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The Effect of Set Menus on Beverage Purchasing Intention as a Product Bundling Method in Food and Beverage Businesses

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Abstract

In contemporary markets where online food ordering has become increasingly dominant, food and beverage (F&B) businesses rely on a variety of sales promotion tools to enhance profitability. Among these methods, product bundling—commonly operationalized as set menus—has become a strategically significant practice. This study examines how the perceived value derived from set menus influences consumers' intention to purchase beverages in F&B establishments.

The constructs "Perceived Value" and "Purchase Intention" were adapted from Kwon and Jang's (2011) scale and measured using a five-point Likert scale. Data were collected via an online survey, resulting in 556 valid responses. Findings reveal that 72% of participants who initially chose a beverage from an à la carte menu also continued to include a beverage when presented with set menus. Notably, 51% of those who did not initially select a beverage added one when offered a set menu option. Moreover, perceived transaction value and perceived acquisition value were positively associated, and both significantly enhanced purchase intention.

Overall, the results demonstrate that set menus elevate perceived value and substantially strengthen consumers' beverage purchase intentions, underscoring their effectiveness as a sales promotion strategy for F&B businesses.

Keywords: Product Bundling, Menu Engineering, Food and Beverage Operations, Sales Promotion, Perceived Value, Purchase Intention.

Jel Codes: M3, M30, M31.

Introduction

The increasing variety of products and services in global markets has intensified competition and compelled businesses to develop more effective strategies to maintain their market presence. As

Uyar (2018: 22) notes, sales promotion activities are among the most frequently utilized methods for achieving competitive advantage and boosting sales. Their widespread use is attributed to their ease of implementation and immediate impact in highly competitive environments.

One prominent sales promotion strategy is product bundling, which holds a significant place in the marketing literature. In the food and beverage sector, product bundling typically takes the form of set menu applications (Guiltinan, 1987: 74). Restaurants continuously refine their menus to enhance customer experiences and create memorable encounters, leveraging product bundling programs to achieve these goals (Fikri, Ramadhan, 2011: 138). Hamidli (2006) states that businesses offering bundled products and services aim both to attract new customers and to boost the sales of complementary items. In this context, the menu functions as a critical marketing and communication tool, with well-designed menus improving customer attraction and profitability (Fang, Peng, 2013: 492).

The purpose of this study is to examine consumers' reactions to product bundles—specifically set menus—and to determine how perceived value influences their intention to purchase beverages. Yin et al. (2023: 1674) argue that product bundling is widely employed across competitive markets and can shape purchasing behavior by altering consumers' choice sets. Set menus, therefore, have the potential to encourage consumers to purchase items they might not otherwise select. In support of this perspective, Tunali et al. (2021: 1622) emphasize that customer-oriented service strategies are particularly important in low-margin sectors, underscoring the strategic relevance of set menus.

Sales Promotion In Marketing

The American Marketing Association (AMA, 2025) defines marketing as the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. Within this framework, promotion encompasses structured communication efforts aimed at informing target audiences about products or services and cultivating favorable brand perceptions (Kuru, 2011: 13–14).

While critics argue that the excessive use of promotional tools may erode brand value and lead to long-term market share decline, other scholars maintain that sales promotions contribute positively to long-term profitability when implemented appropriately (Kwok, Uncles, 2005: 170). The

effectiveness of sales promotions depends largely on whether the offered benefits align with the product or service and genuinely create value for consumers. Communication established between the business and the customer is critical for the sale to take place, and the primary tools of marketing communication are advertising, public relations, personal selling, and sales promotion activities (Yükselen, 2007: 368).

Sales promotion constitutes a major component of the promotional mix and includes short-term incentives designed to stimulate purchasing behavior (Acayıp, Çakır, 2016: 110). Benefits perceived by consumers include monetary savings, convenience, enhanced quality and enjoyment (Kwok, Uncles, 2005: 171). For retailers, in-store displays, multi-buy campaigns (e.g., "buy one, get one free"), and similar tactics generate unplanned purchases, increase store traffic, and may even stimulate demand for non-promoted items (Abdelhamied, 2013: 94).

Product bundling, as an extension of sales promotion strategies, has emerged as a vital tool in contemporary marketing. Amin and Wijaya (2024: 184) highlight its effectiveness in promoting low-visibility or slow-selling products. Yin et al. (2023: 1674–1675) further emphasize that consumer judgments vary with contextual reference points, affecting purchase decisions. Tunali et al. (2021: 1623) similarly note that directing customers toward larger, more personalized bundles presents valuable opportunities for increasing sales.

Restaurants And Sales Promotion Efforts

Food and beverage (F&B) establishments play an increasingly critical role in contemporary social and economic life. Numerous scholars underscore the significance of these businesses, noting that they provide not only essential nourishment but also contribute to social interaction and economic activity (Özdemir, Çalışkan, 2014: 3; Filimonau et al., 2017: 161; Cankül, 2019: 250). Restaurants may be categorized using diverse criteria; however, they generally operate as structured organizations that deliver both tangible (food and beverages) and intangible (service, atmosphere) components. Given that customers evaluate the dining experience holistically, the integration of these components is vital (Beyazkaya, 2017: 11).

The historical development of the foodservice industry—from Ottoman palace kitchens and military barracks to factory canteens and ultimately to modern commercial foodservice—

illustrates its longstanding social and economic relevance. Foreign investment in the late 20th century further accelerated sectoral growth, reinforcing the industry's macroeconomic importance (Öndoğan, 2010: 11).

Commercial F&B establishments aim to meet customers' nutritional needs while offering convenience and memorable dining experiences (Doğan et al., 2010: 242). Common types of restaurants include:

- Fine-dining restaurants
- Cafés and snack bars
- Fast-food restaurants
- Mall-based eateries
- Casual/standard restaurants
- Ethnic restaurants
- Specialty restaurants
- Restaurants located in transportation hubs

As competition intensifies, restaurants increasingly rely on sales promotion tools to maintain customer interest and drive repeat patronage. Tunali et al. (2021: 1622) emphasize that product bundling, in particular, enables businesses to better meet customer needs while supporting sales development processes. For restaurants operating with thin margins and high competitive pressure, such strategies offer both economic and operational advantages.

Marketing In Food And Beverage Establishments

Marketing in the F&B industry presents unique challenges due to the simultaneous delivery of products and services. Restaurants must make strategic decisions regarding pricing, menu design, presentation quality, staff performance, and overall customer experience (Öndoğan, 2010: 12). These complexities require a comprehensive and dynamic marketing approach.

Abdelhamied's (2013: 95–96) literature review identifies multiple sales promotion tools frequently used in restaurant settings, including:

- Free or low-cost samples
- Coupons designed to attract new or returning customers
- Gifts or add-ons
- Periodic discounts
- Contests and sweepstakes offering prizes

For example, McDonald's offers a bundled promotion combining coffee and an apple pie at a marginal add-on price, demonstrating how bundling can encourage incremental purchases. Fast-food chains also commonly employ "buy one, get one free (1+1)" and other multi-buy campaigns. Additionally, branded merchandise (cups, hats, apparel) and seasonal promotions help stimulate customer engagement.

Among these tools, product bundling stands out as one of the most frequently used and influential strategies. Bundling refers to offering multiple products at a combined price more advantageous than purchasing each item individually. A restaurant might, for instance, offer a bundle such as "lentil soup + sautéed meat entrée + beverage + rice pudding." Promotions such as "second item 50% off," "free dessert with entrée," or gift vouchers included with menu purchases also fall under this category (Ertürk, 2019: 1108).

Tunali et al. (2021: 1624) emphasize that bundling decisions should consider the category-level relationships among items (e.g., entrée–drink combinations). This approach enhances strategic decision-making by ensuring that bundled items align with consumer expectations and perceived compatibility.

Menu Engineering

The menu is one of the most fundamental marketing tools in F&B establishments, functioning as both an informational and persuasive instrument. Beyond simply listing available options, menus shape perceptions, guide choices, and communicate the restaurant's identity (Fikri, Ramadhan,

2011: 139–140). Cankül (2019: 250) asserts that menu design aims not only to inform but also to strategically direct customer attention toward specific items. Research shows that menu placement influences selection frequency, with items placed at the top or upper-right sections receiving disproportionate attention.

Menu planning is a strategic managerial activity that determines which items will be produced and offered. Regular updates based on customer preferences, sales trends, and operational constraints are essential to ensure profitability. Poor menu planning—such as inadequate variety or lack of price display—can negatively affect customer satisfaction (Beyazkaya, 2017: 12–14). Özdemir and Çalışkan (2014: 5) identify four core dimensions of menu design:

1. Placement of items
2. Descriptions
3. Labels or category indicators
4. Physical attributes of the menu card

Given dynamic shifts in consumer preferences, maintaining a fixed or unchanging menu is impractical. Continuous menu optimization based on sales data and behavioral insights is necessary for both customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.

Recent studies highlight the importance of category-aware bundling in developing effective menu combinations. Sun et al. (2024: 14) show that analyzing cross-category relationships can enhance bundle formation, while Yin et al. (2023: 1674) argue that context-dependent consumer preferences encourage restaurants to adopt mixed bundling strategies. These findings further underscore the strategic significance of menu engineering in influencing consumer behavior and shaping purchase intentions.

Product Bundling (Set Menus)

Product bundling has long been recognized as a central strategy in marketing, particularly within the restaurant industry. Bundling involves combining multiple products or services into a single package sold at a unified price. This structure is designed to meet a variety of consumer needs

simultaneously. Examples outside the restaurant industry include automobile dealerships offering complementary travel services or insurance with vehicle purchases (Gaeth et al., 1991: 47; Guiltinan, 1987: 74). In the hospitality sector, Harlam et al. (1995: 57) note the ubiquity of bundled vacation packages and complementary product pairings such as razors and shaving cream.

A critical factor in bundle design is product compatibility, defined as the perceived coherence and complementarity of items presented together (Simonin, Ruth, 1998: 30; Reinders et al., 2010: 1128). Bundles may take one of two fundamental forms: Pure Bundling (Products can only be purchased as a bundle); Mixed Bundling (Products can be purchased either individually or as part of the bundle) (Herrmann et al., 1997: 99; Schwartz, Cohen, 1999: 20). Mixed bundling is further divided into: Leader-focused mixed bundling, where a flagship product is sold at full price and complementary items at a discount; Joint mixed bundling, where two or more items are packaged at a combined price (Ertürk, 2019: 1112)

In the restaurant industry, product bundling manifests primarily as set menus, combo menus, fixed menus, or lunch specials (Nazlan et al., 2018: 423–424). Set menus are especially prominent in fast-food chains such as Burger King, Domino's, KFC, and McDonald's, where bundled pricing provides clear economic incentives. Biçici and Köroğlu (2013: 53) report that such menus may lead consumers to purchase items they might otherwise forgo, increasing both transaction value and profit potential. However, potential disadvantages include food waste when certain bundled items are not consumed and limited freedom of choice. These drawbacks can be mitigated through regular menu optimization based on sales analytics.

The broader literature provides extensive insights into the effects of bundling. Amin and Wijaya (2024: 184) define bundling as a strategy combining two or more products under a single price, while Sun et al. (2024: 2) emphasize its role in supporting promotional campaigns, enhancing appeal, and increasing revenue. Bundling simplifies decision-making by grouping related products, thereby encouraging incremental purchases.

Liu et al. (2025: 848–849) highlight bundling as a widely adopted price-based tactic and suggest that advanced data-driven models can improve bundle design through enhanced semantic representation of products. Yin et al. (2023: 1679) report that bundling may reduce competition in certain product categories, providing strategic advantages. Tunali et al. (2021: 1622, 1624) show

that bundling is both widely applicable and complex, influenced by price structures, product relationships, and personalization strategies.

Perceived Value and Purchase Intention

The concept of value is fundamentally defined as the price consumers are willing to pay for a product, while perception refers to the process through which individuals interpret both tangible and intangible stimuli using their senses. Perceived value, therefore, represents a consumer's overall assessment formed by comparing the benefits gained from a product or service with the sacrifices made, such as price, effort, or time (Konuk, 2008: 16–18). This construct is an essential determinant of customer satisfaction, with previous research demonstrating strong associations between perceived value, customer loyalty, and overall satisfaction (Bengül, Güven, 2019: 384).

Perceived value is typically divided into two core components: (1) Perceived Acquisition Value: The consumer's evaluation of the net benefits gained after the purchase. Positive utility from the product contributes positively, while the price paid contributes negatively. (2) Perceived Transaction Value: The perceived psychological satisfaction arising from the deal itself, including feelings of enjoyment, fairness, and savings associated with the purchase (Grewal et al., 1998: 48; Xu, 2009: 80).

Purchase intention refers to the likelihood that a consumer will choose to buy a specific product or service within a given context and timeframe (Gökalan, 2009: 68; Gür, 2019: 45). According to Madahi and Sukati (2012: 153–154), purchase intention emerges after consumers evaluate whether a product aligns with their needs and expectations. The process involves sequential stages such as information search, evaluation, and finally, making a decision if the product is perceived as beneficial (Tariq et al., 2013: 341).

The literature on bundling shows extensive evidence of its influence on consumer behavior. Biçici and Köroğlu (2013: 56) found that foreign tourists in Fethiye perceive set menus positively and that such offerings significantly enhance purchase intention. Ertürk (2019: 1125) similarly states that bundling can increase sales volume, although he cautions that profitability gains depend on accurate cost analysis.

Amin and Wijaya (2024: 182–192) conceptualize purchase intention as a behavioral tendency formed through stages of attention, interest, desire, and confidence. They argue that product bundling increases purchase intention by offering prices that appear more economical compared to individual purchases, generating a perception of financial advantage. Their findings further demonstrate that emphasizing economic value in bundled offerings positively shapes consumers' final decisions.

Sun et al. (2024: 2–3) note that bundles enhance user experience by offering complementary and alternative items together. Consumers tend to prefer such bundles when they reflect their goals and consumption contexts. The reduced total price of bundles relative to individual items serves as an additional motivator, strengthening purchase intentions through perceived savings.

Liu et al. (2025: 848) highlight that bundling encourages customers to purchase more items per transaction, thereby increasing average transaction value. By providing convenience and perceived savings, bundling enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. Yin et al. (2023: 1674–1682) add that bundling shapes consumer preferences by altering reference points and creating decoy effects that steer customers toward specific options.

Tunali et al. (2021: 1622–1624) emphasize that analyzing co-purchase tendencies helps businesses design bundles that maximize value. Data-driven set menu strategies can improve both customer satisfaction and operational efficiency by offering optimized combinations aligned with behavioral patterns.

Methodology

The research methodology consists of the subsections "Purpose and Importance," "Scope, Limitations, and Sample," "Model and Hypotheses," "Data Collection Method," and "Analysis and Findings."

Purpose and Importance

The primary aim of this study is to examine how the perceived value of set menus, which represent a specific form of product bundling in food and beverage establishments, influences consumers'

intention to purchase beverages. The findings aim to assist businesses in understanding how set menus shape consumer behavior and to inform beverage suppliers about the strategic significance of beverages within bundled offerings.

Scope, Limitations, and Sample

This study focuses on measuring how set menu preferences in the food and beverage sector influence consumers' beverage purchase decisions. Several limitations were identified: *Temporal limitation*: The study was conducted within a specific timeframe to minimize variability arising from fluctuating consumer behaviors. *Cost and practicality limitation*: Due to the high cost and time required for face-to-face surveys, an online questionnaire format was chosen. *Sampling limitation*: Because the population (consumers purchasing products/services from F&B establishments in Turkey and Azerbaijan) is geographically broad and difficult to quantify precisely, probability-based sampling was not feasible. Instead, convenience sampling, one of the non-random sampling methods, was used.

The sample size was calculated using widely accepted statistical formulas (Kurtuluş, 2010: 67), at a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence interval. The minimum required sample size was determined to be 384. In practice, 556 valid responses were obtained and included in the analysis.

Research Model and Hypotheses

The research process model was adapted from Ertürk (2019) (Figure 1). Initially, respondents were asked about their routine dining preferences. They were then presented with simulated à la carte prices from a fictional restaurant (main dish, salad, soup, dessert, beverage) and asked to make choices. Subsequently, several set menu alternatives created by the researchers were presented, followed by a final selection between à la carte and set menu options.

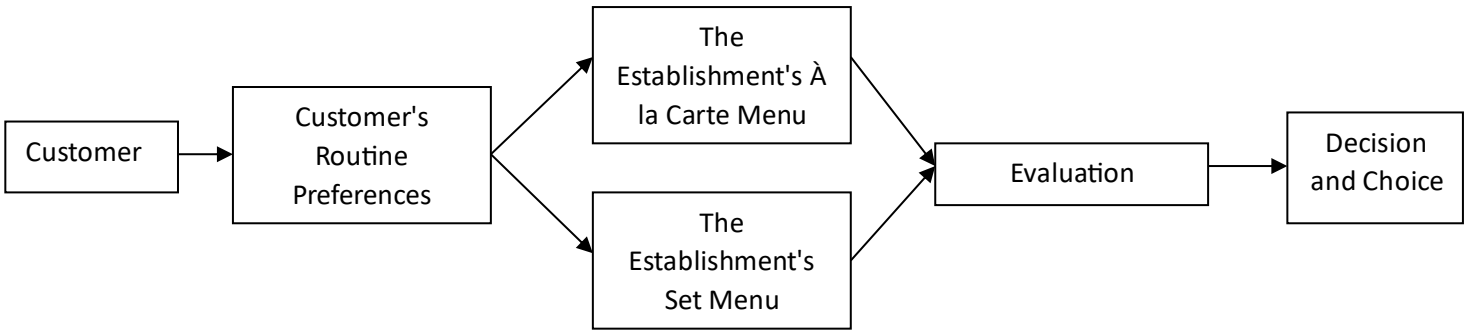

Figure 1. Research Process

The theoretical research model, adapted from Grewal (1998: 47) and Xu (2009: 58), is presented in Figure 2. The model includes one dependent variable (Purchase Intention) and two independent constructs (Perceived Transaction Value and Perceived Acquisition Value). Based on the literature, the hypotheses were formulated as follows:

H1: Perceived Value affects Purchase Intention.

H1a: Perceived Transaction Value affects Purchase Intention.

H1b: Perceived Acquisition Value affects Purchase Intention.

H2: Perceived Transaction Value and Perceived Acquisition Value are positively related.

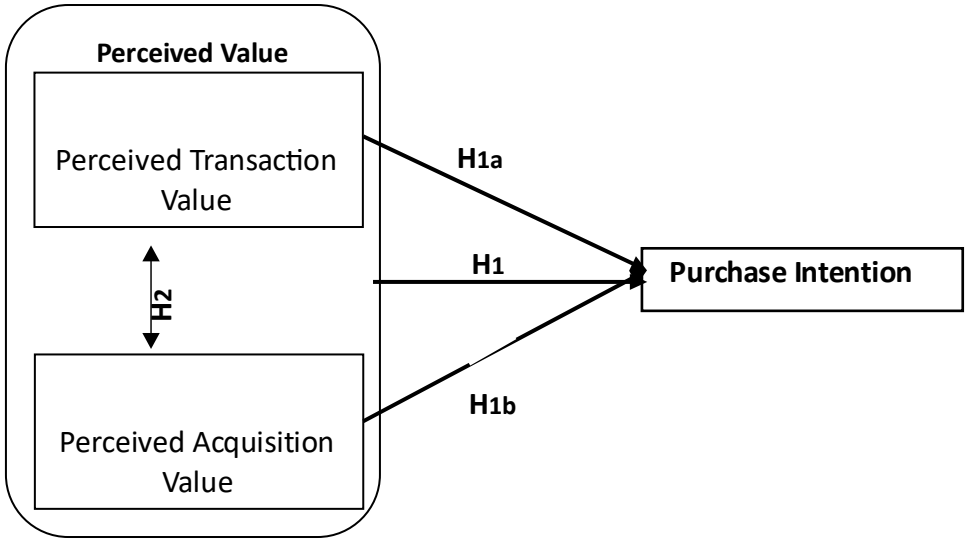

Figure 2. Research Model

Data Collection Method

Data were collected through an online questionnaire administered via Google Forms between May and June. Of the 617 total responses, 556 were deemed valid and included in the analysis.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections and one filter question:

- Dining habits (3 items)
- Routine meal preferences & attitudes toward set menus (8 items, adapted from Ertürk, 2019)
- Perceived Value and Purchase Intention scales (11 items, three-factor structure), adapted from Kwon and Jang (2011), originally based on Grewal (1998)
- Demographic questions

Each construct was measured using a five-point Likert scale.

Analysis and Findings

The data obtained from the research were analyzed using the SPSS program. As a result of the reliability analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the factors were found to be 0.881 for the "Perceived Transaction Value" factor, 0.912 for the "Perceived Acquisition Value" factor, and 0.931 for the "Purchase Intention" factor (Table 1). According to Kurtuluş (2010: 184), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient should be greater than 0.70. When we look at the percentages, this requirement is met.

Table 1. Factor Reliabilities

Factors	***Statements***	***Cronbach`s Alpha Coefficient***
	Taking advantage of a price offer like this makes me feel good.	

Perceived Transaction Value	When ordering a set menu, I enjoy knowing that I save money with the lower price. This advantageous price offer that allows me to save gives me a sense of fun.	0,881
Perceived Acquisition Value	If I order a set menu, I feel that it is worth the money I pay. Compared to the highest price I am willing to pay for each dish individually, the set menu price provides a better value. If I order a set menu, I think I will obtain good value for the money I spend. If it meets my needs at a reasonable price, this set menu is valuable to me. If it is a reasonably priced meal, ordering this set menu is the right choice.	0,912
Purchase Intention	If I wanted a set menu, I would order this menu. I am highly likely to consider ordering this set menu. I am likely to order this set menu.	0,931

While 76.1% of the participants eat out 1–5 times a month, 20.3% prefer to eat out less frequently (6 times or more per month), and 3.4% do not prefer to eat out at all. Similarly, 69.6% of these participants order food from outside more frequently (1–5 times a month), 9.9% never order food, and 19.7% order food less frequently.

A One-Way ANOVA analysis was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences between participants' income levels and the "Purchase Intention" and "Perceived Value" scales. According to the analysis results, since the significance values in the ANOVA table (Lira: 0.246 and 0.257; Manat: 0.346 and 0.742) are above 0.05, no statistically significant difference was found at the 5% significance level.

In Table 2 below, a frequency table is presented showing how participants prefer beverages. It is observed that 70% tend to purchase beverages more when they are included in a set menu, that is, when an advantage is offered.

Table 2. Beverage Preference Frequency Table

	Frequencies	**Percentage**
If it is included in a combined/set menu, I will take it.	390	70,1
I add it myself separately from the menu.	166	29,9
Total	556	100,0

In the menu presented in the study, the beverage price was defined in TL (Turkish Lira) and AZN (Azerbaijani Manat) according to market conditions in Turkey and Azerbaijan. According to the data obtained, this price was considered normal by 51.1% of the participants, expensive by 43.3%, and cheap by 5%. Among those who found the price cheap, normal, or expensive, 70% added the beverage to their order in the first stage, while 30% did not. In other words, regardless of how the price was perceived, 70% of the consumers added the beverage to their order from the à la carte menu.

When set menu options were presented to those who did not add a beverage to their order from the à la carte menu (1. "I would still choose the product I want from the menu"; 2. "Meat Dish + Soup"; 3. "Meat Dish + Salad"; 4. "Meat Dish + Beverage"; 5. "Meat Dish + Soup + Salad"; 6. "Meat Dish + Soup + Beverage"; 7. "Meat Dish + Salad + Dessert + Beverage"), 37% of those who found the price cheap, 35.6% of those who found it normal, and 39% of those who found it expensive added the beverage option to their order. Based on these data, it can be stated that consumers' sensitivity to beverage prices is low.

According to the results of the frequency table, when set menu options were presented to those who initially preferred a beverage from the à la carte menu, 11.7% of the participants shifted toward set menus without beverages, 72.2% did not give up their beverage preference and ordered set menus that included a beverage, and 16.2% did not prefer a set menu and continued to order from the à la carte menu.

For those who initially did not prefer a beverage from the à la carte menu, when a set menu was presented, 51.6% chose a set menu with a beverage, 31.1% chose a set menu without a beverage, and 17.4% did not prefer a set menu and wished to continue ordering from the à la carte menu.

Overall, it can be observed that those who selected a beverage in the first stage largely did not change their preference when confronted with set menus, while those who did not choose a beverage for various reasons added a beverage to their order at a rate of over 50% when set menu options were presented. When advantageous offers are provided, the intention to purchase beverages also increases, which may serve as a useful reference for the food and beverage sector.

Looking at Table 3 regarding the reasons for choosing set menus, it is seen that set menus are mostly preferred because their prices are advantageous, they are filling, and they meet needs.

Table 3. Frequency Table of Reasons for Choosing Set Menus

	Frequencies
Having a more advantageous price	190
Being more filling	154
Allowing me to have greater savings	70
Allowing me to try a greater variety of products	104
Containing the amount of products I need	162
All of them	38

A regression analysis was conducted in order to test the model established in the study, and thus the causal relationships between the variables were examined. As a result of the analysis conducted to investigate the effect of “Perceived Transaction Value” and “Perceived Acquisition Value” on “Purchase Intention,” the following tables were obtained.

When we look at Table 4, the regression model consisting of “Perceived Value (Transaction and Acquisition Value)” activities, which are thought to affect “Purchase Intention,” is found to be

statistically significant. In addition, it was determined that the model has the power to explain 65.9% of the dependent variable.

Table 4. Model Summary Table of the Regression Analysis on the Effect of Perceived Value on Purchase Intention

Model	R	Coefficient of Determination	Adjusted Coefficient of Determination	Standard Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,813[a]	,661	,659	,59004	,661	538,182	2	553	,000

Table 5. ANOVA Table on the Effect of Perceived Value on Purchase Intention

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Regression	374,729	2	187,364	538,182	,000[b]
Residual	192,523	553	,348		
Total	567,252	555			

Table 6. Regression Coefficients Table for the Effect of Perceived Value on Purchase Intention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

(Constant)	,331	,100		3,325	,001
Perceived Transaction Value	,118	,044	,120	2,673	,008
Perceived Acquisition Value	,756	,048	,711	15,886	,000

In Table 5, it is seen that the coefficients in the equation are different from zero. In Table 6, the variables that we think affect Purchase Intention are as follows:

X: Perceived Transaction Value

Z: Perceived Acquisition Value

In this case, our formula is as follows:

Y= 0,331 + (0,120X) + (0,711Z)

According to the results of the analysis, the two independent variables—"Perceived Transaction Value" and "Perceived Acquisition Value"—are positively related to each other, and both independent variables have a positive effect on "Purchase Intention."

Since there is a positive relationship between perceived transaction value and perceived acquisition value, an increase or decrease in these two variables occurs simultaneously. At the same time, when the perceived value represented by these two variables increases, purchase intention also increases, and when it decreases, purchase intention decreases as well. In this case, food and beverage businesses should give importance to increasing perceived value through this promotional activity and thereby try to encourage consumers to purchase.

Table 7. Summary Table of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	**Result**
H1: "Perceived Value" affects "Purchase Intention."	Accepted
H1a: "Perceived Transaction Value" affects "Purchase Intention."	Accepted
H1b: "Perceived Acquisition Value" affects "Purchase Intention."	Accepted
H2: There is a significant positive relationship between "Perceived Transaction Value" and "Perceived Acquisition Value."	Accepted

Discussion and Conclusion

This study investigated how the perceived value derived from set menus influences consumers' intention to purchase beverages. By focusing specifically on beverages—a complementary yet high-margin category—the research provides empirical evidence on how product bundling can alter category-level decisions within restaurant settings.

The findings show that set menus significantly increase beverage purchasing, particularly among consumers who initially did not choose a beverage from the à la carte menu. More than half of these consumers (51.6%) added a beverage when it was included in a bundled option, demonstrating the persuasive role of bundled pricing in stimulating incremental category purchases. This result supports previous research noting that bundling can expand the consumer's choice set and promote additional-item purchases (Guiltinan, 1987; Herrmann et al., 1997; Yin et al., 2023) and further confirms that beverages function as a "completion product" whose selection rises when bundled advantages are present.

Regression analyses indicate that both perceived transaction value and perceived acquisition value significantly increase purchase intention and together explain approximately 66% of its variance. The strong positive relationship between these two components of perceived value supports the theoretical propositions of Grewal et al. (1998) and Xu (2009), showing that consumers' evaluation of both the deal (transaction value) and the total benefits (acquisition value) jointly shape

behavioral intention. This reinforces the idea that set menus do not merely offer economic incentives but systematically influence perceived value structures that drive consumer decision-making.

A noteworthy finding is the limited effect of price perceptions on beverage choices. Regardless of whether the beverage price was perceived as cheap, normal, or expensive, nearly 70% of participants added a beverage to their initial order. This suggests that beverages hold a stable complementary role and that consumers display relatively low price sensitivity in this category. The increase in beverage purchases during the set menu stage further indicates that bundling enhances perceived value even in low-sensitivity categories, providing an important theoretical insight into category-based bundling dynamics.

Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the product bundling literature by demonstrating that bundle-induced value perceptions have a differentiated effect across product categories, with beverages showing strong responsiveness to bundled advantages despite low baseline price sensitivity. Prior research has examined bundling in general purchasing behavior, but this study empirically identifies the mechanism through which bundling shapes decisions in a specific complementary category. The demonstrated link between perceived value - beverage inclusion - overall purchase intention deepens theoretical understanding of how bundling shifts intra-meal category choices, offering a refined perspective on category-level demand formation in food and beverage contexts.

Practical Recommendations

Restaurants should strategically position beverages within set menus, as bundled presentation substantially increases their selection even among consumers who are initially indifferent. Menu engineering efforts should highlight advantageous pricing and clear value cues, given their strong influence on both transaction and acquisition value perceptions. Collaborations with beverage suppliers may further enhance profitability and menu attractiveness. Businesses should also apply

data-driven approaches to identify high-probability product pairings and develop set menus based on co-purchase patterns, as recommended in recent bundling literature.

Limitations and Future Research

The use of convenience sampling and self-reported online data limits the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could investigate different restaurant formats, cultural contexts, or additional complementary categories such as desserts or side dishes. Exploring dynamic or personalized bundling strategies may also offer deeper insight into how consumers respond to context-dependent combinations.

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