customer services between and within groups ( $F(5, 24) = [0.827], p = 0.543$ ).

**Table 8.** Analysis of Variance Between the Perceived Price and Customer Services and Age Respondents

<b>Source of Variation</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P-value</b>	<b>F crit</b>
Between Groups	3.0859	5	0.6171	0.827087	0.542917	2.620654
Within Groups	17.909	24	0.74622			
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.99527</b>	<b>29</b>				

The results in table 9 show that there was no statistically significant difference in the market factors (perceived price and customer services) of income between or within groups of respondents. For the

between- and within-groups, the computed degrees of freedom were 6 and 28, respectively. Moreover, the p-value was 0.547, which was greater than the indicated significance level of 0.05, and the calculated critical value was 0.844. ( $F(6, 28) = [0.844], p = 0.547$ ).

**Table 9.** Analysis of Variance Between Perceived Price and Customer Service on Income of Respondents

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	5.051497	6	0.841916	0.84441	0.54671	2.445259
Within Groups	27.91732	28	0.997047			
<b>Total</b>	<b>32.96882</b>	<b>34</b>				

**Is there a significant relationship between the two factors namely perceived price and customer service as assessed by customers of the stores?**

The relationship between the perceived price and customer service was computed using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Table 10 illustrates the results of the correlation between the two factors based on the assessment of respondents by age group ( $N = 6$ , groups). Based on the table, the perceived price and customer services were moderately correlated ( $r(4) = .64, p = .17$ ). The computed p-values of .17 are greater than the set .05, at 95% level of confidence.

**Table 10.** Pearson Correlation Coefficient

		Perceived Price	Customer Services
Perceived Price	Pearson R	1	0.64
	Sig. (two-tailed)		0.17
	N	6	6
Customer Services	Pearson R	0.64	1
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.17	
	N	6	6

**DISCUSSION**

Based in Table 1, more than 50% of the respondents were aged 30 years old and below. This signified that the majority of the customers who loved to eat outside are of a younger age or what it calls the millennials. Aside from this, it was noticeable that customers aged 41 years old and above comprised the 12% of the respondents, a bit higher than those who are aged 31 years old up to 40 years old. This suggests that regardless of age, as long as customers are satisfied with the price and services provided by Kowloon House, they will tend to rebuy and become loyal to the store.

Income below the Php A total of 25,000 respondents predominated the survey (see Table 2). The majority of this is income earners are age 30 years old and below. There were 61 out of 90 respondents with monthly salaries beyond the median monthly basic salary of the Php 13, 646 (Occupational Wages Survey, Philippine Statistics Authority 2020). This implies that most customers do not belong to a poor class family. They belong to the growing labor force who could spend out to eat. In addition, Table 3 implies that most of the customers who dined in the Kowloon House (KH) San Roque Branch in Antipolo City are those with income closer to or beyond the median income prescribed by Occupational Wages Survey (OWS) of PSA. It is notable that there are customers of Kowloon House who may consider living in the lower to upper middle class. This may indicate that customers were mixed-income earners. According to

the results of Raquel and Alonzo (2019) and Yusuf et al. (2017), high-income customers have a moderating effect on customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is an important aspect of every business. In this type of industry, it is crucial to identify what customers value the most and help allocate resources for continuous improvement based on customers' needs and wants (Matuszewska, 2021). A customer satisfaction reflects how customers feel about the products and services provided. This can be a comparison between expectations and experiences from the goods or services they have already received from others (Ali et al., 2019).

Price is an important factor that must be considered by business owners. The perceived price charged to customers may have a great effect on customer satisfaction. This is because the price of goods and services is set to attract more customers and influence purchases (Pandey et al., 2019). Price plays an important role as it always serves as the basis for customer satisfaction. The results in Table 3 suggest that customers strongly agreed with all indicators under perceived price. The one who obtained the highest score was the price at the best price relative to the food quantity. This implies that if some customers think first of quantity over price, they would consider buying Kowloon House products. Moreover, customers who are highly satisfied with the affordability of the price, value of food, and quality of food are relative to its price. Respondents believed that price was an indication of buying, rebuying, and retention. This is consistent with the findings of Yasri et al. (2020) and Hwang and Chung (2019).

Customer service is one of the factors considered in this study. This factor consists of food and service quality, and the physical environment. Similar to the result of perceived price, food quality obtained a weighted mean of 3.61 with a verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. This suggests that respondents who dined in and answered the survey were highly satisfied with the quality of food served by the store. Four (4) of the indicators of food quality obtained equivalent mean values of 3.68. The food is clean, tasty, rich in flavor, well prepared, and served hot and fresh. These indicators have also been reported by Carins et al. (2020). Abdullah et al. (2018) suggest that food quality can have a considerable effect on behavioral intentions and positively influence customer satisfaction.

Service quality is another variable in customer service (see Table 5). This refers to services provided by a store to its customers. The staff were neat and clean, and they also wore appropriate attire and obtained the highest rating. In addition, their prompt and quick service adds to customer satisfaction. The additional features provided by the store are the sanitized utensils, the availability of napkins and condiments, and the attitude of staff towards customers. The promotion of stores ranked lowest, but was still evaluated as strongly agree. The quality of the service provided to customers is an integral part of customer satisfaction. Thus, a high level of service quality is the ultimate commitment to a company's success. High levels of service quality may lead to high customer satisfaction; however, dissatisfaction will occur if services fail to meet customer expectations. This is associated with Masa (2021), who studied five aspects of customer service and behavioral intentions in themed restaurants in Manila.

The only criterion under customer services evaluated as Agree is Physical Environment. This indicates that customers were satisfied only with the physical attributes of the store. Customers were looking for improvements in air conditioning, attractive lighting, and store amenities. Currently, competitors focus more on the physical features of stores. Most customers first looked at the ambiances and amenities of stores. They tend to return to stores with good and relaxing ambiance and stay a bit longer to feel and relax.



Julilvan et al. (2017) stated that satisfied customers are those who experience quality of service, such as friendliness, care, diversity of menu, speed of service, and food consistency. In addition, customer satisfaction depends on communication between the staff, crew, and customer. The quality of the physical environment attracts customers and is an antecedent of customer satisfaction (Adam et al., 2018).

The results of the one-way ANOVA (Tables 8-9) revealed that there were no significant differences between the selected factors (perceived price and customer services) and profile (age and income) of the customers. The influence of demographic profiles was studied by Sivesan and Karunanithy (2022), Grazhdani (2021), and Zuratulraha et al. (2020). Among the demographic variables, age was a significant moderator of customer satisfaction. This is in contrast to the results of the present study.

The computed Pearson Correlation Coefficient of  $r(4) = .64$ ,  $p = .17$ , suggests that perceived price is moderately correlated with customer services. An increase in the rating of the perceived price linearly increased customer services. In addition, the measured p-value is beyond .05 at 95% level of confidence. This implies that there is no significant relationship between perceived price and customer services as the result factor that indicates customer satisfaction in the store. Based on the responses of customers categorized by age, they opted to pay more as long as they commensurate the quality of food and services. This also matched the results on customer satisfaction with perceived price and customer services as assessed by respondents grouped by monthly income and to the study of Kocoglu and Kalem (2020).

## **Conclusion**

Based on Equity Theory, satisfaction occurs when consumers perceive their output-input ratio as fair. The outcome input is fair if both parties exchange equitable feelings. Customers may feel equitably treated or not depending on different factors, such as price being paid, time spent, and effort received from services. This theory matches the results of this study. In terms of food quality, customers are willing to pay a price that is reasonable to the quality of the food being served by the store. Indicators such as food served presentable, hot, fresh, tasty, rich, and nutritious convinced them that the price commensurate with the food being served by the store. In addition, customers strongly agreed with all the service quality indicators. They found that the staff was prompt and quick to serve their orders. They were also satisfied with the attitude of the staff in dealing with customers.

The COVID-19 Pandemic and the health protocol on social distancing in eating on food establishments limits dine-in customers. This limits the number of respondents to 90 dine-in customers of Kowloon House San Roque, Antipolo. In line with this, two groups of respondents in terms of income were not incorporated into the discussion due to limited representation (Php 35,000-39,999 and Php 45,000-49,999). Initially, three Kowloon Houses with the dine-in option in Antipolo were considered in this study. Only stores owned by the researcher were considered in this study. The practices and standard procedures of the branches were not part of the study. The inclusion of these methodologies may have significant implications for the future expansion of franchisors.

The survey instrument used in the study was a checklist, and customers' qualitative responses were not solicited in the survey. Therefore, the opinions and suggestions of customers that are essential for store improvement cannot be included in the study. The study only focuses on the prescribed indicators in Tables 2-5, which are selected factors such as perceived price, food and service qualities, and the physical environment in the study. The indicators per criterion were not treated as independent variables; they were integral parts of the factors.

The results of this study will serve as a basis for the improvement of stores. Kowloon House Inc., particularly the owner of the store, must become innovative in promoting products to generate more sales. Promoters such as discounts, buy-1-take-1, and loyalty cards can be considered to attract more customers. Incorporating and studying different marketing strategies is essential to remain alive in the food industry.

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