

THE EFFECTS OF SELECTION ATTRIBUTES OF CAFÉ ON REVISIT INTENTION: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

Chin Jin Bui
Toh Pei Sung
Ang Hong Loong

Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy,
88400 Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinbalu, Malaysia.

*Corresponding author's email:
angkingsley@ums.edu.my

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine the effects of selection attributes of cafe on revisit intention in Malaysia. The cafe industry in Malaysia has undergone significant growth driven by factors such as urbanization, rising disposable incomes, and a growing appreciation for specialty coffee. As a result, there have been expansion and diversification, mirroring global trends in the food and beverage sector. In light of the expanding numbers of cafe and the growing desire for unique culinary experiences, customers have more choices whereby their intention to revisit the same cafe might be affected. Therefore, this paper attempts to explore the factors that influence on revisit intention among customers of cafe in Sabah, Malaysia. Some of the issues being highlighted in the literature previously associated with the cafe industry in Malaysia are related to unpleasant customer experience, pricing and value perception misalignment, lack of accessibility and convenience. Thus, this paper discusses the main problems faced by cafe in Sabah related to the factors that effect on revisit intention of customers.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, Malaysia's cafe industry has undergone a remarkable transformation, evolving from a modest landscape to a vibrant and thriving sector (Omar, Ahmad, Nor, Abidin, Sulaiman & Ahmad, 2022). Initially, the cafe scene in

Malaysia faced limitations and regulations, with restrictions on operating hours and alcohol sales (Lee, 2019). However, in recent years, the industry has experienced substantial growth and diversification, fuelled by changing consumer lifestyles and preferences whereby the cafe industry has witnessed a surge in popularity, driven by factors such as urbanization, rising disposable incomes, and a growing appreciation for specialty coffee (Krisnamoorthy & Balasubramanian, 2019). The growth of cafe is reflected in the market size, which has expanded significantly, with the cafe industry contributing substantially to Malaysia's economy where the spending on cafe experiences has seen a notable increase, indicating a shift in consumer behavior towards valuing experiences and social interactions (Md Daud, Jusoh, Sulaiman, Yeop Johari & Zainal Abidin, 2020). Moreover, the emergence of new trends such as third-wave coffee culture and the fusion of traditional Malaysian flavors with international cuisines has contributed to the industry's dynamism and appeal. With a burgeoning cafe culture and increasing demand for unique culinary experiences, Malaysia's cafe industry presents lucrative opportunities for entrepreneurs and investors alike (Yahya, Mazlan & Wan Kamarudin, 2022).

Malaysia's cafe industry has experienced remarkable growth, mirroring global trends in the food and beverage sector (Omar et al., 2022). However, this growth has not been without its challenges. Despite the increasing popularity of cafe culture driven by factors such as urbanization, rising disposable incomes, and a growing appreciation for specialty coffee (Krisnamoorthy & Balasubramanian, 2019), however, the industry faces a myriad of challenges in terms of unpleasant customer experience, pricing and value perception misalignment, lack of accessibility and convenience. Unpleasant customer experience due to inconsistent product standards such as food portion have negatively impacted the overall customer

experience (Michelle, Sushila & Rupam, 2018), especially, the bad service quality across all customer interactions and unable to maintain a clean and inviting ambiance which causes unpleasant customer experience, result in negative word-of-mouth, reduced customer satisfaction and revisit intention (Rajput & Gahfoor, 2020). Moreover, some cafes struggle to strike the right balance between pricing and perceived value, leading to discrepancies between customer expectations and the actual value delivered (Suhud, Allan, Wibowo, Sabrina & Willson, 2020). Finally, accessibility and convenience challenges, such as limited parking facilities and inconvenient operating hours, further impede customer satisfaction and revisit intention, while the absence of accessibility features excludes individuals with disabilities from enjoying cafe offerings fully (Widyawati & Berlianto, 2019).

Therefore, owners and entrepreneurs in Sabah, Malaysia should pay more attention to the demand and needs of the customers and devise focused strategies to attain enhanced progress, and augment revisit intention of customers. Attempts are made to address the following question in this study: What are the factors that affect revisit intention of customers to cafes in Sabah? Therefore, this paper aims to identify the factors influencing revisit intention of customers to cafes in Sabah. This study has used Theory of Reasoned Action to address these questions in the following way, this paper was divided into four parts. The introductory section outlines and briefly discusses Theory of Reasoned Action. The next section explored the variables under study including revisit intention, product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment and place. The third section introduces the conceptual framework and concludes with a summary of the paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action places significant emphasis on analysis due to the critical role that preexisting attitudes play in the process of decision making (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). This theory is applied in order to know the preexisting attitudes of customers on the revisit intention towards the cafe. Theory of Reasoned Action has the core theory whereby customers act based on their intention to create a particular outcome (Hagger, 2019). Based on the concept of this theory, revisit intention towards the cafe by the customers can be predicted as the perception that has contributed to the results. In this theory of analysis, customers are rational actors who choose to act based on their best interests (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). This statement demonstrates that customer behavior was calculated, as logical customers will return to the cafe if the marketing mix was executed effectively, and conversely, if the marketing mix was executed poorly. Follow the concept of the theory, the specificity was important in decision making process whereby from the time the customer decides to act until the time of action was completed, the customers still have the power to change their mind and make another action (Hale, Householder & Greene, 2002). Therefore, Theory of Reasoned Action was applied as the action of the customers was followed by their intention and it could lead to different decision action.

Revisit Intention

Revisit intention refers to the likelihood or inclination of a customer to return to a particular establishment or venue for future visits or patronage (Rajput & Gahfoor, 2020). Revisit intention was a measure of the customer's intention or willingness to engage in repeat business based on their previous experiences and satisfaction with the product, service, or overall experience provided by the establishment (Bae, Slevitch & Tomas, 2018).

Product Quality

Product quality refers to the degree to which the inherent characteristics of food meet the requirements, including the appearance, quality, specification, quantity, attractive, packaging, safety and health of food (Kuan, 2017).

Product quality encompasses various aspects such as durability, reliability, performance, safety, and aesthetics (Bae et al., 2018). High product quality implies that the product consistently meets or exceeds customer requirements and performs as intended, resulting in customer satisfaction and loyalty. Conversely, poor product quality may lead to dissatisfaction, negative perceptions, and ultimately, loss of customers (Michelle et al., 2018). Effective quality management processes, including quality control and assurance measures, are essential for ensuring and maintaining product quality throughout its lifecycle, from design and manufacturing to distribution and use (Petzer & Mackay, 2014). The appearance of food definitely affect the choice of customers on their purchase behaviour (Zuratulraha, Hairunnisa, Massyittah & Gopinath, 2016).

Service Quality

Service quality is the degree to which a service fulfills or beyond customer expectations and needs which includes several aspects including responsiveness, reliability, certainty, empathy, and tangibles (Cibro & Hudrasyah, 2017).

Quality of service is the magic weapon for businesses to win in the competition, no matter in the tangible products or in the service industry (Michelle et al., 2018). The evaluation of service quality by the customers was not only considered as the result of service, but also involve the process of service whereby the better the service provided by the business, the more satisfied the customers (Suhud et al., 2020). High service quality means the

service provider regularly offers dependable, prompt, and compassionate service that meets or beyond customers expectations, resulting in customer satisfaction and revisit intention while poor service quality can lead to customers discontent, negative word-of-mouth, and lack of intention to revisit in future (Kuan, 2017).

Price

Price refers to the amount of money that a customer must pay to acquire a product or service. Price has a significance effect on the buying behaviour of customers especially when the customers compare the price with other brands (Widyawati and Berlianto, 2019).

Price is one of the most important aspects that affect the choice of customers towards products and services. Part of the consumers would even link the price of the products with the quality of the products whereby the higher the price, the better the quality (Kuan, 2017). Price reflects the perceived value of the product or service, considering factors such as production costs, competition, demand, and perceived benefits. Setting the right price is essential for businesses to achieve their revenue and profitability goals while remaining competitive in the market (Widyawati & Berlianto, 2019). One of the most frequently used strategy by the entrepreneurs is price adjustment strategies as price can directly influence the selection and satisfaction of the consumers and even their intention to revisit (Suhud et al., 2020).

Promotion

Promotion is a type of communication by marketers to consumers by informs, persuades, and reminds to influence the action taken by the consumers which promotion generally include advertising, public relations, personal sales and sales promotions (Satit, Tat, Rasli, Chin & Sukati, 2012).

Promotion is a communication activity that have a rich content in various forms of advertising, takes advantage of various opportunities to carry out corporate publicity, the follow-up service taken by the salesperson, the face-to-face promotion of products by the salesperson and all public relations activities (Bae et al., 2018). Promotion delivers good information to the target market, so as to achieve a series of activities that arouse desire of consumers to purchase products and services (Cibro & Hudrasyah, 2017). Customers will understand and trust the products and services through promotion method which enables to establish a positive image and collect the feedback and suggestions of consumers (Michelle et al., 2018).

Physical Environment

Physical environment refers to the tangible aspects of the surroundings which includes elements such as the layout, design, decor, ambiance, cleanliness, and comfort of physical spaces like retail stores, offices, restaurants, hotels, and other service establishments (Widyawati & Berlianto, 2019).

Dining environment has already become an antique class veteran for the diners, and no one wants to let business fails because of the bad dining environment. The setting of restaurant environment should take into account the target group of their business whereby every restaurant owner is familiar with the synonym of fast food is young people; high-end theme hotels are mostly for business people; health care is generally for the elderly and families (Zuratulraha et al., 2016). The internal environment of the restaurant also affects the operation of the restaurant because most of the customers are willing to have a warm and comfortable dining environment such as the cleanliness of the environment, the uniforms of service personnel are iconic and influential (Bae et al., 2018).

Place

Place is a location where businesses is been proceed and it is also known as a location that used to attract and target customers. Place is also referring as a way to deliver products and services to customers which also called as distribution whereby it is used to ensure to delivery of products or services in the right time and right place (Satit et al., 2012).

The concept of place encompasses both physical and virtual channels through which products or services are distributed, including retail stores, online platforms, wholesalers, distributors, and direct sales channels (Bae et al., 2018). A great location is needed to be convenience, helps for increase the crowd and attraction of customers, such as easy to be find and a lot of parking space (Kuan, 2017). Convenient locations is very important in cafe industry due to the reason consumers would like to have location of cafes that are closer with the place they stay (Cibro and Hudrasyah, 2017). The convenient location of cafe enables to increase the performance of the business and able to attract the customers to dine in more frequently (Widyawati & Berlianto, 2019).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1 shows a conceptual framework based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, offering a solid theoretical basis for comprehending customer revisit intention. Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment, and place are significant factors in affecting customer revisit intention. By integrating the Theory of Reasoned Action with these variables, a robust framework can be established to investigate the factors influencing customer revisit intention and thoroughly analyze the determinants of revisit intention.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the framework enables entrepreneurs and business owners in the cafe industry to gain a deeper comprehension of the intention of customers to revisit, so serving as an efficient instrument for the development of focused measures and strategic preparations. The Theory of Reasoned Action is a psychological theory that is extensively used to anticipate human behavior. This theory has a wide variety of applications for describing people’s attitudes and behaviors, especially when it comes to predicting human behavior. The findings of this research have provided useful insights, which have therefore contributed to the satisfaction of customers and their intention to return. This integrated strategy helps to have positive word-of-mouth, boost profitability and business performance, in addition to increasing business performance which is crucial to the long-term success of operating cafes in Sabah, Malaysia.

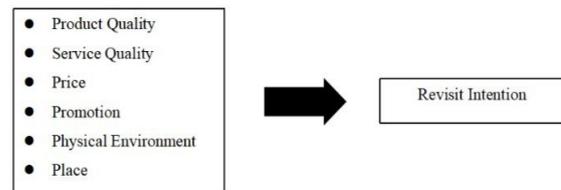


Figure 1. A conceptual framework

Table 1 displayed the sources and measurement items that were being considered. The measuring items used in this investigation were taken from those used in other studies (Amofah, Gyamfi, and Tutu, 2016; Andreti, Zhafira, Akmal, and Kumar, 2013; Jang and Namkung, 2009; Namkung and Jang, 2007; Voon, 2012). From 1, which indicates “strongly disagree,” to 5, which indicates “strongly agree,” a Likert scale with five points was utilized for all of the variables. The aspects that need to be taken into consideration include the revisit intention, product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment and place. It is believed that these measures will react to the aims of the study, which are to investigate the effects of selection attributes of cafe on revisit intention in Sabah, Malaysia.

Table 1 Measurement items and source

No.	Measurement Item	Source
RI1 RI2 RI3	Revisit Intention: I would like to come back to the cafe in the future. I would recommend the cafe to my friends or others. I would say positive things about the cafe to others.	Namkung and Jang (2007)
PQ1 PQ2 PQ3 PQ4	Product Quality: Meal presentation is visually attractive. The cafe serves a delicious meal. The cafe offers a variety of menu items. Meal is served at the appropriate temperature.	Jang and Namkung (2009); Namkung and Jang (2007)
SQ1 SQ2 SQ3 SQ4 SQ5 SQ6 SQ7	Service Quality: Service staffs of the cafe can immediately respond to my needs and questions. Service staffs can immediately provide the service I need. The cafe responds to customers' special or extra needs. Service staffs can make efforts to assist with customers' problems. Service staffs provide the amounts on bills that are accurate. Service staffs of the cafe deliver orders to customer accurately. Service provided by the cafe can be accomplished punctually.	Andreti et al. (2013)
P1 P2 P3	Price: The cafe offers value for money in terms of quality. The cafe offers value for money in terms of quantity. The cafe offers discount.	Amofah et al. (2016)
PN1 PN2 PN3 PN4 PN5 PN6	Promotion: The cafe provides coupon to be changed with merchandise. The cafe provides seasonal promotion. For instance, Christmas, New Year, Hari Raya and etc. The cafe provides privileged card for members. The cafe provides sales promotion. The cafe provides promotional material. The cafe provides attractive promotions.	Andreti et al. (2013)
PE1 PE2 PE3 PE4 PE5 PE6 PE7	Physical Environment: The Cafe has appealing physical facilities. For instance, paintings, ceiling, wall decoration, furniture and flowers. The cafe has clean dining area. The cafe has appropriate temperature. The cafe has a nice music. The cafe has appropriate colour scheme. The cafe has a nice smell (scent). The cafe has a good design and layout.	Voon (2012)
PL1 PL2 PL3 PL4	Place: The cafe location is easily accessible. The cafe is easy to find. The cafe has a strategic location. The cafe has many branches within my residence area.	Andreti et al. (2013)

CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to examine the effects of selection attributes of cafe on revisit intention in Sabah. Factors that affect customer revisit intention include product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment and place. By investigating these variables in relation to the revisit intention of customers, this study makes a contribution to the current body of research about the topic. From a theoretical standpoint, the value of this study lies in the fact that it investigates the factors that effect on revisit intention of customers on cafe in Sabah. Through variables such as product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment and place, this study extends the understanding of the factors underlying customer revisit intention.

Through the utilization on Theory of Reasoned Action as a framework, this study provides a theoretical framework for examining the relationship between these variables and customer revisit intention. Moreover, this study highlights the importance of preexisting attitudes which will directly affect the decision-making action of an individual in the context of behaviour intention on selection of cafe. The findings provide contribution to the larger body of research on the cafe industry in Malaysia by shedding light on the relationship between product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment and place with customer revisit intention of cafe in Sabah, Malaysia.

The theoretical implications of this study provide specific insights for the cafe and Sabah Tea and Coffee industry. These insights help shop owners and entrepreneurs better understand the needs of customers and their revisit intention, thereby increasing customer revisit intention, positive word-of-mouth, increase profitability and business performance. The conceptual framework shown in this study contribute to validate the apply of Theory of Reasoned Action to

the behaviour action of customer. This helps to confirm whether this classic psychological theory is accurate in particular condition and industry contexts. By recognizing the importance of product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment and place, it helps the owners and entrepreneurs to understand the important attributes that influence the customer to revisit a cafe.

This study contributed informative outcomes to the owners and entrepreneurs of cafe shops and help them to develop marketing strategies that help to retain different kind of customers and make improvement based on the expectation of customers in terms of product quality, service quality, price, promotion, physical environment and place. Besides, this study provided important theoretical and practical references for effects of selection attributes of cafe, which helped to improve customer revisit intention and directly increase profitability and achieve better business performance.

This study primarily examined conceptual issues and did not offer empirical evidence to support the use of Theory of Reasoned Action, product quality, service quality, pricing, promotion, physical environment, and place on consumer revisit intention. Additional study is required to confirm the relationship between these selection attributes and customer revisit intention. However, the results of this study have significant outcomes for cafe owners and entrepreneurs in Sabah, as well as offer valuable insights for future research. Future research should explore the interactions among many elements and variables to understand their impact on customers' revisit intention in coffee shops in Sabah. Utilizing quantitative approaches will provide a detailed analysis of the correlation between selection attributes and revisit intention, resulting in a more thorough comprehension of customer retention strategies and enhancement of business performance.

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