

XXX University

FAST FOOD VERSUS HEALTH LIVING:
MCDONALD`S THE ON-GOING BATTLE

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APPROVALS

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CONTENTS

APPROVALS	1
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
LIST OF TABLES	4
ABSTRACT	5
INTRODUCTION	6
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	13
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	26
METHODOLOGY	30
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	36
CONCLUSION	66
REFERENCES	71
APPENDICES	72

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Gross sales McDonald's worldwide

Table 2. McDonald's System wide Restaurants

Table 3. McDonald's Outlets Growth in Different Countries

Table 4. McDonald's outlets in UK

Table 5. Comparative figures between research site and Hong Kong

Table 6. Age distribution of respondents

Table 7. Frequency of visits to McDonald's

Table 8. Group Behavior

Table 9. Family member who usually initiates for fast foods

Table 10. Work Environment

Table 11. Trend or pattern on food seeking

Table 12. Distribution of respondent regularly eating home cooked food

Table 13. Regular eating place if not home

Table 14. Response as to statement that fast foods system is one of the most convenient way of food distribution which evolved through the years

Table 15. Response to the statement my friends are now more health conscious generally avoiding fat foods and sweets compared to two years

Table 16. Response to the statement that McDonald's burger and fries are generally unhealthy because of its high fat content

Table 17. Response to the statement that a McDonald's burger is one of the tastiest burger in the market.

Table 18. Response to the statement if given time and money is no problem; most people will cease to patronize fast foods like McDonald's...

...ABSTRACT

In the success-oriented world, corporate strategy serves as one of the tools of the company's realization. McDonald's has to constantly change its marketing strategy for example, because public opinion of fast food can radically shift thus affecting the acceptability or attractiveness of its product lines.

The paper investigated the impact of current issues and concerns raised against McDonald's and other fast food chains as it affects the complex way public perception is created. There are five factors which the paper evaluated which may have profound impact on the long term operation of a fast food giant like McDonald's. The paper developed a five factor complexity mapping of McDonald's. These are policy, technology, business, corporate configuration and public opinion. These factors are so intertwined that a change in one factor could lead to changes in another. The paper has also investigated and evaluated the marketing strategies which McDonald's has used in order to target customers seeking to consume only 'healthy' products and those who do not mind consuming fatty foods. The paper describes factors which may affect consumer perceptions of 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' foods. The paper critically analyses the development of McDonald's corporate strategy in relation to changes for example in public opinion and provides recommendations for further adjustments of the company's strategy for possible future scenarios like high demand for all natural food and non-meat products.

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Introduction

Current business practices could now be equated with being global, and in being global by sheer coincidences it becomes entangled in a complex mosaic of global issues and concerns such as food, health, environment, ethnicity and culture as ideological divides came crushing down in the mid-80's at the end of the cold war. It then appears logical to view McDonald's in the grand scale of globalized economy with interlocking national interests and dynamics in a very diverse cultural setting.

Global is enormously complex and there are tons of data on just about anything available in the Internet. How this mass of information is being processed depends on the nature of the study being conducted. Modeling gives us a chance to provide a way of giving meaning or context to information which gives us a way of describing how corporate giants like McDonald's behave in a global setting with its attendant concerns.

The Fast food industry is a complex system of relationships intertwined in a more or less urban or city setting where it fits in nicely to the fast pace of living in city or urban setting. In this sense the fast food outlet could be considered an indicator of a trend in social development.

Embarking in such a complex study points to a need for a paper that deals with developing a conceptual model of McDonald's operation and strategies as it relates to other players in the food industry and the public whose view of the world and its problems is shaping the aggregate demand for basic products and services. Because of its bigness, the actions of fast food chains like McDonald's could significantly affects other industries such as agriculture, scents and flavor among others. We are confronted here with two intellectual problems. One coming up with an evaluation of a particular implication of certain actions and coming up way of knowing which actions have important implications

and which has not.

The food industry as a study in complexity

A fast food outlet could be viewed as intertwined in that particular local setting or community and the top management of the food chain. The basic operation of the outlet then is pre-determined by corporate policies which allow the practices and array of products offered to the public.

This study delves into how stakeholders act given the contexts and layers of meanings attributed to each step a long the way of completing a simple cycle from production to selling to consumption of a burger for example. The author believes that the basic virtues and value system which made America a world power is at work in the fast-food industry.

Assessing future states is possible to some extent if we will have an idea on the complications and what steps could be taken by the players to handle such complications such as when any part of the process is being questioned as “unhealthy” or “unsafe.”

There are many studies dealing with the concerns and issues related to the fast food industry but there is however a need to delineate the issues and place them in their proper context. There is need for a logical format from which we could present key relationships affected by each issue or concern.

An issue or a concern has a multiplicity of aspects and brought about by a complex interplay of forces, factors and interests involving people, events, time and place. Depending on the importance and significance of certain concerns for example whether it would have a profound effect of how people and society as whole would respond.

To understand the importance fast foods is to understand the complexity surrounding how the ubiquitous burger and fries come into being day-in and day-out, a social routine for millions of people worldwide who patronize McDonald’s outlets anytime in a day...

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