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## AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON CONSUMER AWARENESS TOWARDS FAST FOOD OUTLETS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PALAYAMKOTTAI AREA

Dr. P. Geetha <sup>1</sup>

A. Benazir <sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

Fast food has become one of the major aspects of the food industry. There are many Indian and multinational fast food outlets providing their services at the door steps of the consumers. The present study is undertaken in Palayamkottai to know how far these services have influenced the lifestyle of the consumer's their perceptions and attitude on the fast food outlets. The individuals in Palayamkottai have ample scope of income from various sources which increases the spending capacity of an individual. This spending capacity changes the way people live their life. One such way is dinning out with family and friends, whenever they want to relax. Apart from this, in a family if both the life partners are earning members, they find less time to cook at home. This makes them to go out for eating. Moreover, changing lifestyle and attitude of individuals make them to explore everything that's new in the market. When it comes to eating habit, dinning out restaurants and fast food outlets have been the recent trend in the food industry. So, the researcher is interested in knowing the impact of these fast food outlets in the lifestyle of individuals in Palayamkottai. This study is conducted among 142 respondents and convenience sampling is used for this study. It is concluded that fast food sectors should take much care in understanding the consumer taste and preferences, hygienic factors, price factor and other promotional activities to capture the customers permanently and thereby providing a helping developing the nation by contributing to the national income.

**Keywords:** Fast food outlets, satisfaction level, influencing factors, impact of age and income.

### Introduction

The augmented dual income system makes people to take things easily and induces them to splurge lavishly. One of such spending habits is consuming food outside. This lined way to emerging entrepreneurs to start food outlets in the form of hotels and restaurants that shaped a boom in the food industry. One such group in the food sector is the fast food. The fast food segment, a part of the food industry, is rising in a fast manner and plays an effective role in the entire industry by meeting the prospect of the consumers by providing satisfaction and also help in the growth of the economy.

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## Different types of Fast Food

There are many kinds of fast food and some types of fast food are presented below

- Kebab
- French fries
- Hamburger
- Chips
- Pizza
- Sandwich
- Chicken nuggets
- Onion rings
- Fish and chips
- Cheeseburger

## Advantages of Fast Food

- Saves Time

- Cost-effective

## Disadvantages OF Fast Food

- Non-nutritious
- Bigger is Better
- High in Cholesterol
- Reducing Quality Time
- Obesity
- Heart Disease

- Diabetes
- Peptic Ulcer by fast food
- Loss of Appetite
- Lack of Essential Nutrients
- Stress

## Review of Literature

V. Karthigiselvan and M. Senthilraj Kumar (2013) It is obvious from the study that majority of the consumers have visited different fast food at different time. So the fast food owners have to take steps to keep the customers and make them a permanent customer. Majority of the respondents came to know about the fast food through their associates. Hence, the fast food advertise with their quality and Taste are the two major factors considered by the respondents in selecting a fast food and so the fast food owners should not compromise on these aspects at any low cost.

Dipeolu Adewale et.al (2014) This study has been able to show that there is positive and significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. Thus, getting customer satisfaction depends to a large scope that the firm (in this case; fast food restaurant) maintains high service quality standards.

## Objectives of the Study

- To study the awareness of the fast food outlets among the individuals.
- To know the consumption pattern of consumers regarding fast food.
- To find out the factors influencing the buyer behavior to buy and consume fast food.
- To study the level of agreeability of the consumers regarding fast food items.

## Research Design

- The study is a descriptive survey study.
- Primary data is collected questionnaire. Well-structured questionnaire is distributed to 150 respondents and collected back only 144 questionnaires and among that 2 questionnaires were inadequate information. So, the sample size is restricted to 142.

- Secondary data is collected from existing reports, books, journals & magazines and websites.
- The sample size of the study was 142 respondents and they were selected from Palayamkottai according to the convenience.
- Statistical tools like percentage analysis, weighted score, Garrett ranking method and chi square were used.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of the respondents**

Variables	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	72	51
	Female	70	49
Age	Below 20	16	11
	20-30	61	44
	31-40	45	31
	Above 40	20	14
Educational Qualification	School level	36	25
	College level	95	68
	Others	11	7
Occupation	Student	54	38
	Government employee	25	18
	Private employee	34	24
	Professional	07	4
	Others	22	16
Marital Status	Married	72	49
	Unmarried	70	51
Monthly income	Below 30000	83	37
	₹ 30001-₹ 50000	51	57
	above 50000	08	6
Nature of family	Joint family	35	25
	Nuclear family	107	75
Size of the family	Below 3 members	18	13
	3-4 members	65	45
	4-6 members	32	22
	Above 6 members	27	20

Source: Primary Data.

From the above table 5.1 it is inferred that

- Majority (51% & 44%) of our respondents are male and between the age group of 20-30 years.
- Majority (68%) of the respondents have completed college level.
- Majority (38%) of our respondents are from students.
- Majority (51%) of the respondents are unmarried.
- Majority (57%) of the respondents have the monthly income of ₹ 30000 to ₹ 50000.

- Majority (75 %) of the respondents live in nuclear family and they have 3-4 members in their family.

**Table 2: Respondent's opinion about fast food outlets**

Variables	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Favorite fast food outlets	Domino's	17	13
	Aryaas	33	23
	Pizza cottage	20	14
	Marry brown	22	16
	Arasan	47	32
	Others	03	2
Frequency of visit	Weekly	22	16
	Monthly once	51	35
	Once in two months	23	17
	Occasionally	46	32
Visiting fast food outlets	With family members	70	49
	With friends	61	42
	With relatives	11	8
Food habit of respondents	Vegetarian	46	32
	Non-vegetarian	96	68
Amount spent on fast food	Below ₹ 500	52	37
	₹ 501-Rs1000	60	42
	₹ 1001- Rs1500	22	15
	Above ₹ 1500	08	6
Mode of payment	Cash	101	72
	Credit card	10	7
	Both	31	21
Period of consuming fast-food	Less than 1 year	34	24
	1year -2 years	50	35
	2years- 3 years	31	21
	Above 3 years	27	20
Favorite fast food	Pizza	36	25
	Burger	08	6
	Spring roll	16	11
	Sandwich	23	17
	Cutlets	22	16
	Chats	15	9
	Pasta	09	6
	Others	13	10

**Source: Data collected from Questionnaire**

From the above table 5.1 it is inferred that

- Majority of the respondents say that their favourite fast food outlet is Arasan.

- Majority of the respondents visit fast food outlet monthly once.
- Majority of the respondents are non-vegetarian and they spend ₹ 500-Rs1000.
- Majority of the respondents consuming fast food for a period of 1 - 2 years.
- Majority of the respondents say that their favourite fast food is pizza.

**Table 3: Satisfaction level of respondent's regarding fast food outlets**

Likert scaling method is used to analyze the satisfaction level of the respondents.

Statement	Highly satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neutral (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Highly dissatisfied (1)	Total score	Avg Score	Rank
Taste	72 (360)	54 (216)	16 (48)	0 (0)	0 (0)	624	124.8	I
Varieties of food items	68 (340)	44 (176)	18 (54)	12 (24)	0 (0)	594	118.8	II
Easily & readily available	32 (160)	48 (192)	46 (138)	16 (32)	0 (0)	522	104.4	III
Service rendered	20 (100)	48 (192)	50 (150)	16 (32)	8 (8)	482	96.4	IV
Cost	2 (10)	48 (192)	44 (132)	28 (56)	20 (20)	410	82	V

Source: Primary Data.

The above table 5.3 shows that majority of the respondents are fulfilled with taste of fast food followed by varieties of food items and easy and ready availability of food items in the fast food outlets.

**Table 4: Garrett Ranking for factors influencing the choice of outlet**

Factors	Score	Avg.score	Rank
Place of outlet	6959.42	49.01	IV
Varieties of food available	9127.76	64.28	II
Hygienic factor	4762.68	33.54	VIII
Taste	9758.24	68.72	I
Ease of transport	6520.64	45.92	V
Quick delivery	5330.68	37.54	VII
Quantity	6096.06	42.93	VI
Prestige/status issue	7677.94	54.07	III

Source: Primary Data.

Garrett ranking method is used to analyze the factors influencing the choice of particular fast food outlets by the respondents. The above table 5.4b shows the majority of the respondents are influenced by taste of food item in fast food outlets followed by varieties of food items and status symbol off fast food outlets.

### Hypothesis Testing

**H<sub>0</sub> 1: There is no association between age and frequency of visit by the respondents**



Age	Weekly	Monthly once	Once in two months	Occasionally	Total
Below 20 years	4	4	6	4	18
20-30 years	6	26	6	24	62
30-40 years	12	18	8	6	44
40 and above	0	2	6	10	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>142</b>

Source: Primary Data.

Particulars	Calculated value	Table value at 5%	df	H <sub>0</sub> accepted/ rejected
Chi- square	30.461	16.919	9	Rejected

Since the calculated value(30.461) is more than the table value (16.919)the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is association between age and frequency of visit by the respondents.

**H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no association between income and frequency of visit by the respondents.**

Income	Weekly	Monthly once	Once in two months	Occasionally	Total
Below 30000	6	32	12	32	82
₹ 30001- ₹ 50000	12	16	12	12	52
₹ 50001-Rs70000	4	2	0	2	8
Above ₹ 70000	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>142</b>

Source: Primary Data.

Particulars	Calculated value	Table value at 5%	df	H <sub>0</sub> accepted /rejected
Chi- square	18.36	16.919	9	Rejected

Since the calculated value (18.36) is more than the table value (16.919) the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is association between income and frequency of visit by the respondents.

### Suggestions

- The outlets must take much care on germ-free factors and cleanliness.
- They should have tidiness in their kitchen.
- The price of fast food items should be fixed at a reasonable rate with good quality and quantity.
- Fast food outlets should offer door delivery service.
- The fast food outlets should periodically take up a survey in order to find out the consumers changing taste, preference and know the troubles faced by them.
- The outlets should keep in mind the fact that the purchase decision of the consumers is mainly governed by quality, presentation, quality, cost and taste of the fast food.
- Special offers and coupons can be introduced for the consumers to purchase more.
- The outlets can select a suitable media to create responsiveness and attract consumer to approach their outlets.

Today, there is a general change in the lifestyle of the younger and the middle-aged group. The Indian style of management of money and

geared towards saving for his/her future is fast changing. The western idea of "spent today and save tomorrow" is becoming the border of the day. So, the tendency towards spending a desire for a change from there some life in employment/business, and inclination to taste variety of food items with good taste made people to adopt fast food culture which enable the fast food providers to develop deep roots in the country.

The fast food culture has really made the work easy for money in cooking their daily food. But it is not reasonable to consume food outside in fast food outlets regularly as it is considered to be costly, high in cholesterol content which is harmful to the health. There is also a general perception that taking food outside is not considered to be hygienic. In spite of these problems, the concept of fast food will continue to have its survival, because of its glamour and the money circulation in the particular sector. Hence, these fast food sectors should take much care in understanding the consumer taste and preferences, hygienic factors, price factor and other promotional activities to retain the customers everlastingly and thereby providing a serving the nation by contributing to the national income.

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