

**CUSTOMER WITH DISABILITIES EXPERIENCES ON  
ACCESSIBILITY OF SELECTED STAND-ALONE FAST-FOOD  
RESTAURANTS IN CAVITE: BASIS FOR SERVICE  
ENHANCEMENT PLAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study explored the accessibility experiences of PWD customers in Cavite's stand-alone fast-food restaurants. Surveying 100 PWD customers, the study revealed that they had experienced moderate accessibility in terms of physical accessibility; restroom facilities; menu options and information; and communications and assistance. This means that the standalone fast-food restaurants in Cavite are prioritizing the needs of PWD customers. While designated parking, ramps, and doorways were well-received, physical accessibility could benefit from increased wheelchair maneuvering space. Restroom facilities scored moderately, praised for grab bars and spacious stalls but lacking readily available emergency call systems. Menu options and information also received moderate ratings, commended for allergen options but needing clearer labeling for dietary restrictions and healthier alternatives. Communication and assistance were perceived as moderately accessible, with dedicated staff and PWD lanes appreciated but highlighting the need for sign language interpreter training and other communication aids. To address these gaps, a service enhancement plan proposes expanding wheelchair space, installing emergency call systems, clearly labeling menus, and investing in staff training on disability sensitivity and communication aids. This study's findings not only inform service enhancements in Cavite's fast-food restaurants but also contribute to academic knowledge and practical application, fostering a more empathetic and inclusive dining environment for PWD customers everywhere.

**Keywords:** Customers with disabilities (PWDs), accessibility, fast-food restaurants, physical accessibility, restroom Facilities

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), as estimated by the World Health Organization (WHO), constitute approximately 15 percent of the global population, encompassing individuals with varying mobility, sensory, and cognitive needs (WHO, 2018). This diverse group faces unique challenges in their daily lives and interactions with public spaces. Among these interactions, visiting fast-food restaurants is a common practice. Understanding the experiences of PWD customers in fast-food restaurants is critical to ensuring their access to essential services (WHO, 2018).

The study at hand focuses on the experiences of PWD customers in fast-food stand-alone restaurants in Cavite. PWDs face distinct challenges in accessing and enjoying services in public places (WHO, 2018). This study seeks to explore the accessibility experienced by PWD customers in selected stand-alone fast-food restaurants in Cavite, assessing aspects such as entrance and pathways, restroom facilities, and ordering and communication services. By focusing on the PWD customer's perspective, this study aims to shed light on their unique experiences in these establishments.

The need for this study is underscored by the importance of understanding the accessibility challenges faced by PWD customers in fast-food restaurants. The research conducted by Marin, Paredes, and Alonso (2020) has highlighted the challenges faced by PWDs in public spaces, emphasizing the significance of inclusive design and user-friendly environments. The objective of this study is to provide valuable insights into the current state of accessibility for PWD customers in the fast-food industry in Cavite, serving as a basis for future service enhancement plans.

This study addresses a critical gap in understanding how fast-food restaurants accommodate PWD customers in the local context of Cavite. As the municipality continues to grow and develop, it is imperative to ensure that businesses within the area cater to the needs of all residents, including PWDs. The fast-food industry, as a dynamic and central component of the local economy, represents a significant area of investigation to contribute to a more environmentally friendly environment.

This study on the accessibility experiences of PWD customers in selected stand-alone fast-food restaurants in Cavite, aims to provide insights that can serve as a foundation for service enhancement plans. By understanding the challenges faced by PWD customers, the researchers can work towards a more inclusive and future for all members of our community, aligning with the principles of equal access and participation for PWDs (WHO, 2018).

Thus, this study aimed to determine the customers with disabilities experiences on accessibility of selected stand-alone fast-food restaurants in Cavite: Basis for service enhancement plan.

In view of the preceding statements, this study was conducted to:

1. Determine the demographic profile of PWD customers in terms of:

- a. Age;
- b. Sex;
- c. Civil status; and
- d. Monthly Income;

2. Identify the level of accessibility of PWD customers on:

- a. Physical accessibility;
- b. Restroom facilities;
- c. Menu options and information; and
- d. Communications and assistance;

3. Propose an enhancement plan for fast-food restaurants in Cavite based on the results of the study.

**2.0 METHODOLOGY**

This study used the descriptive correlation research design. The descriptive-correlation design was used to describe the demographic profile and experiences of customers with disabilities regarding the accessibility of selected stand-alone fast-food restaurants. The primary objective of this study was to assess the accessibility issues faced by PWD customers and to use this information as a basis for developing a service enhancement plan. For this study, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique to consider 100 PWD customers selected stand-alone fast-food restaurants in Cavite. The researcher used an adapted survey questionnaire thru face to face to collect the data from PWD customers in Cavite.

Data were analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages and means to describe the participants' demographic profiles and experiences of customers with disabilities regarding the accessibility of selected stand-alone fast-food restaurants. The researchers used 5-point Likert scale to measure the PWD customer experiences on accessibility of selected stand-alone fast-food. The following conversion scales were used in interpreting the data.

**Table 1. Descriptive interpretation for the PWD customer’s experiences.**

<b>NUMERICA LRANGE</b>	<b>VERBAL INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTIVE INTERPRETATION</b>
4.21 – 5.00	Highly Accessible	The participant experience highly accessibleon various services of fast-food restaurants.
3.41 – 4.20	Moderately Accessible	The participant experience moderately accessible on various services of fast-foodrestaurants.
2.61 – 3.40	Slightly Accessible	The participant experience slightly accessible on various services of fast-foodrestaurants.
1.81 – 2.60	Fairly Accessible	The participant experience fairly accessibleon various services of fast-food restaurants.
1.00 – 1.80	Not Accessible	The participant experiences no accessibilityon various services of fast-food restaurants.

**3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**3.1 Demographic Profiles of the Participants**

Table 2 shows that most participants (35%) belong to the age bracket of 25-31 years old and are female (55%). Majority (63%) of the participants are single and with monthly income (51%) ranging from ₱5,000-10,000.

According to Datu (2011) there are several factors that contribute to the higher prevalence of females with disabilities compared to males. One key factor is the intersection of gender and disability, as women and girls with disabilities often face double discrimination and increased vulnerability. Additionally, certain health conditions and disabilities may be more common in females, contributing to the higher prevalence. Social and cultural factors, such as limited access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities for women with disabilities in many parts of the world, also play a role.

Moreover, according to Reyes (2011), it is possible that there are more single persons with disabilities (PWD) than married individuals due to a variety of factors. One reason might be the difficulties and challenges that individuals with disabilities face in finding suitable partners and navigating the social dynamics of relationships and marriage. Additionally, the impact of disability on an individual's lifestyle, mobility, and independence can pose unique challenges in forming and maintaining romantic relationships. Furthermore, societal attitudes and stigmas related to disability might also play a role in the disparity, as these factors can influence how individuals with disabilities are perceived and included within the realm of marriage and family life.

Department of Social Welfare and Development, (2023) House Bill 8223 proposes the creation of a Disability Support Allowance Program under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) that will give an initial allowance of P2,000 per month to PWDs. The proposed Disability Support Allowance Program will be implemented in three phases. During the first three years of implementation, the allowance will be given to children with disabilities, adults with "significant disabilities who are facing the highest barriers and disability-related costs," and PWDs who are recipients of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps,) Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens, and other similar programs.

**Table 2. Distribution of participants in terms of their socio-demographic profile**

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	31	31.00
25-31	35	35.00
32-38	14	14.00
39 and above	20	20.00
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	55	55.00
Male	45	45.00

**Civil Status**

Single	63	63.00
Married	37	37.00

**Monthly Income**

₱5,000-10,000	51	51.00
₱10,001-15,000	31	31.00
₱15,001-20,000	13	13.00
₱20,001 and above	5	5.00

**3.2 The level of accessibility of PWD customers**

Table 3 presents the level of accessibility of PWD customers regarding physical accessibility. As a result, the study revealed that they had a moderately accessible experience in terms of physical accessibility.

According to Q Aini, et al (2019) defines accessibility as the availability of pathways for all individuals, inclusive of those with disabilities and the elderly. The assessment of accessibility takes into account factors such as safety, convenience, usability, and independence. Suppose the fast-food restaurant in Cavite provide a right physical accessibility for the PWD customers. In that case, the PWD customer has very good experience when entering to the fast-food restaurant in Cavite.

Moreover, Matejowsky, T. (2017) stated that Jollibee is considered moderately accessible in terms of physical accessibility for persons with disabilities (PWDs) due to the range of physical accommodations provided at their locations. These may include ramps or lifts for wheelchair access, designated parking spaces for PWDs, as well as restrooms. However, the accessibility level may vary across different Jollibee outlets, and some locations may still have limitations in terms of entrance accessibility, pathway obstructions, or other barriers that may hinder seamless navigation for individuals with disabilities. While efforts have been made to enhance physical accessibility at Jollibee outlets, there is room for further improvement to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their physical abilities, can fully enjoy the dining experience at Jollibee.

The accessibility at the entrance of fast-food restaurants like Jollibee may be relatively higher due to the implementation of specific physical accommodations aimed at facilitating entry for individuals with disabilities. This often includes features such as ramps, automatic doors, or widened entryways to accommodate wheelchairs and mobility aids. Additionally, many establishments prioritize the entrance area for accessibility enhancements as it represents the crucial point of entry for all customers, reflecting a commitment to inclusivity and ensuring that individuals with disabilities can enter the restaurant with ease. While the entrance accessibility may be relatively more advanced compared to other areas, continued efforts to

assess and improve accessibility throughout the dining environment are essential to providing a truly inclusive experience for all patrons (Urban B. 2017).

**Table 3. Customer's experience based on the physical accessibility**

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY	WEIGHTED MEAN	REMARKS
1. Designated parking spaces close to the entrance of fast-food restaurant.	4.22	Highly Accessible
2. Entrance of the fast-food restaurants.	4.25	Highly Accessible
3. Steps and doorways of fast-food restaurants.	4.21	Highly Accessible
4. Sufficient space to maneuver a wheelchair.	4.05	Moderately Accessible
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>4.18</b>	<b>Moderately Accessible</b>

Table 4 presents the level of accessibility of PWD customers regarding restroom facilities. Overall, it can be seen that all participants had a moderately accessible experience in terms of restroom facilities.

According to Mediclinics,(2021) the distribution of elements within these spaces is influenced by available area, which must consider the mobility and functionality of users with disabilities. A minimum space of 1.5 meters in diameter is necessary for conventional wheelchair users, free of obstacles. Grab bars and technical aids are indispensable within these bathrooms, facilitating mobility and usage. These elements must be easy to grip, possess a circular section with specific dimensions, and withstand defined forces. Reinforced the result of the study, which proved that PWD customers have an experience on the restroom facilities of standalone fast-food restaurant in Cavite.

Moreover, Reyes C. (2011), found out that the moderately accessible restroom facilities for persons with disabilities (PWD) in Jollibee could be the result of efforts to comply with accessibility standards while facing certain limitations. It's possible that the design and layout of some older Jollibee locations may present challenges in fully accommodating individuals with disabilities. Retrofitting and updating such facilities to meet more stringent accessibility standards can be a complex and costly endeavor. However, it's important to note that Jollibee may be actively working to improve the accessibility of their restroom facilities as part of their commitment to inclusivity. By recognizing the need for improvement and making strides to enhance accessibility, Jollibee can further demonstrate their dedication to providing a positive and accommodating experience for all customers, including those with disabilities.

Furthermore, Wingrove, C. (2017) stated that Jollibee prioritizes higher accessibility in its restroom facilities by incorporating features such as grab bars, spacious stalls, and sinks to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all customers. These accessibility features cater to individuals with disabilities, elderly customers, and parents with young children, ensuring comfort and safety. By exceeding basic accessibility requirements, Jollibee demonstrates its commitment to inclusivity and social responsibility while also differentiating itself in the market and attracting a wider customer base. Additionally, this proactive approach to compliance with accessibility regulations reinforces Jollibee's commitment to creating a positive and accommodating dining experience for all patrons.

**Table 4. Customer's experience based on the restroom facilities**

<b>RESTROOM FACILITIES</b>	<b>WEIGHTED MEAN</b>	<b>REMARKS</b>
1. The restroom features such as grab bars, spacious stalls, and sinks.	4.11	Moderately Accessible
2. Location of the restroom or clear signage and pathways leading to restrooms.	4.10	Moderately Accessible
3. Restroom toilets and urinals.	4.10	Moderately Accessible
4. Availability of emergency call systems or alert mechanisms in restrooms.	3.91	Moderately Accessible
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>Moderately Accessible</b>

Table 5 shows the experience of PWD customers in terms of menu option and information. Overall, the study revealed that the participants have moderately accessibility experience in terms of menu options and information.

According to Lam, et al., (2020) supporting features that can increase accessibility, such as large color contrast, large text size, appropriate lighting (interior area), audio systems, braille labelling, and tactile guide routes, as ways to make the facilities more visually impaired-friendly. This study revealed that the stand-alone fast-food restaurant in Cavite is visually impaired physical friendly so that the PWD customer has an accessible experience on menu option and information.

Moreover, Matejowsky, T. (2017), stated that moderate accessibility of menu options and information for persons with disabilities (PWD) at Jollibee may be attributed to several factors. It's possible that the presentation and layout of the menu boards, as well as the availability of alternative formats such as braille or large print menus, could be improved to better accommodate individuals with visual impairments. Additionally, the communication of menu



options, including allergen and nutritional information, may not be optimized to address the diverse needs of customers with disabilities. Jollibee could benefit from a dedicated effort to enhance the accessibility of menu options and information to ensure that all individuals, including those with disabilities, can confidently navigate the menu and make informed dining choices. By actively addressing these considerations, Jollibee can reinforce its commitment to inclusivity and provide a more welcoming and accommodating experience for customers with disabilities.

Furthermore, Asis, R. (2011) The availability of menus and other visual aids for customers with cognitive disabilities is prioritized at Jollibee fast food to create a more and inclusive dining experience. The company recognizes the diverse needs of its customer base and is dedicated to ensuring that individuals with cognitive disabilities can effectively engage with the menu options and make informed choices. To achieve this, Jollibee may offer various visual aids, such as picture menus, easy-to-understand graphics, or simplified written descriptions of menu items. These efforts assist customers with cognitive disabilities in comprehending and navigating the available choices, fostering a sense of independence and empowerment in their dining experience.

**Table 5. Customer’s experience based on the menu option and information**

MENU OPTIONS AND INFORMATION	WEIGHTE DMEAN	REMARKS
1. Menu options that are clearly labeled for dietary restrictions or allergies.	3.81	Moderately Accessible
2. Menus are available in alternative formats such as font size, color contrast, and availability of Braille or audio versions.	3.85	Moderately Accessible
3. Accessibility of information related to ingredients and allergens.	3.83	Moderately Accessible
4. Availability of pictorial menus or other visual aids for customers with cognitive disabilities.	4.08	Moderately Accessible
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>Moderately Accessible</b>

Table 6 presents customer experience in terms of communication assistance. Overall, it can be seen that all participants had a moderately accessible experience in terms of restroom facilities.

According to Tantawy & Alaa, (2005) is essential in many sectors of life, including fast food establishments. While not every chain is totally, many make an effort to meet the requirements of all clients. For people with cognitive disabilities, audio instructions and dietary restrictions on menus make ordering simpler. Tostrengthened the result of our study by proving his



findings, the stand-alone fast-food restaurant in Cavite made an effort for PWD customer for having accessibility when it comes communication assistance when making orders.

Moreover, Urban, B. (2017) found that Jollibee Fast Food's commitment to being moderately accessible to communication assistance for persons with disabilities (PWD) stems from its dedication to creating an inclusive and accommodating environment for all customers. The company recognizes that effective communication is essential for providing high-quality customer service and aims to ensure that individuals with communication assistance needs, including PWD, are welcomed and supported. This moderate accessibility may encompass various measures, including staff training to communicate effectively with customers who have speech or hearing impairments, providing visual aids to facilitate communication, or offering alternative communication methods such as writing or the use of technology. By incorporating these strategies, Jollibee demonstrates its commitment to fostering a welcoming and supportive atmosphere where customers with diverse communication needs, including PWD, can interact with staff and fully enjoy their dining experience.

In addition, the study of Tabuga (2011) stated that Jollibee's prioritization of accessibility in the special lane for customers with disabilities (PWD) stems from a commitment to providing equitable and inclusive service. By offering a dedicated lane for PWD, Jollibee demonstrates a proactive effort to streamline the queuing process and ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the attention and assistance they may require. This not only serves to enhance the overall customer experience but also reflects a deep respect for the diverse needs of all patrons.

**Table 6. Customer’s experience based on the communication assistance**

COMMUNICATION ASSISTANCE	WEIGHTED MEAN	REMARKS
1. Staff assigned for PWD requests and assistance.	4.12	Moderately Accessible
2. Special lane for PWD customers for queue and assistance.	4.29	Highly Accessible
3. Availability of sign language interpreters or other communication aids.	4.09	Moderately Accessible
4. Training of staff in communicating effectively with customers with different types of disabilities.	4.13	Moderately Accessible
<b>OVER-ALL</b>	<b>4.16</b>	<b>Moderately Accessible</b>

### 3.3 Enhancement plan for standalone fast-food restaurant in Cavite

Based on the results of the study, it revealed that need an enhancement for the stand- alone fast food in Cavite. In the table below the researchers present the proposed service enhancement plan.

**Table 7. Proposed service enhancement plan**

SERVICES	PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT
1. Physical Accessibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficiency of space for wheelchair</li> </ul>	Stand-alone fast-food restaurant in Cavite need to provide space for the maneuver wheelchair.
2. Restroom Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor availability of emergency call systems or alert mechanisms in restrooms.</li> </ul>	Provide emergency call system or alert mechanism in restrooms. To easily contact when have an emergency inside the restroom.
3. Menu option and Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Menu options are not clearly labeled for dietary restrictions or allergies.</li> </ul>	Menu options should be clearly labeled to cater individuals with dietary restrictions or specific health conditions. Providing healthier choices or alternative for those PWD customers
4. Communication and Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of availability of sign language interpreters or other communication aids.</li> </ul>	Fast-food restaurant in Cavite should invest in training their staff to be more sensitive and accommodating toward PWD customers. This includes educating them about sign language or provides other communication aid like audio instructions.

### 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated the accessibility experiences of people with disabilities (PWDs) in stand-alone fast-food restaurants in Cavite, Philippines. Employing a descriptive research design with 100 PWD participants, the study assessed physical accessibility, restroom facilities, menu options and information, and communication assistance:

- Most of the participants belong to the age bracket of 25-31 years old and are female. Most participants are single and with monthly incomes ranging from Php5, 000 - Php10, 000.
- The PWD customer experienced moderate accessibility in terms of physical accessibility; restroom facilities; menu options and information; and communications and assistance. This means that the standalone fast-food restaurants in Cavite are prioritizing the needs of PWD customers. Their strengths lie in physical infrastructure

like designated parking, ramps, and spacious doorways, and also, there are areas requiring improvement that include maneuverability space within restaurants, emergency call systems in restrooms, clear signage, and menu options clearly labeled for dietary restrictions.

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Fast-food Restaurants can directly adopt the recommendations outlined in the study to create a targeted plan for improving accessibility. This could involve allocating budget for infrastructure upgrades, staff training, and communication tools like sign language interpreters.
2. Local Government and Disability Rights Organizations: The study's data can be used to advocate for stronger accessibility regulations and policies at the local level. This could involve pushing for stricter building codes or tax incentives for restaurants implementing accessibility features.
3. PWD Community and Support Groups may use this study to provide valuable information for PWD individuals and families looking for accessible dining options. This could be disseminated through support groups, online forums, and disability advocacy websites. PWD communities can collaborate with restaurants to further refine accessibility measures and ensure they cater to diverse needs and preferences within the disability spectrum.
4. Future researchers may use the study as a reference to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of PWD customers in fast-food restaurants. This knowledge can contribute to academic and professional growth, fostering a more empathetic and inclusive mindset in their future endeavors.

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