

Starbucks' Critical Success Factors based on Customer Perception

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Abstract. Starbucks, a prominent coffee brand that originated in 1971 as a single location and has since grown to include over 30,000 chain stores, serves as a prime example of the rapid expansion potential associated with effective branding strategies. This study aims to identify the critical success factors contributing to Starbucks' success. Nine key factors were determined: (1) the overall ambiance of the environment, (2) the suitability of the environment for working and studying, (3) the suitability for leisure activities, and (4) the quality of service provided. (5) the convenience and accessibility of store locations, (6) the quality of products offered, (7) the creativity and originality of products, (8) price competitiveness, and (9) the brand's perceived social value. Through empirical research involving a simple random sampling of Starbucks customers who rated the brand on these nine factors, this study concludes with insights into Starbucks' competitive advantage. Additionally, the findings offer valuable perspectives for professionals in the food and beverage (F&B) industry, marketing, and behavioral economics.

Keywords: Starbucks; Critical Success Factors; Customer Perception; Food and Beverage; Marketing.

1. Introduction

1.1 History of Starbucks

In 2024, Starbucks emerged as a global market leader in the coffee industry, boasting an impressive network of 38587 stores worldwide. However, tracing its origins back to 1971, the company began as a modest single-location enterprise, operating under the name "Seattle-based Starbucks (SBUX)" and specializing in the sale of coffeemakers and coffee beans. The subsequent rapid expansion and ascendancy of the brand exemplify a quintessential case of marketing success, frequently studied by business professionals and academics alike.

The narrative of the brand's evolution commenced when Howard Schultz, a passionate New Yorker committed to fostering a culture of warmth and artistic excellence, acquired the company in 1987. Under his leadership, all existing establishments were rebranded under the "Starbucks" banner. With an aspiration to emerge as the "premier purveyor of the finest coffee in the world," while adhering to unwavering principles during its expansion, Starbucks experienced remarkable growth. Throughout the late 20th century, the company expanded across the United States and subsequently ventured beyond the Pacific, establishing its first stores in Japan in 1996, Europe in 1998, and China in 1999. Furthermore, Starbucks revisited and renewed its mission statement, vowing to "nurture the limitless possibilities of human connection" through "every cup, every conversation, and every community." [11]

1.2 History of Starbucks, China

In recent years, China has emerged as the largest overseas market for Starbucks. Consequently, upon its initial entry into the Chinese market in 1999, Starbucks strategically prioritized establishing its presence and penetration within first-tier cities, particularly targeting the Central Business Districts (CBDs) of Beijing and Shanghai. This strategic approach was evident from the opening of its inaugural outlet at China World Hotel in Beijing.

During that period, China ranked as the second-largest recipient of foreign direct investment globally. [12] The introduction of Starbucks ignited a debate regarding luxury consumption among elite and aspiring middle-class consumers. Simultaneously, this event paved the way for the coffee

culture to take hold in China, appealing to consumers by linking its brand with exclusivity and underscoring the premium quality of its products.

To further penetrate the market, Starbucks subsequently adapted to local tastes and cultural preferences by developing novel products and marketing strategies tailored to meet the demands of the Chinese consumer base. By the decade of the 2010s, China had transformed into Starbucks' fastest-growing market, achieving the milestone of opening its first 1,000 locations within just 15 years.

1.3 Competitor Analysis

Throughout its extensive brand development and expansion endeavors, Starbucks has amassed several inherent strengths, while its operational style has concurrently led to the manifestation of specific weaknesses. These aspects are comprehensively encapsulated in a SWOT analysis, as presented in Table 1. (retrieved from <https://businessmodelanalyst.com/starbucks-swot-analysis/>)

Table 1. SWOT analysis of Starbucks, China

Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel strategy it adopted in its start-up stage • Strong brand recognition • Strong loyalty program • Extensive international supply chain • Tailor-made menu • Standardized production • Moderate product innovation • Commitment to CSR (social responsibility) • High labor satisfaction.
Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel strategy it adopted in later times • Low price competitiveness • High products replicability • Accused of violating the “fair trade” principle • Sporadic control issues.
Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product diversification • Product innovation • Partnerships • Adopt price differentiation • Strengthen online channels • Promote a lifestyle, eg. healthy dieting.
Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition with low-price coffee vendors • High products replicability • The rising prices of raw coffee beans • Emerging boutique cafes.

1.4 Financial Performance

The aforementioned Strengths of Starbucks have significantly contributed to its enhanced financial performance during the fiscal year 2023. Notably, the company demonstrated a swift recovery from

the severe demand disruption induced by the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020. In the fiscal year 2023, Starbucks reported total revenues of \$35.97 billion, representing an 11.55% growth compared to the previous fiscal year. Additionally, the reported net income was \$4.12 billion, experiencing a significant increase of 25.69% over the same period. Alongside its revenue growth, Starbucks also exhibited improvements in both operational and net profit margins, with increases of 13.97% and 12.67%, respectively, resulting in margins of 16.32% and 11.46%. Consequently, this led to an augmentation in the company's return on net assets (ROA), which rose from 14.01% to 19.42%.

The liquidity ratios of Starbucks' also exhibited improvement, with the current ratio standing at 78.15% by the end of 2023. Furthermore, the quick ratio (or acid test ratio) was 58.82%, representing increases of 1.90% and 11.17% respectively compared to the previous period.

In 2022, Starbucks incurred a shareholder deficit amounting to \$8698.7 million. However, this deficit decreased by 8.17% in 2023. Additionally, the debt-to-equity ratio improved by 3.02% during the same period. [6]

1.5 Existing Marketing Strategies

Starbucks' primary revenue stream is derived from the sale of food and beverages. The company's marketing strategies are centered around two core pillars: enhancing customer experience and maintaining product quality. The various marketing campaigns and strategies employed by Starbucks can be encapsulated in the following aspects.

1. Channel strategy in its start-up stage: Starbucks effectively capitalized on the opportunities presented by China in the 1990s. Notably, the company strategically established key elements of its channel strategy, including pricing, location, target consumer demographics, and physical evidence (such as purpose-built store designs). These strategies collectively contributed to achieving its desired market proposition: establishing "the Third Place" tailored for elite consumers. Through these efforts, Starbucks successfully acquired its initial customer base in China.

2. High brand consistency: The products and marketing messages of Starbucks are consistently created and maintained across all individual stores. Additionally, the indoor store designs and takeaway packaging designs are harmonized to convey the same messages. Collectively, these elements contribute to the strong brand recognition that Starbucks enjoys.

3. Social media strategy: In comparison to its competitor businesses, Starbucks demonstrates a high level of follower engagement on social media platforms. As of May 5th, 2024, the company boasts 18 million followers on Instagram, 2.3 million followers on TikTok, and 2.6 million followers on LinkedIn. Notably, on May 5, 2024, Starbucks was ranked as the most engaging influencer on platform X. Furthermore, the brand encourages the use of hashtags to attract attention to user-generated content on its channels, thereby enhancing its visibility to the general public and fostering trust between the brand and its potential customers. [5]

4. Strong loyalty program: Starbucks' mini-program is designed to incentivize customers by awarding them "stars" for purchases, which can be accumulated to redeem free coffee and other products. By setting a target number of purchases for rewards, this program provides customers with an additional motive to opt for Starbucks over rival brands for their beverage needs. As they are given a target quantity of purchases to fulfill to be rewarded, are given one more reason to choose Starbucks over other brands for beverages. Furthermore, Starbucks has introduced bonuses, such as double-star days and complimentary treats on birthdays, further enhancing customer loyalty and strengthening its loyalty program.

5. Strategic alliances: Starbucks has forged alliances with prominent entities across diverse industries, including Apple, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Nestle, among others, to catalyze growth and enhance customers' overall experience. [11]

6. Commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Starbucks' strategy for addressing the multifaceted domain of CSR is grounded in three core pillars: community, ethical sourcing, and environmental sustainability. These pillars are actively being implemented through various initiatives. These initiatives are currently being implemented: the Starbucks Foundation provides support for

programs catering to youths, veterans, and agricultural communities; Starbucks continues to expand its presence by opening additional outlets in underserved areas; and through its Coffee and Farmer Equity (C.A.F.E.) Practices, Starbucks ethically sources 99% of its coffee beans, guaranteeing sustainable farming practices and equitable compensation for farmers. These endeavors attract environmentally aware consumers and investors. [5]

7. **“Glocal” strategy:** The "glocal" strategy, also referred to as the "multi-domestic approach," has been adopted by Starbucks, which tailors its product offerings and brand strategies to align with the distinct characteristics of local markets. By presenting varied menu options across different markets, Starbucks' localization strategy has led to substantial gains in market share. [5]

1.6 Significance of This Study

However, in the contemporary information-driven era, Starbucks is confronted with fierce competition. An analysis of brand perception from the consumers' perspective is pivotal for several reasons: it allows Starbucks to assess the effectiveness of its marketing strategies and steer its future growth trajectory, while also providing valuable insights to other marketing professionals regarding consumer behavior within the food and beverage in China.

Furthermore, there is a scarcity of research focusing specifically on Starbucks' market presence in China, with an even more limited number of studies dedicated to examining customer brand perception. By presenting empirical evidence, this study aims to bridge this gap and contribute to a more comprehensive and contemporary understanding of the Starbucks brand and the dynamics of the food and beverage industry in China.

2. Hypotheses

In this study, several pivotal success factors are identified and examined, with this section specifically dedicated to elucidating these critical determinants.

H1: The environment constitutes a pivotal success factor, providing Starbucks with a distinct advantage over its competitors.

The distinctive, earthy, and inviting ambiance cultivated by Starbucks underscores elegance and convenience, thereby substantially elevating its brand image. Notably, various environmental attributes, encompassing temperature control, lighting arrangements, overall cleanliness, interior decoration, and sensory cues (such as the meticulous selection of aromas and visual coherence), play a crucial role in augmenting customer satisfaction and fostering repeat patronage. Consequently, it is contended that environmental design of Starbucks represents a significant competitive advantage.

H2: Service represents a critical success factor where Starbucks holds a competitive edge over its rivals.

Based on the data retrieved from Starbucks' official website, an average of 9.23 employees per store is maintained, which ensures the high quality of service at Starbucks locations. Numerous stores further offer pour-over coffee preparations, engaging consumers in the process of creating their beverages. This engagement fosters a sense of participation and enhances communication and interaction between consumers and employees, thereby enabling the provision of specialized and customized services.

H3: Convenience emerges as a critical success factor, conferring a competitive edge to Starbucks in comparison to its market competitors.

Since 1999, Starbucks expanded its presence in China's mainland by opening 6500 stores across 250 cities [11], significantly enhancing the convenience for its consumers. A study conducted by Lee and Kim reveals that the successful implementation of the cluster location strategy, which entails establishing numerous outlets in highly commercialized central business districts, has brought Starbucks beverages closer to consumers. This strategy not only facilitates psychological nudges but also allows Starbucks to dominate the market. Furthermore, through the utilization of its proprietary

delivery service and online ordering platform, Starbucks has provided consumers with a broader range of options in terms of both the timing and location of their beverage consumption.

H4: Quality represents a critical success factor that grants Starbucks a competitive advantage over its rivals.

Starbucks offers a diverse selection of coffee beans sourced from all three major coffee-growing regions. The company employs strategies such as utilizing beans from high altitudes, establishing farmer support centers, and maintaining rigorous quality control measures to enhance the quality of its beans. Specifically, the Starbucks Reserve brand offers even more exclusive beans and leverages the price-quality correlation to convey this premium message to consumers.

H5: Creativity serves as a fundamental success factor that provides Starbucks with a competitive edge over its market rivals.

Starbucks has introduced an extensive array of innovative beverages, notably the Frappuccino series and the newly launched Oleato series, which differentiate the company from its competitors and broaden consumer options. Limited-time offerings and the incorporation of local flavors are employed as strategies to generate excitement and attract new patrons. Furthermore, customer feedback and taste testing are comprehensively integrated into the new product development process. This collaborative methodology for enhancing menu creativity fosters a stronger emotional bond between Starbucks and its consumers.

H6: Price competitiveness serves as a pivotal success factor that grants Starbucks a significant advantage over its market competitors.

Premium branding constitutes a pivotal marketing strategy for Starbucks, focusing on fostering a brand image that encourages patronage primarily among those of higher socioeconomic status. This approach serves to elevate the social value associated with visiting Starbucks. Additionally, the utilization of various cup sizes, the premium quality of coffee beans, and the diverse range of toppings offered contribute to the pricing structure of its products.

H7: Workplace suitability is a critical success factor that provides Starbucks with a competitive edge over its market rivals.

The “coffee shop effect,” a theory positing a positive correlation between working in a coffeehouse environment and enhanced individual productivity and creativity, has led numerous individuals to utilize Starbucks as their preferred workplace. The ambient visuals and auditory stimuli within such settings facilitate the generation of ideas through the mechanism of stochastic resonance. Furthermore, the expansive indoor space, equipped with spacious tables and an abundance of power outlets, significantly enhances the working and study experience for individuals, thereby addressing a pivotal need of many workers and students.

H8: Relaxation suitability constitutes a crucial success factor, in which Starbucks holds a competitive advantage over its peers.

In the context of coffeehouses, relaxation is a paramount concern for consumers. The incorporation of cakes and other desserts alongside traditional coffee offerings has the potential to substantially prolong the average duration of each customer's visit to Starbucks and augment their overall spending, particularly among those seeking a relaxed atmosphere. Strategic elements such as comfortable couches, gentle lighting, and thoughtfully designed acoustics have collectively contributed to positioning Starbucks as a “third place” – a sanctuary between home and work. This strategic positioning has fortified customers' sense of belonging, thereby intrinsically linking the Starbucks brand with comfort and relaxation.

H9: Social value emerges as a pivotal success factor, granting Starbucks a competitive edge over its market counterparts.

In a study conducted by Bryant Simon on the operations of Starbucks in Singapore, numerous teenagers expressed a perceived association between Starbucks and the American ideals of freedom and diversity. The café served as an escape from their immediate environment, while its premium pricing acted as a status symbol, rendering it an appealing destination for upper-middle-class adolescents. This appeal contributed to an enhancement of their self-esteem and confidence.

H10: Customer perceptions of several key success factors may vary across different age groups. This variation can be modeled through a linear relationship, where age serves as the explanatory variable, and the preference score acts as the dependent variable.

Senior consumers, with their higher disposable income, may be more inclined to accept the premium pricing of coffee products, thereby placing greater emphasis on the quality of coffee beans. Additionally, the convenience of store location may hold greater significance for this demographic due to their preference for minimizing travel time and effort. Furthermore, prior research has indicated that social interaction and shopping experience are pivotal factors influencing the store choice of senior consumers in retail settings [13]. It is plausible to extend this finding to the context of cafes, suggesting that these factors may similarly influence the cafe preferences of senior consumers.

3. Materials and Methods

In this study, an anonymous questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire was designed to elicit information from respondents regarding their age group and their subjective evaluations of Starbucks' performance across various critical success factors, compared to its competitors. These factors include:

- Environment (ambiance)
- Quality of Service
- Convenience and accessibility (location-wise)
- Quality of food and beverage
- Creativity and originality of food and beverage
- Suitability of its pricing strategies
- Suitability for work
- Suitability for relaxation
- Perceived social value

Respondents were presented with five options to rank each factor: “Much better than competitors”, “Better than competitors”, “Comparable”, “Worse than competitors”, and “Much worse than competitors”. These responses were subsequently converted into numerical preference scores on a scale ranging from 2 to -2, respectively. A positive score indicated a competitive advantage for Starbucks in that particular factor, whereas a negative score denoted a disadvantage compared to its competitors.

The data was gathered offline from diverse locations throughout Shanghai and at various times of the day over a period of seven days. This approach was adopted to mitigate the potential influence of sampling time on the collected data.

The data collection process was conducted by two high school students, who introduced the study as a school project unrelated to Starbucks Corporation to minimize response bias. To enhance the randomness of the data collected, a cluster sampling strategy was employed. Specifically, ten Starbucks stores located in Xujiahui and Nanjingdong Road were selected, and every customer within these locations was invited to complete the questionnaire. Following data collection, the mean average and standard deviation of the responses were calculated to assess the brand perception of Starbucks among different consumer groups. Additionally, calculating the standard error of the population mean from the sample standard deviation allowed for calculating a p-value for a population mean test with the null hypothesis of population mean equals 0, and the alternative hypothesis that the population mean is greater than 0. A p-value under $\alpha = 0.1$ will suffice in rejecting the null hypothesis, proving a critical success factor for Starbucks. Furthermore, regression analysis was utilized to investigate the impact of age on customer brand perception across various aspects. In this analysis, the median age of consumers within specified age groups served as the explanatory variable, while the mean of the numerical values of the preference scores on different

variables related to Starbucks served as the dependent variable. This approach enabled us to examine how age influences consumer perceptions of the brand in different dimensions.

4. Results

This section examines the results collected through the questionnaire. The initial subsection is specifically dedicated to providing a comprehensive overview through descriptive statistics, while the subsequent subsections delve into the rigorous examination of the formulated hypotheses.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the questionnaire results are presented in Table 2, including the total number of responses, as well as the minimum, maximum, mean, median, and standard deviation values.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	No. of responses	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Environment	525	-1	2	1.2171	1	0.6614
Service	525	-1	2	0.9733	1	0.8353
Convenience	525	-1	2	0.9962	1	0.8583
Quality	525	-1	2	1.1562	1	0.7854
Creativity	525	-1	2	0.8648	1	0.8861
Price	525	-1	2	0.2400	0	1.0963
For work	525	-1	2	1.0933	1	0.7869
For relaxation	525	-1	2	1.2343	1	0.7619
Social value	525	-1	2	1.1181	1	0.8134

The mean results indicate a notably high level of consumer satisfaction regarding the quality of beverages, ambiance, social value, and suitability for work or relaxation. Conversely, consumers assigned a relatively low preference score to price competitiveness. Although service quality, convenience, and the creativity of beverages are also recognized as unique selling propositions of Starbucks, they are perceived as less significant factors.

The perception of a brand can be readily influenced by individuals' social and demographic characteristics. The standard deviation of the respondents' preference scores, relative to the mean average, can provide insight into the clarity and effectiveness of a unique selling proposition.

The highest standard deviation is observed in the consumer perception of price suitability, likely due to Starbucks's premium pricing strategy, highlighting the varying willingness to pay among different potential customers. Conversely, the lowest standard deviation is noted in the preference score for the environment, indicating a consistent and positive impression among consumers regarding Starbucks's interior and exterior design.

4.2 Analysis of Statistical Evidence

The P-value, calculated using the z-score, is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. P-value table

Variable Name	P Value according to results based on age groups						
	10 to 20	20 to 30	30 to 40	40 to 50	50 to 60	60 or above	All Responses
Environment	0.0000	0.0075	0.0040	0.0000	0.0001	0.0031	0.0027
Service	0.0817	0.1074	0.0689	0.0663	0.1312	0.0228	0.0815
Convenience	0.2562	0.1135	0.0735	0.0430	0.0968	0.0038	0.0881
Quality	0.1684	0.0472	0.0223	0.0214	0.0023	0.0031	0.0304
Creativity	0.2633	0.1776	0.1058	0.0926	0.1678	0.1314	0.1354
Price	0.7163	0.4432	0.3925	0.4076	0.4189	0.3856	0.4209
Work suitability	0.1945	0.0356	0.0203	0.0583	0.1312	0.0228	0.0387
Relax suitability	0.2164	0.0140	0.0141	0.0252	0.0001	0.0000	0.0167
Social value	0.1980	0.0712	0.0241	0.0531	0.0263	0.0038	0.0455

Based on the p-values calculated for all responses, the positive preference scores of respondents are significant at the 0.01 level for the environment, the 0.05 level for quality, work suitability, relaxation suitability, and social value, and the 0.10 level for service and convenience. Minor variations in the p-values calculated across different age groups are generally not significant. These findings suggest a statistically significant and unified perceived brand advantage for Starbucks across the six critical success factors identified in our sample.

4.3 Analysis of the Regression between Age Group and Preference Score

Regression analysis is conducted with the age of respondents serving as the independent variable and their preference score functioning as the dependent variable. The resulting coefficients and p-value are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression Results Table

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Coefficient
Environment	Age	1.751389e-3
Service	Age	-1.13686e-3
Convenience	Age	9.837429e-3 **
Quality	Age	7.672246e-3 *
Creativity	Age	2.604516e-3
Price	Age	1.3613846e-2 *
For work	Age	-3.60935e-3
For relaxation	Age	8.208535e-3
Social value	Age	9.89163e-3 *

In the regressions carried out using the nine critical success factors and the age group of respondents, four factors—Convenience, Quality, Price Suitability, and Social Value—reached the selected significance level of 0.10. All these factors exhibited a positive correlation between age and preference scores. This observation indicates that the satisfaction among the senior population in these four aspects may generally surpass that of the younger generation, highlighting the demographics of the customer group that is most satisfied with Starbucks. Such results may be rationalized by several factors: seniors tend to have longer leisure time (viewing Starbucks as an ideal place for relaxation and social interaction), higher disposable income (leading to less sensitive to price), limited technical skills for online ordering (thereby scoring convenience highly), and a greater emphasis on health (placing importance on product quality).

5. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Starbucks holds an advantage in terms of the critical success factors, namely environment, service, convenience, quality, work suitability, relaxation suitability, and social value. These conclusions are supported by existing literature. The three-year financial roadmap released by Starbucks in September 2022 underscores its commitment to “partnering” with employees to enhance service experience. The advancement of electronic payment methods and the expansion of store numbers may further contribute to improved convenience for consumers. [14] Wang’s research suggests that total quality management at Starbucks leads to higher customer retention and positive brand perception. [15] Simon notes that the Starbucks brand is associated with trendiness and uniqueness among Singaporean teenagers, highlighting social value as a significant factor influencing consumer decisions. [3] Additionally, Akgun and Yalim emphasize the importance of store ambiance in shaping customer perceptions of value. [16] Lufkin proposes that working in coffee shops may enhance creative output due to stochastic resonance caused by an optimal level of background noise. [17]

The analysis of customer preference scores indicates that Starbucks should maintain its strengths in environment, service, convenience, quality, work suitability, relax suitability, and social value to differentiate itself from its competitors and enhance its brand image. Specifically, several strategies could be considered for implementation. Introducing a more flexible part-time workforce during peak sales seasons or periods could reduce customer waiting times, thereby enhancing perceived service quality. Additionally, further developing grab-and-go stores in office buildings or areas with high pedestrian traffic could improve the accessibility of Starbucks products. Marketing campaigns emphasizing the quality of coffee beans and enhanced supply chain transparency could improve customers' perceptions of Starbucks coffee quality, potentially increasing their willingness to pay. Furthermore, incorporating meeting rooms and couches could encourage customers to choose Starbucks as a socialization venue. Lastly, individual seating spots could be optimized to create a better working or studying environment for solo customers.

Furthermore, the regression analysis between preference scores and respondents’ age yields several noteworthy insights. The observed positive correlation between preference scores in aspects such as convenience, quality, price suitability, and social value among respondents suggests a heightened emphasis and prioritization of these factors by older consumers. The greater acceptance of Starbucks' pricing strategies among older generations, including Baby Boomers and Generation X, may be attributed to their higher disposable income. To capitalize on this opportunity, Starbucks could implement a price discrimination strategy by expanding its premium quality offerings under the Starbucks Reserves brand, providing a diverse array of high-priced coffee products that cater to the heightened willingness to pay among senior customers. This approach may also positively influence senior customers’ perceptions of Starbucks coffee quality through price-quality inference. Additionally, to attract senior consumers, Starbucks could further develop community engagement projects that foster local connections and underscore the social value it provides.

Bias can potentially arise during the sampling process, particularly when utilizing voluntary response sampling, as employed in this study. Such a method may introduce skewness in the results, as the sample may not accurately represent the broader population. Additionally, the potential for courtesy bias and social desirability bias, which could positively distort the findings and prevent some respondents from expressing their genuine opinions. Furthermore, nonresponse bias might occur, as individuals engaged in work or social activities within Starbucks may decline to participate in the questionnaire. Another factor that is not addressed in this study is reference dependence, as the perceived competitors of Starbucks may vary among respondents. To enhance the reliability of future research, it is recommended to introduce alternative sampling methods and increase the sample size.

6. Conclusion

This study confirms several hypotheses regarding the critical success factors of Starbucks relative to its competitors. Specifically, it validates that environment (H1), service (H2), convenience (H3), quality (H4), work suitability (H7), relax suitability (H8), and social value (H9) are areas where Starbucks holds an advantage. Additionally, H10 is supported, indicating that customer perceptions of these success factors differ among age groups, with a statistically significant positive correlation observed between age and preference scores for convenience of location, quality of products, price suitability, and social value of the café.

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Appendix

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for questionnaire results in the demographic group of 10-19 years old

	No. of responses	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Environment	20	0	2	1.4	1	0.60
Service	20	-1	2	0.95	1	0.83
Convenience	20	-1	2	0.75	1	1.07
Quality	20	-1	2	0.9	1	0.97
Creativity	20	-1	2	0.5	0	0.89
Price	20	-1	2	-0.45	-1	0.89
Work	20	-1	2	0.95	1	1.05
Relaxation	20	-1	2	0.9	1	1.07
Social value	20	-1	2	0.65	1	0.88

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for questionnaire results in the demographic group of 20-29 years old

	No. of responses	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Environment	159	-1	2	1.12	1	0.68
Service	159	-1	2	0.94	1	0.87
Convenience	159	-1	2	0.89	1	0.86
Quality	159	-1	2	1.09	1	0.81
Creativity	159	-1	2	0.82	1	0.94
Price	159	-1	2	0.18	0	1.13
Work	159	-1	2	1.17	1	0.81
Relaxation	159	-1	2	1.28	1	0.76
Social value	159	-1	2	1.04	1	0.84

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for questionnaire results in the demographic group of 30-39 years old

	No. of responses	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Environment	253	-1	2	1.23	1	0.68
Service	253	-1	2	1.02	1	0.83
Convenience	253	-1	2	1.02	1	0.84
Quality	253	-1	2	1.21	1	0.77
Creativity	253	-1	2	0.94	1	0.87
Price	253	-1	2	0.31	0	1.07
Work	253	-1	2	1.14	1	0.75
Relaxation	253	-1	2	1.25	1	0.76
Social value	253	-1	2	1.23	1	0.79

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for questionnaire results in the demographic group of 40-49 years old

	No. of responses	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Environment	57	0	2	1.32	1	0.54
Service	57	-1	2	0.96	1	0.80
Convenience	57	-1	2	1.21	1	0.84
Quality	57	-1	2	1.21	1	0.77
Creativity	57	-1	2	0.91	1	0.83
Price	57	-1	2	0.26	0	1.06
Work	57	-1	2	0.91	1	0.76
Relaxation	57	0	2	1.12	1	0.76
Social value	57	-1	2	0.95	1	0.77

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for questionnaire results in the demographic group of 50-59 years old

	No. of responses	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Environment	27	0	2	1.22	1	0.58
Service	27	-1	2	0.74	1	0.81
Convenience	27	-1	2	1	1	0.88
Quality	27	0	2	1.07	1	0.62
Creativity	27	-1	2	0.67	1	0.83
Price	27	-1	2	0.30	0	1.20
Work	27	-1	2	0.74	1	0.81
Relaxation	27	0	2	1.19	1	0.56
Social value	27	0	2	1.15	1	0.77

Table 10. Descriptive statistics for questionnaire results in the demographic group of 60 years old or above

	No. of responses	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
Environment	9	0	2	1.44	2	0.73
Service	9	0	2	1	1	0.71
Convenience	9	0	2	1.33	1	0.71
Quality	9	0	2	1.44	2	0.73
Creativity	9	0	2	0.78	1	0.83
Price	9	-1	2	0.44	0	1.24
Work	9	0	2	1	1	0.71
Relaxation	9	1	2	1.56	2	0.53
Social value	9	0	2	1.33	1	0.71

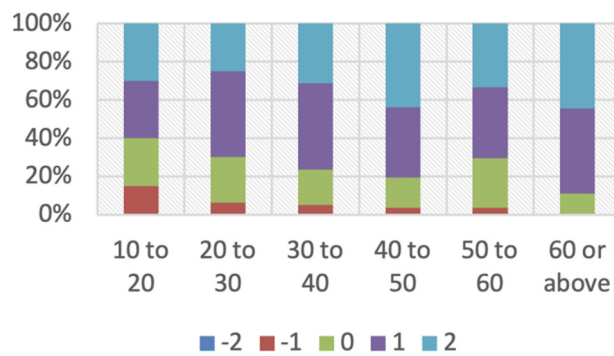


Figure 1. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of environment and atmosphere across different age groups

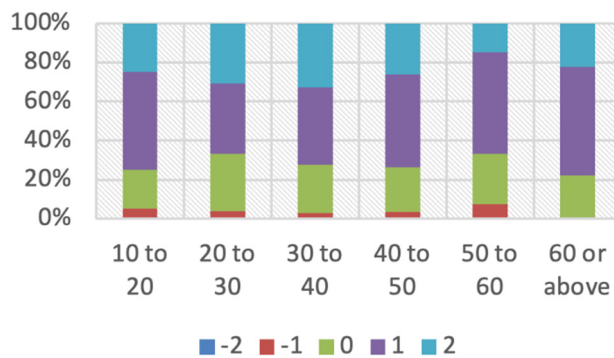


Figure 2. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of service quality across different age groups

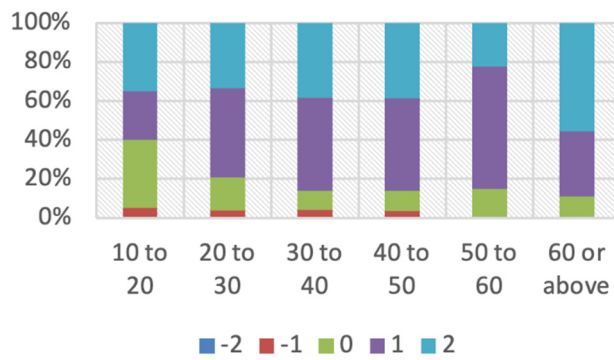


Figure 3. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of convenience and accessibility across different age groups

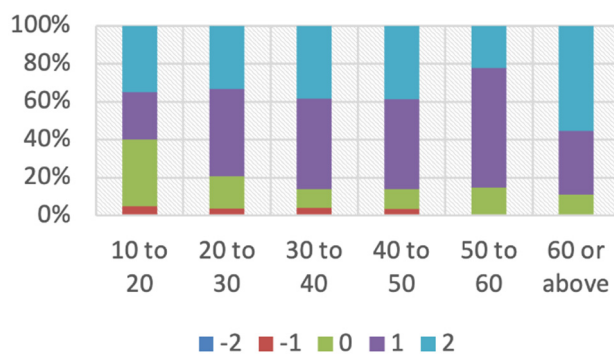


Figure 4. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of convenience and accessibility across different age groups

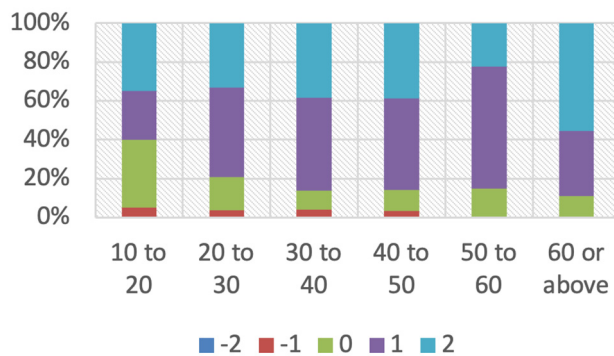


Figure 5. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of product quality across different age groups

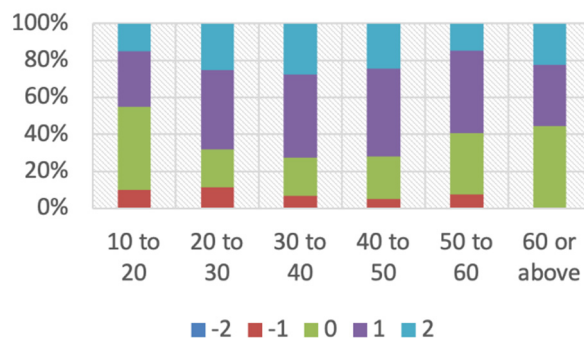


Figure 6. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of product creativity across different age groups

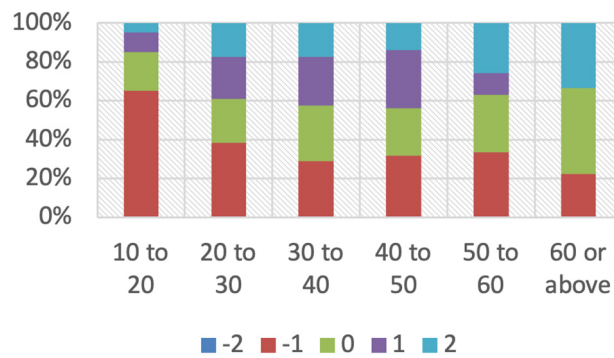


Figure 7. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of pricing strategy suitability across different age groups

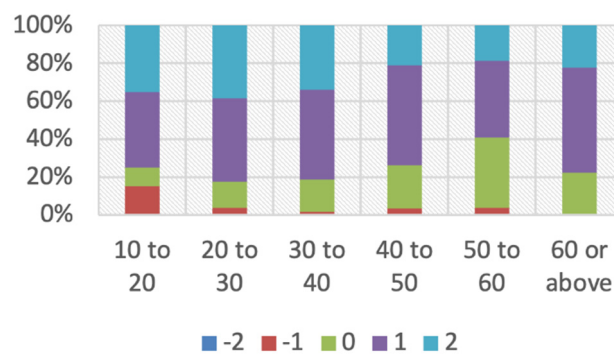


Figure 8. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of suitability for working or studying across different age groups

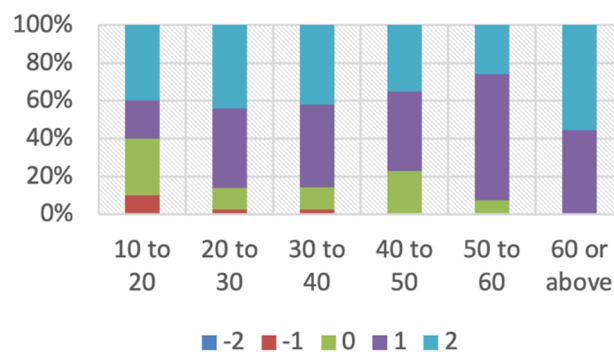


Figure 9. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of suitability for relaxing across different age groups

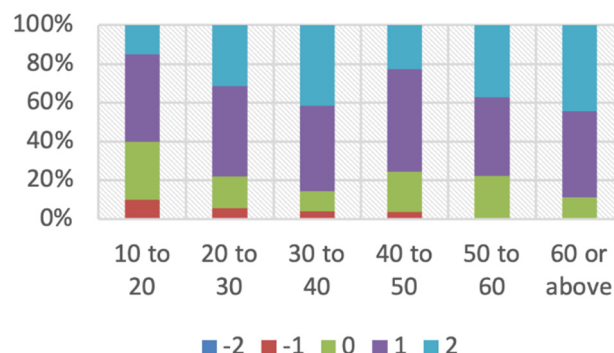


Figure 10. Distribution of preference scores for the CSF of social value across different age groups

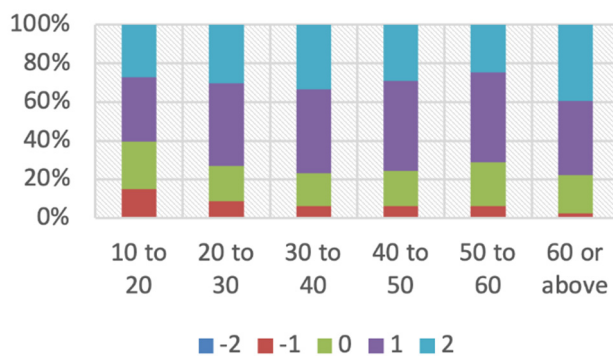


Figure 11. Distribution of preference scores for all CSFs across different age groups