

Observational Exercise
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Research Question #1

What is the experience of the customer at the ordering kiosk?

Research Question #2

How do customers spend their time in the restaurant during lunchtime?

Research Question #3

What do customers talk about while sitting down?

These are questions I will like to answer when I am sitting at the fast-food restaurant on Thursday, October 3, 2019, at lunchtime. I noted the observation for 45 minutes.

Jottings

I arrived at the fast-food restaurant at 12:15 pm. I split my time into two different parts of the restaurant for my observation. First, I took a seat close to the four ordering kiosks.

- A female customer with a red blouse, brown pant, twisting her long brown hair, tapping through different icons to make her food selections, she ordered a combo meal.
- A male teen, black hair, grey shoes, ordered chicken nuggets, talking on his Apple iPhone, his friend came by and disrupted his ordering process.
- Lady behind the male teen seems impatient, once the kiosk is free, had a credit card in her hand, went straight to her food selection, and swipe her payment
- Observe the number of customers per line on the kiosk, approx 4 to 5 each.
- Saw a group of four customers, take-out, drinks
- A male, girl, burger or nuggets, milk or juice box, pharmacy bag, bbq, apple Baby doll, dressed in a pink heavy sweater, curly blond hair, black leggings
- Kiosk line 1 to 2 customers, pick-up area (5 to 6), 2 with smoothies
- A teenage boy, wearing a red Beat headphone, dancing, a blue backpack, ordered fries and coffee
- No one was at the kiosk.
- An older lady, cane, couldn't find what she was looking, the customer (guy) behind to assist, salad
- The gentlemen ordered his espresso, his phone rang, in 3 mins

I went to a separate section of the restaurant, sat at a long communal table, took one of the 10 occupied stool seats.

- Three girls, high school, burger, one coffee, two sodas, blue blouse (1), yellow shirts (2), brown skirts
- Two boys, college students, HCCC sweaters, salad, assignments, short, long list, afterschool
- A lady, nurse uniform, booth, meal, playing Samsung phone

- A businessman, navy suit, dark-rimmed glass, writing, notepad, coffee, resume, interview
- Four customers walked in, two girls and two boys, all carrying book bag
- Lady - baby stroller, girl, girl eating fries, mommy, juice,
- Two ladies, last night date, movie, pizza, one wearing a dress, the other dress pant
- Two guys, both in blue jeans, work boots, high top, windows, fries, burgers, cellphone
- A single teenage lady, wearing white headphones, singing, lyrics, latte
- Two teenage boys, booth, backpack on the tabletop, flipping through textbooks
- An older man took out his Apple laptop, had a coffee, started typing
- A girl, watching a video, mobile phone, tapping the table
- Girls, twisting their hairs, boys, and dates
- Staff came to empty trash bins
- One lady came with a takeout bag from Popeye
- 2 young girls, one with calculus book and graphic calculator
- Young lady, grey slacks, white shirts, holding a flyer
- Grey hoodie guy, blue jeans, leaving with a smoothie
- Three teenagers girls, one talking on her phone, two others carrying out with the takeout bag
- Two ladies sat a booth, both eating salads, one had a red shirt, twirling the eyeglass
- Two guys, both wearing sweat pants, gym bag, both wearing white T-shirts, define muscles
- An older lady, white hair, wheeling luggage cart, took a seat
- A family of four came (mom, dad, two sons), carry-on luggage
- A group of six high school students came in, two went to grab a booth, four went direction of the kiosk. All in uniforms.
- Older gentlemen, reading a newspaper, sipping tea, having a walking cane, eating a cookie
- A college girl, wearing rip jeans, white sneaker, large hanging earrings, logo yellow T-shirt

The observation ended at 1 pm.



4 Kiosk ordering system



Ten communal seat table

Full Observational Notes

What is the experience of the customer at the ordering kiosk? How do customers spend their time in the restaurant during lunchtime? What do customers talk about while sitting down? These are the questions I was looking to answer when I was observing the customers at the fast-food restaurant. The location located near a major transit hub, two hotels in the area, lots of other fast-food restaurants, banks, convenience stores, and dollar stores dotted the neighboring streets. The weather was around 65 F degrees during the lunchtime observation in an urban fast-food restaurant. I went to two separate parts of the restaurant for my observation. I sat close to where I was able to observe the four ordering kiosks. The first view was two or three customers lined behind each kiosk. Also, a line for the full-service counter, which I did not pay close attention to since I was more interested in the customer's behavior at the ordering kiosk. The first red blouse female customer was not sure what she wanted to eat. She was tapping through various parts of the menu board before deciding on a combo meal. It took approximately two minutes for her to complete the transaction, made a note of the time on my first customer transaction. The male teen behind her was chatting on his phone did not realize she was taking so long. The third male customer on line looked annoyed and was impatiently holding his credit card in his hand.

My vision only covered the first two ordering kiosk to the left of me and have a limited view on the other two kiosks. From time to time, I will check on the number of customers per kiosk line. As the customers walk in; few went straight to the kiosk, while others went to the full-service counter. The black-haired male teen was ordering a single item of nuggets. His buddies came to disrupt him as he was completing his payment process with his credit card. After the teenage male got his receipt; the young lady behind him rushed up to the kiosk. She started to tap on the screen, turned my focus on the other four customers walking in, did not notice what she order since she was already touching her card to make payment.

I saw a group of four customers picking up their takeout order, heading to the soda fountain dispenser machine, and filling up their drink cups. Two guys took a sip of their drinks before moving on. I turned back my attention to the next customer I saw at the ordering kiosk. It was a father and daughter standing next to the kiosk. Father asked the daughter whether she prefers to have a burger or nugget for lunch, along with what to drink, either juice or milk. The daughter responded that she wanted nuggets, BBQ sauce, and apple juice. The father was carrying a white pharmacy bag tagged with the Rite-Aid logo on it. The baby girl was tending to her daughter while her dad was completing the order. I turned to the queue line at the kiosk, saw one to two customers per kiosk. There was a crowd of five customers waiting at the pickup area for their food orders. Two customers were sipping on their smoothies while waiting for their food order.

A teenage boy wearing red Beats headphones, made two dance moves while completing his order, saw his order history of fries and coffee. The last customer was at the kiosk. Turned my attention to the teenage boy eating his fries while sipping on his coffee cup. A few minutes have passed, another wave of customers came in, an older white-haired lady using a walking cane came up to the ordering kiosk screen. She looked frustrated, asked the gentlemen behind if he could assist. The lady wanted to order a salad could not navigate the screen. The gentlemen moved forward and helped her with the order. It was his turn to place his order. He spoke aloud that he wanted an espresso, but his phone rang and replied that he be there within 3 minutes.

For the next part of the observations, I moved to a new spot of the restaurant, sat at a communal table to observe what customers were talking and doing. It was a long communal table with ten stool like chairs. On one end of the table, three high school teenage girls, each chewing a burger sandwich, one had coffee, and the other two were drinking sodas. They were wearing different tops, one with a blue blouse, and the remaining two with yellow shirts and all three had brown skirts. On the right side, where two college guys from HCCC, eating their

salads. Talking about their homework assignment, one complained the assignment had too many requirements, and it was due in such a short time. The two college students decided to meet after school to work on the project. The rest of the time, two college students sat quiet and quickly ate their foods for the remaining of the time before they leave.

I turned my attention to a lady who was wearing a nurse uniform. Eating and finishing off her meal, she spent the remaining of her time at the restaurant, playing with her Samsung phone. I made single eye contact with her for a few seconds. On the opposite side of me, a businessman dressed in a navy blue suit-wearing dark-rimmed eyeglass was reading over his resume while drinking a cup of coffee. Four high school students are walking in, with each one carrying a book bag. A lady pushing the baby stroller came into the restaurant, sat at a booth while mom enjoyed an order of fries with her daughter. The daughter was drinking orange juice and dipping the remaining of the fries into ketchup. Two ladies at a booth talking very loud about their last night dates involved a movie and pizza. One was wearing a dress, and the other was wearing a pant. Two construction workers both guys sitting near on a high top facing towards the window, chewing on fries and burgers, while scrolling through their phones.

An individual teenage girl was wearing white headphones, singing music lyrics, sipping a latte. Two adolescent boys are sitting opposite each other in a booth. Their backpacks were on the tabletop. Students were flipping through the textbooks. An older gentleman took out his Apple laptop, started typing away, and sipping his coffee. A teenage girl was watching a video through her mobile phone while tapping the table. Girls were twisting their hairs, discussing boys, and previous dates. Staff came to empty trash bins. One lady came with a takeout bag from Popeyes. Two young girls, one with a calculus book and a graphic calculator. Grey hoodie guy with blue jeans, leaving with a smoothie. Three teenagers girls, one is talking on her phone, two others carrying out with the takeout bag. Two ladies sat a booth, both eating salads, one had a red shirt, twirling the eyeglass. Two guys were both wearing sweat pants, and white T-shirts carrying gym bags have defined muscles. An white hair older lady looked through her

wheeling luggage cart before taking a seat at the booth. A family of four came (mom, dad, two sons), had carried on luggage. A group of six high school students came in; two went to grab a booth, four went in the direction of the kiosk, and all with uniforms. An older gentleman, reading a newspaper, sipping tea, having a walking cane, and snacking a cookie. A yellow logo T-shirt college girl, wearing rip jeans with a white sneaker, had large hanging earrings sat a booth alone.

Analytic Section

Part One

Table 1

Full Observational Notes	Coding
<p>I sat close to where I was able to observe the four ordering kiosks. The first view was two or three customers lined behind each kiosk. Also, a line for the full-service counter, which I did not pay close attention to since I was more interested in the customer's behavior at the ordering kiosk. The first red blouse female customer was not sure what she wanted to eat. She was tapping through various parts of the menu board before deciding on a combo meal. It took approximately two minutes for her to complete the transaction, made a note of the time on my first customer transaction. The male teen behind her was chatting on his phone did not realize she was taking so long. The third male customer on line looked annoyed and was impatiently holding his credit card in his hand.</p>	<p>Kiosk - credit card payment</p> <p>Customer came in pairs, by themselves, or as a group.</p> <p>Many customers ordered takeout.</p>

<p>My vision only covered the first two ordering kiosks to the left of me and have a limited view on the other two kiosks. From time to time, I will check on the number of customers per kiosk line.</p> <p>As the customers walk in; few went straight to the kiosk, while others went to the full-service counter. The black-haired male teen was ordering a single item of nuggets. His buddies came to disrupt him as he was completing his payment process with his credit card. After the teenage male got his receipt; the young lady behind him rushed up to the kiosk. She started to tap on the screen, turned my focus on the other four customers walking in, did not notice what she order since she was already touching her card to make payment.</p> <p>I saw a group of four customers picking up their takeout order, heading to the soda fountain dispenser machine, and filling up their drink cups. Two guys took a sip of their drinks before moving on. I turned back my attention to the next customer I saw at the ordering kiosk. It was a father and daughter standing next to the kiosk. Father asked the daughter whether she prefers to have a burger or nugget for lunch, along with what to drink, either juice or milk. The daughter responded that she wanted nuggets, BBQ sauce, and apple juice. The father was carrying a white pharmacy bag tagged with the Rite-Aid logo on it. The baby girl was tending to her daughter while her dad was completing the order. I turned to the queue line at the kiosk, saw one to two customers per kiosk. There was a crowd of five customers waiting at the pickup area for their food orders. Two customers were sipping on their smoothies while waiting for their food order.</p>	<p>Kiosk - credit card payment</p> <p>In a hurry</p> <p>Takeout orders</p> <p>Ordering a meal for plus one.</p> <p>Family lunch outing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Father and daughter ● Mom and daughter ● Mom, father, and two sons
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<p>A teenage boy wearing red Beats headphones, made two dance moves while completing his order, saw his order history of fries and coffee. The last customer was at the kiosk. Turned my attention to the teenage boy eating his fries while sipping on his coffee cup. A few minutes have passed, another wave of customers came in, an older white-haired lady using a walking cane came up to the ordering kiosk screen. She looked frustrated, asked the gentlemen behind if he could assist. The lady wanted to order a salad could not navigate the screen. The gentlemen moved forward and helped her with the order. It was his turn to place his order. He spoke aloud that he wanted an espresso, but his phone rang and replied that he be there within 3 minutes.</p> <p>I moved to a new spot of the restaurant, sat at a communal table to observe what customers were talking and doing. It was a long communal table with ten stool like chairs. On one end of the table, three high school teenage girls, each chewing a burger sandwich, one had coffee, and the other two were drinking sodas. They were wearing different tops, one with a blue blouse, and the remaining two with yellow shirts and all three had brown skirts. On the right side, where two college guys from HCCC, eating their salads. Talking about their homework assignment, one complained the assignment had too many requirements, and it was due in such a short time. The two college students decided to meet after school to work on the project. The rest of the time, two college students sat quiet and quickly ate their foods for the remaining of the time before they leave.</p> <p>I turned my attention to a lady who was wearing a nurse uniform. Eating and finishing off her meal, she spent the remaining of her</p>	<p>Customer came in for their lunch time cup of coffee.</p> <p>Elderly - alone</p> <p>Kiosk - Elderly - difficulty in navigate the ordering screen.</p> <p>In a rush</p> <p>Customer came in pairs.</p> <p>College: Homework assignment</p> <p>In a rush</p> <p>Activities during lunchtime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resume preparation ● Listening to music ● Playing on the mobile phone ● Watching a video ● Studying ● Talking ● Reading a newspaper ● Coffee and tea break
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time at the restaurant, playing with her Samsung phone. I made single eye contact with her for a few seconds. On the opposite side of me, a businessman dressed in a navy blue suit-wearing dark-rimmed eyeglass was reading over his resume while drinking a cup of coffee. Four high school students are walking in, with each one carrying a book bag. A lady pushing the baby stroller came into the restaurant, sat at a booth while mom enjoyed an order of fries with her daughter. The daughter was drinking orange juice and dipping the remaining of the fries into ketchup. Two ladies at a booth talking very loud about their last night dates involved a movie and pizza. One was wearing a dress, and the other was wearing a pant. Two construction workers both guys sitting near on a high top facing towards the window, chewing on fries and burgers, while scrolling through their phones.

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Topics discussed:

- Dates
- Homework
- Movies

Customer came in pairs.

College students - homework assignments

College and high school students - lunch spot.

wearing sweat pants, and white T-shirts carrying gym bags have defined muscles. An white hair older lady looked through her wheeling luggage cart before taking a seat at the booth. A family of four came (mom, dad, two sons), had carried on luggage. A group of six high school students came in; two went to grab a booth, four went in the direction of the kiosk, and all with uniforms. An older gentleman, reading a newspaper, sipping tea, having a walking cane, and snacking a cookie. A yellow logo T-shirt college girl, wearing rip jeans with a white sneaker, had large hanging earrings sat a booth alone.

Many customers using their cellphones.

Part Two

The observational study was to find out what customers were doing during their lunchtime and what conversation were they having, plus their experience ordering at the kiosk. During the observational study, the researcher is immersed in the environment and jotting down notes as it happens (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I occasionally head to this fast food restaurant to dine in during my lunch break. However, I never paid much attention to what other customers were doing during their lunch break. For the 45 minutes observation, the opportunity to sit down and observe brought back memories when I was an account manager working on a retail account, in a similar fashion observing customer's buying habits.

The observation lasted for 45 minutes at a fast-food restaurant to answer the three research questions proposed. I noted down the observation into two different parts. The first part was to sit next to kiosk machines and answer the following question: What was the customer experience at the ordering kiosk? The majority of the customers knew how to use the point of sales machine since they knew where to click and did a quick checkout with the credit card payment. A few customers took extra time because either they were distracted during the ordering process. Was ordering a plus meal for others; or had a difficult time navigating through the order screen, especially for the elderly folks.

The second part of the observation involved answering two of the other research questions. What customers were doing during their lunch break? A few activities noted down, including resume preparation, listening to music, playing on the mobile phone, watching a video, studying, talking and conversing with each other, reading a newspaper, and enjoying their coffee and tea break. Customers talked about their homework assignments, dates, and the movies they enjoyed watching.

For this observation, it was challenging to record the talking conversation unless I sat close to the customers I was listening to. Bias could be introduced into the study since I may be too focused on a particular recorded observation. Also, there were too many conversations going at the same time, had to focus on one conversation.

References

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods Approaches Fifth Edition Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.