



Balancing Cost and Quality: A Case Study on Burger King Finland's Pricing Strategy

Ranjita Tiwari, Hemangi Pandya

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Ranjita Tiwari, Hemangi Pandya
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The competitiveness in the fast-food industry is an ever-growing aspect that greatly relies on the customer experience because it indicates both business performance, customer satisfaction levels, and the loyalty of customers. This thesis focuses on the study of Burger King Finland's pricing strategy, quality of service, and customer experience to determine the factors affecting customer preference in making the choice among its competitors. This research includes survey data from customers and an interview with the representative member of the partner company to gather insights. The obtained responses were analysed and about 50 people participated in the survey and only 1 representative of the case company gave an interview and insights. Also, benchmarking was done to have a clear comparison of the case company with other competitive companies such as Hesburger and McDonalds.

This research evaluates how people see Burger King's prices in comparison to its competitors McDonald's and Hesburger. The research activities are focused on the factors that are considered, the deciding factors in selecting fast-food brands by the customers, whether it is the quality of food and service or the product price.

Based on responses from customer surveys and internal insights from the company representative the deciding factor for the customers was the quality of food followed by price and size of the portion. This research is not just to provide useful information for Burger King but is also suitable for a better understanding of pricing methods in the fast-food industry. The research outcomes help the business in creating a better balance between customer experience and pricing.

Keywords: Fast-Food Industry, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Consumer Behaviour, Pricing Perception, Consumer Preferences, Burger King Finland.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The expansion of the fast-food industry all over the world has been driven by urbanization and changes in the living standards of the customers which created the need for fast food options. The market of global fast food was valued at USD 784.24 billion in 2023 which is projected to grow at a compounding annual rate of 4.9% from the year 2023 to 2030 and estimated to reach USD 1,096.22 billion. The expansion of food delivery services and quick service restaurants with the advancement of technology for changing customer preference is increasing in the case of ready-to-eat meals, according to (Fast Food Market - Global Industry Analysis and Forecast 2024).

The fast-food industry in Finland is influenced by global trends, driven by the increasing number of fast-food customers and the growth of outlets. The increasingly busy routine of the Finns and the growth of international fast-food franchises have greatly contributed to the growth of the fast-food market. The current Finnish market is dominated by Burger King, McDonald's, and Hesburger. Although Burger King is a globally established brand, it faces intense market competition in Finland, particularly in terms of customer perceptions and pricing strategies (Watson 2024).

Customers in the fast-food industry are becoming more and more selective while going for fast-food options by considering the quality of food, fairness of pricing, dining environment, and smoother services. Among the customers, the pricing of products at Burger King is perceived to be higher than its competitors which is one of the reasons that Burger King fails to retain the price-sensitive customers. Moreover, the requirement for sustainable practices in addition to health-conscious eating habits has led to continuous innovation and adaptation unavoidable in the fast-food sector. (Alexander 2022).

1.2 Background of Burger King

Burger King is a globally recognized fast-food brand whose outlets are widespread across the globe and serving customers. Originally, it was established by Keith J. Kramer and Matthew Burns in the year 1954 under the name Insta-Burger King in Jacksonville, Florida. One of the most creative cooking equipment that was used by the restaurant was the Insta-Broiler to cook several burgers at the same time. This technology helped the business to meet the needs of the consumers and at the same time ensure that the food was prepared in the right manner. However, Insta-Burger King had its own set of financial issues to deal with even if it was able to introduce this innovation. James McLamore and David Edgerton bought the business in 1954

located in Miami and changed the name to Burger King. Flam-grilling is one of the burger-making techniques that Burger King adopted as one of its specialties, which was new in their preparation technique. Also, they came up with the Whopper, a bigger burger that would offer the customers more value for their money. The burger that is still popular today, gradually rose up to become the company's favorite Whopper (Garcia 2020).

Burger King Corporation expanded rapidly in the 1960s. McLamore and Edgerton made it convenient for other restaurants to open by assuming full franchising responsibilities for the business. Burger King operated 274 outlets by 1967. Due to this success, Burger King was sold to Pillsbury for \$18 million. Burger King continued to grow during Pillsbury's ownership, but it also encountered some problems. The variations in the way franchise owners conducted their business made it difficult to achieve consistency across all the outlets. To solve this issue, Burger King hired Donald N. Smith from McDonalds in 1978. Smith has made the business more competitive, enhanced the menu, and set new rules for the franchise owners. These changes were beneficial to Burger King in the fast-food sector. (DairyNews 2024).

Burger King experienced some changes of ownership in its operations in the past. Pillsbury sold Burger King to the British corporation Grand Metropolitan in 1989. Later in 1997, Grand Metropolitan and Guinness merged to form Diageo which comprised Burger Kings. However, Burger King could not match McDonalds and therefore Diageo sold the company to TPG Capital and other investors in 2002. To enhance the image of Burger King, the new owners started new marketing strategies and new products on their menu. Burger King was acquired by 3G Capital, a Brazilian investment company at \$3.26 billion in 2010. From this, big changes were made such as the efforts to redesign the brand and enhance operational efficiency. Currently, Tim Hortons, a famous coffee shop in Canada, merged with Burger King to form Restaurant Brands International, which was in 2014. This merger helped both businesses expand to new markets (Panter 2004).

Burger King is a company that is famous for its unique advertising strategies and its flexibility towards different markets around the globe. Currently, the firm attends to about 15.7 million clients daily through more than 14,000 outlets in almost 100 countries. Flame-grilled burgers, brand image, and speed are the key factors that have contributed to the success of the organization. Over the years, Burger King has enhanced the quality of its products, the prices it charges for its meals, and the services it offers to its clients to fit in the fast-food market (Mandaliya 2024).

1.3 Purpose

The focus of this thesis is to study the pricing strategy of Burger King as it is seen to be quite expensive in comparison to their rival companies from a customer's perspective. This difference in pricing has raised questions about the company's ability to retain consumers especially those

in the low-income bracket and sustain a competitive advantage in the Finnish fast-food industry.

With regards to the below-stated research questions, this study aims to address the following concerns: The impact of pricing strategies on the customer's behavior and decision-making process when choosing between fast-food restaurants. The purpose of the study is to establish the factors that can be utilized by Burger King to enhance its pricing policies without affecting the quality of the products in the market. The primary focus would be regarding the consumer perception of price concerning quality and identifying ways to alter the pricing strategies to gain more market share and customer satisfaction.

Besides, this study will provide Burger King with insight into how it can increase its prices and at the same time enhance its services to meet the needs of the customers. The results are based on the data collected through the surveys and interviews conducted among the Burger King customers in Finland and both qualitative and quantitative data will be used. This paper seeks to establish the perception that customers have about prices to determine the factors that influence their buying decisions and the recommendations that Burger King could implement to align its prices with the customers' perceptions.

The purpose of this thesis is to assist Burger King Finland in striking a balance between price and quality to increase customer satisfaction, loyalty, and business outcomes in a competitive environment.

1.4 Research Question

The research-based thesis entails the proper formulation of research questions concerning challenges faced by the company for data collection for possible solutions. The aspects of research for this project are as follows:

1. How does Burger King's pricing is perceived by customers in comparison to Hesburger and McDonald's?
2. What factors do customers prioritize when choosing between fast-food brand's price and quality?

Table 1. Price comparison of Burger King, Macdonald, and Hesburger

Table 1 Price comparison of Burger King, Macdonald, and Hesburger

Item	McDonald's (€)	Burger King (€)	Hesburger (€)
Big Chicken Burger	5.95	6.95 (Tendercrisp)	5.8
Nuggets	2.5	2.70 (Plant-Based)	2.7
Vegan/Vegetarian	2.5	6.45 (WHOPPER)	1.8
Fries	2.3	2.55	2
Coke / Pop / Drink	2.3	3.05	3
Dessert	3.1	3.25	2.8
Cheeseburger	2	2.45	2.8
Hamburger	1.8	1.95	2.8
Big Burger	6.25 (Big Mac)	9.95 (BIG KING® XXL)	8.90 (Mega Burger)

(Sources: from McDonald's, Hesburger, and Burger King app)

This table shows that Burger King's price is quite a bit higher than its competitors'. This was made on 25/3/2025.

2 Literature Review

Detailed information regarding customer expectations and pricing methods in the fast-food sector is taken from different sources and the summaries are presented below:

2.1 Pricing strategies for fast food

In this world of inflation, everyone wants to have services and products in their budget i.e. reasonable prices along with nutrition in their diet. Especially for those who are quite budget conscious and price is the most considered factor more than quality. Also, people are health conscious, and they consider diet and nutrition while keeping price in mind. Moreover, the people who live all by themselves and have busy lifestyles prefer to eat outside frequently. But not all of them can afford the high price. This can impact the frequency of people visiting such restaurants. That's where food chains like Burger King come in, providing hands-down quality, but the prices somehow don't justify it. So, in such cases, customers choose to prefer other rival companies that are providing the same products at lower prices than them along with nutritious food.

According to Noopur Saxena, 2020, the need for restaurants was mentioned to have risen especially among young people because of the change in their lifestyle and diet. Therefore, there was not just one reason to go to a restaurant, there were many factors that influenced the decision. To measure the utility of the factors conjoint analysis was done on the attributes of the fast-food restaurant. A structured questionnaire was administered to 204 youth customers (16 - 25 years) of Delhi/NCR regions who have dined in a fast-food restaurant in the last three months. It was also observed that young people mostly care about how the food is cheaper rather than caring about other things like health, ingredients, and taste.

2.2 Consumer Behavior in pricing and brand loyalty

This research work focused on the influence of price on consumer behavior and perception. According to Hussain Al-Salamin (2016), a cross-sectional study was conducted among the people in the Al-Hassa region, and 433 participants responded to the survey, which was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This research also shows that there is an increased tendency to buy as the price decreases. No differences were observed in response to the questions according to age, marital status, education level, and income, except for gender differences in response to odd pricing. The study offers recommendations to retailers and dealers on how odd pricing, bundle pricing, and discount pricing influence consumers' buying behavior.

Chi Kin Yim (1999) outlined that the existing market was characterized by many products that differentiate loyalty between the competing brands. Researchers introduce a new way to measure loyalty by comparing two types: hard-core loyalty, where customers always choose or buy the same brand and product, and reinforcing loyalty, where customers switch between a few preferred brands. To analyze this, researchers use a mathematical model called linear logit latent class modeling loyal customers, including those who might switch brands. By studying a special product known as Cracker purchase, they found that combining both types of loyalty gave a more accurate picture of brand commitment. This product was used to analyze whether the company can retain its customers or whether the customers are loyal and committed to the brand.

2.3 Enhancing customer experience through service and pricing

Hanaysha (2016) outlined that customer satisfaction is one of the most crucial factors that determine the success of a business organization in the current world market. It is important for companies to determine which factors affect the satisfaction of customers. The objective of this research was to establish the impact of food quality, price fairness, and physical environment on customer satisfaction in Malaysian fast-food outlets. The respondents were 242 customers from fast-food restaurants from the international chain restaurants on the east coast of Malaysia. The information collected was further assessed using statistical techniques such as

SPSS and structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings of the study affirmed that food quality has a positive effect on the level of customer satisfaction. The study also found that price fairness as well as the physical environment had a positive impact on customer satisfaction. The analysis presented in this paper provides the marketing of fast-food restaurants with practical implications and affirms the importance of the selected factors for customer satisfaction.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design offers an understanding of competition in the fast-food industry and consumers' attitudes in the Finnish context. In this research, we will use interviews, surveys, and benchmarking as our methods for this research.

3.2 Primary data collection: interview

The interview with the manager provides concrete information about the extent of comprehension of the issues of the company and the operational advantages and issues. This research method helped in understanding the dynamics of the organization and the perception of the workforce. The application of interviews as a research approach meant focusing on the crucial aspects of the subject that may not be noticed when using purely quantitative methods. The participants are allowed to express their experiences and opinions, which results in more detailed information. This method was more useful to the researchers than questionnaires because the researchers were able to follow up with the respondents with additional questions. (Karen Dunwoodie 2022).

3.3 Primary data collection: Survey

The research method involves the use of questionnaires for customers who have visited fast-food restaurants. The data collection process uses this survey to measure customer satisfaction as well as their perception of the fast-food industry. Surveys offer the surveyor a general idea of the customers' feelings because it covers many people. The method enabled the researchers to gather data from several respondents and hence increased the generalization of the study. The structure of survey questions also facilitates researchers' ability to compare answers and perform statistical analysis. Closed and open-ended questions enable the researchers to collect quantitative data in addition to qualitative data to get a full picture of the customer's attitude. (PONTO 2015).

3.4 Bechmarking

Benchmarking helps the organization to evaluate the competitive environment of Burger King Finland concerning McDonald's, and Hesburger. According to Mohammed Saleh Alosani 2016, Benchmarking is a strategic management technique that involves comparing prices with customer satisfaction and service quality to determine the level of success of an organization. It includes a comparison of the pricing strategies of three main fast-food industries such as Burger King, McDonald's, and Hesburger-based on their pricing models, value offerings, and regional adaptations.

Burger King adopts market-oriented pricing strategies which always compete favorably with the prices that other fast-food brands offer. This pricing method sets price ranges and price points according to existing market conditions and changes with numerous factors like supply availability, demand levels, and prices at competing fast food companies (Sheridan Nina 2024). The market-based pricing formula thus makes sure of the competitiveness of company prices. Following this strategy, the price strategy shift in 2015, the brand employed a more aggressive pricing strategy, which is a bundle pricing strategy that features value meals, to appeal to price-conscious consumers.

Burger King is known for its flame-grilled burgers, making it a superior alternative to its competitors' products. Burger King usually uses a variety of approaches, for example, Kingi Vikko offers premium items like the Whopper, to set prices and design their promotions. In combination with these promotional pricing, combo set, and limited/ discount are significant components of their pricing strategy. Moreover, Burger King adopted Dynamic pricing, where price may depend on location, time of day, or promotional activities, such as the price of chicken burgers being higher in the airport than in the city center due to location (Bhasin H. 2024).





(Source: Burger King app, March 28, 2025) (promotional deals)

McDonald's in Finland is in the process of enhancing digital integration techniques, menu personalization, restaurant' renovation, drive-thru services, and other factors about customer demands. It has also laid a lot of emphasis on training the employees while at the same time ensuring that value proposition and convenience are delivered to customers in all the outlets (Iain 2011). Others are digital ordering and payment, drive-thru management, localization of menus, training of employees, and using customer data to make suggestions. McDonald's adopted a comprehensive pricing strategy that includes cost leadership also known as Porter's model, this is done through cost-minimization, which provides a competitive edge. The company has streamlined operations geared toward maximizing efficiency, minimizing costs, and generating profits despite offering products at competitive prices (Gregory Lawrence 2024).

Claire G describes that the Psychology pricing strategy consists of pricing just below round numbers, that is, just a little less than a round number: for one, for example, in the United States, BigMac sells for USD 3.99 instead of right pricing it to USD 4.00, while BigMac Meal sells for USD 5.99 instead of USD 6.00. Also, in Finland, the price is set for 2,95€ instead of 3 €. McDonald also introduced McValue in 2025 as a new pricing strategy, it was started in Chicago, on January 7, where they offer more variety, choices, and flexibility for every occasion. Customers can buy one and add one more item for a \$1 offer, also dropping more offers in the app on Mcvalue-including free medium fries with a \$1 purchase every Friday and a free McCrispy™ chicken sandwich for new App users. Furthermore, McDonald's also uses promotional deals where the company often introduces limited time offers and seasonal promotions to attract new customers and maintain customer's interest under competitive pressure. As Burger King is also doing the same promotional deal it's tough competition in the Finnish market.



(Promotional deal)

Source: Mcdonalds app, 28, March 2025

Hesburger is found to be committed to sustainable development while encouraging local ingredients, which is why the popularity of the company is growing. To enhance customer satisfaction, this organization decided to digitize it, they developed a mobile application and changed the concept of the bonus club to cater to the needs of the customers. The use of the application increased their sales by 25% (Vincit n.d.).

According to Tittamari Rinne's (2024) research, it was found that Hesburger prices are generally competitive with local competitors. In Finland, the average price for burger meals at Hesburger would be like McDonald's and a little cheaper than Burger King. Hesburger also emphasizes local taste, by focusing on local tastes, Hesburger integrates regional flavors and ingredients in its menu, which pulls up its pricing and enhances customer loyalty. They also declare on their home page their secret of success by researching taste habits, following trends, listening to customer feedback, and responding to changes. for example, they make the ingredients for their product such as sauces, and mayonnaises. Finns also support their brand so that Hesburger maintains its competitiveness in the Finnish market.

According to Kesko 2021, Finns associate products made in Finland with responsibility and transparency: conscientious consumers want to know where a product comes from and whether it is reliable and safe. They also want to support Finnish work and keep jobs in Finland. It also creates value perception. By emphasizing high-quality ingredients and unique recipes such as signature mayonnaise-based sauces, Hesburger establishes a perception of value that is consonant with its pricing policy.



(Veke Double Veggie Burger)

Aspect	Burger King	McDonald's	Hesburger
Price Model	Market-oriented pricing with Dynamic adjustment (e.g., airport vs. City center pricing)	Cost leadership, Psychology pricing (e.g. €2,95 instead €3), and value menus	Competitive pricing with premium localization (e.g., Finnish source ingredients)
Value Offering	Bundles meals, (e.g., Kingi vikko offers) promotions, and loyalty rewards.	Value meals, meal bundles, and limited or seasonal offers	Focus on quality ingredients, unique recipes (e.g., signature sauces), and regional flavors.
Price Adjustment	Periodical adjustments contribute to adaptability towards the ever-changing market conditions and operational costs.	promotions are made continually introducing new value platforms like McValue(e.g., free fries Friday).	Stable pricing even though the industry-wide cost increase over the past years

Market positioning	It targets price-conscious customers who prefer variety and promotional deals.	It can reach a diverse customer base even at low rates and keep high quality.	Caters to local preferences with an emphasis on quality and unique offerings
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Source: Hesburger app 28, March 2025

Benchmarking reveals that Burger King Finland employs market-oriented pricing (e.g., bundled meals), while competitors like McDonald's prioritize cost leadership (e.g., €1 hamburger) and Hesburger emphasizes localized value (e.g., Finnish-sourced ingredients). Burger King's lack of region-specific pricing adjustments, unlike Hesburger's stable pricing despite industry-wide cost increases, may hinder its competitiveness. These findings will be tested through surveys and interviews focused on pricing perceptions and strategies.

Positioning in the market and consumer preferences primarily mark up fast food joints like Burger King, McDonald's, and Hesburger into price strategy. Competitive pricing accompanied by value menus or promotions is used in fast food joints like Burger King. Cost leadership in determining prices is the name of the game at McDonald's. Pricing, therefore, reflects the brand's worth; it makes it more effective with psychological pricing and various promotions. On the other hand, Hesburger is consumer-oriented in local tastes and quality; it practices competitive pricing but is open to breaking the rules with unique menu offerings. So, these examples give us a perspective of how the major players in the fast-food game price themselves one way or another balancing affordability, customer perceived value, and profitability in an environment of stiff competition. The price strategy, therefore, should not only be for positioning the brand but should also correlate well with market dynamics to prove attractive to as well as retain customers in the fast-food business.

4 Results and findings

The findings from the research and interviews are analyzed to draw the project conclusion. However, the issues at Burger King are first outlined and then, with the help of the methods described in reference sources, research interviews and survey questions are formulated. The interview with a Burger King representative from the top-level management is taken into consideration. The level of information regarding company trends and important decisions in a

locality was in the Interviewee's responsibilities. This was done among the general customers to have an insight into their experience and record their recommendations.

To gather information about Burger King Finland, an interview was conducted with Nea, the chain manager, and the financial manager of the company, regarding the company's pricing strategies, customer preferences, feedback mechanisms, competitive challenges, and suggestions for other fast-food brands. The interview was conducted to ensure the information obtained was up to date. It was conducted in a formal manner which enabled precise answers to the questions on Burger King's business in Finland. Since the interview was managerial and conducted one-to-one, there was only one response which gave an insight into the opinion of the decision-maker of the organization. The information provided by the chain manager and financial manager was helpful in the project in terms of internal and external strategies and market positioning of Burger King Finland and became an important part of the evaluation of the company's approach to pricing and customer relations in the fast-food market.

4.1 Interview insight

The interview with the company representative resulted in fruitful responses. The company representative's responses are:

The major cause of Burger King Finland's price strategy is the cost of the products. This is because when the cost of raw materials used in the preparation of meals goes up, they have no option but to adjust the price of meals offered to the customers to cover the extra cost and ensure the company is profitable. Other aspects that are considered include competition in the local market, the demand of the customers, and the economic factors to make the price reasonable for the customers as well as to make sure that the business can grow. There are various factors that influence customer preferences at Burger King Finland. First, global brand recognition is an important factor since Burger King is a popular international brand that customers from around the world trust. Second, their food quality and affordable prices are the major factors that would help enhance customer satisfaction. To attract the attention of Finnish customers, new products are launched from time to time, and promotional campaigns are started. For instance, the current Kingi Viikko promotion where they give a 30% discount on burgers has been very successful in getting and maintaining customers.

It is also important to listen to the customers and this is done through different means to capture their opinion. To monitor the level of satisfaction of customers of all the Burger King outlets in Finland, Restel conducts general surveys twice a year. Moreover, they ensure that they provide a feedback section on the receipt that the clients can fill and submit at the same time they are leaving the restaurant. Burger King is an international company, and it has its own standard price policy and promotion policy. They monitor the competitors to know what is happening in the market, but they do not copy them. The market competition with McDonald's

and Hesburger presents unique challenges. McDonald's has been in the market for 30 years now and has had time to capture the loyalty of the consumers. Hesburger has a local appeal and offers a menu that is aligned to the Finnish palate and culture through a burger double cheeseburger. Moreover, while Hesburger has more than 274 restaurants to Burger King's 60 restaurants, this means that Hesburger is more accessible to consumers.

As much as they acknowledge the moves of the other fast-food brands, they strongly hold the view that Burger King has a different approach to the price model and customer relations. Concerning the above objectives, the following are the strategic priorities: In this case, other brands, suggest that they should maintain their brand identity and keep on adapting to the market needs. Some of the information that the representative of Burger King Finland provided during the interview was regarding the company's pricing strategies, as well as the preferences of the market and the industry positioning. The price determination of Burger King in Finland involves three main aspects, namely the cost of the product, competition, and customer buying habits to ensure the company gains competitiveness in the market as well as profits. Customers develop their perception of the brand due to its global reach as well as the quality of food it offers and the prices it sets. The 30% burger discount during Kingi Viikko promotional events is crucial to Burger King Finland in gaining and maintaining customers.

4.2 Survey Data Reflection

The survey data was collected from 51 users actively fast-food consumers through an online questionnaire, and their responses were studied and evaluated to understand the customer needs.

The users were asked about how often they eat at fast-food restaurants and the following data shows the number of times each of the 51 respondents consumed fast food. The largest percentage 33.2% consumes fast foods once a week and above which is a clear sign of high frequency. However, 31.4% of the respondents rarely eat fast food, which means a good number of people avoid it. Moderate frequency is indicated by 19.6% dining at fast food places once a month while 9.8% stated that they do so a few times a month. In general, one-third of the population is a regular fast-food eater, one-third a rare one, and the rest - monthly/occasionally.

How often do you eat at fast food restaurants?

51 responses

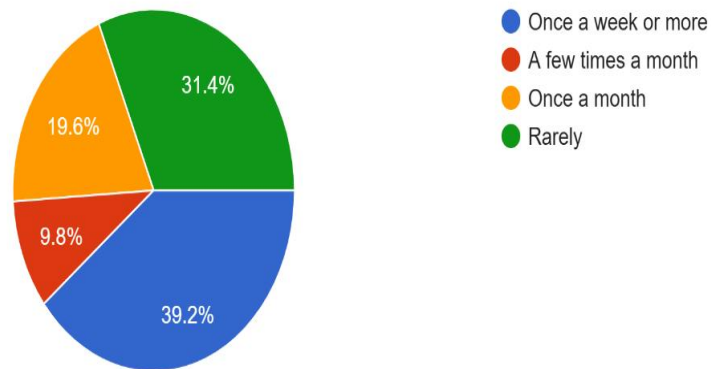


Figure 1: Users' frequency of using fast food Monthly

The next question about the preference for fast-food brands was asked and the results indicated Burger King is on the top with 39.2% which means that it is the most visited brand by the respondents. The second closest restaurant is McDonalds where the frequency of visits is 31.4% which indicates that the restaurant is also popular, but people visit it slightly less often. Hesburger, which is not as popular as the other brands, takes 3rd place with 21.6%, which can be attributed to the fact that it is active only in some regions of the world, such as Northern Europe. The "Other" category represents 7.8% and it encompasses all the other brands that are not specified, which shows that the consumers are more particular about the brands they use in a less considerable degree. Thus, Burger King is more often visited, followed by McDonald's, and Hesburger is a rather surprising player in the market.

Which fast food brand do you visit the most?

51 responses

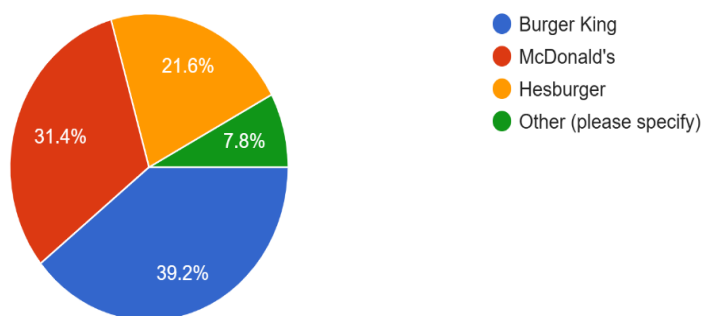


Figure 2: Fast food brand preference

On asking about price comparison views the results showed Burger King's perceived pricing to that of McDonalds and Hesburger. The largest portion of 45.1% of the respondents think that Burger King is more costly than the competition. However, 39.2% of the respondents think that it is fairly priced, which means that there is a large cohort that does not find much variation in the prices of the brands. However, a minority of 15.7% consider Burger King cheaper, which indicates their opinion of better value. In sum, the results are split almost 50/50, with one half perceiving Burger King as more expensive and the other half perceiving that the prices are fairly close.

How do you see Burger King's pricing compared to McDonald's and Hesburger?

51 responses

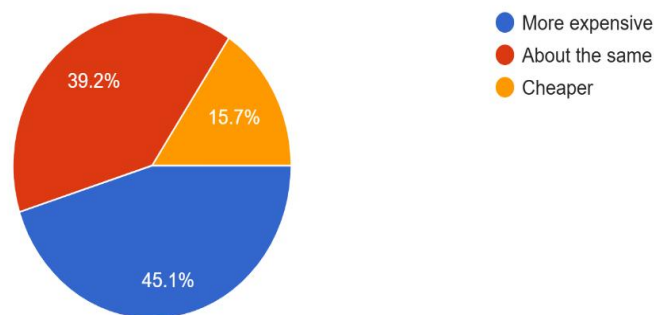


Figure 3: Price comparison

Following on this the question of whether price affects the preference of McDonald's or Hesburger over Burger King was asked to respondents. The data indicated biggest percentage of 43.1% has stated that they have often chosen McDonald's or Hesburger because of the price, which shows that price is important to most people. However, 39.2% indicate that they occasionally do so, which means that there is also price consciousness among a significant number of consumers. Thus, 17.6% have never chosen the alternatives over Burger King because of price, indicating that there is a smaller population that cares about other factors such as taste or location. In general, the findings emphasize the role of price in the choice of fast foods.

Have you ever chosen McDonald's or Hesburger instead of Burger King due to price?

51 responses

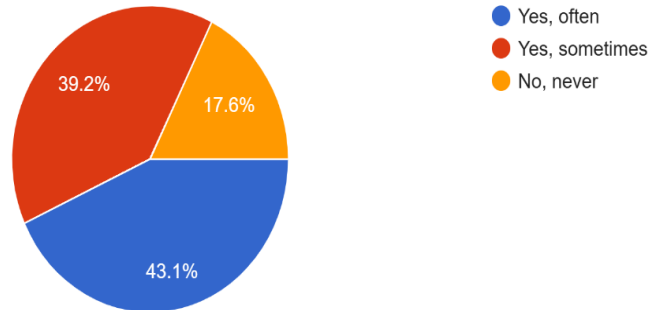


Figure 4: Selection choices based on pricing

The bar chart below shows the factors that affect the selection of fast-food restaurants. Quality is the most important factor that was mentioned by 38 (74.5%) respondents followed by food price mentioned by 35 respondents (68.6%), which makes it a primary factor. Portion size was considered as having a significant effect by 23 (45.1%) of the participants while customization options were considered as having a moderate effect by 16 (31.4%) and promotions/discounts were considered as having a lesser effect by 17 (33.3%) participants. Out of the variables, brand loyalty has a moderate impact with 21 (41.2%). Other responses are as follows: 5 (9.8%) meaning that most of the responses are in line with the listed categories. In general, the findings stress that price and food quality are the most important factors that influence the choice of fast food.

What factors influence your decision when choosing a fast food restaurant?

51 responses

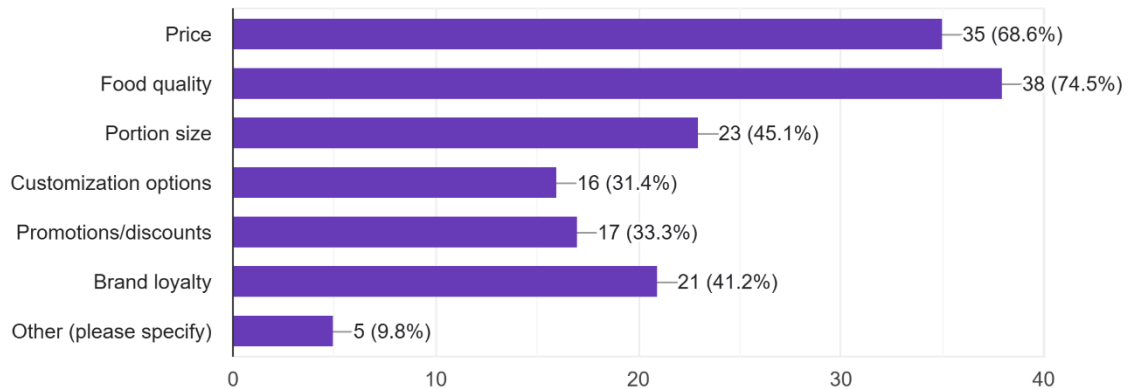


Figure 5: Food selection pattern

The pie chart is below on 51 responses looks into whether people take out ingredients such as pickles or tomatoes in Burger King burgers. The biggest portion of 35.3% said that they never adjust the ingredients, which means that they are comfortable with the basic burger configuration. At the same time, 32.2% often take out an ingredient, which means that a large share of the respondents makes modifications quite frequently. Also, there is a 25.5% who sometimes take out ingredients, which is an indication of occasional flexibility. The responses are divided: 36% eat their burgers as is, and 57.7% (often and sometimes) modify their burgers, therefore indicating that Burger King customers frequently customize their burgers most likely owing to personal preference.

Do you usually remove any ingredients from your Burger King burger (e.g., pickles, tomatoes)?

51 responses

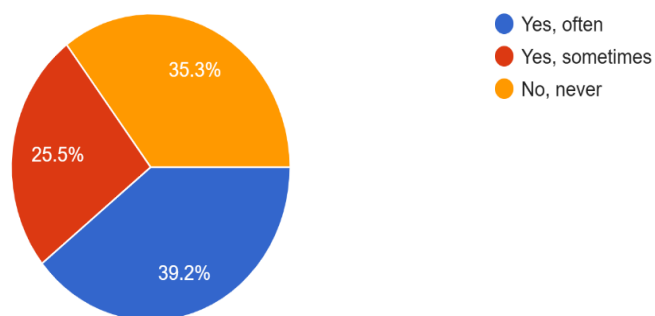


Figure 6: Ingredient preference

The next survey results showed that 76.5% of the 51 participants supported Burger King to reduce the burger base price through the removal of pickles and tomatoes while making them as extra components. The new format of pricing has been supported by 76.5% while the existing format has been supported by 23.5% of the participants. Majority of the respondents shared the same opinion that they would rather opt for a solution that is more flexible and possibly less costly.

If Burger King removed certain ingredients that customers often discard (e.g., pickles, tomatoes) and offered them as optional add-ons at a lower base price, would you support this idea?

51 responses

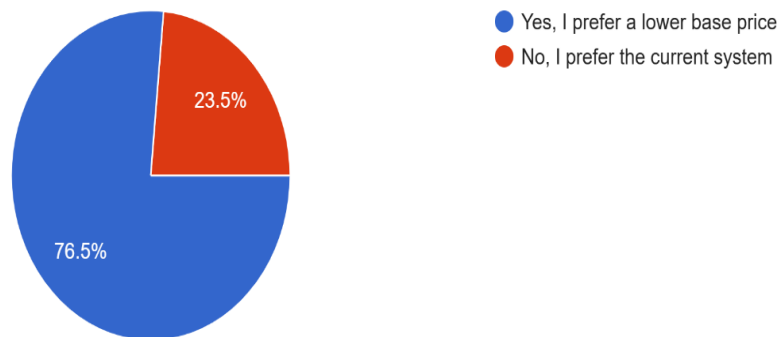


Figure 7: Interest in ingredients as add-ons

The data presented below reveals which type of promotions would be most appealing to the customers with the participants. From the survey results, it is clear that the most popular promotional offer is a meal discount since forty of the respondents chose it. Among the bonuses, buy one get one free promotion was considered as the most effective with 31 responses (60.8%) while free add-on was considered as the second most effective with 30 responses (58.8%). Of all the offers, birthday discounts were considered the least interesting by the survey participants as 18 (35.3%) of the respondents chose it.

Which type of promotions would attract you the most?

51 responses

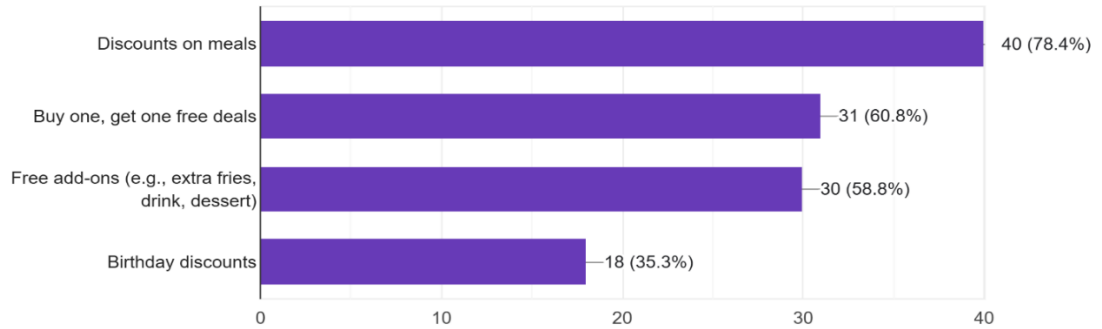


Figure 8: Interest of customer in offer variants

The survey revealed that 50% of the participants regarded Whopper portions as excessive and wasteful while 42% regarded them as appropriate and 8% desired portions larger than the existing ones. The survey shows that 50% of the 50 respondents complained that Burger King portions are too large despite the fact that the majority of the respondents feel that the portions are just right while the rest want even bigger portions.

Do you think Burger King's portion sizes (especially Whoppers) are too big?

50 responses



Figure 9: Results on portion sizes

The results of the survey prove which factors can encourage Burger King customers to choose their restaurants over other fast-food chains. The results of the survey show that the most important reason that would make customers visit Burger King more often is the price since 46.9% of the participants chose this option. The survey shows that 40.8% of the customers will

visit Burger King more often if the restaurant speeds up in terms of service delivery. According to the survey, 38.8% of the respondents said that better portion sizes were a key reason to select Burger King. 32.7% of the respondents stated that they would visit Burger King more often if there were loyalty rewards or if the application offered some benefits. 28.6% of the respondents wished to have a selection of options that would be tailored to their preferences. As for the impact that the company could have on Burger King, 24.5% of people stated that they would visit Burger King more often if the company introduced meal deals and discounts. The respondents' perception of the preference for healthier options was the least important according to 18.4% of the respondents.

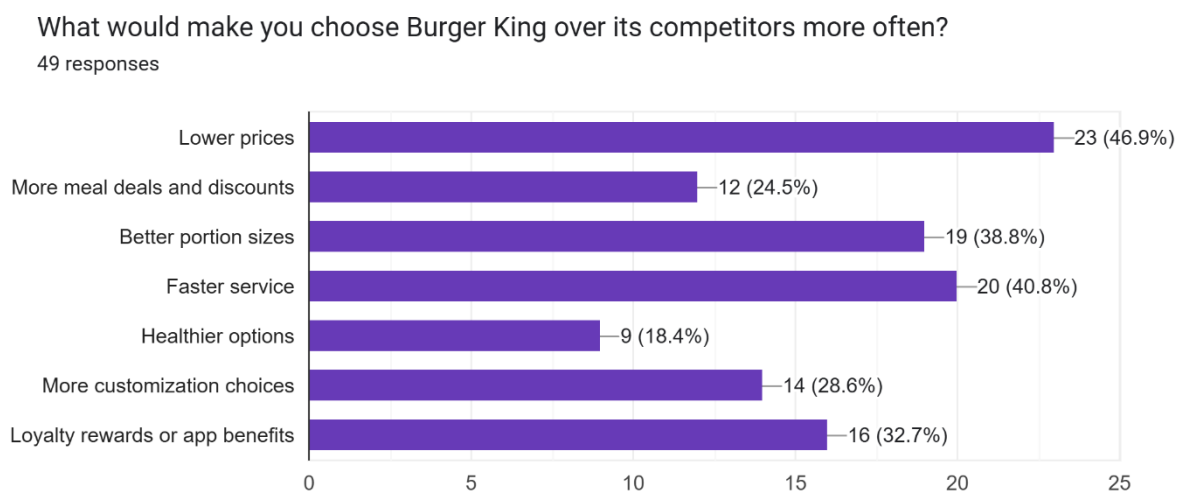


Figure 10: Reason for using Burger King over similar service providing companies

From the survey, 49 participants said that what they get from the product is worth the price, and what they consider as worth the price are the product's taste and freshness. The following were the responses: Good taste and freshness: 41(83.7%); High quality of the ingredients: 31(63.3%); Quick service: 27(55.1%); Comfortable dining environment: 23(46.9%); Options for customization: 22(44.9%); Friendly staff: 21(42.9%); Large portions: 19(38.8%). Taste and freshness are the two most crucial aspects that the respondents consider when it comes to fast-food meals, followed by high-quality ingredients. The time it takes to deliver food is another factor that customers consider to be very important. From the above responses, portion size is the least important factor that these respondents use to determine the worth of fast-food meals.

What do you think makes a fast-food meal "worth the price"?

49 responses

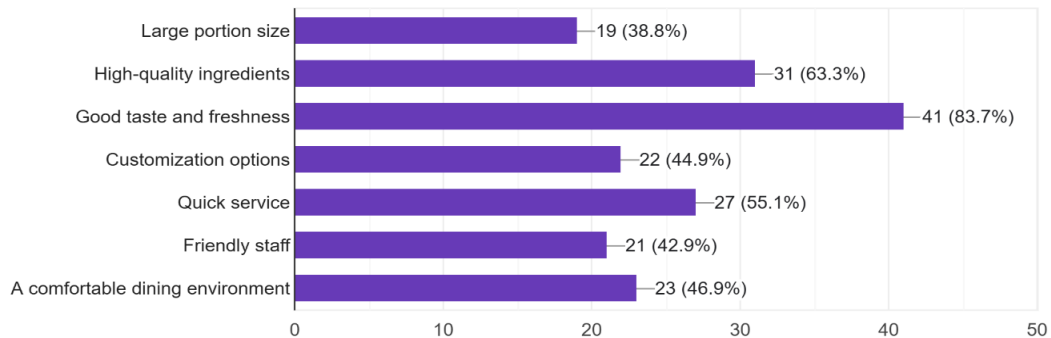
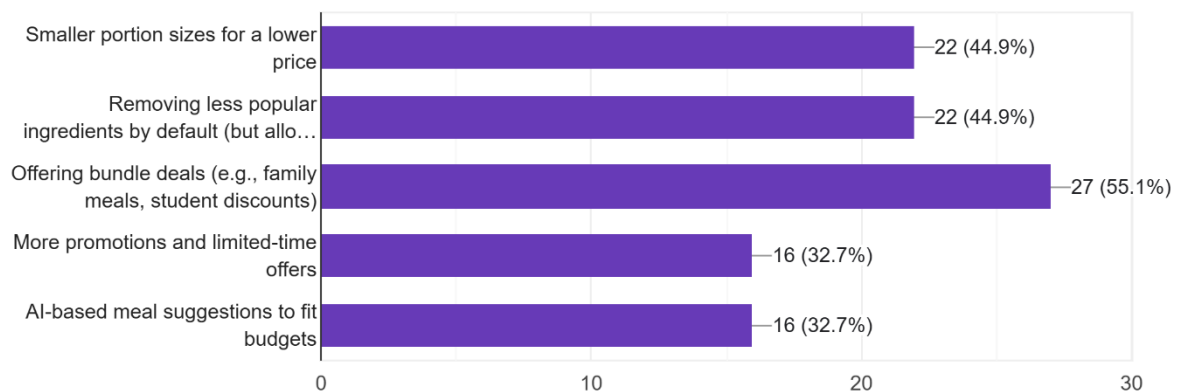


Figure 11: Reason for customer satisfaction meal

From the survey conducted, consumers opted for family meals and student discounts as their preferred method of getting the price reduction by Burger King as 27 out of the respondents chose this option. Two solutions are considered equally popular among 22 participants (44.9%): the decision to serve portions at a lower price and the decision to eliminate products with low demand from the menu. The two least chosen choices by the respondents were the AI-based meal suggestions based on the budget and more promotional items with limited-time offers with 16 participants selecting each of them (32.7%). The customer preference for Burger King price reductions is on the bundle deals and then followed by portion size changes or changing ingredients. The options of promotions are the least preferred by the customers.

If Burger King had to reduce prices, which of the following changes would you prefer?

49 responses



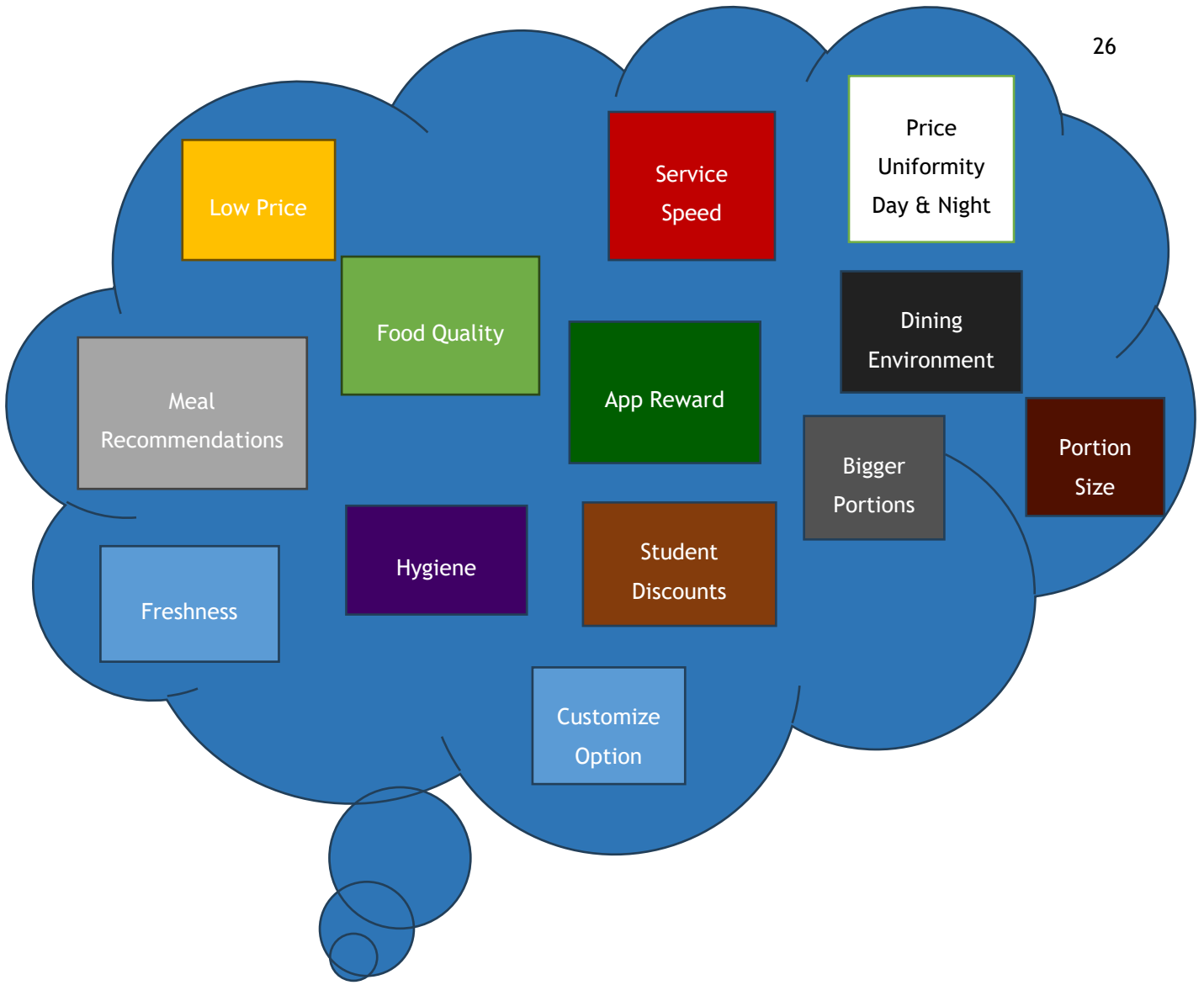


Figure 12: Interest in change for price reduction

From the survey, the customers provided recommendations for change at Burger King through 51 responses. The following are the research findings that can be made from the study. Four of the customers' suggestions were that there is a need for more options to be added and one thing burger and quick service and price were considered important as well. The participants' feedback rates "Give more vegetables", "Low price", "Improve the food", "More Vegetarian options", "Price should be better", "Speed, quality and accuracy", and "Waiting time" were almost similar. The fact that the customer improvement suggestions provided are scattered across the table indicates that Burger King customers have different needs that cannot be consolidated into a single most important area of concern. The study reveals that customers decide based on quick service, cost, menu flexibility, food quality, and vegetarian options. The company should assess various customers' needs to improve its operations.

4.3 Suggestions for Effective Cost-Reduction

4.3.1 Ingredient Customization-Based Pricing

Pricing based on the customization of ingredients is one of the most effective ways of cutting down the costs. This strategy entails the elimination of certain burger ingredients that are not popular with customers such as pickles or tomatoes and instead, they are offered as extra ingredients that customers can order. This also assists in reducing wasted food by allowing customers to order food of their choice and not the food that is usually wasted. It may be possible for Burger King to lure price-sensitive customers using this system since the base price of burgers will be reduced.

The model also employs inventory management and reduces wastage from the perspective of cost as the restaurant does not order items that are not required by the customers. This leads to several benefits; these include cutting costs that can be passed to the consumer in terms of better products or lower prices. Moreover, it contributes to the achievement of sustainability goals, which are significant for customers of the present day who expect companies to have a low environmental impact and minimize food waste.

The findings of the study also support this model based on survey data. Another factor that was well received by 76.5% of the respondents was the elimination of commonly discarded extras and their inclusion as extra options at a cheaper base price. The high level of interest indicates that consumers will appreciate the opportunity to choose what they want to eat and the potential to save money. From these findings, Burger King can achieve a competitive advantage by using customization as a key driver to increase customer satisfaction.

Applying this pricing model would benefit Burger King in the sense that it would be able to meet individual customers' needs and at the same time improve its operations and make dining more affordable and friendly to the customers.

4.3.2 Reducing Portion Size of large Burgers

One more idea is to reduce the price by downsizing the portion size of the product, for example, the Whopper burger. Many customers have complained that the serving sizes are large, especially for standard products such as the Whopper, thus leading to wastage. Besides providing customers with a cheaper substitute that retains the core value and feel of the original product, downsizing portions may also aid in lessening these waste issues.

It also helps customers who may not wish to consume such large meals due to their dietary requirements or choices, thus making it a more suitable option. It would also help Burger King to attract more customers, who are in search of lighter meals or meals that are cheaper than those that are currently being offered in the market.

A mere 42% of the respondents are satisfied with the size and 50% of the respondents believe that the current portion sizes, especially the Whopper, are too large and are usually thrown away. This goes a long way in proving that a large proportion of the customers would most likely opt for the small portions option. That is because offering smaller portions may attract price-sensitive customers or those who have concerns about wastage.

On the financial side, this strategy may be beneficial for the business to reduce expenditure and, at the same time, meet customer needs for smaller and more affordable portions. In addition, it minimizes food wastage, which is becoming a concern to both consumers and business entities. Burger King would be able to address consumer complaints and support sustainability efforts by introducing a mini-Whopper or similar products, aligning with the general population, and enhancing the brand image.

As a result, this approach is in line with the survey in that half of the consumers prefer smaller portions. It is also a practical way of enhancing customer satisfaction, reducing costs, eliminating unnecessary costs, and offering an economical solution to its budget-savvy customers.

4.3.3 Quality Optimization Based on Sales Data

Another realistic cost reduction strategy that Burger King could employ is quality usage according to the sales volume. This strategy entails maintaining a high quality of those products that have a high demand while diluting the quality of those products that are not so popular. Since popular and often selling items contribute to most of the sales and customer satisfaction, this strategy aims to guarantee that they retain their quality. At the same time, small improvements in the quality of the ingredients used in the products that are not very popular among the customers can lead to a decrease in the overall costs of the ingredients while the customers will not notice that.

This way, Burger King will be able to make better decisions on resource distribution since it will be able to identify which products are not selling well. Thus, to maintain the quality of the burger that people like, such as the Whopper or Chicken Friends, a low-selling burger, for instance, might be prepared using cheaper ingredients like a different type of cheese or sauce. For the best-selling products, this data-oriented strategy allows to application of the cost structure without compromising the customer's expectations.

The results revealed that food quality and price were the most significant factors influencing eating decisions, and food quality was the most important factor that the consumers considered when choosing a fast-food restaurant (74.5%). Thus, while there is a need to cut costs, it is also necessary to ensure that the quality of the products offered meets the expectations of the customers, especially in the case of key products or products with high demand.

This is because it is always economical to make the best use of the ingredients and to simplify the production process in products that have low sales turnover. Moreover, the preservation of the capacity of popular products makes sure that customer satisfaction remains elevated, thus creating more repeat business and brand loyalty. This is because Burger King can experiment with new products or promotions without the burden of losing money on such products by using the ingredients of low-selling products.

All things considered, quality optimization supported by sales data can help cut expenses while maintaining the core product offering's customer appeal, which will ultimately benefit the company and its customers by providing a better balance between price and quality.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Key finding

The research findings showed that the two key factors that influence the customers' preferences in Burger King Finland are the price and quality of the products offered. As seen in the survey, 45.1% of the participants perceive Burger King to be more costly than McDonalds and Hesburger, and this has made many customers not choose Burger King due to its high costs. According to the survey, 83.7% of respondents responded that food quality and freshness are the basis of the value for money. Consumers consider promotional strategies that involve discounts on meals because 78.4% of the respondents agreed to it. The survey indicates that Whopper portion sizes are a worry to 50% of the respondents since they are too large for the price. It is recommended that portion adjustments may help in enhancing the perception of pricing. The number of customers visiting Burger King Finland increases when people are given offers and vouchers along with fast service and loyalty cards. The findings of the study show

that Burger King Finland must set the right price level and offer high-quality services to customers to gain a competitive edge in the market.

5.2 Recommendation for burger King Finland

The following recommendations are proposed based on the findings of this thesis to assist Burger King Finland in improving its competitive position and achieving a better balance between price and quality of service in the Finnish fast-food sector.

- **Offer Ingredient Options at a Base Price:** As per the survey, 76.5% of the respondents agreed that ingredients that are usually excluded from the burger must be removed and offered as extra at a lower price than the basic burger price. This model should be adopted by Burger King to help cut down on food waste, lower costs, attract price-conscious consumers, and not compromise on the quality of the staple products. This is in line with the 68.6% of the respondents who considered price as an important factor, and therefore the company can target the market with cheap products without necessarily posting poor profits.
- **Reduce Portion Sizes:** As 50% of the respondents felt that portions were too large, Burger King should consider downsizing its portions at a lower price, for instance, the “Mini Whopper.” This would be good for customers who are looking for lighter meals or cheaper meals to address the 43.1% who often opt for competitors because of the latter’s cheaper meals. It also contributes to sustainability by minimizing wastage of food, thus making the brand more attractive to the growing numbers of conscious consumers.
- **Improve service speed:** From the survey, 40.8% of the respondents said that they would be more frequent visitors if the speed of service delivery was increased. Burger King should focus on operational strategies like efficiency in order to take and preparation time to meet the fast-food service expectations of the customers. The major factors that can enhance the dining experience include training the staff to manage the peak hours and implementing technology to complete the orders quickly.

Furthermore, Burger King should focus on value-based promotions, 78.4% of the respondents said that they would prefer a meal discount as a promotional offer. Offering more often and targeted promotions, for example, family meals or student’s special offers (preferred by 44.9% for the lower price), would attract price-sensitive consumers while keeping the business profitable due to the bundle offers.

Although 74.5% of the respondents are concerned with food quality, Burger King must ensure that cost-cutting measures, such as quality improvement based on sales data, do not reduce the quality of food products such as the Whopper. In the case of slow-moving products, it is

possible to use cheaper materials to cut costs but still retain 83.7% of the consumers who are concerned with taste and freshness.

5.3 Limitations of the study and for future research

The study was a cross-sectional study that only looked at customers at a certain time while customers changed their behaviour over time. As for further research, it is possible to focus on the dynamics of customer loyalty, satisfaction, and price sensitivity during a longer period of time. This would enable Burger King to determine the long-term impact of the implemented strategies such as loyalty programs or changes in the price of the burgers and the necessary adjustments to make.

Limitations: The current study failed to consider some factors such as the macro environment factors, inflation, and supply chain factors that influence the pricing strategies. Future research could examine how these issues affect the Burger King company's prospect of keeping the prices low while at the same time being profitable. For instance, assessing the effects of increasing raw material prices on the pricing strategies would assist in finding ways of reducing the costs without necessarily affecting the consumers.

A larger and more diverse sample should have been used in the study; the study used a sample of 51 respondents which is not enough to represent the diverse customers of Burger King Finland. Future research should include a larger and more diverse sample of participants with a focus on the age, income, and geographical location of the participants across the country of Finland. This would help Burger King to have a better understanding of the customers in terms of their preferences and perceptions towards the brand and the products of the company to be able to formulate specific strategies for the different demographic segments and the market conditions in the different regions.

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Tables

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

1. How does Burger King Finland determine its pricing strategy? What factors are considered (e.g., costs, competition, customer demand)?
 - Response: It is obvious that the major cause of Burger King Finland's price strategy is the cost of the products. This is because when the cost of raw materials used in the preparation of meals goes up, we have no option but to adjust the price of meals offered to the customers to cover the extra cost and also ensure the company is profitable. Other aspects that are taken into account include competition in the local market, the demand of the customers, and the economic factors in order to make the price reasonable for the customers as well as to ensure that the business is able to grow.

2. What do you believe are the key factors that influence customer preferences at Burger King Finland (e.g., price, quality, service)?
 - As it is well known, there are various factors that influence customer preferences at Burger King Finland. First, our global brand recognition is an important factor since Burger King is a popular international brand that customers from around the world trust. Second, our food quality and affordable prices are the major factors that would help in enhancing customer satisfaction. In order to attract the attention of Finnish customers, new products are launched from time to time, and promotional campaigns are initiated. For instance, the current Kingi Viikko promotion where we give a 30% discount on burgers has been very successful in acquiring and maintaining customers.
3. How does Burger King Finland gather feedback from customers about pricing and overall satisfaction?
 - Response: It is also important to listen to the customers and this is done through different means in order to capture their opinion. To monitor the level of satisfaction of customers of all the Burger King outlets in Finland, Restel conducts general surveys twice a year. Also, we ensure that we provide a feedback section on the receipt that the clients can fill and submit at the same time they are leaving the restaurant. We also track and review the Google reviews to enhance our understanding of the customers' perception and come up with improvements.
4. Are there any pricing or promotional strategies from competitors that you admire or consider adopting?
 - Response: Burger King is an international company, and it has its own standard price policy and promotion policy. We monitor the competitors to know what is happening in the market, but we do not imitate them. Rather, we concentrate on the specific strategies of value-based promotions, new menu items, and daring advertising. This enables us to sustain our individuality and uniqueness compared to other companies within the market.
5. What do you see as the biggest challenges in competing with Hesburger and McDonald's in the Finnish market?
 - Response: The market competition with McDonald's and Hesburger presents unique challenges. McDonald's has been in the market for 30 years now and has had time to capture the loyalty of the consumers. Hesburger has a local appeal and offers a menu that is aligned with the Finnish palate and culture through a burger called Kerroshampurilainen. Moreover, while Hesburger has more than 274 restaurants to Burger King's 60 restaurants, this means that Hesburger is more accessible to consumers. For instance, Hesburger has outlets in strategic areas such as near supermarkets and the city centres in cities such as Vaasa which makes it easier for the customers than having to travel to the Burger King outlets. However, it is evident that

Burger King has not been left behind in the sales performance in Finland and sometimes even outperforms its competitors.

6. What recommendations would you make to other fast-food brands looking to optimize their pricing and customer experience?
 - Response: As much as we appreciate the moves of the other fast-food brands, we strongly hold the view that Burger King has a different approach to the price model and customer relations. Regarding the above objectives, the following are the strategic priorities: In this case, for other brands, we suggest that they should maintain their brand's identity and keep on adapting to the market needs. However, we are sure that we will be able to sustain our competitive advantage because the strategies are adjusted to our brand and customers.

Appendix 2: Survey Questions

1. How often do you eat at fast food restaurants?
2. Which fast food brand do you visit the most?
3. How do you see Burger Kings™ pricing compared to McDonald's and Hesburger?
4. Have you ever chosen McDonald's or Hesburger instead of Burger King due to price?
5. What factors influence your decision when choosing a fast-food restaurant?
6. Do you usually remove any ingredients from your Burger King burger (e.g., pickles, tomatoes)?
7. If Burger King removed certain ingredients that customers often discard (e.g., pickles, tomatoes) and offered them as optional add-ons at a lower base price, would you support this idea?
8. Would you be interested in using an AI-based ordering system that recommends meals based on your budget and preferences?
9. If Burger King removed certain ingredients that customers often discard (e.g., pickles, tomatoes) and offered them as optional add-ons at a lower base price, would you support this idea?
10. Which type of promotions would attract you the most?
11. Do you think Burger King's portion sizes (especially Whoppers) are too big?
12. What would make you choose Burger King over its competitors more often?
13. What do you think makes a fast-food meal "worth the price"?
14. If Burger King had to reduce prices, which of the following changes would you prefer?
15. What is one thing Burger King could change to improve your experience as a customer?

Appendix: 3 Table of Recommendations from Participants

Respondent	What is one thing Burger King could change to improve your experience as a customer?	Summary keywords
1	Speed, quality, and price	Service speed, Quality, Price
2	Service and Quality	Service speed, Quality
3	Meat size	Bigger Meat portion
4	Bigger Meat portion	Bigger Meat portion
5	Prices	Price
6	King	NA
7	Nothing	NA
8		NA
9	Hi	NA
10	Price	Price
11	Introduce regular audits or mystery shoppers to ensure adherence to standards, especially during peak hours.	Introduce regular audits or mystery shoppers to ensure adherence to standards, especially during peak hours.
12	Law price	Price
13	Talking in English	English language
14	NA	NA
15	Quick Service	Service speed
16	Thank you	NA
17	All things are good but there may be an increase in portion size especially in meals and one more thing they could do faster is take away food options.	Bigger portion, Service speed
18	Allow more customization options for burgers and sides.	Customization options
19	Add more vegetarian food	More Vegetarian options
20	.	NA
21	Give more vegetarian options with less price.	More Vegetarian options, Price
22	Good taste and cheaper prices	Good taste, Price
23	Their menu is awesome but expensive in India but not good in Finland but cheaper. I think they should work on quality burgers at affordable prices.	Food quality, Price
24	Same price at day and night	Price uniformity during day and night
25	Don't know as I don't eat at Burger King often	NA
26	Bigger portion	Bigger portion
27	Waiting time	Service speed
28	Prices	Price

29	The recommendation does sound like a good idea. Also, there should be some sort of student discount as well.	Meal recommendations, Student Discount
30	I think they should stagger app rewards	App rewards
31	It can be more chipper	Price
32	Maybe introduce a vegetarian patty burger and not just Hallumi	More Vegetarian options
33	Service quality and price	Service speed, Quality, Price
34	One thing Burger King could change to improve the customer experience is consistency in food quality and freshness across all locations. While some outlets serve hot, fresh, and well-prepared meals, others may have issues with cold food, stale buns, or inconsistent portion sizes. Ensuring a uniform standard of food quality would enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.	Quality, Portion size, Freshness
35	Food quality, hygiene, And Price of product	Quality, Freshness, Price
36	Improve the food quality and freshness	Quality, Freshness
37	price and quality of food	Quality, Price
38	price definitely, because it is expensive for small burgers and quality of food,	Quality, Price
39	price and quality of food	Quality, Price
40	Price should be decreased and food quality	Quality, Price
41	Price and food quality as dining environment	Quality, Price, Dining environment
42	Price and dining environment, following hygiene	Quality, Price, Dining environment
43	Quality	Quality
44	More Vegetarian options and varieties of snacks rather than the same for many years.	More Vegetarian options
45	Nothing	NA
46	Lower prices	Price
47	Pricing should be lower	Price
48	Quality	Quality
49	its food quality and price	Quality, Price
50	food quality and price	Quality, Price
51	burger king should focus on food quality and fresh	Quality, Freshness