Determinants Of Customer Patronage For Local Food Restaurant In Awka Metropolis

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ABSTRACT
This work examined the determinants of customer patronage for local food restaurant in Awka metropolis. Specifically, the study examined the effect of food quality, service quality, physical environment and price on the patronage of local restaurants in Awka, Anambra State. Relevant conceptual, theoretical and empirical literatures were reviewed. The study was anchored on models of consumer patronage. The study adopted survey research design. The population of this study comprises all customers of local food restaurants in Awka Metropolis. This population is unknown (infinite) since the researcher cannot obtain a sampling frame for the population the study adopted Topman's statistical to obtain a sample size is 246. Questionnaire was employed as the main instrument of data collection. The study adopted face and content validity. Factor analysis through principal component analysis and communality test, descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were employed in analyzing the data. The study found that the four hypotheses were tested with multiple linear regressions and the model shows a good fit. The analysis shows that all the four independent variable except price used in the study are significant determinants of customer patronage in local food restaurants segment of food industry in Awka. The study concluded that food quality is the most statistically significant determinant of customer patronage of local food restaurant followed by food varieties, physical environment and service quality. The study therefore, recommended that those local food restaurant operators should improve on the quality of the meals served since it is the best predictor of customer patronage. Also, they should made available different food varieties with various spices so that the customers can make their choices. The physical environment should be appealing to the customer and portrays the kind of meals served in the restaurant.
Keywords: Food Quality, Service Quality, Physical Environment, Price and Patronage of Local Restaurants

INTRODUCTION
Today, with the markets getting more aggressive and the working setting undergoing constant change, organizations have realized that they no longer face an increasing economic system with ever-growing markets; as a result, each and every consumer has gained a new worth. Consumer satisfaction is considered as a factor cheering consumers to use the service again, though there is no security that a satisfied consumer will return for a repeat purchase (Soriano, 2002). In 1980s and 1990s, marketers and researchers mostly focused on the issue of client satisfaction and on methods to boost customer satisfaction. Bust over time, marketers realized that many consumers who were satisfied did not essentially reuse the goods or services in question (Hyun, 2010).

Consumer patronage is considered to be of significant factor for rising profitability and maintaining the position of the organization. Saeed, Fared and Lodhi (2013) report a powerful relationship between consumer defection rate and increased profits. Nowadays, due to increased service of women outside the home and wide changes in lifestyle, the use of restaurant food and fast food is rising in globe restaurant

industry, and this can provide a very good market for this industry. In the case of Nigeria, the appearance of new chain restaurants, including Crunchies, Thrillers, Diamond Pizza, Norish, Destiny Port., and their devotion to opening new branches is an indication of this issue. Similarly, this development trend in fast food industry has comprehensive to restaurants that serve local meals like Abacha, Akpu, Nri Oka, Nkwobi, Isi Ewu, Amala, and Ukwa to mention but few. This experiential development in local food restaurants industry may not be unconnected to the belief that most of the modern fast food restaurants do not serve local cooking or at most do not get ready it very well hence, an increase in rivalry between these groups that make restaurant food services. With increasing rivalry between these groups of restaurants, attracting new consumers cannot only assurance profits and success but also; retaining existing clients is of more significance. Competitive environment provides customers with more alternatives to choose from. Thereby, they can select their favorite option from several alternatives. The significance of the client and consumer backing is so germane. It includes financial and non-financial dimensions. Various studies have been carried out on what influences or impacts on level of consume backing in order to have food restaurants' patronage. In view of this, determinants of customer patronage in the local Fast Food restaurant industry in Awka metropolis becomes inevitable, hence this study.

Statement Of The Problem
Customer patronage is a significant factor in the customer strategy of any organization. Increasing customer patronage has become a hot topic among managers, consultants, and academic scholars (Keiningham et al., 2007). The significance of this issue is due to the fact that it leads to purchase of goods and services by the clients. Organizations and institutions that are successful in gaining client patronage have a major important advantage (Aksu, 2006). Anderson and Narus (2004) believe that retaining existing clients is a much more effective strategy for the organization than attempting to attract new clients to replace the lost ones (Gee et al., 2008). As a result of facing crowded and ultra-competitive markets, service providers in many industries have switched their marketing strategy from attracting new customers to keeping existing customers through increased patronage (Shoemaker et al., 1999 as cited in Haghighi et al., 2012).

Understanding the factors that responsible for the patronage of local food restaurants could help in properly assisting and encouraging the restaurant operators to perform better since they have the potential of contributing immensely to the nation's economy. The significance of identifying and analyzing factors that influence the clients when he/she decides to patronize local food restaurants is very vital hence; it is a necessity for local food restaurant operators to know what determines and influences the consumers. For local food restaurant owners, it is significant to understand specific decision-making criteria consumers use for restaurant selection in order to be able to affect customers' selection decisions. According to Kotler et al. (2011), consumers seek "a set of benefits" with various capabilities for satisfying their needs. Many marketers consider product packages for restaurants in which food and beverages are only a small part of the package. If consumers also view restaurant services as a package, they will consider multiple criteria for choosing restaurants (Sloan, 2004 as cited in Ling, Mumu & Ling, 2011).From the foregoing, it is legitimate and timely to investigate the factors that predict consumer patronage of local food restaurants in Awka Metropolis.

Objectives of the Study
The general objective of this study is to empirically investigate the determinants of customer patronage for local food restaurants in Awka Metropolis. In specific terms; the study seeks:
1. To determine effect of food quality on the patronage of local restaurants.
2. To ascertain the effect of service quality on the patronage of local restaurants.
3. To find out the effect of physical environment on the patronage of local restaurants.
4. To ascertain the effect of price on the patronage of local restaurants.

Research Questions
1. What is the effect of food quality on customer patronage of local restaurants?
2. To what extent does service quality influence customer patronage of local restaurants?
3. What degree effect does physical environment had on customer patronage of local restaurants?

4. To what extent does price affect customer patronage of local restaurants?

Statements Of The Hypotheses

H_1:   Food quality has no significant effect on customer patronage of local restaurants.

H_2:   Service quality has no significant effect on customer patronage of local restaurants.

H_3:   Physical environment has no significant effect on customer patronage of local restaurants.

H_4:   Prices of has no significant influence on customer patronage of local restaurants.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
Conceptual Framework
Customer Patronage

The client is as old as business. The sole purpose of every business is to "Create client" (Drucker, 1973 as cited in Ogwo&Igwe, 2012). Ogwo and Igwe (2012) opined that the only economic and social justification for the existence of any business is to create customer satisfaction. The importance of the customer and customer patronage is so germane. It includes financial and non-financial dimensions. Various studies have been carried out on what influences or impacts on level of customer patronage. They include-firm's capability, product or services attributes, economic situation, political forces, social and psychological factors, situational, competition, marketing mix programs (Schiffman & Kanuk 2009 as cited in Ogwo & Igwe, 2012; Kotler and Keller 2006). Experience shows that defining and measuring patronage is a difficult task. Attitude and actual usage patronages have been used as measures of customer patronages (Ogwo &Igwe 2012). Dick and Basu (1994) precisely suggested that favorable attitude and repeat purchase were pre-requisites to defining patronage. Intention to use is defined as a specific desire to continue relationship with a service provider (Czepiel and Culmore, 1987 as cited in Ogwo &Igwe, 2012),

Patronage Motives for Restaurants: Patronage motive is defined as the carters of behavior that bring customers to the marketplace to satisfy their interior needs (Jim and Kim, 2003). But in its growth, a person is driver to the market not only because there is need to be purchased. The fact shows that a visit to the restaurant shop is felt not only by the desire to eat a plate of meal. Because of patronage motives a customer makes purchase from one restaurant rather than from another. These motives can be either rational or emotional. Common patronage motives include customer services and policies; assortment; food quality; courteous sales force and Restaurant location and appearance.

Determinants Of Customer Patronage

Food Quality: Food quality is one of the most critical components of a dining experience (Namkung & Jang, 2007; Sulek & Hensley, 2004). Clark and Wood (1999) confirmed that food quality is a primary factor influencing customer loyalty in restaurant choice. While, Susskind and Chan (2000) persisted that from the customer's perspective, food quality is a key determinant for visiting a restaurant. Mattila (2001) considered food quality as a key predictor of customer loyalty in casual dining restaurants and Sulek and Hensley (2004) found that when compared with other aspects of the restaurant, such as environmental components and service quality, food quality" is the most important element of customer satisfaction. Namkung and Jang (2007) tested the impact of food quality on customer patronage and behavioural intentions and found a positive relation between food quality and patronage or behavioural intentions.

Service Quality: Service excellence is often viewed from two viewpoints that are from the client's cognitive assessment of the service provided (Taylor & Baker, 1994) and a multidimensional construct created by an assessment of quality performance (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Service excellence is usually defined as the consumer's judgment of the overall excellence or dominance of the service (Zeithaml, 1988). Thus, it is the consumer's subjective assessment formed by comparing prospects and perceived performance (Bolton & Drew, 1991; Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988). Based on this gap theory, Parasuraman et al. (1988) developed SERVQUAL as a mechanism to measure service excellence.

Food Varieties: The wide range of varieties of foods provides more choices to the consumers (Chavadi & Kokatnur, 2008). If any fast food outlets are looking to boost customer satisfaction, one of the most promising places to start is maintain wider diversities of foods.

Physical Environment: The setting of the fast food outlets is significant for the customers. Especially for hedonic buyers like the Koreans (Park, 2004), who used to come to the restaurants for seeking enjoyment; clean, cozy and fairly atmosphere of the restaurant can provide them massive satisfaction. Physical surroundings are helpful to create image in the mind of customer and to influence their behavior. Physical atmosphere of the restaurants have the significant impacts on the customers satisfaction. Lightning, furnishing, sent, music and different other atmospheric factors among them influence on customer satisfaction.

Price: Based on the basic microeconomic theories, prices are significant factors that can disturb the demand of purchasing goods and services destructively (Mankiw, 2006). So, cheaper prices of the foods can arouse the customers to consume more regularly and can induce more satisfaction. Restaurants are selected for diverse reasons. Skindaras (2009) there are millions of products in this world having different prices. Pricing a product is challenging thing to do. Prices are set according to the value of the product. Price from marketing mix Han (2009) state that one of the most elastic element that changed speedily. In the literature of Khan (2011) marketing the most significant factor indicated for consumer satisfaction is price, because most of the consumers approximation the value of the product or got service through price. Consumers choose restaurants for many reasons like family celebration, business meetings and not having time to go home and cook food themselves. One of the most vital factors of consumer's purchase decision is price. In the study of Antilla (2007), consumer's price perception must be analyzed to understand its effect on their purchase decisions.

Convenient Location: Location is one of the most significant factors in business and marketing relationship (Ferdous and chowdhury, 2010; Sharkey, Horel, Han and Huber, 2007). The location of the food outlets should have decent communication structures which are favorable to build up a strong customer relationship and to boost up overall satisfaction (Ndubisi and Chan, 2005).

Cultural Influence: Schwartz and Davis (1981) also claim that not only does ambiance and other antecedent influence customer satisfaction but as well culture, because the underlying organizational culture helps to determine the value that customers place on the service. In other words, when a Ghanaian customer repeatedly chooses an ethnic/local restaurant like Ashanti Home Touch, Mama Lit Heavy Do, Las Palmas, La Paloma, Asanka, Afrikiko, Kenkey Boutique Mukaase, Lomnava or Abga-Maami, he/she may have more positive perception of the restaurant associated with its organizational culture, which may contribute to the value of the service.

Theoretical Framework

This study adapted Sabir et al. (2014) and Ashraf et al. (2014) models of consumer patronage. These models were intended majorly to measure the decisive factors of consumer patronage in a typical restaurant that serves local meals. This study adapted these models because they provide a real-time framework for measuring the determinants of consumer patronage in local food restaurants. Also, these models provide opportunity for replicating them in a developing economy like Nigeria and in particular from the Igbo cultural perspectives so as to know whether the results from other societies are applicable in our own society.

Empirical Review

In a study conducted by Ashraf, Akhter and Noor (2014) in Dhaka city, data were collected from students in a private industry in the city. The results of the principal component factor analysis and SEM indicate that food quality, service quality, food variety, outlet environment and convenient location statistically significantly influence consumer patronage in the fast food industry.

Nasir, Ahmed, Nazir, Zafar and Zahid (2014) carried out a study aimed at finding out the factors that are important in patronizing fast food restaurants. The results show that food quality, exceptional employee service, environment, price and security are significant factors with price being the most significant.

Moreover, Tan, Oriade and Fallen (2014) carried out an empirical study to investigate customers' perception of Chinese fast food restaurant service quality and its relationship with customer patronage. 205 respondents were used and the findings from the study revealed that service

More so, Sabir, Ghafoor, Hafeez, Akhtar and Rehman (2014) carried out a study to investigate, compare and evaluate the determinants of the customer patronage in fast food industry in Pakistan.. The result of the correlation and multiple regressions show that service quality, price, and environment are positively significant determinants of customer patronage. Quality has positive influence on customer patronage.

Khan, Russian and Yaqoob (2012) conducted a study aimed at finding the key success factors that influence consumer patronage in food industry. The findings show that service quality and brand are the key factors for patronage in food industry in Peshwar Pakistan.

METHODOLOGY
Research Design
This study adopted survey research design. The population of this study comprises customers of local food restaurants in Awka Metropolis. This population is unknown (infinite) since the researcher cannot obtain a sampling frame for the population. Since the population of study is unknown (infinite), because the research could not obtain a sampling frame of their local food restaurant in the area of study, there are sample size was determined to make the study purposeful and easier. The study adopted Topman's formula for the sample size. The formula estimates the representativeness of the sample on certain critical parameters at an acceptable level of probability. The formula is given as;

$$N = \frac{Z^2(P)(Q)}{e^2}$$

Thus,

Z = @ 95% confidence level is 1 .96 (read from the standard- normal distribution table).

P = 80% (0.80) is assumed success rate based on the pilot study

Q = 1 - 0.80 = 0.20 is assumed failure rate

e = 0.05 (since we have chosen 95% as our confidence limit)

$$N = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.80)(0.2.)}{0.05^2}$$

= 245.86 = 246

The sample size is 246 respondents.

Sources of Data Collection
In order to reliably generate data that would help the researcher for his research work primary source or data were used source from field through the use of questionnaire given to the respondents.

Instruments of Data Collection
Questionnaire was adopted as the data collection instrument. The study made use of 5- point Likert scaled questions. The questionnaire comprises two sections. Section A comprises demographic profile of the respondents while section B comprises questions on the main constructs of the study namely, physical environment, convenient location, Food varieties, cultural influence, price, customer patronage, food quality, and service quality.

Validity of Research Instrument
Draft copies of the questionnaire were given to some research experts who went through and made comments that were used in drafting the final questionnaire; this was carried out to conduct face, content and construct validity tests.

Reliability of Research Instrument
For reliability test, factor analysis through Principal Component Analysis and Communality test were employed.

Method of Data Analysis
Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was employed to explain the characteristics of the respondents while multiple regressions were employed to test the significance of the hypotheses. The data were analyzed using SPSS 22.0.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS
The total number of usable copies of questionnaire returned and analyzed was 236 and it amounted to 95.55% response rate. This is considered to be acceptable for the study of this nature. The first presentation is the demographic variables as shown in table 1. Five demographic variables were used namely gender, age, marital status, education and occupation. They showed that the respondents are suitable for the study and have the educational and financial willpower to participate in the study.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	149	63.1	63.1	63.1
	Female	87	36.9	36.9	100.0
	Total	236	100.0	100.0	
Age	18-25	20	8.5	8.5	8.5
	26-35	28	11.9	11.9	20.3
	36-45	120	50.8	50.8	71.2
	46 and above	68	28.8	28.8	100.0
	Total	236	100.0	100.0	
Marital Status	Single	20	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Married	28	11.9	11.9	20.3
	Divorced	120	50.8	50.8	71.2
	Separated	68 236	28.8 100	28.8 100	100.0
	Total				
Education	FSLC/O'level	20	8.5	8.5	8.5
	OND/NCE	28	11.9	11.9	20.3
	HND/BSc	120	50.8	50.8	71.2
	Post-Graduate	68	28.8	28.8	100.0
	Total	236	100	100	100
Occupation	Civil/Public Servant	75	31.8	31.8	31.8
	Private Firm's employee	73	30.9	30.9	62.7
	Self-employed	87	36.9	36.9	
	Total	236	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

The next information is the descriptive statistics and this is shown in table 2 below. The table reveals that most of the items have standard deviations of less than one except customer patronage item service quality item 2 and physical environment items 1 and 4. Standard deviations above one show high variations in response; except for 6 items with high variations the other 21 items have standard deviations less than one and this shows respondents agreement with the dimensions of the research model.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Customer patronage 1	1.37	.483	236
Customer patronage 2	2.97	1.118	236
Customer patronage 3	2.08	.810	236
Food quality 1	3.00	.865	236
Food quality 2	1.36	,576	236
Food quality 3	1.76	.723	236
Service quality 1	2.41	.996	236
Service quality 2	2.51	1.017	236
Service quality 3	2.45	.885	236
Price 1	2.03	.903	236
Price 2	2.08	.871	236
Price 3	2.36	.899	236
Price 4	2.19	.855	236
Physical environment 1	2.31	1.064	236
Physical environment 2	2.42	.881	236
Physical environment 3	2.11	.743	236
Physical environment 4	2.03	1.209	236

Source: SPSS 22.0

Factor analysis was employed to reduce the data and test the reliability of the instrument. The table below shows the results of the factor analysis show that KMO measure of sampling adequacy is .666 which is above the threshold of .5 with the Chi Square value of 3023.207 significant at .000 means that the sample is adequate to perform factor analysis. The Bartlett's test of sphericity

(Sig. $\leq$ 0.00) confirms the result-'of KMO. These show that the measurement data is reliable and dependable.

Table 4.3: Factor Analysis
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.666
Approx. Chi-Square	3023.207
Bartlett's Test of SphericityDf	253
Sig.	.000

Tests of Hypotheses
To test the hypotheses, multiple linear regressions we used to test the hypotheses with factors and the results are shown below:

Table 4.5: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.767[a]	.588	.575	.65195333	1.595

a. Predictors: (Constant),food quality, service quality, Price, physical environment
b. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage
The result of the model summary of the regression analysis shows the coefficient of correlation R of .767, which is a strong correlation. The coefficient of determination R^2 is .588, which means that 58.8% of

variations in customer patronage are accounted for by the independent variables. Durbin-Watson (D-W) statistic of 1.595 indicates that there exist no redundant variables that need to be expunged in the study.

Table 4.6: ANOVA[a]

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	138.090	7	19.727	46.412	.000[b]
Residual	96.910	228	.425		
Total	235.000	235			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage
b. Predictors: (Constant), Food quality, Service quality, Price, Physical environment,

Table 4.6 above reveals the analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the regression analysis, and from the results, the F-value of 46.412 that was significant at .000 implies that the research model is a good-fit in explaining determinants of customer patronage in the local food restaurant industry.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.412E-017	.042		.000	1.000
Food quality	.619	.059	.619	10.445	.000
Service quality	.108	.055	.108	1.966	.050
Physical environment	.124	.051	.124	2.407	.017
Price	-.061	.052	-.061	-1.176	.241

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Patronage
From the coefficients table of regression analysis above, food quality has a t-value of 10.445 and it is significant at 0.05 hence, hypothesis 1 is validated and accepted. Service quality has a t-value of 1.966 which is significant at 0.05 hence, we validated and accepted hypothesis 3. For price construct, it has a t-value of -1.176 and no significance hence, hypothesis 2 is rejected. Physical environment has a t-value of 2.407 and significant at 0.05 hence, hypothesis 4 is validated and accepted.

Summary of Findings
The main objective of this study is to empirically investigate the determinants of customer patronage for local food restaurants in Awka Metropolis of Anambra State. The main instrument for data collection is the questionnaire which was designed to cover all aspects of the research. Four independent variables were identified in the study and they are; service quality physical environment, price. Each of these variables was measured with at least two items and factor analysis was employee to test reliability and reduce the items into the variable. The four hypotheses were tested with multiple linear regressions and the model shows a good fit. The analysis shows that all the four independent variable except price used in the study are significant determinants of customer patronage in local food restaurants segment of food industry in Awka.

CONCLUSIONS
This study examined the determinants of customer patronage of local food restaurant. Empirical evidence shows that food quality is the most statistically significant determinant of customer patronage of local food restaurant followed by food varieties, physical environment and service quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the conclusions, this study recommends that local food restaurant operators should improve on the quality of the meals served since it is the best predictor of customer patronage. Also, they should made available different food varieties with various spices so that the customers can make their choices.
 Furthermore, the physical environment should be appealing to the customer and portrays the kind of meals served in the restaurant.
Finally, the implication of this study is that the Sabir et al. (2014) and Ashraf et al. (2014) models adapted for the study is a good fit and can be plausible models for local food restaurant operators in managing and maintaining competitive advantage and profitability in organizations.

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