

Determinants of Consumer Patronage of Food Vendors in Nigeria

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Abstract

This research work investigated the determinants of consumer patronage of food vendors in Nigeria with reference to south eastern part of Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to investigate the influence of food familiarity, price and vendor's physical environment on consumer patronage of food vendors. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population size was unknown while the sample size was 384. Primary source of data was used while the instrument of data collection was the questionnaire. The validity and reliability of the research instrument were checked and established. The study used a convenient sampling technique in reaching the respondents. Multiple regression statistical technique was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 5% level of significance. The finding showed that menu familiarity and price had positive significant influences on consumer patronage. The finding also showed that vendor's physical environment had no significant influence on consumer patronage. The findings of the study have many implications to the stakeholders, policy makers, marketers, consumers, potential vendors and future researchers. The study recommended that street food vendors should continue to provide familiar menu options in order to boost consumer's patronage. It was also recommended that food vendors should continue to provide menu at affordable price in order to increase consumer patronage. The study also recommended that the physical environment of the vendor's sales outlets should be more clean, appealing, neat and modern as these will help to increase consumer patronage of food vendors in south-eastern part of Nigeria.

Key words: *Determinants, Familiarity, Price, Vendor's Physical Environment, Patronage*

Introduction

With the present geometric growth of Nigerian population, there has been an increase in street food businesses. The tremendous rise is necessitated due to the fact that Nigeria is one of the fastest growing countries in the world; expected to be the fourth by 2050; surpassing countries like Japan, Brazil and Pakistan (Shoyemi, 2014). Thus, the increase in population is a good market opportunity for food business. Furthermore, Shoyemi, (2014) maintained that increased urbanization and changing work roles contribute significantly to the growth of restaurants and fast food in Nigeria. As the demand for food outside from home increases, there is opportunity for growth in the eatery and restaurant industry (Olise, Okoli & Ekeke, 2015). Pertinently, south eastern part of Nigeria, especially Igbo ethnic group formed the economic stronghold of Nigeria since they have tight trade schedule (Orugun & Nafiu, 2014). Some people do businesses outside their house and may not have enough time to eat food from their house. Pertinently, the south eastern part of Nigeria represents an admirable target

market where street food vendors can proactively take the initiative in a highly competitive dining world. Food choice is not only influenced by food quality but also by price, being familiar with the type of food served as well as vendor's physical environment.

Street food is very important in Nigeria because of relative low nature of earnings by Nigerian consumers. Contributing, Olise, Okoli & Ekeke (2015) maintained that food businesses can be seen in every part of Nigeria especially in South-East. Regrettably, the rate at which food vendor businesses shut down operations has increased (Olise, Okoli & Ekeke, 2015). Furthermore, Knutson et al. (2016) revealed that the food industry has a high failure rate of over sixty percent within the first three years of opening. The reason for this is that some food vendors were unable to retain and attract more customers which have led to low sales and profitability. The type of food offered varies according to the buyers' socioeconomic status and their environment. Apparently, street vendors not only play a major role in providing food for the population but also serve as a source of livelihood for the vendors. Importantly, street foods contribute significantly to the diets of many people in the developing world (Suneetha, Manjula & Depur, 2011). In addition, the sale of street foods supports the livelihoods of millions of people and it make a sizeable contribution to the economies of developing countries (FAO, 2013). Undoubtedly, a good food vendor must be conversant with what consumers need and desired when dining out. Undoubtedly, price of food also influence the choice of restaurant among the low income earners. Furthermore, price was shown to be important in the selection of a food service in the majority of the studies that investigated it (for instance, Baek, Ham, Yang, 2006). Interestingly, the physical environment itself may produce feelings of excitement, pleasure and relaxation. Consequently, different aspects of atmospheric cues can be used by customers as tangible indicators to assess the quality of services provided. Furthermore, being familiar with a product is strongly and positively associated with a consumer attitude toward it (Pieniak, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Guerrero & Hersleth, 2009).

Nevertheless, there are scanty empirical studies on factors that influence consumer patronage of street food vendors. Extant literature has indicated that only few studies exist on propellers of consumer patronage of food vendors (Knutson, 2010; Ehsan, 2012; Adam, Hiamey & Afenyo, 2014; Deliens, Clarys, De Bourdeaudhuij and Deforche, 2014). Although Blešić, Popov-Raljić, Pivac and Ivkov (2018) studied college students' dining motives, expectations and perceptions; Ukenna and Ayodele (2019) analyzed sustainable street food consumption domain while Ayodele and Panama (2016) conducted a research on street food vendors' patronage but these studies had varying findings. Notwithstanding that a few empirical literature on street food consumption exist but only hygienic factors and other issues were addressed (Singh, Dudeja, Kaushal & Mukherji, 2016). Most studies did not capture the influence of price, menu familiarity and ambience on street food vendor patronage in south east of Nigeria For instance, Soriano (2002), concentrated his study on food quality and quality of service delivery of restaurant busin-esses.,Furthermore, Namkung, and,Jang (2007),study concentrated on food quality and consumer satisfaction. Based on these imbalances in the literature, there is need for further empirical studies concerning motives that influence consumer patronage of street food vendors. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the determining motives and their influences on consumer patronage of street food vendors in south east of Nigeria. Specifically, the researcher sought to ascertain the extent menu familiarity, price and vendor's physical environment influence consumer patronage of street food vendors in South East of Nigeria.

Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the determinants of consumer patronage of food vendors in Nigeria. The specific objectives of this study are to;

1. Investigate the influence of menu familiarity on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.
2. Determine the influence of price on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.
3. Assess the influence of vendor's physical environment on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

Research questions

Based on the objectives of this study, the following research questions were raised;

- 1) To what level does menu familiarity influence consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria?
- 2) To what extent does price influence consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria?
- 3) To what dimension does vendor's physical environment influence consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study.

- H1: Menu familiarity does not have a significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.
- H2: Price has no significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.
- H3: Vendor's physical environment does not have a significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

Literature Review

Menu Familiarity

Menu familiarity is seemed to be one of unique constructs that has not been given adequate attention in the literature. Pieniak, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Guerrero and Hersleth (2009) studied the effect of familiarity on attitude of consumer towards traditional food. They found that familiarity with product is strongly and positively associated with attitude toward traditional food. In addition, Pieniak, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Guerrero & Hersleth (2015) reported that menu or meal familiarity plays significant role in influencing consumer patronage of street food. Also Tian (2011) stated that food consumption habits and patterns are components of culture that make an important contribution to the food decision consumers make. In a similar vein, foods of other cultures are accepted if they have familiar ingredients and preparation styles (Trafialek, Drosinos & Kolanowski, 2017). This seems to suggest that being familiar with a particular food or menu is strongly and positively associated with consumer patronage intentions. Therefore, menu familiarity is seen as a significant factor that influences consumer patronage of street food.

Price

Price is the attribute that influences the choice of street food vendors or restaurant among the low income earners. Thus, price was shown to be important in the selection of a food service in the majority of the studies that investigated it. For instance, Baek, Ham, Yang, (2006) showed that Korean and Filipino consumers alleged price to be the most relevant factor in the choice of a restaurant. Mill (2017) observed that price is another factor restaurant patrons

take into account when selecting a restaurant. If they perceive that the value is less than the price paid, they are likely to evaluate the dining experience negatively. In the same vein, Mulles and Woods (2004) asserted that restaurant consumers use price as a measure for the quality of the restaurant, assuming that an expensive restaurant serves better food and offers better quality. Also, Sweeny et al. (2012) commented that a low price may increase the probability of choosing a particular restaurant, while a high price may also decrease consumer perceptions of restaurants quality. In addition, Knutson, (2010) found that price is the third most important factor in the selection of fast-food restaurants. However, in other studies, (Liu and Jang, 2009; Mattila, 2001; Park, 2004), price was considered to be an attribute of major importance when compared to other factors. Furthermore, price is one of the attribute that positively influence the patronage of vendor's sales outlets especially among the low income earners. Menu price is very important in the selection of a food selling outlets in many studies that investigated it (Atinkut et al., 2018).

Vendor's physical environment

Scholars have expressed interest in the role of physical environment, or "atmospherics" on customer patronage (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). The physical environment itself may produce feelings of excitement, pleasure, or relaxation. Consequently, various aspects of atmospherics may be used by customers as tangible cues to assess the quality of services provided. A range of atmospheric elements within a service setting include visual and auditory cues such as function, space, design, color, and music. The atmosphere of an establishment is shown to be a relevant factor that influences the choice of eatery outlet (Laroche, Takahashi, Kalamas and Teng, 2005). However, Jang, Kim and Bonn (2011) only found moderate importance of atmospheric condition. In a comparative study, Stewart, Blisard, Jolliffe and SanjibBhuyan, (2005) found that the significance of the vendor's physical environment is positively related to fine-dining restaurant, and also significantly related to fast-food restaurants. Also, dining atmospherics has significant effects on customers' positive emotions, negative emotions, and perceived value (Liu & Jang, 2009). Furthermore, Tan and Yeap (2012) observed that this attribute was highly perceived by consumers in selecting family and fine-dining type restaurants, but not in the choice of quick service ones. Kim, Raab and Bergman, (2010) also found that this factor was more important in the choice of fine-dining and casual-dining restaurants than in those of the buffet type. Blešić, Popov-Raljić, Pivac and Ivkov (2018) found that vendor's physical environment is positively related to street food vending patronage intention as well as patronage behaviour. Importantly, physical environment is seemed to drive street food vendors' consumer patronage.

Consumer Patronage

Consumer patronage is a predilection to be purchasing a particular brand of a product or to purchase at a particular sales outlet (Yuen & Chen, 2010). It is a repurchase decision that a consumer is unwavering to buy from a particular food vendor or a specific menu even at a higher price than it is worth. Menu familiarity and price appear to have major influences on consumer patronage. Consumer patronage is the after effects of choice according to some dependable criteria (Resnik, 2000). Paswan et al. (2010) capture that consumer patronage behavior can be measured in many ways such as; loyalty intention, amount of money spent, repeat purchase, number of visits, satisfaction level, duration taken, time and quantity of goods bought. In addition, food vendors benefit by understanding the various factors that influence consumer patronage behavior by getting more sales, repeat purchase and customer loyalty. Yeun and Chen (2010) found that consumer patronage behavior can be influenced by location, atmosphere, meal familiarity, price, and food quality. Thang and Tan (2003)

maintained that consumers patronize street food outlet based on positive and acceptable factors and experiences.

Proposed Conceptual Model for the Study

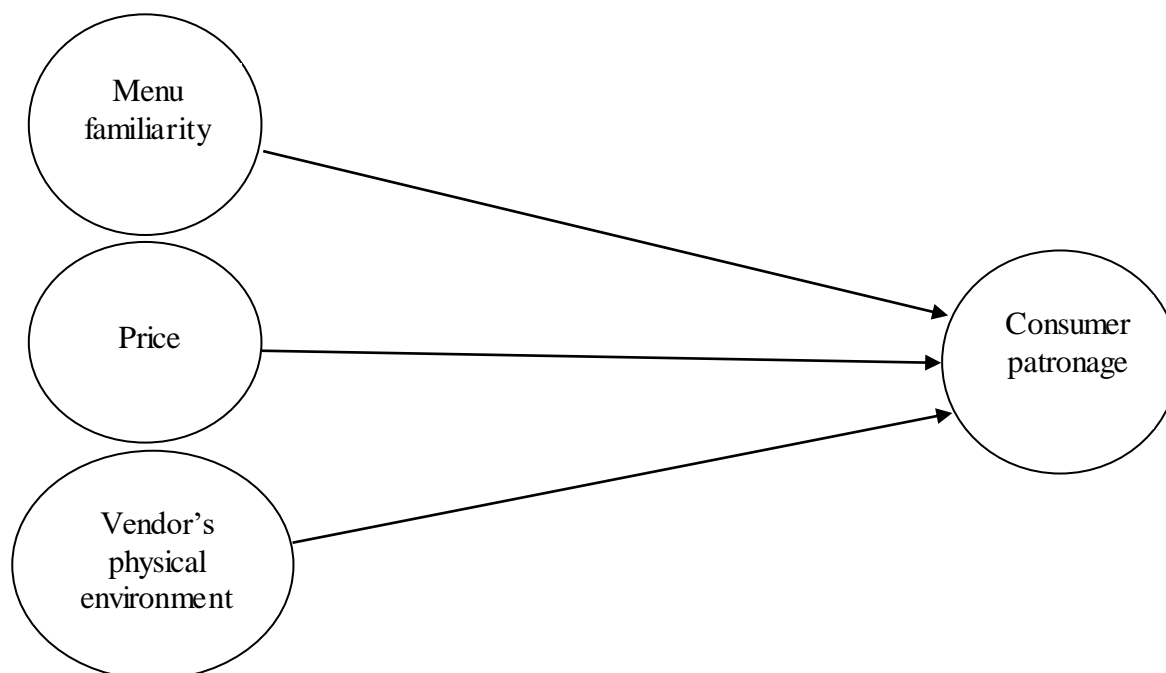


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Model for the Study.
Source: Researchers' Schematics (2021).

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design. The target population of the study comprised the consumers of food vendors in south-east of Nigeria while the population is unknown. The sample size of 384 was statistically determined using Yamane formula for known population size. The study utilized a convenience sampling technique. The source of data collection was the use of primary source using self-administered copies of the questionnaire. The questionnaire items were developed from the literature and the measurement scale adapted from the previous studies and modified to suit the context of this research work. The questionnaire items for each construct were pilot tested and revalidated due to alterations made to the measurement instrument. The Likert's scale style of structured questionnaire was adopted. The data collection lasted for 68 days at different times of the day as suggested by (Kok & Fon, 2014). The average reliability alpha coefficient value of 0.724 proved the internal consistency of the instrument which made it reliable for the main survey. In addition, the face validity of the instrument was done by three research experts who ensured the soundness of the research instrument. Three hundred and eight four copies of the questionnaire were distributed to consumers of food vendors of thirty selected outlets across the state capitals of five south-eastern states (Abakaliki, Awka, Enugu, Owerri and Umuahia). A multiple regression analysis statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study which was facilitated using SPSS software package. In addition, three hypotheses were tested and decision made based on 5% level of significance. The decision rule benchmark for the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis is to accept the alternative hypothesis if the p-value is ≤ 0.05 ; otherwise, reject the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis if the p-value is > 0.05 .

RESULTS

Data Presentation and Analyses

Table 1: Menu Familiarity

Items	(1) Neutral	(2) Strongly Disagree	(3) Disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1 Street food vendor cooks familiar meals.	6	29	33	176	91
2 Street food vendor produces what I usually eat.	8	6	39	177	105
3 Street food vendor cook the type of food I like when I was young.	4	52	55	145	79

Source: Field Survey (2021).

Table 1 demonstrates that 91 respondents strongly agreed that street food vendors cook familiar meals; 176 respondents agreed that street food vendors cook familiar meals. 33 respondents did not agree that street food vendors cook familiar meals; 29 respondents strongly disagreed while 6 respondents were neutral. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed that street food vendors cook familiar meals. Table 1 also shows that 105 respondents strongly agreed that street food vendors produce what consumers usually eat. 177 respondents agreed that street food vendors produce what consumers usually eat. 39 did not agree that street food vendors produce what consumers usually eat; 6 respondents strongly disagreed while 8 respondents were neutral. The implication is that a good number of the respondents agreed that street food vendors produce what consumers usually eat. Furthermore, table 1 field survey findings show that 79 respondents strongly agreed that street food vendors cook the type of food consumers like when they were young. 145 respondents agreed that street food vendors cook the type of food consumers like when they were young. 55 respondents did not agree that street food vendors cook the type of food consumers like when they were young. 52 respondents strongly disagreed while 4 respondents were did not take sides. This implies that majority of the respondents have established that street food vendors cook the type of food they like when they were young.

Table 2 demonstrates that 116 respondents strongly agreed that the price of food is not expensive; 160 respondents agreed that the price of food is not expensive. 19 respondents did not agree that the price of food is not expensive; 37 respondents strongly disagreed while 3 respondents were neutral. This implies that majority of the respondents testified that menu price is not too expensive. Furthermore, 101 respondents strongly agreed that menu or meal price is very affordable; 163 respondents agreed that menu price is affordable. 24 respondents did not agree that menu price is affordable; 34 respondents strongly disagreed while 13 respondents were neutral. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed that menu price is affordable. Table 2 also signals that 128 respondents strongly agreed that meal is competitively priced. 175 respondents agreed that meal is competitively priced.

Table 2: Menu Price

Items	(1) Neutral	(2) Strongly Disagree	(3) Disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1 The price of food is not expensive.	3	37	19	160	116
2 Menu price is affordable.	13	34	24	163	101
3 Meal is competitively priced.	2	18	12	175	128
4 The menu prices are reasonable.	9	36	18	173	99
5 The fee charged is commensurate with food quality.	5	28	22	143	137

Source: Field Survey (2021).

In addition, 12 respondents did not agree that meal is competitively priced; 18 respondents strongly disagreed while 2 respondents were neutral. This implies that majority of the respondents confirmed that meal is competitively priced. Table 2 also shows that 99 respondents strongly agreed that the menu prices charged by the vendor are reasonable. 173 respondents agreed that the menu prices charged by the vendor are reasonable. 18 respondents did not agree that the menu prices charged by the vendor are reasonable; 36 respondents strongly disagreed while 9 respondents were neutral. This implies that majority of the respondents concurred that the menu prices charged by the vendor are reasonable. In addition, table 2 also shows that 137 respondents strongly agreed that the fee charged is commensurate with food quality. 143 respondents agreed that the fee charged is commensurate with food quality. 22 respondents did not agree that the fee charged is commensurate with food quality; 28 respondents strongly disagreed while 5 respondents were neutral. The implication is that a good number of respondents approved that the fee charged is commensurate with food quality.

Table 3 indicates that 73 respondents strongly agreed that vendor's dining area is not dirty. 189 respondents agreed that vendor's dining area is not dirty. 29 respondents did not agree that vendor's dining area is not dirty. 40 respondents disagreed while 4 respondents were indifferent. This implies that a good number of respondents confirmed that food dining vicinity is clean. In addition, table 3 shows that 88 respondents strongly agreed that the interior design is visually appealing, 158 agreed while 46 respondents disagreed. 36 respondents strongly disagreed whereas 7 respondents were neutral. Table 3 also shows that 94 respondents strongly agreed that interior colours used create pleasant atmosphere. 150 respondents agreed that interior colours used create pleasant atmosphere. 52 respondents did not agree that interior colours used create pleasant atmosphere. 30 respondents strongly disagreed that interior colours used create pleasant atmosphere while 9 respondents were neutral. Table 3 indicates that 93 respondents strongly agreed that utensils used by food vendors are clean. 158 respondents agreed while 51 respondents disagreed that utensils used by food vendors are clean. 31 respondents strongly disagree while 2 respondents were indifferent. Furthermore, still on table 4.2.5, 111 respondents strongly agreed that the tables used by food vendors are neat. 102 respondents agreed while 25 respondents disagreed that tables used by food vendors are neat. 89 respondents strongly disagree while 8 respondents were neutral.

Table 3: Vendor's Physical Environment

		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Items	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	The vendor's dining area is not dirty.	4	40	29	189	73
2	The interior design is visually appealing	7	36	46	158	88
3	Interior colors used create pleasant atmosphere	9	30	52	150	94
4	The utensils used appear clean.	2	31	51	158	93
5	The tables are neat.	8	89	25	102	111
6	The plates are always clean.	4	12	40	189	90
7	The vendor's surroundings are tidy	6	22	31	175	101

Source: Field Survey (2021).

Table 3 also signals that 90 respondents strongly agreed that the plates used by food vendors are always clean. 189 respondents agreed while 40 respondents did not agree that plates used by food vendors are always clean. 12 respondents strongly disagree while 4 respondents were indifferent. In addition, 101 respondents strongly agreed that the vendors' surroundings are tidy. 175 respondents agreed while 31 disagreed that vendors' surroundings are tidy. 22 respondents strongly disagree while 6 respondents were neutral. This implies that vendor's physical environment is an important factor.

A cursory look at table 4 shows that 128 respondents strongly agreed that they will encourage their relatives to dine at street food vendor because the type of menu options offered are familiar to us. 175 respondents agreed that they will encourage their relatives to dine at street food vendor because the type of menu options offered are familiar to us. 12 respondents disagreed that they will encourage their relatives to dine at street food vendor because the type of menu options offered are familiar to us. 14 respondents strongly disagreed that they will encourage their relatives to dine at street food vendor because the type of menu options offered are familiar to us while 6 respondents were neutral. The implication of the survey findings is that menu familiarity is a major factor that influences consumer patronage of street food vendors in South East.

Table 4: Consumer Patronage

Items	(1) Neutral	(2) Strongly Disagree	(3) Disagree	(4) Agree	(5) Strongly agree
1 I will encourage my relatives to dine at a particular vendor because she offers the type of menu we are familiar with.	6	14	12	175	128
2 I will continue to buy from a particular vendor because she sells food at affordable price.	9	36	18	133	139
3 I will continue to purchase from a particular vendor due to clean environment she maintains.	4	28	22	144	137

Source: Field Survey (2021).

Moreso, table 4 shows that 139 respondents strongly agreed that they will continue to buy from a particular vendor because she sells at affordable prices. 133 respondents agreed that they will continue to buy from a particular vendor because she sells at affordable prices. 18 respondents disagreed that they will continue to buy from a particular vendor because she sells at affordable prices. 36 respondents strongly disagreed that they will continue to buy from a particular vendor because she sells at affordable prices while 9 respondents were neutral. This implies that menu price is a significant factor that influences consumer patronage of street food vendors in south east, Nigeria. In addition, table 4 indicates that 137 respondents strongly agreed that they will continue to purchase from street food vendors due to clean environment they maintain. 144 respondents agreed that they will continue to purchase from street food vendors due to clean environment they maintain. 22 respondents disagreed that they will continue to purchase from street food vendors due to clean environment they maintain. 28 respondents strongly disagreed that they will continue to purchase from street food vendors due to clean environment they maintain while 4 respondents were indifferent. The implication of the field survey findings is that vendor's physical environment is an essential factor that influences consumer patronage of street food vendors in South East.

Table 5: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.713 ^a	0.552	.547	.13242	2.002

- a. Predictors: (Constant) = Menu Familiarity, Price, Vendor's Physical Environment
- b. Dependent variable: Consumer Patronage

Table 6: Multiple Regression Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	98.022	5	13.112	65.234	.000 ^b
	Residual	54.113	178	.432		

Total	152.135	183			
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage					
Table 7: Multiple Regression Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.902	.327		7.075	.000
Menu Familiarity	.142	.050	.149	2.864	.004
Menu Price	.212	.051	.230	4.142	.000
Vendor's Physical Environment	.050	.052	.049	.966	.335

Dependent variable: Consumer Patronage
 Source: SPSS Computation Output, 2021.

Test of Hypothesis One

HO1: Familiarity does not have a significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

HA1: Familiarity has a significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

Based on result on table 7: for menu familiarity; the t-value is 2.864, p-value = .004 and β value = 0.149. The decision is that the null hypothesis three is rejected and alternative hypothesis three accepted. The conclusion is that menu familiarity has a positive significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East, Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis Two

HO2: Price has no significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

HA2: Price has a significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

Based on result as shown on table 7: for menu price; the t-value is 4.142, p-value = .000 and β value = 0.230. The decision is that the null hypothesis four is rejected and alternative hypothesis four accepted. The conclusion is that menu price has a positive significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East, Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis Three

HO3: Vendor's physical environment does not have a significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

HA3: Vendor's physical environment has a significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East Nigeria.

Based on result on table 7: for vendor's physical environment; the t-value is 0.996, p-value = .335 and β value = 0.049. The decision is that the null hypothesis five is accepted and alternative hypothesis five rejected. The conclusion is that vendor's physical environment has no significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study has discovered that menu familiarity has a positive significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East, Nigeria. The finding of this study is in line with Pieniak, Verbeke, Vanhonacker, Guerrero and Hersleth (2015) who found that familiarity influence the attitude of consumer towards traditional food. They found that Importance attached to familiarity with a product is found to be strongly and positively associated with general attitude toward traditional food as well as

traditional food consumption. In addition, menu price has a positive significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East, Nigeria. Importantly, the finding of this study is, in, agreement with the findings of Baek, Ham and Yang (2013) who found that Korean and Filipino consumers consider menu price as one of the, significant factors, in, the, selection or choice, of, a, restaurant or fast food outlets. However, research work, work, contradicted the findings of, Liu, and, Jang (2009) and that of Mattila (2010) who, found, that, price plays less significant function when, compared, to other factors. Our study found that vendor's physical environment has no statistical significant influence on consumer patronage of street food vendors in South-East, Nigeria. Moreover, the finding of this research contradicted the findings of Laroche, Takahashi, Kalamas and Teng (2005), who found that physical or atmospheric, environment is a relevant, factor, that, influences, the, choice, of, eatery, outlets. In addition, the finding of this, study, is, in, line, with the findings of Kim, Raab and Bergman (2010), who found that atmosphere is very important in the choice of food restaurants. In addition the physical environment was found to create feelings of excitement pleasure and, relaxation to consumers. Furthermore, it was discovered that vendor's physical environment are tangible, cues, which are, used to assess, the quality of services provided by food vendors. Contrary, this study found that consumers of street food are not greatly influenced by vendor's physical environment. In addition, Jang, Kim and Bonni (2011), found that vendor's physical surroundings plays a critical role in influencing consumer patronage. Also, Stewart, Bli-sard, Jolliffe and Bhuyan (2005), found that vendor's physical environment positively associated to, high-profiled restaurants or eatery outlets but, negatively, related, to, fast-food, restaurants.

Conclusion

The study has provided a comprehensive knowledge that menu familiarity, meal/menu price and vendor's physical environment have significant influences on consumer patronage of food vendors in south-eastern part of Nigeria. The findings of this study have demonstrated that positive and significant influences exist between menu familiarity and price on consumer patronage of street food. Vendor's physical environment was found to have not significantly influenced consumer patronage of food vendors in South East of Nigeria. Conclusively, menu familiarity and price are strong predictors that drive consumer patronage as demonstrated by the findings of this study. In conclusion, street food vendors should continue to provide food or menu options that are familiar to consumers at affordable prices and also put more efforts in maintaining conducive environment of the sales outlets. This study recommended that street, food, vendors, should, continue to provide, familiar, menu in order to increase consumer patronage that will enhance profitability in return. Consequently, street food vendors should continue to provide menu varieties at affordable price in order to increase consumer patronage. In addition, proper pricing strategies should be encouraged for overall improvement and sustainability of street food vendors businesses in south eastern part of Nigeria. The study also recommended that the physical environment of the vendor's sales outlets should always be clean, appealing, neat and modern as these will enhance more consumer patronage of street food vendors in Nigeria.

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