

A Study on Consumer Preference Towards Fast Food in Kanyakumari District

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Abstract—Fast food is a type of mass- produced food prepared quickly for sale, often from restaurants with a take-out service. The fast foods like Hamburgers, pizza, burgers, French fries and sandwiches. It is popular because it's convenient for people with busy lifestyle. The main objectives of study are to identify the factors motivate to purchase fast food, to analyse the consumer preference level of fast food in the study area and to find out the problem faced by the fast-food consumers. The study is descriptive and analytical. This study is carried out on the basis of both primary and secondary sources. The researcher has selected 240 samples from the consumers in Kanyakumari district. The researcher used method of convenient sampling technique. The main finding of the study is factors motivate to purchase fast food, "Taste" ranks first with the mean score of 86.61 and problem faced consumer while using fast food, "Lack of Nutrients" with the mean score of 85.64 contributed I- rank.

Index Terms—Fast Food, Consumer Preference and Purchase

I. INTRODUCTION:

Fast food manufacturing sector is one of the global fastest growing sectors in food industry. It plays a vital role in everyone's day-to-day life. The term fast food is use for the food which can be ready and served faster than any other meal, least preparation of time is considered for fast food, normally this term refers to food sale in cafes and stores with low time preparation and served to customers in form of packaged for take away. However, over a period of time, with a growth in the number of individual families, economic growth and increasing per capita income as well as globalization, fast food culture gained importance in India. India is going to be the record fast food consuming boss in the world. The fast food business in India has progressed with the changing lifestyles of the young people in Indian.

Young people in India prefer fast food such as Pizza, Berger, Sandwich, Pastries more preferably bakery items. Such an option of young generation is not determined by nutritional value of such food items. It depends purely on the current food market.

The Indian fast-food market has been witnessing fast growth on the backbone of positive developments and presence of huge investments of people. In 2023, the global fast-food market grew by 8.4 per cent and reached a value of 620 billion and a volume of 167.24 billion dealings. In India alone the fast-food sector is growing by 42 per cent in a year 2023. The trend is fundamentally changing the way people eat in India. Fast food concepts developed rapidly in last few years in Tamil Nadu. Food quality plays a vital role in shaping consumer preferences, especially in the context of fast food. Fast food has become an integral part of urban people, offering convenience and quick meals for individuals with busy lifestyles in Kanyakumari district.

II. FAST FOOD:

Fast foods are characterized as quick, easily accessible and cheap alternatives to home-cooked meals, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH). They also tend to be high in saturated fat, sugar, salt and calories.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

In recent years, the fast-food industry has experienced important growth due to changes in consumer lifestyles, increasing urbanization and the demand for quick and affordable meals. Fast food chains have become a key part of modern food culture, offering convenience and a wide range of

menu options. However, with the growing competition in the industry, customer satisfaction has become a key factor in determining the success and sustainability of fast-food businesses. Understanding what drives customer satisfaction is vital for companies to improve service quality, customer retention and brand loyalty. Despite the popularity of fast food, customers often express mixed feelings about their experiences. Issues such as food quality, hygiene, waiting time, staff behaviour, pricing, and restaurant ambiance can greatly influence satisfaction levels. Some customers may prioritize speed and affordability, while others may focus on taste, healthiness, or customer service. Without clear insights into these preferences and pain points, fast food outlets may struggle to meet customer expectations consistently. This study seeks to explore the main factors that affect customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants and how these factors vary among different customer groups.

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

Fast food products play a vital role in every human in the day – to – day life. Fast food product is an emerging concept in the study area. Therefore, the researcher tries to find out the factors influencing the buying behaviour of the respondents towards fast food products. The present study gives an insight into the preference level of the respondents.

V. OBJECTIVES:

Following are the objectives of the study are,

1. To study the demographic profile of the fast-food consumers in the study area.
2. To identify the factors, motivate to purchase fast food.
3. To study reasons for consumer taking fast food in the study area.

4. To analyse the consumer preference level of fast food in the study area.
5. To find out the problem faced by the fast-food consumers.

VI. METHODOLOGY:

The study is descriptive and analytical. It is descriptive in the sense it exists at present and it includes facts and findings. It is analytical in the sense it involves analysis of the collected data and information. This study is carried out on the basis of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected by means of systematically prepared Questionnaire from consumers towards fast food in Kanyakumari district. In order to carryout statistical enquires an interview schedule was prepared comprising of age, gender, educational qualification, information about the level of satisfaction. Secondary data has been collected from various Books, Journals, Magazines, Working Papers, Reports, Thesis and Internet. The researcher has selected 240 samples from the consumers in Kanyakumari district. The researcher used method of convenient sampling technique. Convenient sampling comes under non-probability sampling method, which means, it does not provide equal opportunity to all the consumers in Kanyakumari district. The tools used for the study are Percentage methods, Likert's 5 Point Scaling Technique and Garret's Ranking Technique

VII. DATA ANALYSIS:

7.1 Socio – Economic Conditions of Respondents:

Socio-economic variables are most crucial factors which decide the usage of fast-food items. The socio-economic factors like age, gender, education, marital status, occupation and family income of the selected fast-food consumers are analysed and presented in the table.1

Table.1. Socio – Economic Background of the Selected Fast-Food Consumers

Factors	Respondents		Factors	Respondents	
Age	Nos.	%	Family Income	Nos.	%
Below 20	56	23.33	Below 25,000	72	30.00
21 to 30	128	53.34	25,001– 50,000	112	46.67
31 to 40	32	13.33	50,001– 10,0000	36	15.00
Above 40	24	10.00	Above 1,00,000	20	8.33
Gender	Nos.	%	Marital Status	Nos.	%

Male	196	81.67	Married	144	60.00
Female	44	18.33	Unmarried	96	40.00
Education	Nos.	%	Occupations	Nos.	%
Under graduates	128	53.33	Private Employee	136	56.67
Post Graduates	64	26.67	Government Employee	16	6.67
Others	48	20.00	Others	88	36.66

Source: Primary data

Table.1 reveals that 53.33 per cent (128) of the respondents belong to the age group below 21 to 30 and 10 per cent (24) of the respondents belong to the age group above 40. It is inferred that respondents who belong to age group below 21 to 30 are using fast food much. The table further clear that 81.67 per cent (196) of the respondents are male and 18.33 per cent (44) of the respondents are female. Therefore, it is understood that male take more fast-food items than female, especially in purchasing the fast-food items. The table also reveals that 53.33 per cent (128) of the respondents have completed as Under Graduates, 26.67 per cent (64) of the respondents have completed as post graduates and the remaining 20 per cent (48) respondents are having other qualifications. The above table reveals that that 30 per cent (72) of the respondents belong to the income group of below Rs.25,000 while 46.67 per cent (112) of the respondents are income group between Rs.25,001 to Rs.50,000, 15 per cent (36) of them are income group between Rs.50,001 to Rs.100,000 and the remaining 8.33 per cent (20) respondents belong to the income group of above Rs.1,00,000. The table further shows that 60 per cent (144) of the respondents are married and 40 per cent (96) of the respondents are unmarried. The above table shows that 56.67 per cent (136) of the respondents are private employees, 16 per cent (6.67) of the respondents are Government employees. Hence, it is indicated that fast food attracts the private employees than the Government employees and the respondents come under other categories such as students, Businessmen, housewives etc.

7.2 Factors Motivate to Purchase Fast Food:

There are many factors motivate the consumers to purchase fast-foods the ranks assigned by the consumers are converted into Garrett mean score and presented in the following table.2

Table.7.2 Factors Motivate to Purchase Fast Food

Sl. No	Factors	Mean. Score	Rank
1.	Quality	71.64	IV
2.	Hygiene	60.26	VII
3.	Brand Reputation	81.11	II
4.	Taste	86.61	I
5.	Ambience	77.29	III
6.	Service	65.15	VI
7.	Add on Facilities	54.11	VIII
8.	Variety in Menu Offering	68.16	V

Source: Computed data

The table.2 reveals that factors motivate to purchase fast food, “Taste” ranks first with the mean score of 86.61 whereas the second rank goes to “Brand Reputation” with the mean score of 81.11. “Ambience” with mean score of 77.29 contributed third rank, “Quality” with men score of 71.67 contributed fourth rank, “Variety in Menu Offering” with men score of 68.16 contributed fifth, “Service” with men score of 65.15 contributed sixth rank and “Hygiene” with men score of 60.26 contributed seventh rank. The last rank is given to “Add on Facilities” with the mean score of 54.11 in the factors motivate to purchase fast-foods.

7.3 Reason for Taking Fast Food:

Lot of factors may influence the respondents to take fast food products. The opinion of the respondents regarding the reasons are analysed is given in the following table.3

Table.3. Reason for taking Fast Food

Sl. No	Reason	SA	Ag	Ne	SDA	DA	Total	Rank
1.	Taste	92 (460)	48 (192)	72 (216)	24 (48)	4 (4)	920	I
2.	Save Time	48 (240)	80 (320)	64 (192)	28 (56)	20 (20)	828	III
3.	Quality of Food	80 (400)	64 (256)	44 (132)	40 (80)	12 (12)	880	II
4.	Easy Availability	44 (220)	84 (336)	56 (168)	24 (48)	32 (32)	804	VI
5.	Easy Preparation	72 (360)	68 (272)	32 (96)	20 (40)	48 (48)	816	V
6.	Reasonable Price	56 (280)	44 (176)	40 (120)	52 (104)	48 (48)	728	VII
7.	Healthy	28 (140)	48 (192)	48 (144)	76 (152)	40 (40)	668	VIII
8.	Convenient Food	72 (360)	44 (176)	60 (180)	40 (80)	24 (24)	820	IV

Source: Computed data

Note: SA- Strongly Agree, Ag- Agree, Ne- Neutral, SDA- Strongly Disagree, DA- Disagree

The table.3 depicts that the first rank is given to "Taste" with the total score of 920. The second and third is given to "Quality of Food" and "Save Time" with the total of 880 and 828 in the reason for purchasing fast food by the respondents. "Convenient Food" with total score of 820 contributed fourth rank, "Easy Preparation" with total score of 816 contributed fifth rank, "Easy Availability" with the total score of 804 contributed sixth rank, "Reasonable Price" with the total score of 728 contributed seventh rank and "Healthy" with the total score of 668 contributed last rank.

7.4 Level of Satisfaction Towards Fast Food:

Satisfaction differs from one person to another person and goods to goods. Following table represents the satisfaction level of the respondents towards Fast Food are presented in table.4

Table.4. Level of Satisfaction towards Fast Food

Sl. No	Factors	Weighted Average Score	Rank
1	Cleanliness	4.79	I
2	Quality	3.62	VII
3	Taste	3.97	V
4	Easy to Prepare	4.01	IV
5	Varieties of Food	3.12	IX
6	Reasonable Price	2.91	X
7	Healthy	3.43	VIII
8	Time Saving	4.11	III
9	Convenient Food	4.60	II
10	Less Expensive	3.81	VI

Source: Computed data

The table.4 reveals that level of satisfaction towards consumer in fast food, "Cleanliness" with the weighted average score of 4.79 contributed I- rank, "Convenient Food" with the weighted average score of

4.60 contributed II-rank, "Time Saving" with the weighted average score of 4.11 contributed III-rank, "Easy to Prepare" with the weighted average score of 4.01 contributed IV-rank, "Taste" with the weighted average score of 3.97 contributed V-rank, "Less Expensive" with the weighted average score 3.81 contributed VI-rank, "Quality" with the weighted average score 3.62 contributed VII-rank, "Healthy" with the weighted average score 3.43 contributed VIII-rank, "Varieties of Food" with the weighted average score 3.12 contributed IX-rank and "Reasonable Price" with the weighted average score of 2.91 contributed X-rank in the level of satisfaction towards the consumers while using fast-foods.

7.5 Problems Faced While Using Fast Food:

In the competitive world, everything is complicated and risky. Even though departmental store gives a higher level of convenience the consumer faces many difficulties and problems and ultimately makes the choice of purchasing the products.

Table.5. Problems Faced while Using Fast Food

Sl. No	Particulars	Garrett Mean Score	Rank
1	Lack of Nutrients	85.64	I
2	Lack of Freshness	79.03	III
3	More Expensive	81.42	II
4	Unhealthy	46.70	VII
5	Inferior Quality	51.39	VI
6	Health Issues	65.97	V
7	Raw Nature Food	72.66	IV

Source: Computed data

The table.5 reveals that problem faced consumer while using fast food, "Lack of Nutrients" with the mean score of 85.64 contributed I- rank, "More Expensive" with the mean score of 81.42 contributed

II – rank, Lack of Freshness” with the mean score of 79.03 contributed III – rank, “Raw Nature Food” with the mean score of 72.66 contributed IV – rank, “Health Issues” with the mean score of 65.97 contributed V-rank, “Inferior Quality” with the mean score 51.39 contributed VI-rank and “Unhealthy” with the mean score of 46.70 contributed VII-rank in the problems faces by the consumers while using fast-foods.

VIII. FINDINGS:

- ❖ The study reveals that 53.33 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group below 21 to 30.
- ❖ 81.67 per cent of the respondents are male and 60 per cent of them are married.
- ❖ 53.33 per cent (128) of the respondents have completed as Under Graduates.
- ❖ 46.67 per cent of the respondents are income group between Rs.25,001 to Rs.50,000.
- ❖ 56.67 per cent of the respondents are private employees.
- ❖ The study reveals that factors motivate to purchase fast food, “Taste” ranks first with the mean score of 86.61 whereas the second rank goes to “Brand Reputation” with the mean score of 81.11. The last rank is given to “Add on Facilities” with the mean score of 54.11 in the factors motivate to purchase fast-foods.
- ❖ The study shows that the reason for purchasing fast food by the respondents the first rank is given to "Taste" with the total score of 920. The second and third is given to "Quality of Food" and "Save Time" with the total of 880 and 828 in the reason for purchasing fast food by the respondents.
- ❖ The study shows that level of satisfaction towards the consumer while using in fast food, “Cleanliness” with the weighted average score of 4.79 contributed I- rank, " Convenient Food” with the weighted average score of 4.60 contributed II–rank and “Reasonable Price” with the weighted average score of 2.91 contributed X-rank
- ❖ The study reveals that problem faced consumer while using fast food, “Lack of Nutrients” with the mean score of 85.64 contributed I- rank, "More Expensive” with the mean score of 81.42 contributed II – rank and “Unhealthy” with the mean score of 46.70 contributed VII-rank in the

problems faces by the consumers while using fast-foods.

IX. SUGGESTIONS:

1. The main reason for not preferring particular item by the respondents was due to the high price. So, the marketer has to take necessary steps to reduction the price of Fast-food products.
2. Hotels or Street food can take initiative to provide natural based food products.
3. More promotional activities should be carried upon to create awareness about fast food.
4. Customers feel that the manufacturers are not providing health fast food items. So, the manufacturers should concentrate to provide healthy products because now the respondents are very health conscious.
5. To improve awareness about fast food products manufacturers, want to develop new marketing strategy.
6. The taste and quality should be maintained.

X. CONCLUSION:

This study on consumer preference towards fast foods has provided valuable insights into the factors that influence consumer choices, satisfaction levels and the challenges faced by consumers in this sector. The findings show that taste, convenience, affordability and variety are the key drivers behind the growing preference for fast food. Consumers, especially younger demographics are drawn to the ease and speed of access that fast food outlets offer in their busy lifestyles.

The study further reveals that while a significant number of consumers are generally satisfied with fast food services, there are noticeable concerns regarding health impacts, hygiene and the quality of ingredients used. Despite these concerns, the demand remains high due to the strong appeal of flavour, promotional offers and widespread availability. The study concluded that, consumer preference for fast foods is a complex interplay of convenience, satisfaction and perceived value. While fast food consumption continues to rise, the industry must remain mindful of evolving consumer expectations and the growing awareness around health and nutrition. Continuous improvement in service quality, menu diversity and

health-conscious options will be crucial for sustaining growth and meeting consumer demands in the future.

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