

A Study on trend of Fast Food Buying Behavior of Consumers with special reference to Erode District

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ABSTRACT

Fast food is a type of mass produced food that is prepared and served very quickly, was first popularized in 1950s, and may be relatively less nutritionally valuable compared to other foods and dishes. The present study used both primary as well as secondary data. The present study has been undertaken to find out various factors influencing customer's awareness level regarding fast food services. A sample of 200 respondents was selected for the study based on convenient sampling.

1. Introduction

Fast food industry is one of the world's fastest growing sectors in food industry. However, over a period of time, with a growth in the number of nuclear families, economic growth and increasing per capita income as well as globalization, fast food culture gained prominence in India. Fast foods are quick, reasonably price and readily available alternatives to cooked food. It will be convenient and economical for a busy lifestyle, fast foods are typically high in calories, fat, saturated fat, Sugar and salt. The young consumer lifestyle trend consists of taste, convenience and seeking alternate food items which formed the major reasons for consuming fast food. Fast food is a type of mass produced food that is prepared and served very quickly, was first popularized in 1950s, and may be relatively less nutritionally valuable compared to other foods and dishes. While any meal with low preparation time can be considered fast food, typically the term fast food refers to food sold in a restaurant are stored with preheated or precooked ingredients and served to the customer in a packaged form for takeout/takeaway. In Erode, the familiar fast food industry are Maya Bazaar, Punjabi Restaurant, Domino's, Pizza hut, Marry Brown, Big Chick, KFC, Boom fried chicken restaurant, Meat and eat and Pizz Burg.

2. Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

- ✓ To study the demographic profile of consumers of fast food
- ✓ To study the buying behavior of consumers towards fast food
- ✓ To identify the factors affecting the choice of consumers for fast food
- ✓ To study the consumption pattern towards fast foods particularly with respect to the frequency of visits and choice of fast food outlets.
- ✓ To identify the impact of hygiene and nutritional value of fast foods on consumer purchase decision.

3. Review of Literature

The present literature serves many varied interesting features, which forms the vital background for the study consideration.

1. James U. MGNeal , et.al, (1980)in their study "Consumers nutritional ratings of fast food meals" suggested that the nutritional beliefs about fast food restaurants meals held by consumers .View on the nutritional quality, caloric, content, potential hazards and economic value of such meals were examined with respect to the socio economic level and nutritional knowledge of consumers.
2. Grecher C.P and Shannon B (1997) in their study entitled "Impact of Fast food meals on nutrient intake of two groups "suggested that two groups in different population centers were studied to determine how often consumers frequented fast food restaurants and consequently how heavily they relied on this type food for nutrients fast food items were purchased . This study indicates that any attempts to improve nutritive value of fast food snacks or meal must include efforts to lead consumer to make wiser food choices as well as encourage the fast food industry to provide rich sources of all the nutrients in their menu.
3. S.A. French, et.al,(2000) in their study entitled "Fast food restaurant use among women in the pound of prevention study: dietary behavioral and demographic correlates "suggested that frequency of fast food restaurant use was associated with higher total energy intake, higher percentage of fast energy, more frequent consumption of hamburgers French fries and soft drinks and less frequent consumption of fiber and fruit. Frequency of fast food restaurant use was higher among younger women.
4. Prentice A.M, Jebb S.A (2003) in his study entitled "Fast foods energy density and obesity" suggested that Fast food are frequently linked to the epidemic of obesity but there has been very little scientific appraisal of a possible casual role. A study demonstrating that the energy density of foods is a key determinant of energy intake.

The human have a weak innate ability to recognize foods with a high energy density and to appropriately down regulate the bulk of food eaten in order to maintain energy balance. This induces called "Passive over consumption" composition.

- Shanthy A. Bowman and Bryan i.vinyard(2004) in their study entitled "Fast Food consumption of U.S Adults: Impact on energy and nutrient intakes and overweight status" suggested that the percentage of adults eating fast food increased from the early 1990's . Adults who wish to restrict their energy intakes should be cognizant of the high energy content of fast food. Adults who eat frequently at fast food places may wishes to control their energy intakes and improve their overall diet quality.

4. Research Methodology

The study on consumer buying behavior towards fast food has been limited to the respondents located in Erode district only. The sampling design used in the study was non-probability sampling. Convenience sampling techniques are used for

selecting the sample respondent. Field survey techniques was employed to collect primary data from the 200 selected respondents in Erode city and the tool used to collect primary data was structured questionnaire. It includes adequate and relevant questions to ensure the research objectives. The statistical tools were employed for the purposes of analyzing data are Chi-square test and weighted average ranking score analysis.

5. Demographic factors determining the level of awareness

Consumers awareness level with regard to fast food and services depends upon demographic factors are considered as independent variables and the level of awareness as dependent variables. In order to study the significance of relationship between the demographic factors of the respondents and level of awareness regarding customer attitude towards consumption of fast food, null hypothesis has been framed and tested by chi-square test and the inferences has been given below.

Table:1
Demographic Factors Determining the Level of Awareness

FACTOR	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	TABLE VALUE	CALCULATED VALUE	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE	HYPOTHESIS ACCEPTED / REJECTED
Gender	2	5.99	1.709	5%	Accepted
Age	6	12.6	2.272	5%	Accepted
Educational qualification	6	12.6	10.261	5%	Accepted
Occupational qualification	6	12.6	4.741	5%	Accepted
Nature of family	2	5.99	4.00	5%	Accepted
Monthly family income	6	12.6	14.249	5%	Rejected

In the above table 1, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant relationship between the selected demographic factors of the respondents and level of awareness regarding fast food items and services for all the factors except the factor monthly family income. It is evident from the table that the calculated value for the factor monthly family income is more than the table value at 5 percentage level of significance.

6. Reasons that influence the consumer to buy fast food

A comprehensive interview schedule is given to 200 sample customer in order to know their priority according to the fast food consumption. These sample customers are asked to rank the reasons such as taste, affordable price, home-delivery, varieties of food items, attractive advertisement, hygiene and safety, service and timely available. The ranking for reasons given by the respondents at the time of buying fast food is shown in table 2.

Table : 2
Reasons that Influence the Consumer To Buy Fast Food

Weighted Score Points(w)		8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total Score (Σwx)	Weighted Average Score`	Rank
Rank	Factors	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII			
Taste	x	41	50	40	16	12	13	14	14	1127	31.30	I
	wx	328	350	240	80	48	39	28	14			
Affordable Price	x	22	22	26	44	30	19	18	19	938	26.05	IV
	wx	176	154	156	220	120	57	36	19			
Home-Delivery	x	41	33	24	21	26	24	18	13	1033	28.69	II
	wx	328	231	144	105	104	72	36	13			
Varieties of food items	x	43	26	28	19	23	24	18	19	1088	28	III
	wx	344	182	168	95	92	72	36	19			
Attractive Advertisement	x	19	19	28	27	33	19	24	31	856	23.77	V
	wx	152	133	168	135	132	57	48	31			
Hygiene and Safety	x	11	12	11	35	39	42	28	22	773	21.47	VI
	wx	88	84	66	175	156	126	56	22			
Service	x	10	13	19	24	23	36	51	24	731	20.30	VIII
	wx	80	91	114	120	92	108	102	24			

Timely Available	x	13	25	24	14	14	23	29	58	734	20.38	VII
	wx	104	175	144	70	56	69	58	58			
Total		200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200			

Source: Primary Data

7. Interpretation

The above analysis shows the ranking factors influence the buying behavior of fast food. It could be observed that maximum of respondents is ranked "Taste" as the first with a weighted score of 31.30 points. The second rank was given to a "Home - Delivery" with a weighted score of 28.69 points. The third rank was given to a "Varieties of Food Items" with a weighted score of 28 points. The fourth rank was given to a "Affordable Price" with a weighted score of 26.05 points. The fifth rank was given to a "Attractive Advertisement" with a weighted score of 23.77 points. The sixth rank was given to a "Hygiene and Safety" with a weighted score of 21.47 points. The seventh rank was given to a "Timely available" with a weighted score of 20.38 points. The eighth rank was given to a "Service" with a weighted score of 20.30 points. It is conclude, that the maximum of the respondents are influenced by the factor "Taste" to buy fast food items.

8. Conclusion

As per the study it is analyzed that consumer in the today's market are more fascinated to western culture and the result of

the study shows that how for the respondents trends and their buying behavior towards fast food industry. The result analyzed from the chi-square test is that all the factors of null hypothesis are accepted except the monthly family income regards to fast food consumption. The result analyzed from the weighted average score conclude that, the maximum of the respondents are influenced by the factor "Taste". It is conclude from the study that the overview in trend of fast food buying behavior has an enormous effect towards consumers. According to the findings, the industry concentrates in promotional measures like attractive and frequent advertisement to capture the mind of the customer. The result also indicates that the young Indian consumer has passion for visiting fast food outlets for fun and change but homemade food is their first choice. Fast food restaurants pay attention towards to improve the nutritional value of food and regular menu items in the fast food restaurant. It will enhance the goodwill of the industry as well as a contributor of health to the society.

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