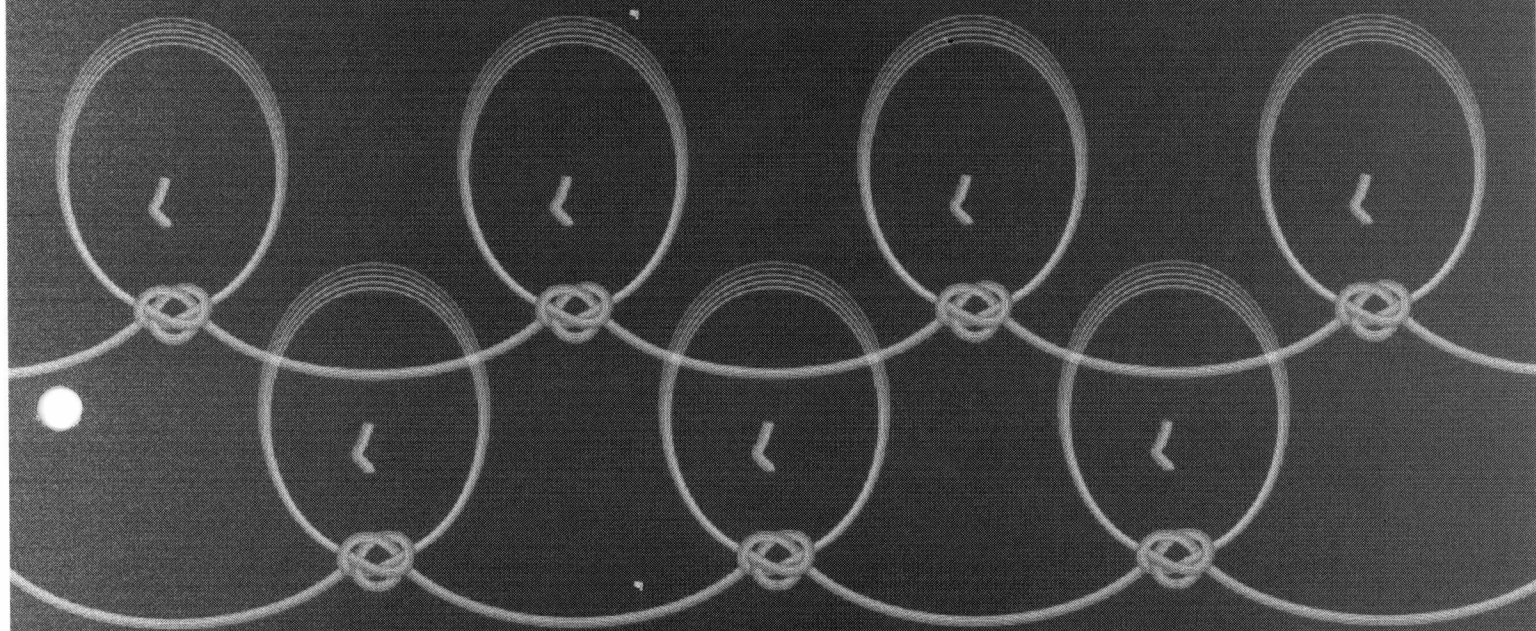


# Public pinion Research • at Crossroads



Proceeding of  
**2014 ANPOR Conference**  
at Toki Messe Niigata Convention Center  
Niigata, JAPAN  
November 29 - December 1, 2014

Co-organized by Asian Network for Public Opinion Research (ANPOR)  
University of Niigata Prefecture  
Faculty of Management Science, Silpakorn University

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## **Hedonic and Utilitarian Values of Eating Fast Food : A Case Study of Undergraduate Students in Thailand**

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### **Abstract**

The objectives of the research were to analyze factors of eating fast food through consumer values; hedonic and utilitarian, and to study relationship between consumer values and fast food restaurant attributes. The sample was 400 undergraduate students, which were selected by convenience sampling. The data were collected by questionnaire between April to May 2014 and analyzed by SPSS 11.5. The statistical techniques employed in this research were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, factor analysis, and pearson correlation. The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts; general data, customer values, and fast food restaurant attributes. It was found that most of sample were female, studied in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, had domicile in Bangkok, and had revenue per month 8,001-10,000 THB. While in customer values, the factor analysis was shown that it could divide into 2 components consisting of hedonic value and utilitarian value. Moreover, it was also found that most of restaurant attributes do not correlated with consumer values.

**Keywords:** *Utilitarian, Hedonic, Fast Food, Undergraduate Student*

## **Hedonic and Utilitarian Values of Eating Fast Food : A Case Study of Undergraduate Students in Thailand**

### **Introduction**

Fast Food or Quick Dish or Single dish meal is popular because it could give a full needed nutrient and also time saving compared cooking. As the research and data collection among Fast Food consumers, this type of food is the most preferred amongst teenager and first jobber so called Primary target. The secondary consumer is Kids because it is easy and convenience which is suitable for rush hour in recent. Moreover, people give a priority to Time so that having Fast Food becomes more and more popular.

There are two types of Fast food. First is full meal fast food which consists of carbohydrate, meat and vegetable. Full meal fast food may have bread, fried potato for carbohydrate. Sausage, ham, bacon, fried chicken, grilled chicken are protein and decorated with vegetable such as tomato, Lettuce. Full meal fast food may offer either small or big set for consumers. The second type of fast food is snack fast food which is a break meal. It might be dessert or meat dish such as ice cream, cake, donut, spring roll, meat-ball stick. (Wannarat, 1997)

Utilitarian Product is product that consumers want to utilize its advantages. Consumers will buy Utilitarian Product because they would like to fulfill their want or would like to fix some problems by concerned its benefit rather than their like or emotional. This kind of product is related to the Hedonic Product that consumers consume it emotionally including imaginary and satisfaction. The products will be helpful for positive feeling and experience of emotional. (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Strahilevitz, 1999; O'Curry and Strahilevitz, 2001; Ang and Lim, 2006; Micu and Chowdhury, 2010) However the product will be emphasized on its utilization and relaxation of emotion depend on both interpretation and application.

Consumption norm for Thais could be spread out significantly influencing by the western norm on eating consumption especially for teenager. Competing with time for education is the core factor for eating consumption. Students turn to have fast food or prepared single dish for their convenience and it is easy to have it with limited time. Also, the taste is good and modern service provided. The examples of fast food are as the following; hamburger, sandwich, pie, pizza, fried chicken, and sausage. (Siriworakul, 2011) Moreover, this restaurant could be the meeting point for teenagers as well.

## Research Methodology

1. This research is the quantitative study surveying the opinions of the Thai undergraduate students on customer value and fast food restaurant attribute.

2. The population of this research consisted of 2,106,643 undergraduate students in Thailand (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2014). The sample group was calculated using the Yamane method. Finally, 400 samples were obtained and randomly sampled using the convenience sampling during April 2014 to May 2014.

3. Questionnaire was used as a research instrument. The questionnaire comprised four parts of general data of the respondents, fast food consumption behaviors, customer value on fast food, and opinion about fast food restaurant attributes, respectively.

4. The research initially began with the literature review for the conceptual framework, theories and researches compiled from the books, journals and related articles to gain the issues for drafting the questionnaire in accord with the research objectives. The two experts of marketing considered the validity of the drafted question. Only the questions consistent with the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) over 0.5 were selected. The questionnaire adjusted and approved by the experts was tried out with 30 undergraduate students in Bangkok. It was found that the Alpha Cronbach Coefficients of the questionnaire for customer value on fast food, and opinion about fast food restaurant attributes were 0.867 and 0.882, respectively, indicating that the questionnaire had high confidence. Therefore, this questionnaire was used in the data collection with the samples.

5. The data were verified and were analyzed using the SPSS program whereas general data of the respondents, fast food consumption behaviors, and opinion about fast food restaurant were analyzed by the descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage.

Customer values on fast food were analyzed by the Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation. The Eigenvalue of each factor should be high than 1 and factor loading absolute value should be over 0.5 (Hair et al., 2009).

The correlation between customer value on fast food and opinion about fast food restaurant attributes was analyzed by pearson correlation with significance level at 0.05

## Results

The general data analysis revealed that most of the samples were female, ( $n = 304$ , 76.00%), studied in third year ( $n = 140$ , 35.00%), GPAX between 2.51 – 3.00 ( $n = 194$ , 48.50%). They rest at dormitory in campus ( $n = 201$ , 50.25%). Most of them had a domicile in Bangkok and Metropolitan ( $n = 163$ , 40.75%) and obtained the average income in the amount of Bt. 8,500 -10,000 per month ( $n = 201$ , 50.25%), See Table 1.



Table 1  
Frequency and Percentage of General Data of Samples

Description	Frequency (n=400)	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	304	76.00
Male	96	24.00
<b>Class</b>		
First year	88	22.00
Second year	91	22.75
Third year	140	35.00
Fourth	81	20.25
<b>GPAX</b>		
Less than 2.00	7	1.75
2.01 – 2.50	44	11.00
2.51 - 3.00	194	48.50
3.01 – 3.50	98	24.50
3.51 – 4.00	57	14.25
<b>The average income per month</b>		
Less than 5,000 Baht	10	2.50
5,001-8,500 Baht	103	25.75
8,501-10,000 Baht	201	50.25
More than 10,000 Baht	86	21.50
<b>Residence</b>		
Dormitory in campus	268	67.00
Dormitory outside of campus	102	25.50
Home	23	4.75
Other	7	1.75
<b>Domicile</b>		
Bangkok and Metropolitan	163	40.75
Central	96	24.00
Western	65	16.25
Southern	41	10.25
Northern	17	4.25
Eastern	14	3.50
North-Eastern	4	1.00

The analysis of behavior in fast food consumption indicated that most of the respondents have McDonald as favorite fast food restaurant (n = 163, 40.75%); they have fast food restaurant in lunch (n = 177, 44.25%); they use fast food services once a week (n = 163, 40.75%); their favorite reason for eating fast food is eating with friends or family (n = 105, 26.25%); they have fast food with friends (n = 245, 61.25%); they prefer to have fast food at restaurant (n = 319, 79.25%) and they spent for a time about 100 – 200 THB (n = 208, 57.00%). See Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage of Behavior in Fast Food Consumption

Description	Frequency (n=400)	Percentage
What's your favorite fast food restaurant?		
McDonald	163	40.75
KFC	121	30.25
Pizza Hut	33	8.25
The Pizza Company	30	7.50
Pepper Lunch	8	2.00
Burger King	5	1.25
Other	40	10.00
When do you typically eat at fast food restaurant?		
Breakfast	48	12.00
Lunch	177	44.25
Dinner	92	23.00
Snack	83	20.75
How often do you use fast-food services?		
Once a week	163	40.75
Twice a week	136	34.00
Once a month	87	21.75
Once a year	11	3.75
Other	3	0.75
The favorite reasons for choosing to eat at fast food		
Eat with friend / family	105	26.25
Limited time	100	25.00
Advertisement	53	13.25
Cost / Price	50	12.50
Enjoy the taste	35	8.75
Variety of menu	32	8.00
Lack of cooking skill	25	6.25
Who do you often have fast food with?		
Friend	245	61.25
Relatives / parents	45	11.25
Alone	92	23.00
Other	18	4.50
Which place do you prefer to have Fast food?		
Restaurant	319	79.75
Take away	41	10.25
Both of them	40	10.00
How much does a meal cost per person each time?		
Less than 100 Baht	48	12.00
101-200 Baht	208	57.00
201-300 Baht	91	22.75
More than 300 Baht	53	13.25

The factor analysis results related to customer value of Thai undergraduate student could be separately 10 factors into 2 components. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was 0.769 whereas the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was 1073.181 (Sig = 0.000). The two components consisted of hedonic and utilitarian with the total variance of 52.955%, See Table 3.

Table 3  
Factor Loading, Mean, S.D. of Each Component of Customer Value

Factor	Factor Loading	Mean	S.D.
Component 1: Hedonic (Eigenvalues = 2.859 Variance = 228.951%)			
You choose fast food by consider on taste more than nutrient.	0.776	3.87	0.75
Having fast food could express you are modern	0.766	3.83	0.73
You have Fast food as a trend	0.746	3.87	0.76
Fast food restaurant is a place for meeting	0.742	3.90	0.78
You have fast food because it is convenient and save time	0.739	3.88	0.74
Component 2: Utilitarian (Eigenvalues = 2.436 Variance = 24.364%)			
Fast food is suitable for all age and gender	0.839	3.89	0.74
You give a priority to the raw material and freshness of food	0.714	3.86	0.76
You give a priority to the clean and neat place	0.714	3.92	0.72
You give a priority to the clean and well dress of waitress such as apron	0.601	3.81	0.79
Fast food have a nutrient as international standard	0.590	3.91	0.79

The fast food opinion about fast food restaurant attributes revealed that the most emphasize attribute is food order was correct and complete, the next are clean environment for using service and discount offer, respectively. See Table 4.

Table 4  
Mean and S.D. of Opinion in Fast Food Restaurant Attributes

Fast Food Restaurant Attributes	Mean	S.D.
1. My food order was correct and complete	4.25	0.73
2. Discount offer	4.04	0.77
3. Clean environment for using service	4.04	0.72
4. Fast service	4.01	0.76
5. The food is tasty and flavorful	4.00	0.81
6. The service is excellent	3.97	0.72
7. Obviously price list	3.96	0.73
8. The quality of food is excellent	3.95	0.78
9. The value for price paid was excellent	3.92	0.75
10. Attractive promotion such as collection, coupon	3.92	0.77
11. Well dress	3.88	0.77
12. Availability of sauces, utensils, napkins, etc. was good	3.88	0.77
13. Enough table for service	3.87	0.85

<b>Fast Food Restaurant Attributes</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
14. The menu board was easy to read	3.86	0.77
15. The food is served hot and fresh	3.85	0.82
16. Nearest branch and convenient to use service	3.85	0.84
17. Employees are patient when taking my order	3.83	0.83
18. Variety of Channel for service	3.80	0.85
19. The menu has a good variety of items	3.79	0.81
20. Trial product	3.79	0.81
21. Employees are friendly and courteous	3.75	0.79
22. Sufficient parking lot	3.72	0.98
23. Employees speak clearly	3.71	0.87

The result from correlation between customer values and restaurant attributes can conclude that in hedonic value, it correlated with the food is served hot and fresh, variety of channel for service, and employees speak clearly. As for utilitarian value, it only correlated with employees are friendly and courteous. The other restaurant attributes do not correlate with customer values. See Table 5.

Table 5  
Pearson Correlation between Customer Values and Restaurant Attributes

<b>Fast Food Restaurant Attributes</b>	<b>Hedonic</b>	<b>Utilitarian</b>
1. The food is served hot and fresh	0.102*	-0.040
2. The menu has a good variety of items	0.039	-0.082
3. The quality of food is excellent	-0.015	-0.066
4. The food is tasty and flavorful	0.017	-0.024
5. The value for price paid was excellent	-0.006	-0.024
6. Obviously price list	0.017	0.011
7. Nearest branch and convenient to use service	0.008	0.009
8. Variety of channel for service	0.129**	-0.049
9. Attractive promotion such as collection, coupon	-0.021	0.035
10. Discount offer	-0.090	-0.017
11. Trial product	0.030	0.044
12. Employees speak clearly	-0.121*	-0.016
13. Employees are patient when taking my order	0.045	0.083
14. Employees are friendly and courteous	0.018	0.107*
15. The service is excellent	0.080	0.026
16. Well dress	0.039	-0.003
17. The menu board was easy to read	-0.018	-0.041
18. Clean environment for using service	0.027	0.054
19. Sufficient parking lot	0.033	-0.091
20. Enough table for service	0.037	0.054
21. My food order was correct and complete	-0.005	-0.005
22. Availability of sauces, utensils, napkins, etc. was good	-0.023	0.020
23. Fast service	-0.056	-0.004

\*sig. at 0.05 \*\*sig. at 0.01 \*\*\*sig. at 0.001

## Conclusion

As for the results above, it can conclude that most of the samples were female, studied in third year, GPAX between 2.51 – 3.00, rest at dormitory in campus, had a domicile in Bangkok and Metropolitan, and obtain the average income in the amount of Bt. 8,500 -10,000 per month.

The analysis of behavior in fast food consumption indicated that most of the respondents have McDonald as favorite fast food restaurant, have fast food restaurant in lunch, use fast food services once a week, have favorite reason for eating fast food is eating with friends or family, have fast food with friends, prefer to have fast food at restaurant, and each time spending about 100 – 200 THB.

The factor analysis results related to customer value of Thai undergraduate student could be separately 10 factors into 2 components consisted of hedonic and utilitarian.

The fast food opinion about fast food restaurant attributes revealed that the most emphasized attribute is food order was correct and complete, following by clean environment for using service and discount offer, respectively.

The correlation between customer values and restaurant attributes can conclude that in hedonic value, it correlated with the food is served hot and fresh, variety of channel for service, and employees speak clearly. As for utilitarian value, it only correlated with employees are friendly and courteous. The other restaurant attributes do not correlate with customer values.

The core benefit of this research is shown that it is hard to define what hedonic or utilitarian customers want, some attributes hedonic is emphasized more than utilitarian, and vice versa. Then, it is necessary for fast food companies to prepare everything for every single customer. Moreover, it is good topic for other researchers to find how correlate of customer value and restaurant attributes can make maximization profit to companies.

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