

Product-Related and Promotional Strategies to Increase Guest Dining Rate in Local Restaurants in Ormoc City

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Abstract

This study examined product-related interventions and promotional strategies implemented by selected local restaurants in Ormoc City, Leyte, to increase guest dining rates. Anchored on the Theory of Planned Behavior and Prospect Theory, the study employed a descriptive quantitative research design involving 90 restaurant owners, managers, supervisors, and staff from 10 selected establishments through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a researcher-developed, validated, and pilot-tested questionnaire and analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and weighted means. Findings revealed that most respondents were male, worked in relatively newly established restaurants, and primarily offered Filipino cuisine. Product-related interventions were very highly implemented (weighted mean = 4.46), particularly menu improvement, food quality consistency, and menu variety. Promotional strategies were likewise very highly implemented (weighted mean = 4.27), emphasizing online food delivery partnerships, social media marketing, and seasonal promotions. Respondents strongly agreed that guest dining rates had increased (weighted mean = 4.87), particularly customer referrals, first-time visits, repeat patronage, and daily customer traffic. However, specialty dietary offerings, discounts, and loyalty programs received comparatively lower implementation ratings. The study concluded that restaurant personnel perceived product-related and promotional strategies as important contributors to customer satisfaction and increased patronage. It recommended expanding dietary options, strengthening loyalty programs, and maintaining food quality standards. The study aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Its findings may contribute to socio-economic and institutional sustainability by supporting restaurant competitiveness, business continuity, and local hospitality development.

Keywords: Business Sustainability; Customer Patronage; Guest Dining Rates; Local Restaurants Product-Related Interventions; Promotional Strategies; Restaurant Competitiveness

1. Introduction

The food and beverage industry contributes to employment, tourism, and economic development in the Philippines. In Ormoc City, Leyte, local restaurants implement product-related interventions and promotional strategies to attract customers and increase guest dining rates. These include food quality, menu variety, pricing, advertising, discounts, and digital marketing. However, limited research examines these strategies from the perspective of restaurant personnel responsible for their implementation. This study investigates product-related interventions, promotional strategies, and capacity-leveling practices among selected local restaurants in Ormoc City to provide insights into improving customer patronage and business sustainability.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2023) reported that 22,071 restaurants and mobile food service establishments employed 269,203 individuals in 2020, highlighting the industry's economic contribution. The Food Safety Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10611) further emphasizes food safety and consumer protection. In Ormoc City, restaurant competitiveness depends on product quality, taste, presentation, variety, pricing, and promotional activities. Weti and Osorno (2025) found high customer loyalty (3.87), with food quality (3.99), service quality (3.98), and hygiene and sanitation (3.93) identified as important patronage factors. These findings emphasize the importance of product improvement and customer-oriented strategies in encouraging restaurant visits.

Previous studies emphasize the relationship of product quality, marketing practices, and restaurant performance. Baylon et al. (2025) highlighted product quality, pricing, promotion, and service quality, while Santos and Glory Sotelo-Drequito (2024) identified a positive relationship between marketing strategies and customer satisfaction. Similarly, Tabafunda et al. (2024) emphasized product offerings, advertising, and discounts, whereas Uslu and Eren (2020) identified food quality as an important determinant of dining decisions. Digital promotion also influences customer behavior. Sundo (2025) found that social media marketing affects customer attitudes and purchase intentions, while Mihashiro-Santamaria et al. (2024) emphasized online advertising and customer engagement. Hanafi, Siregar, and Hutabarat (2023) associated product quality, service quality, and digital promotions with customer satisfaction and revisit intentions. Manurung et al. (2025) identified promotional activities as contributors to sales growth, while Concepcion et al. (2024) emphasized marketing-mix strategies in attracting customers. Restaurant adaptability and operational efficiency are equally important. Nonato, Banayo, and Cadano (2023) highlighted marketing strategies during business disruptions, while Silvano et al. (2022) emphasized operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Alvarez (2020) identified marketing-mix practices and employee development as important business considerations, whereas Magboo et al. (2020) highlighted branding, customer experience, and creative marketing. Collectively, these studies establish the relevance of product and promotional interventions to restaurant competitiveness and customer patronage.

In Ormoc City, Weti and Osorno (2025) established the importance of food quality, service, and hygiene in customer loyalty. Philippine studies by Baylon et al. (2025), Tabafunda et al. (2024), Nonato, Banayo, and Cadano (2023), Silvano et al. (2022), Alvarez (2020), and Magboo et al. (2020) similarly emphasized marketing strategies, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction in restaurant businesses. International investigations by Sundo (2025), Manurung et al. (2025), Mihashiro-Santamaria et al. (2024), and Hanafi, Siregar, and Hutabarat (2023) further highlighted digital marketing, product quality, and promotional effectiveness. These findings support examining restaurant marketing interventions within Ormoc City's hospitality environment.

This study is anchored on the Theory of Planned Behavior by Icek Ajzen (1991) and Prospect Theory by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky (1979). The Theory of Planned Behavior explains how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence restaurant owners' intentions to implement product improvements and promotional strategies. Prospect Theory explains how owners evaluate potential gains and losses when investing in menu innovations and marketing activities. Conceptually, the study identifies local restaurants as the independent variable, product-related interventions and promotional strategies as intervening variables, and increased guest dining rate as the dependent variable.

Although previous studies have examined restaurant marketing and customer satisfaction, limited attention has been given to restaurant personnel responsible for implementing product-related and promotional interventions. Weti and Osorno (2025) primarily examined customer loyalty rather than restaurant management practices. Addressing this gap, the present study examines restaurant and respondent profiles, product-related recalibrations, promotional course corrections, and capacity-leveling practices intended to increase guest dining rates among selected local restaurants in Ormoc City.

This study aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by examining restaurant strategies relevant to business continuity, employment, and local economic activity. It also supports SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) through product improvement and innovative promotional practices, including digital

marketing. Furthermore, SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) relates to the contribution of local restaurants to hospitality, tourism, and community economic development.

The study contributes to socio-economic, institutional, and community sustainability by examining strategies that may strengthen restaurant competitiveness and support continued business operations. Its findings may assist restaurant owners and managers in improving product offerings, promotional practices, and customer engagement while providing local government stakeholders with insights relevant to tourism and business development. The study also contributes to hospitality management, marketing, and entrepreneurship research by examining restaurant interventions from the perspective of personnel directly involved in their implementation.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive quantitative research design using a self-administered questionnaire. This approach employed numerical data to describe the extent of implementation of product-related and promotional strategies and the reported increase in guest dining rates among selected local restaurants in Ormoc City.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Ormoc City, Leyte, a developing first-class city in Eastern Visayas known for its growing business and tourism sectors. The city offers diverse dining establishments, including local eateries, cafés, family restaurants, and casual dining establishments. Its developing hospitality industry and accessibility to the researchers made it a suitable location for examining restaurant product and promotional strategies.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The study involved 90 respondents comprising restaurant owners, managers, supervisors, and other employees from 10 selected local restaurants in Ormoc City. These establishments were Restoria Kitchen, Pare's Lechon, Food Crave Seafoods and Grill Park, Pier Capitan, Ramenboi and Steakhouse Restaurant, Lugawan ni Opaw, Cristina's Made with Love, AZ Corner Café & Restaurant, The Aviary, and Marasa Restobar. Respondents were selected based on their involvement in restaurant operations and familiarity with product-related and promotional practices.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study employed purposive sampling, a non-probability technique that selects participants based on characteristics relevant to the research objectives. According to Nikolopoulou (2022), purposive sampling involves deliberately selecting individuals who can provide appropriate information about the phenomenon being investigated. Accordingly, the researchers selected 90 owners, managers, supervisors, and employees from the 10 participating restaurants based on their involvement in restaurant operations.

2.5 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to assess product-related interventions, promotional strategies, and guest dining rate increases. The instrument underwent content validation and pilot testing before administration. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding coefficients of 0.82 for Product Interventions, 0.84 for Promotional Interventions, and 0.88 for Guest Dining Rate Increase, with six items in each section. These results indicated good internal consistency across the three sections, supporting the instrument's reliability for data collection.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers first obtained permission from the Dean of the School of Tourism Hospitality Management and subsequently requested authorization from the selected restaurant managers in Ormoc City. Following approval, questionnaires were distributed to respondents who provided informed consent. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was assured. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and securely stored for subsequent analysis. No incentives were provided to participants.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and weighted means. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize respondent and restaurant profiles, while weighted means were employed to determine the extent of implementation of product-related interventions and promotional strategies, as well as the reported extent of increase in guest dining rates.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical principles of autonomy, informed consent, beneficence, justice, confidentiality, and non-discrimination. Respondents were informed of the research objectives, their right to withdraw, and the voluntary nature of participation. The questionnaire presented minimal risk, and no compensation was provided.

Collected information was used exclusively for academic purposes, securely handled, and treated confidentially. Participants were also provided with researcher contact information for inquiries, and the final manuscript was intended for submission to the school library and Institutional Research Office.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents and Restaurant Characteristics

3.1.1 Position of Respondents in Local Restaurants

Among the 90 respondents, 64 (71.11%) were restaurant staff, 10 (11.11%) were owners, 7 (7.78%) were managers, and 6 (6.67%) were supervisors. Restaurant staff constituted the largest respondent group. The findings indicate that the study primarily reflects the perspectives of employees directly involved in restaurant operations. Their responsibilities in food preparation, customer service, and daily transactions provide opportunities to observe customer preferences, product offerings, and promotional practices.

3.1.2 Years of Restaurant Operations

Most respondents, 53 (58.89%), worked in restaurants operating for 1–3 years, followed by 25 (27.78%) in establishments operating for 4–6 years. Meanwhile, 9 (10.00%) represented restaurants operating for 7–9 years, and 3 (3.33%) worked in establishments operating for at least 10 years. These findings indicate that most respondents were associated with relatively recently established restaurants. This highlights the relevance of product-related and promotional strategies for establishments seeking to strengthen their market presence and customer patronage.

3.1.3 Sex Distribution of Respondents

Of the 90 respondents, 51 (56.67%) were male, 38 (42.22%) were female, and 1 (1.11%) preferred not to disclose their sex. Male respondents represented the majority of participants. The findings indicate greater male representation within the surveyed restaurant personnel. However, the distribution describes only the study respondents and does not establish broader employment patterns across restaurants in Ormoc City.

3.1.4 Types of Cuisine Offered by Local Restaurants

All 90 respondents (100.00%) indicated that their restaurants offered Filipino cuisine. Other reported offerings included Japanese cuisine (20.00%), American cuisine (18.89%), Italian cuisine (8.89%), and Chinese cuisine (2.22%). Multiple responses were permitted. These findings indicate that Filipino cuisine predominated among the selected establishments, although some restaurants also offered international dishes. The variety of cuisines reflects differences in restaurant product offerings and the dining preferences they seek to accommodate.

3.2 Implementation of Product-Related Interventions

3.2.1 Menu Innovation, Food Quality, and Customer Preferences

Product-related interventions were rated Very Highly Implemented, with an overall weighted mean of 4.46. Improving existing menu items based on customer feedback and maintaining consistency in food quality, taste, and portion size obtained the highest weighted means (4.91 each). Introducing new menu items and offering menu variety both received 4.57, while updating menus according to food trends obtained 4.26. Specialty and dietary menu options received the lowest mean of 3.52, although these remained Highly Implemented. The findings indicate that restaurants prioritized food quality, menu improvement, and responsiveness to customer preferences, while specialty dietary offerings received comparatively less emphasis. Santos and Sotelo-Drequito (2024) found that introducing new products, improving existing offerings, and incorporating diverse flavors contribute to customer attraction and satisfaction. Similarly, Baylon et al. (2025) emphasized product quality as an important factor in customer perceptions and restaurant performance. These findings support the relevance of product-related interventions to restaurant competitiveness and customer patronage.

3.3 Implementation of Promotional Strategies

3.3.1 Digital Marketing, Promotional Activities, and Customer Engagement

Promotional strategies were rated Very Highly Implemented, with an overall weighted mean of 4.27. Collaboration with online food delivery platforms obtained the highest weighted mean (5.00), followed by social media promotion (4.95) and seasonal promotions or special events (4.85). Posters, banners, and digital advertisements received 4.15, indicating High Implementation. Discounts and promotional deals (3.35) and customer loyalty programs (3.30) were Moderately Implemented. These findings suggest that restaurants emphasized digital marketing, delivery partnerships, and seasonal activities more than discounts and loyalty programs. Sundo (2025) found that social media advertising and electronic word-of-mouth influence customer attitudes and purchase intentions. Similarly, Mihashiro-Santamaria et al. (2024) emphasized that digital advertising, customer engagement, promotional information, and updated content support restaurant awareness and loyalty. These studies reinforce the importance of digital promotional strategies in attracting potential customers and encouraging restaurant patronage.

3.4 Reported Increase in Guest Dining Rates

3.4.1 Customer Visits, Referrals, and Dining Frequency

Respondents Strongly Agreed that guest dining rates had increased, with an overall weighted mean of 4.87. Customer recommendations and referrals and overall improvement in guest dining rates during the previous 12 months received the highest means (5.00 each). First-time customer visits and average daily customer traffic both obtained 4.90, followed by repeat customer visits (4.85) and increased customer numbers over the previous year (4.55). All indicators were rated Strongly Agree. The findings reflect respondents' positive assessments of customer visits, referrals, and overall dining activity. Hanafi, Siregar, and Hutabarat (2023) found that product quality and digital promotion positively influence customer satisfaction and revisit intentions. Sundo (2025) likewise emphasized the influence of social media marketing on customer attitudes and purchase intentions. Furthermore, Santos and Sotelo-Drequito (2024) highlighted the importance of menu innovation and product improvement in customer satisfaction, while Silvano et al. (2022) associated product quality and operational efficiency with positive dining experiences. These findings support the relevance of product and promotional interventions to customer patronage, although the present descriptive results do not independently establish causal relationships.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that most selected local restaurants in Ormoc City were relatively newly established, predominantly employed male respondents, and primarily offered Filipino cuisine. Product-related interventions and promotional strategies were very highly implemented, particularly menu improvement, food quality consistency, social media marketing, and online delivery partnerships. Respondents strongly agreed that guest dining rates, first-time visits, repeat patronage, and customer referrals had increased. Overall, the findings indicate that restaurant personnel perceived product-related and promotional interventions as important contributors to customer satisfaction, restaurant competitiveness, and increased guest dining rates.

Restaurant owners and managers are encouraged to expand dietary menu options, establish structured customer loyalty programs, and maintain food quality standards. Local government and tourism units may support culinary tourism initiatives, business development policies, and training programs on digital marketing, food safety, and enterprise growth. Guests should continue providing feedback to improve restaurant offerings and services. Researchers are encouraged to incorporate customer perspectives and more comprehensive analytical approaches, while future studies may expand to other areas of Eastern Visayas and examine the long-term financial returns of social media promotional campaigns.

The study was limited to 90 restaurant owners, managers, supervisors, and staff from 10 selected local restaurants in Ormoc City, Leyte. It employed a descriptive quantitative design using a researcher-developed questionnaire and purposive sampling, with data analyzed through descriptive statistics. Findings were based on restaurant personnel's reported experiences and perceptions rather than direct customer responses or independently verified dining records. Consequently, the results may not fully represent all restaurants and customers in Ormoc City or be generalizable to other geographic locations.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflicts of interest and confirm that the study received no external funding, subject to author verification. Ethical principles were observed throughout the research process, with permission obtained from the Dean of the School of Tourism Hospitality Management and participating restaurant managers in Ormoc City, Leyte. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was secured, and data were collected through non-invasive, self-administered questionnaires, with confidentiality maintained and no identifying information disclosed. The researchers acknowledge the School of Tourism Hospitality Management and the participating restaurant owners, managers, supervisors, and staff for their cooperation and contributions to the study.

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