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Determinants of Customer Loyalty in Casual Dining Restaurants

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ABSTRACT

In today's highly competitive food service industry, casual dining restaurants face the constant challenge of not only attracting customers but also retaining them. Customer loyalty has become a crucial success factor, especially as consumer expectations evolve and choices expand. Unlike fast food or fine dining establishments, casual dining restaurants must strike a balance between quality, affordability, and service consistency. Understanding what drives customer loyalty in this segment is essential for restaurant operators aiming to sustain long-term business growth. This study seeks to explore the primary determinants influencing customer loyalty in casual dining settings by examining factors such as service quality, food quality, ambiance, price fairness, and perceived value.

This study explores the key determinants of customer loyalty in casual dining restaurants, focusing on factors such as service quality, food quality, ambiance, price fairness, customer satisfaction, and perceived value. Using a quantitative approach, survey data were collected from patrons of selected casual dining establishments and analyzed to determine the relationship between these factors and customer loyalty. Results show that service and food quality are strong predictors of loyalty, with customer satisfaction and perceived value acting as mediators. The findings offer practical insights for restaurant managers to enhance service delivery and foster customer retention.

Keywords: Customer loyalty, casual dining, service quality, food quality, customer satisfaction, perceived value

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

In a rapidly evolving and highly competitive food service industry, fostering customer loyalty has become an essential goal for casual dining restaurants. While customers are offered countless options, retaining them relies on more than just quality meals; it requires consistent, high-quality service, pleasant ambiance, value for money, and a sense of connection to the brand. Understanding the determinants of customer loyalty allows restaurant managers and hospitality professionals to design strategies that ensure repeat visits and long-term relationships. This study is timely and relevant as it sheds light on the various service and experiential factors that influence loyalty, providing insights that are not only academically valuable but also highly applicable in real-world restaurant operations.

Casual dining restaurants occupy a vital segment in the hospitality industry, positioned between fast food and fine dining. These establishments are characterized by moderate pricing, relaxed ambiance, and full-service offerings. However, with increasing customer expectations and growing competition, the challenge lies in ensuring repeat patronage. Customer loyalty is a crucial component of long-term success and sustainability in this sector. This study seeks to assess the factors influencing customers' patronage in casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City, Philippines. These factors collectively influence customer behavior to help hospitality professionals improve customer experiences and foster long-term business success in the casual dining sector."

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The researcher, a hospitality management educator with academic training and professional experience in the field, brings valuable insight into the study. As a teacher of hospitality and tourism management, the researcher has an in-depth understanding of customer service dynamics, restaurant operations, and consumer behavior. This background enhances the researcher's ability to critically analyze the factors influencing customer loyalty. Moreover, having actively engaged with hospitality students and industry practitioners, the researcher is well-equipped to bridge theoretical concepts with practical applications, ensuring that the findings of this study are both academically grounded and industry-relevant. The researcher's academic role further supports a commitment to evidence-based inquiry and the development of best practices in hospitality management.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study is primarily grounded in the Trust-Based Relationship Theory by R.M. Morgan & S.D. Hunt (1994), and supported by the Relationship Marketing Theory by Leonard L. Berry (1983) and the Social Exchange Theory by George C. Homans (1958).

The Trust-Based Relationship Theory by Morgan & Hunt (1994) posits that trust and commitment are the two most critical foundations for fostering successful and enduring relationships between businesses and their customers. According to the theory, when both trust and commitment are present, parties are more likely to cooperate, share valuable information, and maintain long-term relationships. Trust is defined as the confidence a party has in the reliability and integrity of the other party, while commitment refers to a belief in the relationship's importance and a willingness to make sustained efforts to maintain it.

In service industries, such as hospitality, travel, and casual dining, this theory is especially relevant. Customers often judge service not just by tangible outcomes but by their emotional connection, perceived sincerity, and overall experience. A trust-based relationship ensures that customers feel secure in their interactions and confident that their needs will be understood and met. When trust is established, it reduces uncertainty and risk, leading to greater customer satisfaction and loyalty.

This theory supports the idea that businesses must go beyond transactional encounters to build relational capital with their clientele. By prioritizing trust and commitment, service providers like travel agencies or casual dining restaurants can develop stronger customer bonds, which in turn lead to repeat patronage, positive word-of-mouth, and competitive advantage. Thus, the theory provides a solid framework for analyzing customer loyalty as influenced by relational dynamics rather than one-time service performance alone.

The Relationship Marketing Theory by Berry (1983) emphasized the importance of building long-term relationships with customers rather than focusing solely on individual transactions. This theory proposes that businesses should foster ongoing engagement with customers by delivering consistent value, trust, and satisfaction, which leads to loyalty and repeat business.

The core idea is that successful marketing goes beyond attracting new customers; it involves nurturing and maintaining existing relationships through personalized communication, understanding customer needs, and providing reliable service. Relationship marketing focuses on creating emotional connections, increasing customer retention, and encouraging positive word-of-mouth.

In service industries such as hospitality and travel, this approach is critical because the intangible nature of services makes trust and personal connection vital. By cultivating strong customer relationships, companies can reduce marketing costs, increase customer lifetime value, and build a sustainable competitive advantage.

The Social Exchange Theory by Homans (1958) explains social behavior as a process of negotiated exchanges between individuals or groups. The theory suggests that people engage in interactions based on the expected benefits and costs, seeking to maximize rewards while minimizing costs. Relationships are maintained when the perceived benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

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This theory helps explain how customers decide whether to continue engaging with a service provider. Customers evaluate the value of the exchange, such as quality of service, responsiveness, and fairness, against what they invest, like time, money, and effort. When customers feel they receive fair value and positive outcomes, they are more likely to stay loyal and maintain the relationship.

This theory also highlights the importance of trust, reciprocity, and satisfaction in sustaining long-term relationships. Businesses that consistently offer valuable exchanges foster positive customer perceptions, encouraging repeat patronage and positive referrals.

The theories emphasize the crucial role of trust in cultivating long-term customer loyalty. In casual dining restaurants, when customers trust that the establishment consistently delivers quality food and service, they are more likely to return and recommend the restaurant to others, thereby strengthening loyalty. This also highlights the importance of building and maintaining ongoing relationships with customers through personalized experiences and continuous engagement. Restaurants that focus on relationship-building efforts tend to foster deeper customer loyalty as patrons feel valued beyond just the dining experience. Lastly, customer loyalty results from the perceived balance between the benefits received (such as good food, pleasant ambiance, and attentive service) and the costs incurred (such as price and time). When customers perceive that the rewards outweigh the costs, their satisfaction and loyalty increase. Moreover, the theories provide a comprehensive framework to understand how trust, relationship management, and value perception influence customer loyalty in casual dining settings, which directly informs the focus of this study.

The variety of options offered in casual dining restaurants greatly influences customers' choice of where to dine and whether they return. When restaurants provide a wide selection of dishes that cater to different tastes, lifestyles, and dietary preferences, customers feel that their individual needs are being considered. This sense of choice enhances satisfaction and makes dining more enjoyable, as guests can explore new options without needing to visit another restaurant. Menu variety also creates a feeling of freshness and innovation, signaling that the establishment is responsive to changing food trends and customer expectations. As a result, customers tend to perceive greater value in restaurants that offer diverse and flexible menu options, which strengthens their intention to patronize and revisit the establishment (Kim, W. G., & Jin B., 2009).

Accessibility plays an important role in influencing customers' decisions to patronize casual dining restaurants. When a restaurant is easy to reach, whether through a convenient location, available parking, or access to public transportation, customers are more likely to choose it and return in the future. Convenient access reduces the time and effort required to dine out, making the overall experience more pleasant and stress-free. Beyond physical location, accessibility also includes how easily customers can make reservations or place orders through different channels, such as online platforms or takeout services. Restaurants that offer flexible and convenient access options are seen as more accommodating to customers' busy lifestyles, which helps build satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth (Liu & Jang, 2009).

Price is a crucial factor that influences customer patronage in casual dining restaurants, as it strongly shapes customers' perceptions of value and satisfaction. Many diners carefully consider whether the quality of food and service they receive is worth the price they pay, especially in highly competitive dining environments. While some customers are willing to spend more for a better experience, most casual diners look for reasonable prices that align with their expectations of comfort, taste, and service quality. When prices are perceived as fair and affordable, customers are more likely to feel satisfied and return. On the other hand, prices that are too high may discourage budget-conscious customers, while prices that are too low can raise concerns about quality. Maintaining a balanced and fair pricing strategy is therefore essential in attracting customers and encouraging repeat patronage in casual dining restaurants (Ryu & Jang, 2007).

Facilities and amenities are key factors that influence customer patronage in casual dining restaurants, as they greatly affect the overall comfort and dining experience. A well-maintained, clean, and thoughtfully designed environment makes customers feel valued and enhances their perception of service quality. Features such as comfortable seating, pleasant lighting, clean restrooms, Wi-Fi access, and convenient parking not only make

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dining more enjoyable but also encourage guests to stay longer and return more often. Restaurants that go a step further by offering family-friendly areas or entertainment options can attract a broader range of customers and create memorable experiences. In this way, the quality and availability of facilities and amenities can set a restaurant apart from competitors and foster customer loyalty (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996).

Value for money is a key factor that influences customer patronage in casual dining restaurants, as it reflects how customers perceive the balance between the quality of food and service and the price they pay. When diners feel that they are getting good value, they are more likely to return and recommend the restaurant to others. This perception is not just about paying less; it also includes portion size, taste, service efficiency, and the overall dining experience. Customers often compare options and choose restaurants where they feel their money is well spent. By offering quality meals and service at fair prices, casual dining restaurants can increase customer satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth (Zeithaml, 1988).

Marketing plays an important role in attracting and keeping customers in casual dining restaurants by communicating what makes the restaurant unique, its promotions, and overall brand identity. Effective marketing, through advertising, social media, loyalty programs, or special offers, helps raise awareness and influence customers' dining decisions. When done well, marketing not only brings in new patrons but also strengthens loyalty by creating emotional connections and enhancing the perceived value of the dining experience. In a competitive casual dining market, strategies that target the right audience and highlight quality, ambiance, and fair pricing can have a significant impact on customer choices (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Ambiance plays a crucial role in shaping customers' dining experiences and influencing their choice of casual dining restaurants. Elements such as lighting, music, cleanliness, décor, layout, and the overall atmosphere all contribute to how diners feel while in the restaurant. A welcoming and comfortable environment not only makes the dining experience more enjoyable but also encourages customers to return. By creating a space that appeals to both the senses and emotions, restaurants can enhance perceived value and foster customer loyalty, giving them a competitive edge in attracting and retaining patrons (Ryu & Jang, 2008).

Service quality is a major factor that shapes customer satisfaction and loyalty in casual dining restaurants. It encompasses how well staff deliver service consistently, including responsiveness, reliability, friendliness, and the overall presentation of the restaurant. When service not only meets but exceeds expectations, diners are more likely to have a positive experience and return. Providing attentive, courteous, and dependable service helps build trust and emotional connection with customers, encouraging repeat visits and recommendations. In a competitive casual dining market, restaurants that prioritize high-quality service gain a clear advantage, as it strongly influences customers' decisions and fosters long-term loyalty (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

This highlights that various factors, including ambiance, accessibility, price, value for money, marketing strategies, service quality, facilities, and variety of offerings, play a crucial role in influencing customer patronage in casual dining restaurants. These elements collectively shape customers' overall dining experience and perceptions, which directly affect their satisfaction and likelihood of returning. Understanding and effectively managing these factors are essential for restaurant operators aiming to attract, satisfy, and retain customers in an increasingly competitive and experience-driven food service industry.

Repatacodo (2024) emphasizes the in-depth analysis of the various factors influencing customer patronage in casual dining settings in the Philippines. Conducted through a quantitative correlational design, the study employed a descriptive method and used a structured questionnaire distributed to 395 respondents. These respondents were customers of Department of Tourism (DOT)-accredited casual dining restaurants in the Rinconada area. The study primarily focused on assessing customer satisfaction in terms of restaurant atmosphere, product quality, pricing, and customer loyalty, while also evaluating service quality using the SERVQUAL dimensions, empathy, responsiveness, reliability, tangibility, and assurance.

The study revealed that customers reported high levels of satisfaction across all the key service and product dimensions. Service quality, in particular, was rated highly, with respondents indicating positive experiences in all five SERVQUAL categories. Statistical analyses showed significant differences in customer assessments

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when grouped by demographic variables, suggesting that factors such as age, gender, or income might affect perceptions of service and satisfaction. Moreover, the study found a strong positive relationship between service quality and overall customer satisfaction, reinforcing the idea that excellent service delivery is a critical driver of customer loyalty and repeat patronage in the casual dining industry.

The insights of this study aimed at helping restaurant owners and managers continuously improve service delivery. This includes regular staff training, consistent product quality checks, and strategic pricing models tailored to customer expectations. Ultimately, the study highlights the need for casual dining restaurants to pay close attention to both tangible and intangible service elements, as these greatly influence customer experiences and long-term business success.

Valdez et al. (2020) provide valuable insights into the factors affecting customer patronage in casual dining establishments in Batangas Province, Philippines. The study highlights that attribute such as service quality, food quality, and the physical environment have a significant influence on customers' dining experiences. In contrast, factors like innovation and convenience were found to have a lesser impact. The study also notes that younger customers, particularly those aged 18 to 30, place higher importance on service and food attributes when choosing where to dine. These findings underscore the importance of enhancing key restaurant attributes to improve customer satisfaction and encourage repeat patronage.

Adriatico et al. (2022) identified that service quality, food quality, and the physical design of the restaurant are strong determinants of customer satisfaction in fast-casual dining settings. The study emphasizes that these attributes are crucial for enhancing the dining experience and fostering customer loyalty.

Delos Santos (2023) explored customer patronage of Korean restaurants in Los Baños, Laguna, and found that food quality, service quality, environment, price, word of mouth, and cultural influence all positively correlate with customer patronage. This study emphasizes the multifaceted nature of customer decision-making in dining choices and the importance of addressing various factors to attract and retain customers.

Balladares et al. (2024) revealed that variety and food quality are prioritized by customers when choosing fast-food establishments. While nutrition also plays a role, its impact was found to be statistically insignificant, indicating that other factors may have a more substantial influence on customer preferences in this context.

Sarmiento et al. (2022) focused on evaluating food safety and sanitation practices in casual dining restaurants in the National Capital Region. It assessed service quality dimensions such as food quality, physical environment, and service delivery, based on the SERVQUAL & Dinescape models, and examined food safety and sanitation aspects grounded on the principles of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and the Philippine Food Safety Act of 2013. The study found that customers generally agreed that these restaurants met their expectations in service quality and food safety, contributing positively to the establishments' brand equity. However, certain areas requiring consistent attention were identified, leading to the proposal of an enhanced customer-based brand equity framework to guide casual dining restaurants in improving their operations and strengthening their brand.

The studies imply the critical role of food safety practices and service quality in influencing customer satisfaction and brand equity in casual dining restaurants. By adhering to established standards and continuously improving in identified areas, restaurants can enhance their customers' dining experiences, fostering loyalty and positive word-of-mouth, which are essential for sustained success in the competitive food service industry.

Verma et al. (2018) explored the key factors influencing young consumers' decisions to dine out at casual restaurants in India. The study employed factor analysis to identify the major motivators behind restaurant patronage among this demographic. The study revealed nine critical factors, including food quality, service quality, ambiance, price, and convenience, which significantly impacted customer choices. The study also emphasized that young consumers are highly perceptive of value, service experience, and the overall dining environment. This study concluded that casual dining restaurants must align their offerings with these customer expectations to remain competitive and retain loyalty. The study offers practical insights for restaurant managers

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aiming to attract the growing segment of young, urban diners by focusing on delivering a balanced combination of quality food, efficient service, and a pleasant dining atmosphere.

Kim et al. (2009) examined the influence of social networking service (SNS) characteristics on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the context of the restaurant industry. The study focused on how elements such as reliability, playfulness, convenience, and customization of a restaurant's social media presence affect user satisfaction and their subsequent actions, particularly their intention to visit the restaurant and share positive word-of-mouth.

The study revealed that all four SNS attributes significantly contribute to enhancing customer satisfaction, which in turn has a strong positive effect on customers' willingness to visit and recommend the restaurant. This theory concluded that in an increasingly digital and socially connected market, restaurants must prioritize effective and engaging SNS strategies to build relationships with potential customers and influence their dining choices. The study underscores the critical role of digital marketing in driving patronage in casual dining settings, especially among tech-savvy consumers.

Liut al. (2024) highlighted how service quality influences consumer revisit behavior in chain restaurants during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study involved two studies: the first focused on a Taiwanese restaurant chain, while the second examined a Chinese hotpot chain.

The study revealed that service quality positively affected revisit intentions through brand equity and safety management systems in the Taiwanese context, and through gratification and reputation in the Chinese context. Additionally, the study highlighted the moderating roles of perceived safety and perceived value in shaping revisit intentions. The authors concluded that adapting to local market conditions while prioritizing safety and customer satisfaction is crucial for post-pandemic business recovery in the restaurant industry.

This consistently highlights that factors such as food quality, service quality, ambiance, pricing, and even digital engagement significantly influence customer patronage in casual dining restaurants. Across both local and international contexts, these elements play a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction, loyalty, and revisit intentions.

As customer expectations evolve, especially in response to digital trends and post-pandemic safety concerns, restaurants must adapt by enhancing both physical and service-related aspects of the dining experience to maintain competitiveness and ensure sustained customer patronage.

The Problem

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the factors influencing the patronage of the customers in casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City, Philippines. The findings of this study served as the basis for a proposed action plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.1 age;

1.2 gender;

1.3 civil status,

1.4 educational attainment; and

1.5 occupation?

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What is the level of influence of the factors that contribute to the patronage of the customers in casual dining in terms of:

2.1 variety of options;

2.2 accessibility;

2.3 price;

2.4 facilities and amenities;

2.5 value for money;

2.6 marketing;

2.7 ambiance; and

2.8 service?

3. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the level of influence of the factors that contribute to the patronage of the customers in casual dining?

4. Based on the findings of the study, what action plan may be proposed?

Statement of the Null Hypothesis

At a 0.05 level of significance, the following null hypotheses will be tested:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the level of influence of the factors that contribute to the patronage of the customers in casual dining.

Significance of the Study

The study supports the following persons or individuals and entities to improve service quality, enhance customer satisfaction, and foster loyalty in an increasingly competitive dining industry.

Restaurant Owners and Managers. This will help them identify key areas such as food quality, service, ambiance, and pricing that influence customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Employees. This will help them understand the results of the study by gaining a clearer understanding of the key factors that influence customer satisfaction and patronage in casual dining restaurants.

Customers. This will help them encourage restaurants to improve service quality and safety, ultimately enhancing the overall dining experience.

Marketing Professionals. This will guide them on the development of targeted marketing strategies based on customer preferences and behavior.

Policy Makers and Tourism Agencies. This will help them on how to support the development of quality standards and tourism-related initiatives involving food establishments.

Researchers. This will help them contribute to the body of knowledge on consumer behavior in the food service industry.

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Future researchers. This will help them build additional factors that may influence customer patronage in casual dining restaurants, such as the impact of technology integration, cultural differences, or changing consumer behavior post-pandemic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers the research design, research environment, research respondents, research instruments, research procedures, data gathering, and statistical treatment of data that will be used in the study.

Research Design

This study utilizes a quantitative research design to examine the factors influencing customer patronage in casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City. Data will be collected through structured questionnaires distributed to a sample of customers who have recently dined in selected casual dining establishments within the city. The questionnaire will assess various factors such as variety of options, accessibility, facilities and amenities, value for money, marketing, ambiance, and services. The collected data will be analyzed using statistical tools such as descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis to determine the significance and strength of the relationships between these factors and customer patronage. This design allows for objective measurement of customer preferences and helps identify the key drivers that affect their dining choices.

Figure 1 illustrates the overall research flow, highlighting the continuous interaction among the input, process, output, and feedback components that guide the study.

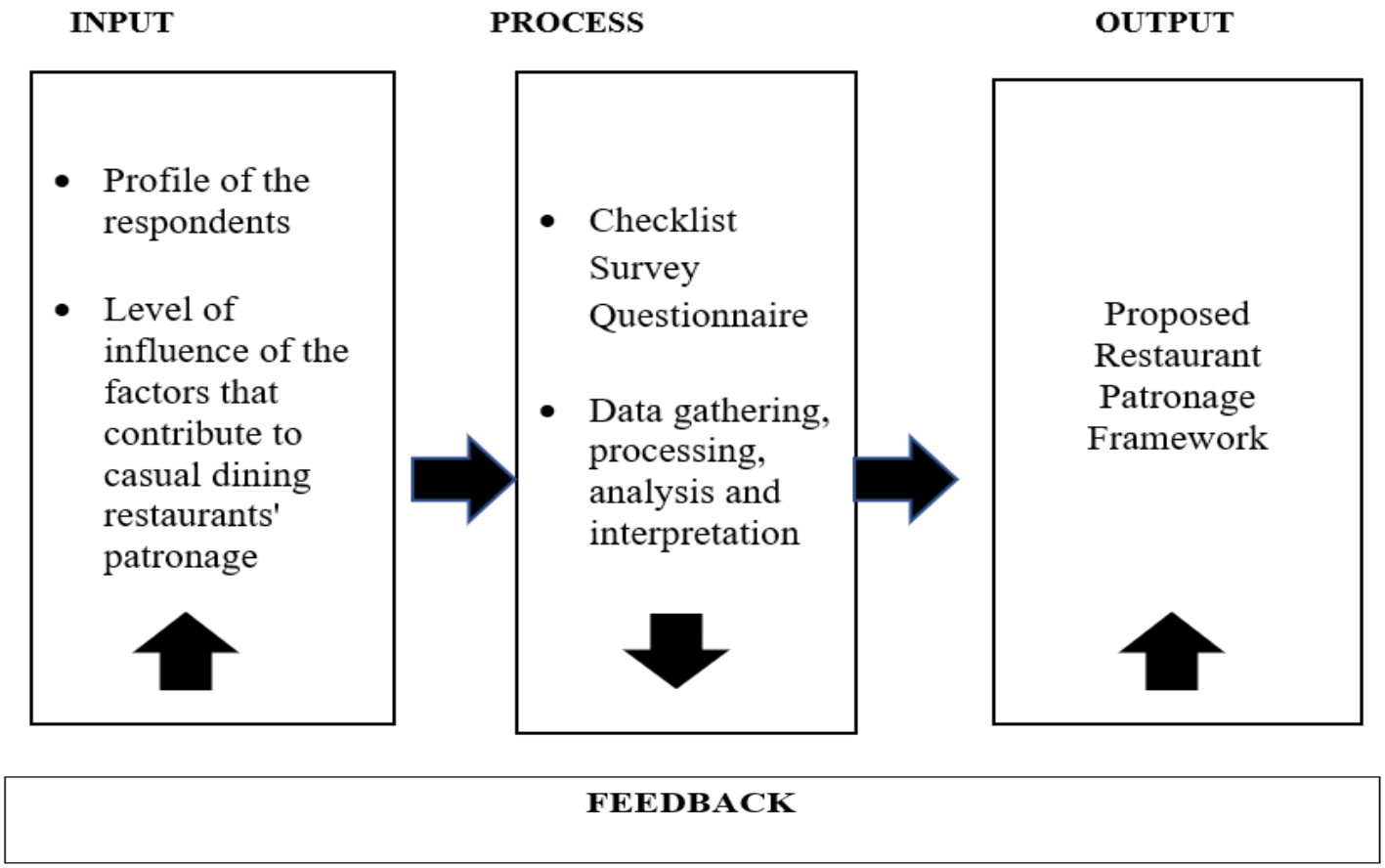


Figure 1. Research Flow

Research Environment

This study will be conducted in Dumaguete City, often referred to as the "City of Gentle People," is the capital of Negros Oriental, located on the southeastern coast of Negros Island in the Philippines. Renowned for its laid-

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back atmosphere, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant academic community, Dumaguete is home to one of the country's oldest and most prestigious universities. The city's strategic location along the coastline offers picturesque views and a thriving tourism industry, attracting both local and international visitors. Dumaguete's culinary scene reflects its diverse population, offering a wide array of dining options that cater to various tastes and preferences.

One of Dumaguete's defining features is its strong educational presence, anchored by Silliman University, founded in 1901. As one of the oldest American-established universities in the Philippines, Silliman attracts students from across the country and abroad, fostering a diverse and vibrant community. The influx of students contributes to the city's youthful and dynamic atmosphere, which significantly influences local businesses, including the casual dining sector.

Dumaguete serves as the economic center of Negros Oriental. Its economy is driven by education, tourism, retail, and small to medium enterprises, including hospitality and food services. The city's port connects it to nearby islands and facilitates the flow of goods and travelers, supporting local businesses. With the rise in tourism and population, casual dining establishments have proliferated, catering to both locals and visitors.

Dumaguete is a gateway to some of the Philippines' best natural attractions. Nearby are diving spots like Apo Island, known for its marine sanctuaries, and Casaroro Falls. The city itself offers a relaxed lifestyle with parks, beachfront promenades like Rizal Boulevard, and a vibrant nightlife scene. These attractions draw a steady stream of tourists who contribute to the local economy and influence dining trends.

The casual dining industry in Dumaguete reflects the city's blend of local tradition and global influences. Restaurants range from those offering traditional Filipino cuisine to those serving international dishes like Italian, Mediterranean, and Asian fusion. This variety caters to a broad clientele, from university students seeking affordable meals to tourists craving authentic local flavors or familiar international fare.

Dumaguete's casual dining spots often serve as social hubs where locals and visitors converge. Restaurants and cafes are popular meeting places for students, professionals, and families, fostering community ties. Events such as food festivals, live music nights, and cultural celebrations also support the growth of the dining industry. The study focused on the following casual dining restaurants on their distinct features and services offered to their customers.

Casual Dining Restaurant A in Dumaguete City offers the rich flavors of Filipino seafood cuisine in a relaxed and communal setting. The restaurant is a popular choice for both locals and tourists seeking a hands-on seafood experience where guests can handpick their catch and have it cooked to their preference. The open-air layout, casual seating, and bustling market-style vibe evoke a sense of community and comfort. With its emphasis on freshness, authenticity, and approachable service, the restaurant A fosters memorable dining moments that resonate with diners. By combining flavorful seafood dishes, a lively ambiance, and personalized service, the restaurant builds strong emotional connections with its guests, making it a standout destination in Dumaguete's vibrant food scene.

Casual Dining Restaurant B in Dumaguete City offers a charming fusion of comfort, creativity, and culinary flair that appeals to both locals and visiting food enthusiasts. The restaurant features vibrant, eclectic interiors that reflect a playful yet cozy ambiance—ideal for casual meetups, family gatherings, or solo retreats. Its diverse menu blends Filipino favorites with Western comfort food, all presented with an artistic twist. The warm hospitality of its staff and the uniquely whimsical atmosphere enhance the overall dining experience, making every visit feel both special and familiar. By balancing visual appeal, flavorful dishes, and heartfelt service, the restaurant continues to cultivate a loyal customer base and remains a beloved gem in Dumaguete's culinary landscape.

Casual Dining Restaurant C, this restaurant is a casual dining establishment located in Dumaguete City that showcases distinctive Negrense flavors integrated with contemporary culinary techniques and the use of fresh local ingredients. The restaurant offers a diverse selection of dishes inspired by Spanish, American, and Negrense

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cuisines, catering to a wide range of customer preferences. Designed with a modern-industrial interior accentuated by local art installations, the restaurant provides a stylish yet comfortable environment suitable for dining and social gatherings. Its strategic location, reasonable pricing, and well-maintained facilities contribute to customer convenience and satisfaction. Moreover, the restaurant's effective marketing initiatives and courteous service staff reinforce its reputation as a preferred casual dining destination in the city.

Casual Dining Restaurant D is a popular Filipino dining concept where guests choose fresh seafood or meat from a market-style display. Customers can then decide how their selection will be cooked, whether grilled, fried, steamed, or prepared in classic Filipino dishes like sinigang, kinilaw, or garlic butter shrimp. This setup highlights freshness and allows diners to enjoy food tailored to their taste. The atmosphere is casual and lively, often resembling a mix of a wet market and an eatery. The restaurants are well-loved by families and groups who enjoy sharing a variety of dishes.

Casual Dining Restaurant E in Dumaguete City brings a cozy and creative twist to casual dining through its two-level setup and diverse menu offerings. Located near the city center, the restaurant blends international comfort food with subtle Asian influences, featuring a wide variety of dishes. The restaurant's warm atmosphere is enhanced by creative interior design, colorful artistic details, and clever use of space that balances modern style with homelike comfort. With attentive staff and a vibrant yet relaxed setting, it also provides a valuable environment for observing hospitality, culture, and customer service.

Research Respondents

The respondents of this study are customers of the five selected casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City who have prior dining experience in these establishments. They were chosen based on their familiarity with the restaurant's services, allowing them to provide relevant and informed feedback. The respondents were evenly distributed, with ten (10) individuals selected from each restaurant, totaling fifty (50) participants. Their profiles include a mix of age groups, genders, civil status, educational attainment, and occupation, which helps capture diverse perspectives on the factors influencing customer patronage. This varied demographic composition ensures that the data collected reflects a broad and balanced view of customer experiences in Dumaguete's casual dining scene.

Table 1 presents the distribution of the respondents according to the selected casual dining establishments. A total of fifty (50) respondents participated in the study, with a frequency of ten (10) respondents from each of the five restaurants. This represents 20% of the total sample per establishment, ensuring equal representation across all participating casual dining restaurants.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents by Travel Agency

Restaurant	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Casual Dining Restaurant A	10	20
Casual Dining Restaurant B	10	20
Casual Dining Restaurant C	10	20
Casual Dining Restaurant D	10	20
Casual Dining Restaurant E	10	20
Total	**50**	**100**

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is a researcher-made questionnaire composed of two parts. The first part gathers the profile of the respondents, including demographic information such as age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, and occupation. The second part focuses on assessing the level of influence of various factors that contribute to customer patronage in casual dining establishments. This section utilizes a checklist questionnaire designed with a 4-point Likert scale, where respondents rate each factor based on its level of influence on their dining decisions. The scale is as follows: 4 – Highly Influenced (the factor strongly affects the

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decision to dine in the restaurant), 3 – Moderately Influenced (the factor somewhat affects the decision), 2 – Less Influenced (the factor has minimal effect), and 1 – Not Influenced (the factor does not influence the decision at all). This structured format allows for a clear and quantifiable assessment of customer perceptions.

To ensure the clarity, validity, and reliability of the questionnaires, it was pilot-tested with 20 non-respondents who are not part of the actual sample. Feedback from the pilot test will be used to refine the instrument before its final administration.

Research Procedures

The research procedures of this study began with the design and development of a researcher-made survey questionnaire. The instrument underwent a pilot test involving 20 non-respondents to assess its clarity, relevance, and reliability. Based on the pilot test results, the questionnaire was revised and finalized. Once validated, the researcher sought formal approval to conduct the study, which included submitting a request letter to the owners or managers of the selected casual dining restaurants, with the approval noted by the research adviser. The request was then endorsed to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval. Upon receiving the necessary permissions, the data-gathering process commenced. After data collection, responses were systematically organized, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools to address the objectives of the study.

Data Gathering

Once the research instrument had been validated through a pilot test and the necessary approvals had been secured, the data-gathering process commenced. The researcher personally administered the finalized questionnaires to the selected respondents, who were customers of the five chosen casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City. A total of fifty (50) respondents, with ten (10) from each establishment, were selected using purposive sampling based on their actual dining experience in the restaurant. The purpose of the study was briefly explained to each respondent, and their voluntary participation was ensured, with full confidentiality of their responses. Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire on-site whenever possible to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the data. Once all responses had been collected, the data were organized, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Treatment of Data

The researcher employed several statistical tools to analyze and interpret the data collected from customer surveys.

Simple percentages and frequency distributions will be used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents.

Weighted Mean will be used to assess the level of influence of the factors that contribute to casual dining restaurants.

A **chi-square test** will be used to determine if there will be a statistically significant relationship between the respondents' demographic characteristics and their perceived level of influence of the factors that contribute to casual dining restaurants.

Definition Of Terms

To ensure clarity and a common understanding of key concepts used in this study, the following terms are defined operationally as they are used within the context of the research.

Profile of the Respondents. This term refers to the demographic characteristics of the individuals who participated in the study, including age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, and occupation. This

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information helps in understanding the background of the respondents and how these factors may influence their dining preferences and behaviors.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining. This refers to the degree to which various factors, such as variety of options, accessibility, facilities and amenities, value for money, marketing, ambiance, and services, affect customers' decisions to choose and return to casual dining restaurants. This is measured using a rating scale that reflects how strongly each factor impacts customer patronage.

Proposed Action Plan. This refers to the conceptual model developed in this study that illustrates the relationship between various factors (such as food quality, service quality, ambiance, pricing, and convenience) and their influence on customer patronage in casual dining restaurants. This framework serves as a guide to understanding how these factors interact to affect customers' dining choices and loyalty.

Presentation, Analysis, And Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents the data gathered in relation to the factors that influence customer loyalty in casual dining restaurants. The findings are systematically organized, analyzed, and interpreted to draw meaningful insights. By exploring customer preferences, satisfaction levels, service quality, and other related factors, this section aims to provide a clear understanding of the key elements that drive repeat patronage and long-term loyalty. The results, supported by both quantitative data and relevant interpretations, serve as the foundation for addressing the research objectives and formulating practical recommendations for the casual dining industry.

Profile of the Respondents

To better understand the perspectives and experiences shared in this study, it is important to first look into the background of the individuals who participated. This section presents the demographic profile of the respondents, including key details such as their age, gender, frequency of dining out, and other relevant characteristics. By examining who the respondents are, we gain valuable context that helps in interpreting their responses and understanding how different customer segments may influence loyalty in casual dining restaurants.

Table 2 shows the profile of the respondents, giving us a better understanding of who they are and where their opinions and experiences are coming from. Before diving into the main findings, it's important to get to know the people behind the data.

This section highlights details such as their age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, and occupation. These background factors matter because they help us see patterns, like which age group dines out the most, or whether certain groups are more loyal to specific restaurants.

This profile gives context to the study and helps us interpret the results more meaningfully. It ensures that when we talk about what influences customer loyalty, we're doing so with a clear picture of who our customers really are.

Table 2 Profile of the Respondents

Respondents' Profile		**Frequency**	**Percent**
A. Age Groups	18-24 years old	12	24%
	25-34 years old	21	42%
	35-44 years old	11	22%
	45-54 years old	6	12%
B. Gender	Male	21	42%
	Female	29	58%
C. Civil Status	Single	28	56%
	Married	22	44%

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D. Educational Attainment	Master's Degree	8	16%
	Bachelor's Degree	30	60%
	Vocational/Technical	5	10%
	HS Graduate	7	14%
E. Occupation	Student	7	14%
	Private Employee	22	44%
	Government Employee	8	16%
	Self-Employed/Business Owner	9	18%
	Unemployed	4	8%
Total		***50***	***100%***

Age

As shown in Table 2, the largest group of respondents in terms of age falls within the 25-34 years age range with 42%, followed by those 18-24 years old with 24%, and those 45-54 years old got the lowest proportion with 12%.

Based on the data in Table 2, most of the respondents fall within the 25–34 age group, making up 42% of the total. This tells us that casual dining restaurants are especially popular among young adults who are likely already working, have some disposable income, and enjoy eating out either for convenience, socializing, or simply as part of their lifestyle.

Coming in second are those aged 18–24, who make up 24% of the respondents. While slightly younger, this group also represents a big part of the casual dining crowd. These are mostly students or fresh graduates who are probably drawn to more affordable, trendy, and accessible food spots where they can hang out with friends or grab a quick meal.

Interestingly, the smallest group represented is the 45–54 age bracket, with only 12% of respondents. This might suggest that older customers either dine out less often or may prefer a different type of dining experience, perhaps something quieter, more formal, or even home-cooked meals.

The numbers show that younger adults are the most engaged customers in the casual dining scene. Knowing their preferences and behaviors can really help restaurants tailor their offerings to what matters most to this age group.

The finding is supported by the Hierarchy of Needs by Abraham Maslow (1943). According to this theory, people are motivated to satisfy different levels of needs, starting from basic physical needs like food, all the way up to social belonging and self-fulfillment. In the case of younger adults, especially those in the 25–34 and 18–24 age groups, casual dining doesn't just meet their need for food, but also their social and emotional needs. Dining out becomes a way to connect with friends, take a break from work or school, and enjoy new experiences. This helps explain why younger customers are more active in the casual dining scene; they’re not just eating, they’re also fulfilling deeper social and lifestyle needs.

Gender

When we look at the gender profile of the respondents, it’s clear that females make up a larger portion, with 58% compared to 42% males. This tells us that females might be more frequent visitors or more willing to participate in surveys about casual dining. There could be several reasons for this. For one, women often play a key role in choosing dining options for themselves, friends, or family. They might also be more interested in the social aspects of dining out, whether it’s catching up with friends, celebrating special occasions, or simply enjoying a meal in a relaxed atmosphere.

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On the other hand, the lower percentage of male respondents doesn't mean men aren't important customers; it might just reflect different dining habits or preferences. Men might visit different types of dining establishments, or perhaps they prioritize convenience and speed over ambiance or social experience.

Recognizing this gender balance helps restaurants understand who their main customers are and what kind of experiences to offer. Women might appreciate cozy seating, healthy menu options, or friendly customer service, while men might look for hearty meals or efficient service. By catering to these subtle differences, casual dining spots can create a welcoming environment that appeals to everyone.

The finding is supported by the Theory of Moral Development and Care Ethics (1982). The theory highlights that women often approach decision-making and social interactions with a focus on relationships, care, and connection. This can help explain why more women are engaged in casual dining; they may value the social and emotional experience of dining out, such as bonding with friends or family. This can help restaurants create an environment that feels welcoming and nurturing, especially for female customers.

Civil Status

Looking at the civil status of the respondents, a little over half, 56%, are single, while the remaining 44% are married. This indicates that casual dining restaurants tend to attract more single individuals, who might be more inclined to eat out frequently for socializing, convenience, or simply enjoying some personal time. Singles, especially younger ones, often look for places where they can meet friends, hang out, or try new food spots without the responsibilities that might come with family life.

Meanwhile, married respondents make up a significant portion too, showing that casual dining is still a popular choice for couples and families. For married diners, these restaurants might offer a relaxed environment for date nights, family outings, or casual celebrations without the pressure of more formal dining.

This mix helps restaurants design their spaces and menus to appeal to both groups, whether it's creating cozy spots for couples or lively areas for groups of friends. It also shows that casual dining fits into different lifestyles and life stages, making it a versatile option for many people.

The finding is supported by the Theory of Psychosocial Development (1950). According to this theory, people go through different stages in life where their social needs and priorities change. For singles, especially younger adults, building relationships and social connections is a big focus, so dining out can be a way to meet friends and enjoy social experiences. For married individuals, the focus often shifts toward deeper commitments and family life, which means their dining choices might be influenced by family needs or shared experiences. Knowing this helps restaurants create welcoming spaces that fit different social needs, whether it's for fun with friends or quality time with loved ones.

Educational Attainment

Looking at the educational background of the respondents, the majority, 60%, have a bachelor's degree, showing that most customers in casual dining restaurants tend to be college-educated young adults. This group likely values a balance between quality, price, and experience, and may appreciate restaurants that offer good food in a comfortable setting without being too formal.

The next largest group is those with a master's degree, making up 16% of respondents. These individuals might have higher expectations when it comes to service and menu variety, and they may be dining out not just for convenience but also as a way to unwind or network after busy workdays.

On the other hand, the smallest group is respondents with vocational or technical education, at 10%. This may reflect differences in lifestyle, work schedules, or dining preferences. They might prefer quicker, more affordable options or different types of dining experiences.

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These educational backgrounds help casual dining restaurants tailor their marketing and services to meet the needs of well-educated customers who seek value, quality, and a welcoming atmosphere.

The finding is supported by the Theory of Cultural Capital (1986). The theory explains that people's tastes and preferences, like the food they enjoy or the places they choose to eat, are shaped by their education and social background. So, those with higher education levels, like bachelor's or master's degrees, may seek dining experiences that reflect their lifestyle and values, such as quality, ambiance, and service. This helps explain why many respondents with college degrees prefer casual dining spots that offer not just food but a comfortable and enjoyable environment.

Occupation

Looking at the occupations of the respondents, the largest group is private employees, making up 44%. This makes sense since many working professionals rely on casual dining as a convenient and enjoyable way to take breaks, socialize with colleagues, or unwind after work. For them, these restaurants offer a comfortable and reliable option that fits into their busy schedules.

The second largest group is self-employed or business owners at 18%. These individuals might enjoy casual dining for its flexibility and relaxed atmosphere, providing a nice change of pace from their often-hectic workdays. It's a place where they can meet clients, have informal meetings, or simply take a break.

At the other end, the smallest group is unemployed respondents, representing 8% of the sample. This might reflect different spending habits or priorities, as dining out could be less frequent when budgets are tighter. They may be more selective or choose more affordable food options when they do eat out.

These occupation groups help casual dining restaurants better tailor their offerings to meet the needs of working professionals, entrepreneurs, and others who frequent these places for different reasons.

The Hierarchy of Needs by Abraham Maslow (1943). According to this theory, people are motivated to satisfy different needs based on their current life situation. For private employees and business owners, casual dining can fulfill not just basic needs like hunger but also social needs, like connecting with colleagues or clients. Meanwhile, those who are unemployed might prioritize more basic needs, which can affect how often or where they choose to eat out. This theory helps explain why people in different jobs experience dining out in unique ways, depending on what they need most at that point in their lives.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining

This section determines the key factors that influence why customers choose to dine at casual restaurants.

Whether it's the taste of the food, the quality of service, reasonable prices, or the overall atmosphere, each element plays a role in shaping their experience. Understanding which factors matter most helps restaurants focus on what truly keeps customers coming back. It's not just about good food, it's about creating a welcoming environment and consistently meeting or exceeding customer expectations. By knowing what drives patronage, casual dining restaurants can tailor their offerings to build stronger connections and encourage loyalty.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Variety of Options

One important factor that influences why people choose casual dining restaurants is the variety of options available on the menu. Customers appreciate having a range of choices that can cater to different tastes, dietary needs, and moods. Whether someone wants something light and healthy or a hearty comfort meal, having diverse options makes the dining experience more enjoyable and satisfying. A menu with plenty of variety not only attracts more customers but also encourages them to come back because they know they can always find something they like.

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Table 3 presents the results of how different factors influence customers when choosing casual dining restaurants. It gives us a clear snapshot of what matters most to diners, helping us understand which aspects, like menu variety, service quality, or price, play a bigger role in attracting and keeping customers coming back.

Table 3 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Variety of Options

Indicators	Mean	Influenced Level
1. The restaurant offers a wide range of food choices on the menu.	3.50	Highly Influenced
2. There are options for different dietary preferences (e.g., vegetarian, low-carb, gluten-free).	3.36	Highly Influenced
3. The restaurant regularly updates or rotates its menu items.	3.40	Highly Influenced
4. There are sufficient drink and dessert selections to complement the main dishes.	3.36	Highly Influenced
5. Customers can customize their orders (e.g., spice level, ingredient substitution).	3.42	Highly Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.41**	**Highly Influenced**

Looking at the overall picture in Table 3, the aggregate mean score of 3.41 shows that the variety of options offered by casual dining restaurants is highly influential factor for customers when deciding where to eat. This means that diners really value having a wide selection and the ability to find something that suits their tastes and preferences.

Among the specific factors, the highest-rated indicator is the wide range of food choices on the menu, with a mean of 3.50, which the restaurant offers a wide range of food choices on the menu, interpreted as highly influenced. This highlights how important it is for restaurants to offer diverse dishes that can appeal to different customers, making sure everyone can find something they like. The second-highest factor is the ability for customers to customize their orders, scoring 3.42 in Customers can customize their orders (e.g., spice level, ingredient substitution, interpreted as highly influenced. This means that it allows diners to adjust spice levels or substitute ingredients, adds a personal touch to the experience, making them feel heard and cared for.

The lowest-rated, but still highly influential factor is having options for different dietary preferences, such as vegetarian or gluten-free choices, with a mean of 3.36. This shows that while these options may be slightly less of a priority than variety and customization, they remain very important in attracting and satisfying customers with specific dietary needs. These results show that variety, customization, and catering to different dietary preferences all play key roles in making casual dining restaurants a preferred choice for many.

The finding is supported by the Two-Factor Theory of Motivation by Herzberg (1959). This theory states that certain factors, called “motivators,” make people feel satisfied and motivated, while others, called “hygiene factors,” prevent dissatisfaction but don’t necessarily excite customers. In the context of casual dining, having a wide variety of food options and the ability to customize orders act as motivators; they enhance the overall dining experience and make customers feel valued and happy. When restaurants offer these choices, they go beyond just meeting basic needs and actually create a more enjoyable and memorable experience that keeps customers coming back.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Accessibility

Another key factor that affects why people choose casual dining restaurants is accessibility, how easy it is for customers to get to the restaurant. This includes things like the restaurant’s location, parking availability, and how convenient it is to visit, whether by car, public transport, or on foot. When a restaurant is easy to reach, it removes a big barrier and makes dining out a hassle-free experience. Customers are more likely to return to

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places that fit smoothly into their daily routines or social plans, making accessibility a major influence on where they decide to eat.

Table 4 shows the results of how accessibility factors influence customers when choosing casual dining restaurants. It gives us a clear look at which aspects, like location convenience, parking availability, and ease of getting there, matter most in attracting and keeping diners coming back.

Table 4 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Accessibility

Indicators	Mean	Influenced Level
1. The restaurant is easy to locate and find using maps or directions.	3.34	Highly Influenced
2. The restaurant is situated near main roads, public transportation, or central locations.	3.44	Highly Influenced
3. There are adequate parking spaces available for customers.	3.12	Moderately Influenced
4. The restaurant's business hours are convenient for my schedule.	3.32	Highly Influenced
5. The restaurant's signage is visible and easy to identify from a distance.	3.18	Moderately Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.28**	**Highly Influenced**

In Table 4, the overall score for accessibility factors is an aggregate mean of 3.28, indicating that accessibility is a highly influential factor in customers' decisions to choose casual dining restaurants. When a restaurant is conveniently located and easy to get to, it makes dining out more enjoyable and hassle-free, encouraging customers to return frequently.

Among the accessibility factors, the highly influential aspect is the restaurant is situated near main roads, public transportation, or central spots, with a mean score of 3.44. This shows that customers really value being able to get to the restaurant easily, whether they're driving, taking a bus, or walking from nearby areas.

The second highly influential factor is that the restaurant is easy to locate and find using maps or directions, scoring 3.34. In today's digital age, people rely heavily on navigation apps and clear directions, so being easy to find online or on the ground is a big plus that encourages visits.

On the other hand, the lowest-rated factor is the there are adequate parking spaces available for customers, with a mean of 3.12, which is moderately influenced. While parking matters, it seems that customers may be willing to overlook limited parking if other aspects of accessibility are convenient.

These results highlight how being easy to find and well-connected to transportation hubs plays a key role in attracting customers, while parking, though important, might not be a deal-breaker for everyone.

The finding is supported by the Theory of Planned Behavior by Icek Ajzen (1991). This theory suggests that people's intentions to perform a behavior, like choosing a restaurant, are influenced by how easy or difficult they perceive the action to be. If a restaurant is easy to get to, clearly visible, and fits well with a customer's schedule, they're more likely to decide to visit. So, making a restaurant accessible not only removes barriers but also increases the chances that customers will follow through and choose that place for their next meal.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Price

Price is a major factor that influences where people decide to eat, especially in casual dining. Customers want to feel that they're getting good value for their money, not just in terms of the food itself, but the overall experience too. When prices are fair and match the quality and service offered, diners feel more satisfied and are more likely to return. Understanding how price impacts customer choices helps restaurants find the right balance between affordability and quality to keep their guests happy.

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Table 5 presents the results showing how price factors influence customers when choosing casual dining restaurants. It gives us a clear picture of how important pricing is in attracting diners and encouraging them to come back.

Table 5 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Price

Indicator	Mean	Influenced Level
1. The prices of food and beverages are reasonable for the quality offered.	3.34	Highly Influenced
2. The restaurant offers good value for money.	3.22	Moderately Influenced
3. There are affordable meal options for different budget levels.	3.22	Moderately Influenced
4. Portion sizes are fair for the price paid.	3.28	Highly Influenced
5. Promotions, discounts, or combo meals make dining more budget-friendly.	3.36	Highly Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.28**	**Highly Influenced**

In Table 5, the overall score for price-related factors is an aggregate mean of 3.28, indicating that price is a highly influential factor in customers' decisions to choose casual dining restaurants. This shows that fair and reasonable pricing plays a big role in making customers feel comfortable and valued, encouraging them to keep coming back.

Among the price factors, the highly influenced is that promotions, discounts, or combo meals make dining more budget-friendly, with a mean score of 3.36. This shows that customers really appreciate special deals and offers, which make their dining experience feel like a smart, affordable choice.

The second is still highly influential, as the prices of food and beverages are reasonable for the quality offered at 3.34. This highlights that diners want to feel they're getting good value, not just in terms of how much they pay, but also in the quality and amount of food they receive.

On the other hand, the lowest-rated factors, though still important, are that the restaurant offers good value for money and there are affordable meal options for different budget levels, both scoring 3.22, interpreted as moderately influenced. While these remain influential, they seem slightly less of a priority compared to specific promotions and the balance of price with quality and portion size.

These results tell us that customers are drawn to casual dining restaurants that offer smart deals, fair prices, and satisfying portions, helping them feel confident and happy with their dining choices.

The finding is supported by the Prospect Theory by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky (1979). This theory explains that people don't just look at the actual cost of something; they also weigh the perceived value and potential gains or losses. So, when customers see promotions, discounts, or combo meals, they feel like they're getting more value for their money, which makes them happier and more likely to return. This shows why offering smart deals and fair pricing is so important in attracting and keeping casual dining customers.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Facilities and Amenities

When choosing where to dine out, people often consider more than just the food. For many, the overall experience, shaped by the restaurant's facilities and amenities, plays a big role in whether they decide to come back or recommend the place to others. Comfortable seating, clean restrooms, good lighting, parking availability, and even Wi-Fi access can significantly influence a customer's decision to patronize a casual dining restaurant. This section explores how much these factors truly matter to diners, and to what extent they impact their overall satisfaction and loyalty to casual dining establishments.

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The results in Table 6 show that facilities and amenities play a significant role in attracting customers to casual dining restaurants. Diners place high importance on clean and well-maintained spaces, comfortable seating, accessible restrooms, and convenient parking, factors that directly impact their overall dining experience. These elements, though sometimes overlooked, can greatly influence whether a customer chooses to return or recommend the place to others. Even seemingly minor features like good lighting, background music, or Wi-Fi add value to the experience by creating a more inviting and enjoyable atmosphere. The findings highlight that while food remains the core attraction, the quality of a restaurant's facilities and amenities can strongly shape customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 6 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Facilities and Amenities

Indicators	Mean	Influenced Level
1. The restaurant has clean and well-maintained dining areas.	3.36	Highly Influenced
2. Restroom facilities are clean, accessible, and adequately supplied.	3.24	Moderately Influenced
3. The restaurant provides comfortable seating and appropriate table arrangements.	3.28	Highly Influenced
4. There is reliable internet access (Wi-Fi) available for customers.	3.10	Moderately Influenced
5. Additional amenities (e.g., air-conditioning, background music, charging stations) enhance the dining experience.	3.24	Moderately Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.24**	**Moderately Influenced**

The aggregate mean of 3.24, which falls under the moderately influenced category, suggests that while facilities and amenities are important to customers, they are not the most critical factors influencing their decision to dine at a casual restaurant. In simpler terms, diners do pay attention to factors like cleanliness, comfort, and convenience, but these elements play a supporting role rather than being the main reason they choose a particular place. This means that although a well-maintained environment can enhance the dining experience, it likely works best when paired with other key elements, such as good food and quality service.

Among all the factors assessed, the restaurant's clean and well-maintained dining area stood out as most influential, with a mean score of 3.36, categorized as highly influenced. This shows that customers place great importance on dining in a clean and well-kept environment. A tidy and pleasant space not only enhances comfort but also creates a sense of trust in the restaurant's overall hygiene standards. It sets the tone for the entire dining experience and can strongly impact whether a customer chooses to return.

Following closely is the restaurant provides comfortable seating and appropriate table arrangements, receiving a mean of 3.28, also marked as highly influenced. This indicates that how the restaurant is physically laid out plays a key role in the customer experience. When guests are seated comfortably and the space feels welcoming and spacious, it allows them to relax and enjoy their meals more fully. These physical elements may seem simple, but they greatly contribute to the overall ambiance and satisfaction of diners.

On the other hand, there is reliable internet access (Wi-Fi) available for customers, which received the lowest rating among the indicators, with a mean score of 3.10, indicating a moderately influenced. While access to reliable internet can still be a nice bonus, especially for younger customers or those dining alone, it's clearly not a top priority for most guests. The finding highlights that when it comes to casual dining, people are more focused on the food, comfort, and cleanliness than on being digitally connected during their visit.

This finding is supported by the Servicescape Theory of Bitner (1992), which emphasizes how the physical environment of a service setting, such as layout, cleanliness, lighting, and ambient conditions, can significantly influence customer behavior and satisfaction. According to this theory, the "servicescape" creates an emotional response in customers, which affects how they perceive the overall quality of the service. In simpler terms, if a restaurant looks clean, feels comfortable, and provides a pleasant atmosphere, customers are more likely to feel

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good about their experience and return in the future. This theory helps explain why elements like clean dining areas and comfortable seating are so influential in shaping customer decisions, even beyond the food itself.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Value for Money

In today's fast-paced world, casual dining restaurants have become a go-to choice for many people seeking a balance between good food, comfort, and affordability. As customers become more mindful of how and where they spend their money, the concept of "value for money" plays a bigger role in deciding which restaurant to dine in. This study aims to understand what really matters to customers when they choose a casual dining spot, is it the price, the portion sizes, the quality of food, the ambiance, or the overall experience? By identifying the key factors that influence patronage and how strongly they impact the perception of value for money, this study hopes to provide insights that can help restaurants better meet the expectations of their customers.

Table 7 presents the results on the level of influence of various factors that contribute to customers' patronage of casual dining restaurants in terms of value for money.

Table 7 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Value for Money

Indicator	Mean	Influenced Level
1. The quality of food and service justifies the price paid.	3.34	Highly Influenced
2. I feel satisfied with the overall dining experience for the amount spent.	3.30	Highly Influenced
3. Meal portions are generous relative to their cost.	3.32	Highly Influenced
4. The restaurant offers a fair balance between price and menu variety.	3.32	Highly Influenced
5. The restaurant is a good choice for affordable, quality dining.	3.26	Highly Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.31**	**Highly Influenced**

The overall aggregate mean of 3.31 indicates that customers are *highly influenced* by the various factors that contribute to their perception of value for money in casual dining restaurants. This shows that diners don't just consider the price alone, but also take into account the quality of food, service, ambiance, and other elements when deciding where to eat. A rating of *highly Influenced* reflects that these factors play a significant role in shaping customer decisions, highlighting the importance for restaurants to maintain a well-rounded dining experience that justifies the cost in the eyes of their patrons.

Among the factors contributing to value for money in casual dining restaurants, the quality of food and service justifies the price paid, receiving the highest mean score of 3.34, indicating that customers are highly influenced when they feel the quality of both the food and service matches what they are paying for. This shows that people are willing to spend a bit more if the overall experience meets or exceeds their expectations.

Closely following is the perception that meal portions are generous relative to their cost, and the restaurant offers a fair balance between price and menu variety, with a mean of 3.32 interpreted as highly influenced. The results show that diners value getting not just quality, but also quantity and variety for what they pay, reinforcing the idea that customers see value as a combination of factors rather than just price alone.

On the other hand, the lowest indicator, though still rated as highly influenced, is that the restaurant is a good choice for affordable, quality dining, with a mean of 3.26. While still significant, this slightly lower score may indicate that while affordability is appreciated, customers place more weight on the actual dining experience and whether it feels worth the price, rather than simply labeling a restaurant as affordable.

The finding is supported by the Theory of Perceived Value by Zeithaml (1988), which emphasized that value is not determined by price alone, but by the overall trade-off between what a customer gives (money, time, effort)

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and what they receive (product and service quality). Customers are looking for an experience that feels worthwhile, not just cheap.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Marketing

In today's competitive dining industry, marketing plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining customers at casual dining restaurants. Beyond just serving good food, how a restaurant promotes itself, through advertising, social media, promotions, and customer engagement, can significantly influence whether people choose to dine there. This study determines which marketing factors have the strongest impact on customer patronage, helping restaurants understand what draws diners in and keeps them coming back.

Table 8 shows how different marketing factors influence customers' decisions to patronize casual dining restaurants. The results highlight which promotional strategies and marketing efforts resonate most with diners, providing insight into what drives their loyalty and choice.

Table 8 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Marketing

Indicator	Mean	Influenced Level
1. I became aware of the restaurant through its online or social media presence.	3.10	Moderately Influenced
2. Promotional advertisements (e.g., flyers, online ads, posters) influence my decision to dine at the restaurant.	2.80	Moderately Influenced
3. Word-of-mouth or customer reviews affect my choice to visit the restaurant.	3.22	Moderately Influenced
4. The restaurant's participation in local events or promotions increases my interest.	3.02	Moderately Influenced
5. Loyalty programs or reward systems encourage me to return to the restaurant.	3.18	Moderately Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.06**	**Moderately Influenced**

The overall aggregate mean of 3.06 indicates that marketing factors have a moderate influence on customers' decisions to visit casual dining restaurants. While marketing efforts do play a role in attracting diners, they are not the sole or strongest drivers of patronage. This indicates that although promotions, advertising, and other marketing strategies matter, customers also rely on other aspects, such as food quality and service, when choosing where to eat.

Among the marketing factors influencing casual dining restaurant patronage, word-of-mouth or customer reviews affect my choice to visit the restaurant, scoring the highest indicator with a mean of 3.22, interpreted as moderately influenced, showing that personal recommendations and online feedback play a strong role in attracting diners. This means that customers trust the experiences of others when deciding where to eat.

Following closely is the impact of loyalty programs or reward systems encourage me to return to the restaurant, with a mean of 3.18, interpreted as moderately influenced. This indicates that customers appreciate being rewarded for their repeat visits, which encourages them to come back to their favorite restaurants.

On the other hand, the lowest-rated factor is promotional advertisements (e.g., flyers, online ads, posters) influence my decision to dine at the restaurant, with a mean of 2.80. While still moderately influential, this means that traditional advertising methods may not be as effective as personal recommendations or loyalty incentives in driving customer decisions.

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These findings align with the Social Influence Theory by Kelman (1958), which explains that people's behaviors and decisions are often shaped by the opinions and actions of others, making word-of-mouth a powerful marketing tool. It highlights why recommendations from friends or online reviews can carry more weight than standard advertisements.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Ambiance

The atmosphere of a casual dining restaurant, its ambiance, plays a key role in shaping customers' dining experiences. From lighting and music to décor and overall comfort, these elements can make a meal more enjoyable and memorable. This study looks into how much ambiance influences customers' decisions to choose and keep coming back to casual dining spots, helping restaurants understand the importance of creating the right vibe to attract patrons.

Table 9 presents the results on how different aspects of ambiance influence customers' decisions to patronize casual dining restaurants. The findings reveal which elements of the restaurant's atmosphere, such as lighting, music, décor, and comfort, play the biggest role in attracting and retaining diners.

Table 9 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Ambiance

Indicator	Mean	Influenced Level
1. The restaurant has a pleasant and comfortable interior design.	3.36	Highly Influenced
2. The lighting and temperature create a relaxing dining environment.	3.46	Highly Influenced
3. Background music enhances the overall dining experience.	3.22	Moderately Influenced
4. The cleanliness and overall atmosphere of the restaurant are appealing.	3.36	Highly Influenced
5. The restaurant's ambiance matches the type of dining experience I expect (e.g., casual, family-friendly, romantic).	3.26	Highly Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.33**	**Highly Influenced**

The overall aggregate mean of 3.33 shows that ambiance has a strong or highly influential effect on customers' decisions to dine at casual restaurants. This means that factors like the lighting, music, décor, and overall atmosphere greatly enhance the dining experience and play a big role in attracting and keeping customers coming back. It highlights how important the vibe and environment are, not just the food, in making a restaurant a favorite spot.

Among the factors related to ambiance, the lighting and temperature create a relaxing dining environment, scoring the highest with a mean of 3.46, interpreted as highly influenced, indicating that customers feel these elements play a crucial role in creating a relaxing and comfortable dining environment. This means that the right lighting and temperature can significantly enhance the overall experience, making guests feel more at ease.

Closely following are the restaurant has a pleasant and comfortable interior design, and the cleanliness and overall atmosphere of the restaurant are appealing, both with a mean of 3.36, also rated as highly influential. These results show that diners value not only how a restaurant looks and feels but also how clean and welcoming it is, reinforcing the idea that a well-maintained space contributes greatly to customer satisfaction.

On the lower end, though still influential, the background music enhances the overall dining experience, with a mean of 3.22, and is rated as moderately influential. While music is appreciated and does add to the ambiance, it appears to be slightly less important compared to physical comfort and cleanliness when customers decide where to dine.

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The finding is supported by the Servicescape Theory by Bitner (1992), which emphasizes that the physical environment, including factors like lighting, temperature, and cleanliness, significantly affects customers' emotions and behaviors. According to this theory, a thoughtfully designed and comfortable atmosphere can positively influence customer satisfaction and their decision to return.

Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Service

When it comes to choosing a casual dining restaurant, the quality of service often makes a big difference. Friendly staff, quick responses, and attentive care can turn a simple meal into a memorable experience. This study determines how much service influences customers' decisions to visit and keep coming back to casual dining restaurants, highlighting the importance of good service in building customer loyalty.

Table 10 presents the results on the level of influence of service-related factors that contribute to customers' patronage of casual dining restaurants. The findings reveal how aspects like staff friendliness, responsiveness, and overall service quality impact diners' decisions to choose and return to these establishments.

Table 10 Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining in Terms of Service

Indicator	Mean	Influenced Level
1. Staff are courteous, respectful, and attentive to customer needs.	3.34	Highly Influenced
2. Orders are taken and served promptly and accurately.	3.32	Highly Influenced
3. Employees are knowledgeable about the menu and able to provide helpful recommendations.	3.24	Moderately Influenced
4. The staff handles customer concerns or complaints professionally.	3.28	Highly Influenced
5. Consistent quality of service is maintained during every visit.	3.28	Highly Influenced
Aggregate Mean	**3.29**	**Highly Influenced**

The overall aggregate mean of 3.29 shows that service plays a highly influential role in customers' decisions to dine at casual restaurants. Friendly, attentive, and efficient service greatly enhances the dining experience, making guests feel valued and more likely to return. This highlights how important good service is, not just the food itself, in building customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Among the service-related factors, the highest-rated item is that staff are courteous, respectful, and attentive to customer needs, with a mean score of 3.34, indicating a high influence on customers' dining decisions. This shows that people deeply value being treated with kindness and respect during their visit, which helps create a welcoming atmosphere and leaves a lasting positive impression.

Following closely is that orders are taken and served promptly and accurately, which scored 3.32 and is also highly influential. This means that efficiency and accuracy in service are essential to a satisfying dining experience. When customers get their food on time and as ordered, it builds trust and confidence in the restaurant.

The lowest-rated factor, although still important, is that employees are knowledgeable about the menu and able to provide helpful recommendations, with a mean of 3.24, rated as moderately influential. While customers appreciate staff who can guide them through the menu, it appears to matter slightly less than basic courtesy and efficiency. It may indicate that while helpfulness is appreciated, it's the human connection and smooth service that matter most.

The finding is supported by the SERVQUAL Model by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which identifies key dimensions of service quality, including responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, as major factors that shape customer perceptions. According to the theory, positive interactions with staff and consistent service experiences are crucial in influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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Summary of the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining

To better understand what drives customers to choose and return to casual dining restaurants, this summary brings together the key findings from various factors, such as variety of options, accessibility, price, facilities and amenities, value for money, marketing, ambiance, and service. By looking at how each area influences customer decisions, the results offer a clearer picture of what truly matters to diners when it comes to their overall restaurant experience.

Table 11 presents a summary of the overall level of influence of the different factors that affect why customers choose to dine at casual restaurants. It brings together key areas, such as variety of options, accessibility, price, facilities and amenities, value for money, marketing, ambiance, and service, to show which aspects matter most to diners. This summary helps highlight what customers truly look for in a casual dining experience and which factors have the strongest impact on their decision to return.

Table 11 Summary of the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
1. Variety of Options	3.41	Highly Influenced
2. Accessibility	3.28	Highly Influenced
3. Price	3.28	Highly Influenced
4. Facilities and Amenities	3.24	Moderately Influenced
5. Value for Money	3.31	Highly Influenced
6. Marketing	3.06	Moderately Influenced
7. Ambiance	3.33	Highly Influenced
8. Service	3.29	Highly Influenced
Overall Mean	**3.38**	**Highly Influenced**

The overall mean of 3.38 shows that customers are highly influenced by the combined factors of variety of options, accessibility, price, facilities and amenities, value for money, marketing, ambiance, and service when deciding to dine at casual restaurants. This means that diners don't base their choice on just one aspect; it's the full experience that matters. From the quality of food and service to the atmosphere and how the restaurant connects with them through marketing, all these elements work together to shape their overall satisfaction and likelihood to return.

Among all the factors influencing customer patronage of casual dining restaurants, variety of options stands out as the most influential, with a mean score of 3.41, interpreted as highly influential, indicating that customers deeply value having a wide selection of food and menu choices to match their preferences.

Following closely is ambiance, with a mean of 3.33, interpreted as highly influenced, highlighting the importance of a pleasant, comfortable, and well-designed environment in creating a satisfying dining experience.

On the other hand, the lowest-rated factor is marketing, with a mean of 3.06, showing only a moderate influence. This means that while marketing efforts like advertisements and promotions can help raise awareness, they aren't as impactful as the actual in-restaurant experience, such as variety, ambiance, and service, when it comes to winning over and retaining customers.

In conclusion, the findings show that customers choose casual dining restaurants based on a combination of meaningful factors, especially variety, ambiance, value for money, and service. While marketing plays a role in attracting attention, it's the overall dining experience that truly leaves a lasting impression. This highlights the importance of restaurants not just to promote themselves, but to consistently deliver quality food, create a

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welcoming atmosphere, and provide attentive service that meets customers' expectations. When people feel they're getting a well-rounded, satisfying experience, they're much more likely to come back.

The finding is supported by Hierarchy of Needs by Maslow (1943), which emphasize that once basic needs like food and comfort are met, people seek experiences that offer satisfaction, variety, and emotional connection. In the case of dining, this means customers are more influenced by how the restaurant meets their personal and emotional expectations than by promotional messaging alone.

Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining

This section determines whether different aspects of the customers' profiles, such as their age, gender, or dining habits, have any meaningful connection to how much the various factors influence their decision to dine at casual restaurants. These relationships can help restaurants tailor their offerings and marketing to better meet the needs of different types of customers.

Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining Restaurants vs. Age Groups

Table 12 presents the analysis of whether there's a significant relationship between the respondents' profiles, such as age group and how strongly different factors influence their choice of casual dining restaurants. The reliability of the data was confirmed through a Cronbach's alpha test, indicating that the survey responses were consistently measuring what they intended to. Meanwhile, the p-values from the statistical tests helped identify which relationships were truly significant, meaning that certain profile traits do affect how customers perceive factors like variety of options, accessibility, price, facilities and amenities, value for money, marketing, ambiance, and service. This insight is valuable for restaurants aiming to tailor their approach to better connect with different customer groups.

Table 12 Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Age Groups

Casual Dining Patronage vs. Age Groups	n	Chi-Square Value	df	p-Value	Decision Ho	Interpretation
a. Variety of Options	50	4.939	3	0.176	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
b. Accessibility	50	0.059	3	0.996	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
c. Price	50	3.944	3	0.268	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
d. Facilities & Amenities	50	7.826	3	0.050	Reject Ho	Significant
e. Value for Money	50	5.537	6	0.447	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
f. Marketing	50	13.841	6	0.031	Reject Ho	Significant
g. Ambiance	50	3.447	3	0.328	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
h. Service	50	2.012	3	0.570	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
*significant @ = 0.05 level						

The Chi-square analysis shows that for most factors influencing casual dining choices, age doesn't make much of a difference; people across all age groups generally value things like variety, price, ambiance, and service similarly. However, there are two exceptions worth noting. Facilities and amenities seem especially important to the 25–34 age group, while marketing efforts resonate more with those aged 45–54. These differences indicate that younger diners might be looking for extra comforts or conveniences when choosing a restaurant, whereas middle-aged customers respond more to how restaurants promote themselves. Though many key factors remain equally important regardless of age, highlighting common expectations across generations.

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The finding is supported by the Generation Theory by Strauss & Howe (1991), which suggests that different age groups develop unique preferences and behaviors based on their life experiences and social environments. Younger adults often seek convenience and comfort, while older groups may respond more to marketing messages that connect with their values and lifestyle. Despite these differences, many core expectations about dining remain consistent across ages, showing common ground in what customers want from casual dining.

Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Gender

When looking at gender, the analysis reveals that most factors influencing casual dining decisions do not significantly differ between male and female respondents. This means that regardless of gender, people tend to value things like price, service, ambiance, and variety in similar ways when choosing where to dine. However, if any slight variations were observed, they weren't statistically strong enough to suggest a meaningful difference. These findings highlight that dining preferences are largely shared across genders, reinforcing the idea that casual dining restaurants can appeal broadly without needing to heavily tailor their approach based on gender alone.

Table 13 presents the results of the analysis examining whether gender plays a significant role in how different factors influence customers' decisions to patronize casual dining restaurants. The comparison explores whether male and female diners value aspects such as price, service, ambiance, marketing, and overall experience differently, helping to determine if gender-based preferences affect dining choices.

Table 13 Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Gender

Casual Dining Patronage vs. Gender	n	Chi-Square Value	df	p-Value	Decision Ho	Interpretation
a. Variety of Options	50	0.469	1	0.493	Failed to reject	Not Significant
b. Accessibility	50	0.002	1	0.963	Failed to reject	Not Significant
c. Price	50	0.363	1	0.547	Failed to reject	Not Significant
d. Facilities & Amenities	50	0.123	1	0.726	Failed to reject	Not Significant
e. Value for Money	50	1.89	2	0.389	Failed to reject	Not Significant
f. Marketing	50	2.241	2	0.326	Failed to reject	Not Significant
g. Ambiance	50	0.911	1	0.340	Failed to reject	Not Significant
h. Service	50	2.68	1	0.102	Failed to reject	Not Significant
**significant @ = 0.05 level*						

Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Civil Status

This section examines whether civil status has a significant relationship with how customers perceive the importance of various factors when choosing casual dining restaurants. By comparing responses from individuals who are single, married, or in other civil status categories, the analysis explores whether personal relationship status affects preferences for things like value for money, ambiance, service, or marketing. The results help determine if dining choices are influenced by whether someone typically dines alone, with a partner, or as part of a family or group.

Table 14 presents the results of the analysis on the significant relationship between respondents' civil status and the factors that influence their patronage of casual dining restaurants. The goal is to see whether being single, married, or in another relationship status affects how much importance customers place on elements like food variety, service, ambiance, value for money, and marketing. This analysis helps uncover whether dining preferences shift depending on personal and social circumstances related to civil status.

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Table 14 Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Civil Status

Casual Dining Patronage vs. Civil Status	n	Chi-Square Value	df	p-Value	Decision Ho	Interpretation
a. Variety of Options	50	1.672	1	0.196	Failed to reject	Not Significant
b. Accessibility	50	0.063	1	0.802	Failed to reject	Not Significant
c. Price	50	0.927	1	0.336	Failed to reject	Not Significant
d. Facilities & Amenities	50	0.487	1	0.485	Failed to reject	Not Significant
e. Value for Money	50	1.211	2	0.546	Failed to reject	Not Significant
f. Marketing	50	3.425	2	0.18	Failed to reject	Not Significant
g. Ambiance	50	0.005	1	0.945	Failed to reject	Not Significant
h. Service	50	0.192	1	0.661	Failed to reject	Not Significant
**significant @ = 0.05 level*						

The Chi-square analysis in Table 14 reveals that civil status does not significantly influence any of the factors related to casual dining restaurant patronage. All the computed p-values were above the 0.05 threshold, which means there's no strong evidence to suggest that being single, married, or in another relationship status changes how customers perceive key factors like variety of options, price, service, ambiance, or marketing. In simple terms, both single and married respondents appear to share similar dining preferences and behaviors, suggesting that civil status doesn't play a major role in shaping where or why people choose to dine in casual restaurants.

Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Educational Attainment

This part of the study looks into whether a person's educational background affects how much different factors influence their choice of casual dining restaurants. By comparing responses from individuals with varying levels of education, such as high school graduates, college degree holders, and those with postgraduate studies, the analysis seeks to understand if education shapes preferences around price, service, ambiance, marketing, and overall dining experience. Knowing this can help restaurants better cater to the expectations of diners from diverse educational backgrounds.

Table 15 presents the results of the analysis examining the significant relationship between respondents' educational attainment and the level of influence of various factors on their decision to patronize casual dining restaurants. This analysis helps identify whether education level, ranging from high school to postgraduate studies, affects how diners value elements like price, service, ambiance, marketing, and overall dining experience.

Table 15 Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Educational Attainment

Casual Dining Patronage vs. Educational Attainment	n	Chi-Square Value	df	p-Value	Decision Ho	Interpretation
a. Variety of Options	50	1.219	3	0.749	Failed to reject	Not Significant
b. Accessibility	50	4.751	3	0.191	Failed to reject	Not Significant
c. Price	50	1.286	3	0.732	Failed to reject	Not Significant
d. Facilities & Amenities	50	3.527	3	0.317	Failed to reject	Not Significant
e. Value for Money	50	2.416	6	0.878	Failed to reject	Not Significant
f. Marketing	50	12.312	6	0.050	Reject Ho	Significant
g. Ambiance	50	0.663	3	0.882	Failed to reject	Not Significant
h. Service	50	12.009	3	0.007	Reject Ho	Significant
**significant @ = 0.05 level*						

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In Table 15, the Chi-square analysis shows that educational attainment has a significant impact on two key factors influencing casual dining patronage: Marketing (p = 0.050) and Service (p = 0.007). Specifically, respondents with a Bachelor's Degree are more influenced by promotional efforts and place greater importance on the quality of service they receive. This indicates that individuals with higher education levels tend to be more discerning when it comes to how restaurants market themselves and how well staff meet their expectations. Meanwhile, other factors like variety of options, accessibility, price, facilities, value for money, and ambiance don't show significant differences across education levels. Overall, this means that although most dining preferences are quite similar regardless of education, restaurants might find that focusing on effective marketing and excellent service particularly appeals to customers with higher education backgrounds.

This finding aligns with the Elaboration Likelihood Model by Petty & Cacioppo (1986), which explains that people with higher education are more likely to process information deeply and critically, making them more responsive to marketing messages and service quality. Meanwhile, other factors like variety of options, accessibility, price, facilities, value for money, and ambiance don't show significant differences across education levels. This means that although most dining preferences are quite similar regardless of education, restaurants might find that focusing on effective marketing and excellent service particularly appeals to customers with higher education backgrounds.

Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Occupation

This section determines whether a customer's occupation has any significant effect on how they view the factors that influence their decision to dine at casual restaurants. By comparing responses from individuals across different professions, such as students, professionals, or service workers, the analysis looks at whether occupation shapes preferences for aspects like price, service, ambiance, marketing, or overall value. Understanding these patterns can help restaurants better tailor their approach to suit the lifestyle and expectations of various working groups.

Table 16 presents the results of the analysis on the significant relationship between respondents' occupation and the level of influence of the factors that contribute to their patronage of casual dining restaurants. This table helps determine whether people in different types of jobs, such as students, professionals, or service workers, value certain aspects of the dining experience differently, including factors like price, ambiance, service, and marketing. The goal is to see if occupation influences how people choose where and how they dine in casual settings.

Table 16 Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Influence of the Factors that Contribute to the Patronage of the Customers in Casual Dining vs. Occupation

Casual Dining Patronage vs. Occupation	n	Chi-Square Value	df	p-Value	Decision Ho	Interpretation
a. Variety of Options	50	6.793	4	0.147	Failed to reject	Not Significant
b. Accessibility	50	1.909	4	0.753	Failed to reject	Not Significant
c. Price	50	2.579	4	0.631	Failed to reject	Not Significant
d. Facilities & Amenities	50	3.297	4	0.509	Failed to reject	Not Significant
e. Value for Money	50	15.353	8	0.053	Reject Ho	Significant
f. Marketing	50	6.475	8	0.594	Failed to reject	Not Significant
g. Ambiance	50	6.167	4	0.187	Failed to reject	Not Significant
h. Service	50	4.075	4	0.396	Failed to reject	Not Significant

*significant @ = 0.05 level

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The Chi-square analysis in Table 15 reveals that occupation has a significant influence on only one factor when it comes to casual dining patronage: Value for Money, with a p-value of 0.053, which sits right at the threshold of statistical significance. This means that individuals who are private employees or self-employed tend to be more mindful about whether what they're paying for truly matches the quality and experience they receive. On the other hand, all other factors, such as variety of options, accessibility, price, ambiance, marketing, and service, do not show any significant difference across different job types. This suggests that while people from various occupations may share similar dining preferences overall, those managing their own income or working in the private sector may be more focused on getting good value for what they spend.

The finding is supported by the Consumer Value Theory by Zeithaml (1988), which explains that people evaluate products or services based on what they give up (cost) versus what they gain (benefits). For working individuals, especially those managing their own budgets, this perceived value becomes a key driver in decision-making. Meanwhile, the other factors, such as price, ambiance, service, and marketing, did not show significant differences across occupations, indicating that most dining preferences remain consistent regardless of one's job type, except when it comes to getting the most out of their money.

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the study on the factors influencing patronage in casual dining restaurants. It highlights the key findings derived from the data analysis, draws meaningful conclusions based on these results, and offers practical recommendations aimed at helping casual dining establishments improve their appeal and better meet customer expectations.

Summary

This study aimed to assess the factors influencing the patronage of the customers in casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City, Philippines. The findings of this study served as the basis for a proposed action plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.6 age;

1.7 gender;

1.8 civil status,

1.9 educational attainment; and

1.10 occupation?

What is the level of influence of the factors that contribute to the patronage of the customers in casual dining in terms of:

2.9 variety of options;

2.10 accessibility;

2.11 price;

2.12 facilities and amenities;

2.13 value for money;

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2.14 marketing;

2.15 ambiance; and

2.16 service?

3. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the level of influence of the factors that contribute to the patronage of the customers in casual dining?

4. Based on the findings of the study, what action plan may be proposed?

This study focused on understanding what influences customers to choose casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City, Philippines. It looked into who the customers are, their age, gender, civil status, education, and occupation, and how different factors like menu variety, accessibility, price, facilities, value for money, marketing, ambiance, and service affect their dining choices. The study also explored whether these preferences are connected to customers' backgrounds. Finally, based on the findings, the study aimed to create a practical framework to help casual dining restaurants attract and retain more customers.

FINDINGS

These findings provide valuable insight into the current state of customer patronage in casual dining restaurants in Dumaguete City, highlighting both the strengths and the areas that need improvement, particularly in marketing efforts and the perceived value for money among different customer groups. The following findings of this study were drawn:

1. The majority of the respondents were young adults aged 25 to 34 years old, predominantly female, single, held a bachelor's degree, and were employed in the private sector.
2. The level of influence of the factors that contribute to casual dining restaurants' patronage showed that variety of options, accessibility, price, value for money, ambiance, and service were all rated as Highly Influenced by the respondents, except for facilities and amenities, and marketing were only Moderately Influenced.
3. The result revealed no significant difference between the profiles of the respondents in terms of gender and civil status, and the level of influence of the factors that contribute to casual dining restaurants' patronage.
4. The results show that age, educational attainment, and occupation do have a significant influence on how certain factors affect casual dining patronage. Specifically, age was linked to differences in how respondents viewed facilities and amenities, value for money, and marketing. Educational attainment showed a significant relationship with marketing, ambiance, and service, indicating that those with higher education levels may be more selective in these areas. Lastly, occupation influenced perceptions of value for money, indicating how people earn and manage their income plays a role in how they evaluate their dining experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that key factors such as food variety, accessibility, price, ambiance, service, and value for money strongly influence customers' patronage of casual dining restaurants. While facilities and marketing are moderately influential, they still contribute to customer decisions. Differences in preferences were noted based on age, education, and occupation, while gender and civil status showed no significant impact. Offering quality service, diverse menu options, and good value remains essential to attracting and retaining customers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are proposed to help casual dining restaurants enhance customer satisfaction, improve service quality, and strengthen overall patronage.

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1. The researcher recommends adopting the proposed action plan to help casual dining restaurants improve or enhance customer patronage and satisfaction.

2. The researcher recommends conducting further studies on the following topics to gain deeper insights and explore areas or topics such as:

1. Assessing the Impact of Restaurant Facilities and Amenities on Customer Dwell Time and Satisfaction in Casual Dining Settings;
2. The Role of Employee Attentiveness and Responsiveness in Building Customer Loyalty in Casual Dining Restaurants
3. Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Strategies in Attracting Millennial Diners to Casual Dining Restaurants; and
4. A Comparative Study on Perceived Value for Money Between Local and Chain Casual Dining Restaurants.

Proposed Action Plan

Rationale

This proposed action plan was developed in response to the findings of the study, which showed that while most factors highly influence customer patronage, marketing, facilities, and amenities, value for money received relatively lower ratings. These areas, though still important, indicate opportunities for improvement. In today's competitive dining environment, customers not only look for good food and service but also expect a comfortable atmosphere, engaging promotions, and pricing that feels fair for what they receive. To address these specific aspects, casual dining restaurants can enhance customer satisfaction, encourage repeat visits, and stay relevant to the needs and expectations of their target market.

General Objective

The focus is on enhancing customer patronage in casual dining restaurants by strengthening marketing strategies, upgrading facilities and amenities, and increasing perceived value for money to boost customer satisfaction, loyalty, and overall dining experience.

The following proposed action plans are cited below to help enhance customer patronage in casual dining restaurants based on the findings of the study:

Key Area	Objective	Strategies/Activities	Outcome	Timeline	Responsible
Marketing	To improve customer engagement through targeted marketing efforts.	• Strengthen social media presence (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) • Collaborate with influencers	• Promote limited-time offers or bundles online • Increased visibility, improved customer awareness, and engagement	1–3 months (ongoing)	Marketing Manager / Restaurant Owner
Facilities and Amenities	To enhance customer comfort and experience through better	• Upgrade seating, lighting, and ventilation • Ensure clean, accessible restrooms	• Add customer-friendly amenities (e.g.,	3–6 months	Operations Manager / Maintenance Team

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	physical offerings.		Wi-Fi, charging stations) • Improved ambiance and customer satisfaction		
Value for Money	To enhance customer perception of fair pricing in relation to quality.	• Introduce value meals and combo sets • Offer loyalty programs or rewards	• Highlight quality ingredients and portion sizes in menus • Better customer retention and repeat visits due to perceived value	2–4 months (initial rollout)	Restaurant Manager / Finance Team
Accessibility	To ensure that digital and physical environments, products, and services are accessible to all individuals, regardless of ability or disability, by removing barriers and implementing inclusive design practices.	• Improve ease of access to the restaurant • Enhance parking availability and signage	• Improve online reservation and delivery options • Easier access and convenience for customers | 3 months	3 months	Operations Manager / Marketing Team

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Curriculum Vitae



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Graduate School	: Master of Science in Hotel and Restaurant
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	University of Cebu – Main Campus
	2024 to present (on-going)
College	: Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management
	Negros Oriental State University – Guihulngan Campus
	Graduated March 2019
High School	: Guihulngan National Highschool – Poblacion
	Brgy. Poblacion, Guihulngan City
	Graduated March 2016
Elementary	: Vallehermoso Central Elementary School
	Brgy. Población Vallehermoso
	Graduated March 2011

Work Experiences	
BSHM Part-time Instructor	: Negros Oriental State University
	Brgy. Poblacion Guihulngan City
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Counter Crew	: Sans Rival Food and Development Inc.

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Trainings Attended	

- Menu Design and Revenue Management Training EARTH Summer Training Workshop June 28, 2025
- Filipino Brand of Service Excellence DOT7 Seminar-Workshop June 22, 2024
- Bread and Pastry Production NC II TESDA Certificate September 8, 2024
- Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages TESOL 150-Hour Program Completed in February 2023