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Determinants of UiTM Students’ Revisit Intention to Kopitiam in Penang

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Abstract

Kopitiam has been modified and being acceptable to all level of people. Although the kopitiam has own specialties and becomes popular among the teenagers including the college and university students as a social center, the main factors influence students to revisit kopitiam is still unknown. Therefore, this study explores the factors influence students to revisit the establishment. Quantitative approach to using survey was undertaken which involved 150 respondents. Result revealed quality of food found as the main factor that contributes the students' intention revisit kopitiam restaurant as compared to service quality and good ambiance of the foodservice organization.

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Keywords: Determinats; UiTM students; revisit intention; kopitiam

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1. Introduction

The development of food service business has brought a new concept, theme, service and menu. While many new types of foodservice business have been introduced in order to satisfy the customers, some of the old concepts have been modified in order to accommodate the demand. In line with this notion, *kopitiam* has been upgraded and accepted among all level of people. Although *kopitiam* is popular as ethnic restaurants among the Chinese, it has its specialities and attracts various races such as Malays and Indians.

With the number of no less than 100 brand names of modern *kopitiam* operating in various parts of Malaysia, *kopitiam* has become favorite place or location for the middle and upper class society to meet, discuss business project, socialize and many other activities (Yazam & Hamid, 2011). *Kopitiam* is one of the tradition and nostalgic memories of a bygone age. Each *kopitiam* shop has its unique flavor and ambiance. The unique ambiance of the restaurant has led the youngsters especially the college and university students to visit *kopitiam*.

As reported, this restaurant sells simple food for breakfast like sunny side up, half boiled egg, scramble egg, bread toast with 'kaya' added with coffee, tea, and melted chocolate drink (Lim, 2013). This place is chosen by the students as a place to hang out with friends, discuss the assignment, share ideas and use the internet access. Besides that, the foods served are simple and hot, and the menu offers suitable during breakfast, lunch, tea time, dinner and also supper.

In addition, most *kopitiam* restaurant served Malay, Chinese and Indian food and is prepared in the traditional method to ensure the authenticity and the taste of food. Instead of the popular toast and hot beverages, patrons can savor specialties and local delights such as Curry Laksa, 'Char Kuey Teow' and 'Nasi Lemak' (Lim, 2013). According to (Jess, 2013), foods in *kopitiam* have become a part of Malaysia's culinary heritage, gastronomic bastions that was proudly weathering the years and changing lifestyles of people.

Early 2000's is the revival of the traditional culture which started with the introduction of new age *kopitiam*. The popularity of the old-fashioned outlets along with society's obsession with nostalgia and increasing affluence has led to the revival of these *kopitiam*. According to Lim (2013), the new *kopitiam* are fast-food outlets which are reminiscent of the old *kopitiam*s in terms of decor, but are usually built in a more urban, modern, hygienic setting such as shopping mall rather than in the traditional shop house, catering mainly for young adults especially for a generation Y. On the other hand (Jess, 2013) stated that, modern *kopitiam*s that retained the old-fashioned marble-topped tables, chunky crockery and, wooden chairs can be found in the air-conditioned shopping center malls. This has led *kopitiam* become popular restaurant among Malaysian with the introduction of new décor and new menu items.

1.1. Problem statement

With traditionally known as Chinese coffee shops and a part of the Malay society in the urban city (Eng, 2010), *kopitiam* has grown rapidly in Malaysia. This concept of restaurant has been accepted by several age groups. This includes teenagers which refer to college or university students. There are too many *kopitiam* or Chinese coffee shops established in Penang. With the huge number of college and university students and due to the variety of restaurants in Malaysia, the students have plenty of choices.

As we know, majority *kopitiam*s are owned by Chinese. It brings hesitation to the Malays because of the Halal status of the restaurant. Even though the *kopitiam*s have Halal certificate, they still cannot attract customer to visit their restaurant (Yazam & Hamid, 2011). Other than Halal certificate to attract more customers, they have to also create other factors to influence customer intention especially students revisit their restaurant.

Customers nowadays especially students are concern about the quality of food while enjoying the food at the restaurant. Therefore, the *kopitiam* need to improve their food quality in terms of the preparation of food, approval sources by Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), freshness of raw materials and others to attract the customers. This is because customers are conscious about their choices of food to maintain healthy lifestyle (Clark, 1998). This study is therefore investigating the factors that influence the students' revisit intention to visit *kopitiam*. This main objective is supported by the following sub-objectives.

- To examine ambiance factors that influence the student revisit intention to visit the *kopitiam*.
- To determine the service quality factors that influences student revisit intention visit *kopitiam*.

- To investigate the food quality factors that influences student revisit intention to visit *kopitiam*.

1.2. Conceptual framework

The study framework for this study is shown in Fig.1:

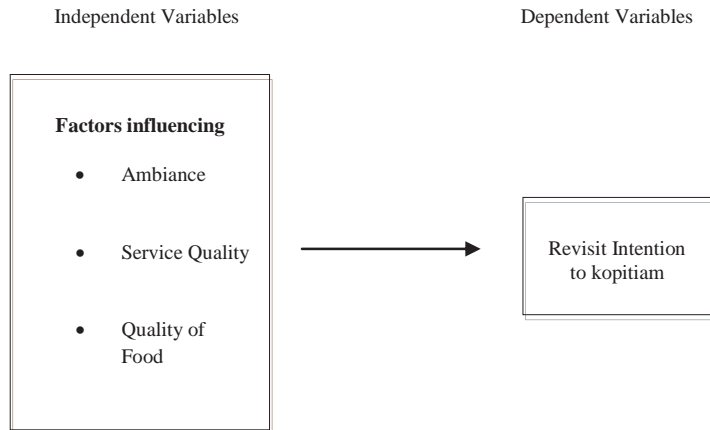


Fig.1.Source adopted from Yazam (2011)

2. Literature review

2.1. Development of *kopitiam* in Malaysia

In Malaysia, *kopitiam*s are found almost everywhere at the town of cities. However, there are a few differences of Malaysian *kopitiam* with Singapore *kopitiam*. According to Lim (2013), stated that in Malaysia the term *kopitiam* is usually referred to Malaysian Chinese coffee shops, the food also that are served at *kopitiam* is usually exclusively Malaysian Chinese cuisine.

Nowadays new generation of “modern” *kopitiam*s have establishing in Malaysian. The increasing affluence has led to the revival of these pretend-*kopitiam*s became popular of the old-fashioned outlets along with society's obsession with nostalgia. The new *kopitiam*s are fast-food outlets which are put in mind of the old *kopitiam*s in terms of decoration, ambiance but are usually built in a more modern decor, hygienic setting such as a shopping mall rather than in the traditional shop house, catering mainly for young adults (Lim, 2013).

Besides that, to offer more experience to customers, they make the true *kopitiam* for example the modern *kopitiam*s such as Uncle Lim's Cafe mostly was offered authentic local coffee with grilled toast that served with butter and a local version of jam made from coconut milk (Kaya) and also soft boiled eggs. Lim (2013) mentioned that, today there are no less than 100 brand names of modern *kopitiam*s operating in various parts of Malaysia. Meanwhile, *kopitiam*s in Ipoh old town district serve Ipoh white coffee. Those coffee beans are roasted with palm-oil margarine and added with less of sugar, it became lighter color than normal coffee beans that uses sugar, hence the name 'white coffee'.

2.2. Factors influencing customers intention to visit *kopitiam*

2.2.1. Quality of service

The quality of service in foodservice industry is difficult to estimate, because the assessments are made not only on the service outcome, but also on the process of service delivery. Zeithaml (1988) defined service quality as the overall excellence or superiority of the service that judge by the customer.

Quality is the importance sign of customer requirements in foodservice industry. In addition, (Lui and Jang, 2009; Aren, Güzel, Kabadayı, and Alpkan, 2013), stated that service quality, ambiance quality, food quality, feeling comfortable and reservation that can make the return patronage on customer satisfaction. Several studies were found that the service quality was more important than food quality in dining satisfaction, (Lui and Jang 2009). This is supported by Andaleeb and Conway (2006) was agreed that an important factors dining satisfaction in the service environment is service quality.

Kurtus (2008), noted that customer is not only pay for the value of food but, they also pay for the value for certain level of service, thus quality service is typically faster and polite and also something that always expected by customer. The equipment, appearances of employees, waiting-time before seating, courtesy of employees, waiting time before food arriving, and waiting time before paying the bill are the elements of quality of service (Eliwa, 2006). On the other hand, waiting time for service is showing the overall image of the service delivery towards these customers can be illustrating in the restaurant industry. It shows that customers who unhappy with the long waiting time or food service may complain about the overall quality of service that is received by them (Kurtus, 2008).

Customers always concern about the quality of service (Soriano, 2002). Ursin (1996) stated that if the waiting staffs if given the authority or the empowerment, that particular individual can give a better performance towards customer when they serve. Thus, it is clearly stated that by providing both quality of service and food quality will make a revisit customers and loyalty towards the chosen restaurants to dine out.

2.2.2. Food quality

Food and beverages can be a most important and primary motivator to satisfied physiological and other people needs and wants. A food also offers enjoyment and at the same time it serves a social purpose. The importance performance analysis on a sample of Chinese restaurant customers point out the most important restaurant attributes were taste and food freshness, flavor, food safety, environmental cleanliness and appropriate food temperature (Liu & Jang, 2009). In addition, the quality of food and fresh of ingredients has already been rated as the most important reasons why customers return to a restaurant (Soderlund & Rosengren, 2008).

The customer usually expects the food to be what is promised on stated the menu, to be cooked and prepared properly, to be clean and to have the correct taste and flavor. Food is the vital of the overall restaurant experience (Kivela, Inbakaran & Reece, 1999; Raajpoot, 2002; Sulek & Hensley, 2004). According to Lewis (1981) considered five factors which are atmosphere, food quality, price, menu variety and convenience factors. Meanwhile, Jang and Namkung (2009) suggested that three factors there are service quality, product quality, and atmosphere as a main restaurant attributes affecting perceived quality of restaurant experiences. Thus, food quality can be considered as the factor that related with customer satisfaction toward restaurant.

2.2.3. Ambiance

The influence of the environment towards people behavior has long been acknowledged by retailers, architects and interior designers (Baker, Levy & Grewal, 1992; Tai & Fung, 1997; Gilboa & Rafaeli, 2003). According to Mehrabian and Russell (1974), pointed that there has been building up proof over the years that environmental variables can essence influence consumer behavior and emotions in physical environments.

A pleasing atmosphere is more likely to attract customers for spending their time and money at the restaurant. From the previous researcher Chen, (2012), noted that physical environment and service of the restaurant is the key of the loyalty. Although atmosphere in marketing contexts, mostly are focusing on the restaurant, nowadays is based on the premise that the design of an environment through a variety of means that including lighting, layout, sound, color, and temperature (Bitner, 1992). It is also could stimulate perceptual and emotional responses in consumers and affect their behaviors (Kotler, 1973). According to Wall and Berry (2007) explained that although food quality is most foundations for successful of a restaurant, the ambiance and service performance must contribute greatly in influencing the customer's evaluation of a particular establishment.

3. Methodology

As this study is to determine the factors influencing UiTM student intention to visit kopitiam, self-reported survey would be adopted for the data collection. The populations of this study were undergraduate students at

Universiti Teknologi Mara, Pulau Pinang. It is important to mention that the sample population for this study will only be collected from UiTM Pulau Pinang students. The underlying reason for choosing this institution is due to time constraints. The questionnaires were distributed to 150 students at UiTM Pulau Pinang. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in the month of November 2013. The surveys were conducted in two days at the UiTM Pulau Pinang by the researcher and with the assistance of close friend around 12.00 p.m to 3.00 p.m. With full cooperation from the students, good responses were obtained. One hundred and fifty (150) responses to the questionnaires have been successfully collected. The questionnaires were then coded and keyed in Social Statistical Package (SPSS) Version 17.0 to be analyzed and interpreted.

4. Results and discussion

The researchers' aims to analyze all aspects that were included in the survey questionnaire and come out with factors influencing UiTM student revisit intention to visit *kopitiam*. To describe the personal detail and characteristics of the respondent, the researcher use descriptive statistics.

4.1. Demographic profile of the respondents

For demographic profile, respondents were between 20 to 25 years old, 98.7% and others about 7%. It is because the questionnaire was distributed to the undergraduate students. The number of female respondents exceeded male with 64% of and 36%. This is probably the population female student's more than male students. In term of status, 100% of the respondents are single. The reason is mostly student UiTM are not married yet.

Table 1. The number and percentage (%) of overall respondents reported by gender, age and marital status

Items	n	%
Gender		
Male	54	36.0
Female	96	64.0
Age		
< 20 years old	1	0.7
21- 25 years old	148	98.7
26-30 years old	1	0.7
Status		
Single	150	100
Married	0	0.0

4.2. Analysis on student return intention to visit *kopitiam* on ambiance factors

Environment is applied by the level of agreement on a seven-point Likert-type scale by producing a range between 1 to 5. Based on the table, the highest mean is 5.03 to the lowest mean of 4.36 while standard deviation 1.239 to 1.437. As can be seen form the table, most respondents somehow agreed on the ambiance at the *kopitiam* (M=5.03). Results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation for ambiance

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Kopitiam</i> has a clean environment	5.00	1.259
<i>Kopitiam</i> has relaxed atmosphere	5.03	1.239

<i>Kopitiam</i> is comfortable to visit	4.85	1.374
The atmosphere at <i>kopitiam</i> raises appetite	4.36	1.359
<i>Kopitiam</i> provides an atmosphere of privacy	4.50	1.437

By looking at the table 2, showed that the majority of the respondents strongly disagreed that the *kopitiam* provides an atmosphere of privacy (M= 4.50, item 5), has a clean environment (M= 5.00, item 1) and place that comfortable to visit (M= 4.85 item 3). More interestingly, most of the students strongly agree that *kopitiam* has relaxed atmosphere (M= 5.03, item 2). This atmosphere has led increase respondents appetite (M= 4.36, item 4),

What we can be said from this section analysis is the ambiance of the restaurant places important role and has influence the respondents to revisit the *kopitiam*. This supported by (Pierce, 2011) claimed that the ambiance can make customer return the restaurant.

4.3. Analysis on student return intention to visit *kopitiam* on quality of food

Quality of food is applied to the level of agreement on a seven-point Likert-type scale by producing a range between 1 to 5. Based on the table, the highest mean score is 5.61 to the lowest mean of 5.44 during standard deviation 1.360 to 1.454. As can be seen form the table, most respondents somehow agreed the quality of food at *Kopitiam* (M=5.61). Results are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation for quality of food

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
The taste of coffee and toast in <i>kopitiam</i> is authentic	5.51	1.360
Food and beverages prices are reasonable at <i>kopitiam</i>	5.44	1.454
Menus available at <i>kopitiam</i> suit my taste	5.58	1.367
Food that are served freshness and stimulate appetite	5.46	1.408
<i>Kopitiam</i> served variety of menu options	5.61	1.384

Based on the analysis form the table 4.3 showed that the quality of food is one of the factors that influence the student revisit intention to visit *kopitiam*. This clearly can be seen that respondents strongly agreed with most of the item. As such, respondents claimed that the *kopitiam* served variety of menu options (M=5.61, item 5), that suits with the respondents taste (M=5.58, item 3) therefore the taste of coffee and toast is authentic. In addition, the students strongly agreed that the prices of the food at *kopitiam* are reasonable (M=5.44, item 2) and also the food that served are fresh (M=5.46, item 4).

All in all, what could be said from the result is that food quality is the most influence the respondent's revisit intention to visit *kopitiam*. This result that was supported by (Pettijohn and Luke, 1997) and (Qu, 1997) noted that food quality as one of the important factors influences the customer revisit intention to visit *kopitiam*.

4.4. Analysis on student return intention to visit *kopitiam* on service quality

Service quality is applied to the level of agreement on a seven-point Likert-type scale by producing a range between 1 to 5. Based on the table, the highest mean score is 3.84 to the lowest mean score of 3.21 while standard deviation 1.043 to 1.500. Results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4. Mean and standard deviation for service quality

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Waiters at <i>kopitiam</i> are friendly	3.84	1.043
Waiting time for food out no longer	3.77	1.372

Attentive staff	3.47	1.418
Waiters knowledge about food	3.21	1.500

The level of the mean scale explained that some of the service quality was offensive to the respondents. Attributes like the staff friendliness (M=3.84, item 1), the attentive staff (M=3.47, item 3), staff knowledge (M=3.21, item 4) and waiting time for food out (M=3.77, item 2) received the mean between 3.21 and 3.84. What could be assumed from these result are the besides food and environment variables, service gives the service staff at the *kopitiam* are still not meet customer's expectation especially among the students.

In summary, the respondents slightly agreed on the food factors given effect for the decision-making to visit *kopitiam*. Overall, the mean rating indicated that the majority of respondents in this study revealed that food have a persuaded them to visit *kopitiam* as compared to service quality factors and ambiance. In conclusion, this research has succeeded in achieving the objective of the study that is to examine the factors influencing UiTM students' revisit intention to visit *kopitiam*.

5. Recommendation, implication and conclusion

On the important of customer intention have developed in the business world, studies on customer intention have been constantly performed. This study was clarified that food quality has most important impact that influencing student intention. Overall taste of food, freshness of food, and eye appeal of the food were classified under food quality dimension. It helps the foodservice manager to exceed or achieve customer especially students to revisit *kopitiam*. This result is supports by Sulek and Hensley (2004), and Pettijohn and Luke (1997) stated that food quality is an important factor that influences customer intention to visit food establishment.

Besides food quality, service influences the intention of students to visit *kopitiam* friendliness of waiters. This is supported by the analysis section (Eng, 2010) reported that respondents claimed that *kopitiam* waiters are friendly with the customers, its make the customers more comfortable. Nevertheless, the students also agreed that the food have an important role that influences student intention to visit *kopitiam*. The food are served need to be come from approval sources and 'halal' condition from the aspects storing, preparing and cooking. It is because, students have also constructed the 'halal' image of the *kopitiam*, and it influence the youths especially students to believe as well as continuously visit the *kopitiam* (Yazam & Hamid, 2011). These results in fact were in line with previous studies undertaken by Eng (2010) and Qu (1997) in other parts of the world.

Some proactive action should be taken. As the recommendation, the manager can enhance their service quality with their customers in a friendlier manner and polite and try to meet their needs and wants in order to improve the customer satisfaction. Even though food quality and service, ambiance of the restaurant has also shown a positive effect of factors that influence student's revisit, the foodservice owner or manager should ensure to maintain the cleanliness of the facilities and relaxed atmosphere with carefully design the interior and exterior, and providing training to their employee to be courteous and friendly during the service.

It is evident that the majority of students claimed that the food is the most factor influence revisit to *kopitiam*. It has been shown that most of them are strongly agreed with the quality of food that served at the *kopitiam*. This is because; food plays important role in any food business and creates a loyal customer. This result aligned by Wall and Berry (2007) which claimed that food quality is most foundations for successful of a restaurant that contribute greatly in influencing the customer's evaluation of a particular establishment.

On the other hand, students were not satisfied with most of the prices that stated in the menu. Some of the respondents claimed that the price is quite high. The restaurant owner should study the price to attract the customer and also to accommodate the spending power of different targeted group of customers. Apart from that, they have comprehended the service in terms of staff knowledge about the menu offer so that the goals and mission could be achieved.

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