

# CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARD FOOD TRUCK SERVICES IN EGYPT

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#### **Abstract**

Food truck industry is a particularly fiercely competitive sector in food and beverage sector. It provides a wide selection of typical local foods and is the most practical food service. However, in order to maintain development and raise profit margins in this business, being able to meet client expectations and requests becomes very crucial. As a result, the goal of this study is to examine consumer satisfaction towards food trucks in Egypt by focusing on four factors: food quality, service quality, price and value and physical environment quality. This research is critical to improving food truck operations and supporting vendors and customers in understanding more about the variables that lured them to the market. In this study, 300 customers at street food trucks in Egypt's Greater Cairo responded to a questionnaire survey. In order to fulfill the study's objectives, a convenience sample was used. This questionnaire was divided into five categories, with 22 items based on a seven-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) used to assess consumers' perceptions on food quality, service quality, pricing and value, physical environment quality, and satisfaction. All four hypotheses were supported. The results demonstrate that consumer satisfaction is positively correlated with physical environment quality, food quality, service quality, price, and value. Owners of food trucks can use the study's findings to gauge how consumers are satisfied with the attributes of quality. If their customer bases are satisfied, they can eventually maintain and expand their businesses.

**Keywords** Customer satisfaction, Food trucks, Street food, Services, Egypt.

#### Introduction

Due to sociocultural and economic changes that occur in numerous countries, the consumption of street food is increasing globally (Ahmed et al., 2017; Kok, 2014). The diversity of cuisine available and consumers' desire for practicality and

agility are the primary factors contributing to the growth of this market category (Wang et al.,2015). Although food trucks are typically renowned for inexpensive lunches providing and snacks. gourmet food trucks are increasingly aiming for a new customer base that may be interested in specialty dishes or unusual sweets (Spence, 2014). Food truck industry has taken off and grown in popularity all over the world. Customers are also drawn to food truck sector because of the rapid service, healthier food alternatives, menu that differs from what they would typically get at home, and the friendly atmosphere (Choi et al., 2020). Food trucks are a type of street cuisine that has established itself competitive eatery a (Shankman, 2015). Food trucks have a long history, but they have only recently become a developing phenomenon. With notable

introduction of gourmet food trucks, recent literature has identified a need for study into the factors that impact food truck consumer satisfaction (McNeil & Young, 2019). To maintain a competitive advantage, the service business provides high-quality services to its clients. In a study on gourmet food trucks, McNeiland Young (2019) found that factors including service quality, brand personality, price/value, and convenience had a positive influence on consumer satisfaction.

# Literature review and hypotheses development Food trucks Concept

Itinerant food sellers selling food on bicycles on streets and beaches, food carts, mobile food trucks, trailers, and kiosks, among other categories, make up the street food sector. (Bezerra *et al.*, 2017). Food truck is a large vehicle with a kitchen inside of which food is prepared and served (Isoni et al.,

2019). According to the definition of the sector, "food trucks" are businesses that specialise in creating and delivering meals and snacks for immediate consumption out of motorised or nonmotorized carts (Mobile Food Services, 2018). Such as, ice cream trucks, serve prepackaged or frozen foods, while others have onboard kitchens and cook meals from scratch. French fries, sandwiches, hamburgers, and other types of local fast- food are common (Ogiemwonyi, 2021). The popularity of food trucks that serve gourmet fare, a range of specialities, and ethnic cuisines has skyrocketed recently, especially in connection with the pop-up restaurant phenomena. (Raya, 2020). Food truck consumption has increased significantly, and it is currently regarded as one of the industry's best-performing subsectors (Isoni et al., 2019). The fact that food trucks offer speedy preparation justifies this categorisation, straightforward product availability, social inclusion, leisure, and a variety of meals (Bezerra *et al.*, 2017).

All throughout Cairo's streets, food carts and trucks are sprouting up, and with each new one, they get more intricate and inventive. No matter where you travel, you may find a variety of food trucks that serve a wide spectrum of people. Eating from a food truck or cart has a number of benefits, including being quick and simple, allowing you to watch your meal being produced in front of you, and typically delivering the food inside your car. (Campos *et al.*, 2015). Egyptian streets have traditionally been populated by mobile food carts. Who wouldn't want a freshly made seasoned ful (beans) sandwich or a cup of warm chickpeas by

the Nile to start the day? In particular for the middle and higher classes, today's food carts have developed into a way out of recent economic difficulties. From the middle-aged man in a galabiya roasting corns on an antiquated, wooden cart to the college student selling sushi out of a bright red bike (Alfiero *et al.*, 2017).

Beyond the trendy and poor districts, it seems that food carts and bikes have spread throughout many upscale neighborhoods, providing young people with an escape from unemployment and a way to supplement their income. They frequently turn their own cars' trucks into mobile cafes (Ogiemwonyi, 2021). Despite being known for their affordable lunches and snacks, gourmet food trucks are increasingly striving to attract new

customers who might be interested in specialty desserts (Bezerra *et al.*, 2017).

# Factors affect customer satisfaction in food trucks

### 1- Food quality

Food quality refers to the attributes of the food that customers find acceptable (Awi and Chaipoopirutana, 2014). A collection of material and immaterial product demands pertaining to the product itself, the production environment, the product-packaging system, and the product-market system should be considered when examining the concept of food quality (Serhan and Serhan, 2019). There are several aspects of food quality that have been examined at in earlier research. Some of these are flavour, health options, freshness, presentation, ingredient quality, safety, portion control, halal,

nutrition, menu variety, aroma, temperature, new menu items, hygiene, genuine food and texture (Suvachart, 2019). According to Mokhtar et al. (2018), consumers consider food quality to be the most important aspect in achieving customer satisfaction. Additionally, higher quality cuisine will boost restaurant patron pleasure.

## 2- Service quality

Service quality is determined by the discrepancy between expected and actual quality performance (Al-Tit, 2015). Excellent service cannot provide greater levels of pleasure in the absence of premium food. If food and service are of a good standard, they can be even happier (Kim and Ham, 2016). Furthermore, (Liu and Tse, 2018) discovered a favourable association between customer happiness and the effectiveness of food and service in fast- food restaurants. According to

Cronin and Taylor (2018), customers' purchase intentions are correlated with service quality, customer happiness, and the methods used to quantify customer service quality, they concluded customer satisfaction is preceded excellence in service. Additionally, customer satisfaction has been found to be positively impacted by the service quality. (Oliver, 2014; Ackerman and Tellis, 2001). Furthermore, in his study Alzaydi (2021) concentrated on customer satisfaction, a topic of major importance in order to increase organisations' profit margins. Customer satisfaction now heavily depends on how well an organisation serves its customers. Customer satisfaction is positively impacted by all service quality indicators. The findings that service quality positively impacted customer satisfaction were also validated by the research of Bajarnahor (2017),

Dawi et al. (2018), Alharthey, (2019) and Tjahjaningsih et al. (2020).

# 3-Price and value (perceived price)

Customers' perceptions of the total value of the goods and services they received in relation to the money they paid are known as customer values (Ahmad et al., 2017). Moreover, according to Biswas and Verma (2023) "customer value" is the evaluation of the goods and services a customer obtains in comparison to the price they paid. According to the consumer, the price is what they contribute in exchange for the service. Price fairness is a psychological aspect that influences the customer's attitude to the paid price. (Cristo et al., 2017). Contreras and Ramos (2016) discovered a link between price sensitivity and degrees of satisfaction and discontent. consumer Furthermore, consumer satisfaction in the fastfood business is significantly impacted by cost perception, claim Ali and Ryu (2016).

# 4- Physical environment quality

According to Ryu and Han (2011), the physical environment has a significant impact on how customers behave and how an organization's reputation is built in the service industry. Physical environmental qualities, such as the atmosphere, layout, and clearly visible signs of food trucks, have a big impact on how customers feel. According to Ryu et al. (2010), other crucial considerations in deciding on eating alternatives include the facility's cleanliness and the person handling the food. One of the elements that is thought to have the most effect on the mental health and behaviour of consumers is their immediate surroundings. The components of the physical environment play a crucial role in

developing the perception and image, affecting customer satisfaction, and obtaining hedonic value (Ozdemir-Guzel & Dinçer, 2018).

#### **Customer satisfaction**

According to Bahia et al. (2023) customer satisfaction is described as a factor that determines whether a post purchase attitude reflects a favourable or unfavourable outcome depending on specific consumer experience. In his study, Tran (2020) examined the relationships between fastfood restaurants' price, patron happiness, and behavioural intentions in addition to the three elements that determine quality (food, service, and physical environment). Similary, this study sought to understand how three aspects of foodservice affected satisfaction quality customer willingness to return. Based on past observations, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Customer satisfaction is significantly positively impacted by food quality.

H2: Customer satisfaction is significantly influenced favourably by service quality.

H3: Customer satisfaction is significantly influenced favourably by price and value.

H4: Customer satisfaction is significantly positively impacted by the physical environment.

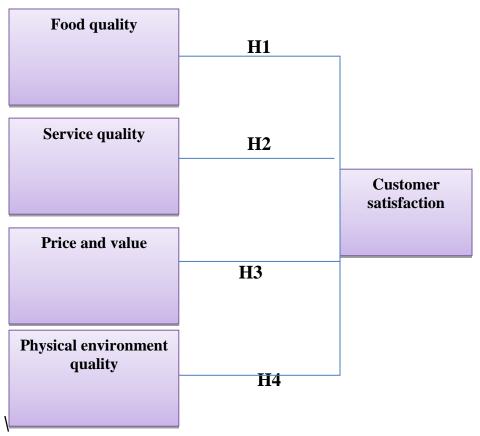


Figure 1. Factors that affect customer satisfaction in food truck

# Research Methodology

### Measurement scale

| Table 1: Construct measurements |   |                     |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Construct                       | Measure   | References          |  |  |  |
| Food quality                    | How would you rank the quality of the food's taste?  What do you think about how fresh the food is?  What do you think of the food's flavour and taste?  How would you rank the food's presentation?  How would you rank the variety of meal options offered? | Siti, et. Al        |  |  |  |
|                                 | How would you rank the size of the portions in each pack?  How would you rank the available healthy eating options?   | (2011)              |  |  |  |
|                                 | How would you assess the hygiene of the offered equipment?  |                     |  |  |  |
|                                 | How would you evaluate the ideal temperature to serve the offered food?   |                     |  |  |  |
| Service<br>quality              | Staff members are friendly.  Staff members serve quickly and promptly   | Namkung<br>and Jang |  |  |  |
|                                 | I feel comfortable with staff   | (2007).             |  |  |  |

|                                    | members' service.   |                              |  |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| (Price and                         | The food truck charges a fair price for its meals.  |                              |  |
| value) Perceived price             | This location has the most affordable price range that works for me.  | Haghighi<br>et al.<br>(2012) |  |
|                                    | The prices at this food truck seem reasonable for what I receive.   |                              |  |
| Physical<br>environment<br>quality | Cleanliness of the floor are satisfactory  The external decorations and colouring of food trucks draw customers.  The food truck has a large parking area and is quiet and silent.  Suitable setting for a family gathering | Ryu et al.<br>(2012).        |  |
| Customer<br>satisfaction           | I was happy with the service received. I appreciated the service that was given. I was satisfied with the service provided  | Ryu et<br>al.(2010)          |  |

As was previously said, the purpose of this study is to determine the degree of client satisfaction with food truck services in Egypt. To achieve this, an online questionnaire was used to study customer satisfaction towards food truck services in Egypt. The analyses were updated for research reasons, and all responses were checked for confidentially. Participants in this study were universities staff and students. Participants received links to the online questionnaire (available in English and Arabic) via emails and various social media profiles. Several times a day, the study team went through and tracked the answers. Research populations are the customers who visited these food trucks in Greater Cairo. These governorates were chosen because they represent major geographic and population areas in the Arab Republic of Egypt and it includes a number of food trucks.

Customers received 400 forms altogether, 322 of which were validly completed, representing an 80.5% response rate. Six significant sections made up final iteration. Participants were questioned

about their profiles in the first segment (that is, age, gender, education, and marital status). On a seven-point Likert type scale, from "strongly disagree" (point 1) to "strongly agree" (point 7), participants in the second five sections of the survey were asked to rate 22 items about their pleasure and perceptions of the quality of the physical surroundings, the food, the service, the pricing, and the value. The 22 items are divided into five variables: food quality (9 items), service quality (3 items) price and value (3 items) physical environment quality (4 items) and customer satisfaction (3 items). Data from the questionnaire were analyzed using the social sciences software package SPSS 25. A descriptive data analysis was performed to show the profile of the respondents. Multiple regressions were carried out to test the hypothesis of the study.

## **Results and Discussions**

#### 1. Respondents profile

| Table 2: Customer            | Freq.  | %   |      |
|------------------------------|--|-----|------|
| Gender                       | Male   | 213 | 66.1 |
| Gender                       | Female   | 109 | 33.9 |
|                              | 25 years or under                                | 177 | 55   |
| A ~~                         | From 26 to 35 years                              | 43  | 13.4 |
| Age                          | From 36 to 50                                    | 66  | 20.5 |
|                              | Over 50 years                                    | 36  | 11.2 |
|                              | Single   | 203 | 63   |
| Marital status               | Married  | 53  | 16.5 |
|                              | Other  | 30  | 9.3  |
|                              | Secondary School Education                       | 29  | 9    |
| Educational level            | Undergraduate degrees or Higher Institute degree | 227 | 70.5 |
|                              | Postgraduate Degrees                             | 66  | 20.5 |
|                              | Student  | 162 | 50.3 |
| Occupation                   | Working  | 94  | 29.2 |
|                              | Not working                                      | 66  | 20.5 |
| Have you recently            | Yes  | 235 | 73   |
| purchased from a food truck? | No   | 87  | 27   |

The profile information includes gender, age, marital status, degree of education, and employment. According to Table (2), 66.1% of the

clients were male, while 33.9% were females. This result is agreed with the great demand of food trucks in Egypt from different segment of society. The chart also reveals that 55% of consumers were 25 years age. Furthermore 20.5% being between the ages of 36 and 50. subsequently, 13.4% of the clients were between the ages of 26 and 35. Only 11.2% of the clients were above the age of 50. These results show that there is interest among different age groups in dealing with food trucks. This also means that there is a wild trend among different age groups towards eating food outside the home as a means of entertainment and relaxation.

In terms of marital status, 63% of consumers were single, while 16.5% were married. Other clients

made up only 9.3% of the total. This result may be attributed to the low degree of social responsibility towards families among single groups. In addition, this social group often prefers to eat out with friends as a way of entertainment and breaking the routine.

It was determined that 70.5% of clients held a bachelor's degree or above. On the contrary, 20.5% had postgraduate degrees. In addition, 9% of the customers had secondary certifications. This result show that most of the customers who eat in the food trucks are in undergraduate degrees or higher institute degrees that spend most of their time with their friends and eat out as a means of entertainment.

According to Table 2, 50.3% of the customers were students. Moreover, 29.2% of them were

employed. In contrast, 20.5% of the customers were not working.

When asked if they have recently made a purchase from a food truck, 73% replied yes and 27% said no.

# 2- Descriptive Analysis

| Construct    | Measure   | M    | SD   | α     |
|--------------|---|------|------|-------|
|              | How would you rank the quality of the food's taste?       | 4.56 | 0.85 | 0.882 |
|              | What do you think about how fresh the food is?            | 4.28 | 0.63 |       |
|              | What do you think of the food's flavour and taste?        | 4.89 | 0.97 |       |
| Food quality | How would you rank the food's presentation?               | 4.44 | 0.75 |       |
|              | How would you rank the variety of meal options offered?   | 3.02 | 0.57 |       |
|              | How would you rank the size of the portions in each pack? | 4.02 | 0.73 |       |
|              | How would you rank the available healthy eating options?  | 2.02 | 0.64 |       |
|              | How would you assess the                                  | 3.09 | 0.82 |       |

|                                    | hygiene of the offered equipment?  How would you evaluate the ideal temperature to | 4.59 | 0.72 |       |
|------------------------------------|--|------|------|-------|
|                                    | serve the offered food? Staff members are friendly.                                | 4.82 | 0.84 | 0.918 |
| Service quality                    | Staff members serve quickly and promptly   | 3.42 | 0.75 |       |
| quanty                             | I feel comfortable with staff members' service.                                    | 4.89 | 0.91 |       |
|                                    | The food truck charges a fair price for its meals.                                 | 4.46 | 0.79 | 0.782 |
| (Price and value)  Perceived       | This location has the most affordable price range that works for me.               | 4.38 | 0.93 |       |
| price                              | The prices at this food truck seem reasonable for what I receive.                  | 4.69 | 0.82 |       |
|                                    | Cleanliness of the floor are satisfactory  | 3.11 | 0.78 | 0.865 |
| Physical<br>environment<br>quality | The external decorations and colouring of food trucks draw customers.              | 3.42 | 0.75 |       |
|                                    | The food truck has a large parking area and is quiet and silent.                   | 3.07 | 0.85 |       |
|                                    | Suitable setting for a family gathering  | 3.55 | 0.65 |       |
| Customer                           | I was happy with the   | 3.09 | 0.51 | 0.920 |

| satisfaction | service received.         |      |      |  |
|--------------|---------------------------|------|------|--|
|              | I appreciated the service | 4.01 | 0.83 |  |
|              | that was given.           |      |      |  |
|              | I was satisfied with the  | 4.87 | 0.80 |  |
|              | service provided          |      |      |  |

Regarding to food quality the mean score for the question (What do you think of the food's flavour and taste?) was the highest overall, scoring a mean of (4.89) and a SD of (0.97), and was proceeded by (How would you evaluate the ideal temperature to serve the offered food?) With a mean rating of (4.59) and SD (0.72). Additionally, the average response to the question (how would you rank the quality of the food taste?) was (4.56) and SD (0.85) followed by (How would you rank the food's presentation?) With a mean rating of (4.44) and SD (0.75). Additionally, the average score of the question (What do you think about how fresh the food is?) was (4.28) mean, (0.63) SD, and then

(How would you rank the size of the portions in each pack?) with a mean rating of (4.02) and SD (0.73). Regarding the question (How would you assess the hygiene of the offered equipment?) the mean score was (3.09) and SD (0.82) followed by (How would you rank the variety of meal options offered?) with a mean score of (3.02) and SD (0.57). The last question (How would you rank the available healthy eating options?) was (2.02) mean and (0.64) SD. The overall food quality scale's average mean rating is (3.87). This signifies that the food truck's meal was satisfactory to the responders. These findings supported the findings of Moorthy et al. (2017), who said that higher food satisfaction in quality increases customer restaurant.

Regarding the statement's average score for service quality, (I feel comfortable with staff members'

service) was the highest overall, scoring a mean of (4.89) and a standard deviation of (0.91), and was followed by (Staff members are friendly) with a mean score of (4.82) and SD (0.84) and the final (Staff members serve quickly and promptly) was (3.42) mean and (0.75) SD. The total service quality scale has a mean score of (4.37), which is the average. This demonstrates that the respondents were happy with the food truck service. This result is consistent with the findings of Moorthy et al. (2017), who indicated that greater service quality will result in higher client satisfaction.

The statement's mean score on the third scale, "Price and Value was (The prices at this food truck seem reasonable for what I receive) has the highest mean score (4.69) and standard deviation (0.82) on a total scale. Then come (The food truck charges a fair price for its meals) with a mean score of (4.46)

and SD (0.79). The scale's last statement (This location has the most affordable price range that works for me) was (4.38) mean and (0.93) SD. The entire price and value scale has an average mean score of (4.51) points. This may mean that the respondents were satisfied with the food truck's items cost. This conclusion concurred with McNeil and Young (2019), who discovered that characteristics such as service quality, price/value, and convenience influenced consumer satisfaction with food trucks.

Regarding physical environment quality the statement's average score (Suitable setting for a family gathering) was the highest overall, scoring a mean of (3.55) and a standard deviation of (0.65), and was followed by (The external decorations and colouring of food trucks draw customers) with a mean rating of (3.42) and SD (0.75). Furthermore,

with respect to the statement (Cleanliness of the floor is satisfactory) the score had a mean of (3.11) and SD of (0.78), and the final one (the food truck has a large parking area and is quiet and silent) was a mean of (3.07) mean and (0.85) SD. The entire physical environment quality rating has an average of 3.28. This mean score shows that respondents were content with the food truck's physical surroundings. According to Anjarsari et al. (2018), the quality of the physical environment considerable beneficial influence has on customer satisfaction. The last scale was job satisfaction the mean score for the statement (I was satisfied with the service provided ) was the highest overall, scoring a mean of (4.87) and SD (0.80) I appreciated the service that was given coming in second with a mean score of (4.01) and SD (0.83). Moreover, in terms of the statement (I was happy with the service received) the mean score was (3.09) and SD (0.51). The mean score of the total work satisfaction is (3.99), on average. This suggests that the food truck satisfied the responders. In their investigation of food trucks operating in the United States, Shafieizadeh, Alotaibi, and Tao (2021) came to the same result and found that customer' judgements of the quality of the food, the level of service, and the aesthetics of the food truck significantly boosted their pleasure with their dining experience. Additionally, fair pricing coupled with excellent food and service quality may result in customer satisfaction in the food service industry (Ibrahim et al., 2018).

## **Testing Research Hypotheses**

Table 3 shows the outcomes of testing the multiple regression including standardised path coefficients (β) and P-values at relevant significance levels.

| Table 3 : Testing Research Hypotheses |           |               |       |       |                 |           |  |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-------|-------|-----------------|-----------|--|
| Hypotheses                            | Direct Re | lations       | ships | ß     | <i>P</i> -Value | Result    |  |
| H1                                    | FQ        | $\rightarrow$ | CS    | 0.156 | 0.001**         | Supported |  |
| Нγ                                    | SQ        | $\rightarrow$ | CS    | 0.139 | 0.021*          | Supported |  |
| Н۳                                    | PP        | $\rightarrow$ | CS    | 0.126 | 0.032*          | Supported |  |
| Н٤                                    | PEQ       | $\rightarrow$ | CS    | 0.243 | 0.003**         | Supported |  |

Standardised route coefficients (B) were used to test the proposed correlations, according to Table 3. The results showed that food quality had a influence positive substantial on consumer satisfaction in food trucks ( $\beta = 0.156$ ; p-value = 0.001), which supported H1. This result supported the claim made by Moorthy et al. (2017) that quality meals will higher boost consumer happiness. Furthermore, H2 was supported by the finding that service quality significantly improved customer satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.139$ ; p-value = 0.021). This finding is consistent with Gopi and Sama's (2020) finding that service quality has a substantial influence on customer satisfaction. As assumed,

perceived price had a substantial, positive relationship with customer satisfaction, supported H3 ( $\beta = 0.126$ ; p-value = 0.032), supported H3. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Han and Ryu (2009), who discovered a substantial link between price perception and pleasure. Furthermore, H4 found that physical environment quality has a substantial positive influence on customer satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.243$ ; p-value = 0.003). Hultén (2019) agreed with this finding, arguing that the physical environment has a good link with customer satisfaction since it affects customers emotionally.

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

According to the study findings, there is a positive association between food quality and customer satisfaction. The findings also revealed that service quality significantly improved customer

satisfaction. Moreover, there was a link between price and value and client satisfaction. Furthermore, there was a positive correlation physical environment between quality satisfaction. The following customer recommendations are made based on past research: To ensure enhanced customer satisfaction, food truck owners should think of innovative methods to expand the attractiveness of food trucks and examine all aspects of consumer concerns. Additionally, food trucks may provide an app for pre-ordering and other cutting-edge methods to cater to the convenience needs of their clients to deliver the quickest and most accurate service. Additionally, food truck owners should focus more the quality of the surrounding physical environment, such as developing fresh décor and colours to draw in more customers and choosing a site that is peaceful, has a lot of parking, and is suitable for family outings.

#### **Limitations and future research**

This research has some limitations; first, this research was carried out in food trucks in Greater Cairo. These analytical findings cannot be applied to all food trucks in Egypt. Second, only 322 of the 400 forms received from the online survey were valid. As soon as customers leave food trucks, a larger sample size study should be performed to increase the validity and reliability of the findings. Thirdly, this study focuses on customer satisfaction in food trucks. A future study might compare customer satisfaction with other food service businesses including restaurants, fast food restaurants, and home delivery services for the benefit of the public. Last but not least, this study

solely hypothesised a direct relationship between customer satisfaction and meal quality, service quality, price and value, and physical environment quality. Future studies should investigate how other factors, including convenience, environment, or food safety, may affect consumer behaviour, with customer satisfaction serving as a mediator.

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