
A Study on Consumer Preference towards Fast Food in Tiruchirappalli City, Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Consumer preference towards fast food is gradually growing globally. The implementation of global fast food companies in developing countries creates huge impact. The study on consumer behavioral activities towards fast food will help to find out the reasons and causes of having fast food. The study is conducted in Tiruchirappalli city (district) which is located in the centre of Tamil Nadu state. Tiruchirappalli is listed as one of the fastest growing city in Tamil Nadu, India. The results for various categories which impacts fast food are found in the study. The categories are such as age, marital status, gender, occupation, income, occasions, time and demand. The data's for the categories are collected and based on that the study has been conducted.

Keywords: Implementation, impact, preferences, categories, fast food.

Introduction

The 21st century has been a rapid development in all lifestyles. One among such development is fast food. Fast food is known as, comfort food and convenience food. Fashion has started to rule all the fields. It has not left the world of food as well. Food has become a fashionable thing to many of us in the name of fast food. The attraction towards fast foods has captured both the young and old. This is a recent trend, which has its origin in United States. The term "fast food" was familiar in a dictionary by Merriam Webster in 1951. Food is not an expectation from it. Almost all human beings work and earn for food, but they do not have much time to eat food with a peaceful mind. In a hurry, people started to go for fast food. In this fast moving mechanical world, they have been taken away to the world fast food even for the daily food. Nowadays, fast food has become important part of the people's life. Fast food centers have come in all the nook and corners of cities.

Fast Food - Definition

Food that can be prepared and served readily or prepared for ready availability use of consumption and with little importance is given to quality or significance (Merriam Webster Dictionary).

Objectives of the study

1. The objective of this study is to analyse the socio economic conditions of fast food consumers in Tiruchirappalli city.
2. Aims to study the consumer preference of fast food in Tiruchirappalli city

Scope and methodology of the study

The study entitled consumer preference towards fast food was undertaken in Tiruchirappalli city. The data have been collected by scheduled interview and questionnaire method. School, college students, middle age and old age consumers from Trichy city, frequently visiting the fast food restaurants, were given questionnaire and interviewed personally. The sample size is 60 belonging to the ages 15 and above.

Review of Related Literature

Prabhavathi et al (2014) investigated the consumer preference towards fast food in young adults. The fast food spending pattern was studied from a group in Hyderabad and Coimbatore. Data was collected from 100 respondents. The analysis of the responses from the respondents revealed that they consume ready food for taste, convenience, alternative food and to share & relax time with friends. The study concluded that men and women consume different types of fast food according to the money they are ready to spend on fast food. The study found that majority of the consumers' expenditure on fast food consumption was around Rs.1430/- per month.

Minal Kashyap et al (2013) explained the fast food consumers' buying habits in Nagpur city. A sample size of 16 females and 14 males aged between 18 to 32 years of age was taken for the study. The study discovered that consumers in today's are more attracted towards western culture and its diet habits. Besides an increase in the conveniences offered by fast food services have driven the expansion of the fast food industry. The regularity of visiting the fast food outlets depended on the ages of the consumers as well as their income based spending habits. Nagpur is a city having very few places for hanging out and parties have become a status symbol in today's dynamic culture. Young adults having access to regular pocket money increasingly consume fast food which extensively boosts the market assessment of fast food commerce.

Al-Dtaibi Hala Hazam,(2015) examined the pattern of fast food consumption among university students in Saudi Arabia to determine the association between fast food consumption and body weight status. Sample size of 276 was collected from female students in the aging between 18 to 25 years. This study found that 130 respondents ate fast food two or more times

per week the main motive for the utilization were lack of food preparation skills. This result showed that obesity and lower weight were both radically related with regularity of fast food consumption two or more times per week.

Anita Goyal and N.P. Singh, (2007) analysed the consumer awareness about fast food in India. A sample size of 171 college students under different streams such as arts and science and engineering were collected who were aging between 20 to 27 years. Majority of the consumers preferred time for visiting fast food outlet were supper times and lunch times. The study found that most of respondents consumed fast food one to two times in a week or in a month. From 171 respondents 92.8 percent respondents were in between 21 to 25 years age. The result showed the six variables were more significant in determining consumer perception namely range of food, taste and quality of food, price of the recipe, service speed, location of the outlet, ambience and hygiene.

Analysis on the responses of the consumers

Table No: 1
Analyses Based on the Genders of the consumers

S.No	Gender	Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	36	60
2	Female	24	40
	Total	60	100

Source: Primary data

From the table No. 1 shows that the majority of the respondents 60 percent preferred the fast food are male and remaining 40 percent of the respondents are female. Therefore, male respondents more when compared to female. It is because of the socio cultural changes.

Classification of Respondents Based on their Age

Table No: 2

S.No	Age	Respondents	Percentage
1	15 and above	27	45
2	21 and above	19	32
3	31 and above	9	15
4	41 and above	5	8
	Total	60	100

Source: Primary data

From the table No. 2 shows that the majority of the respondents i.e 45 percent who consume fast food are from 15 to 20 years. 32 percent of the respondents belong to 21 to 30

years, 15 percent of the respondents belong to 31 to 40 years and remaining 8 percent belong to 41 and above age. This table thus shows all respondents irrespective of age desire that fast food.

Analysis on Respondents Marital Status

Table No: 3

S.No	Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Married	22	37
2	Unmarried	38	63
3	Total	60	100

Source : Primary data

This table depicts that 63 percent of the respondents are unmarried and remaining 37 percent respondents were married. This table clearly tells us that unmarried respondents are more attracted to fast food than married respondents are.

Analysis on Respondents Occupation

Table No: 4

S.No	Occupations	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Employed		
	Government	12	20
	Self employed	10	16
	Daily wages earners	4	7
2	Dependents		
	School student	16	27
	College students	18	30
	Total	60	100

Source : Primary data

The table illustrates that 7 percent of the respondents are daily wage earners, 16 percent of the respondents are self-employed, 20 percent of the respondents are government employee, 27 percent respondents are school students and 30 percents respondents are college students. The table shows that the percentage of fast food consumers is much higher among school and college students. Employed or self-employed respondents desire for fast food is comparatively low.

Classification of the respondents on the basis of their income (Pocket money)

Table No: 5

S.No	Income	Frequency	Percentage
1	Below Rs. 5000	23	38.3
2	Rs. 5000 to 15000	7	11.6
3	Rs. 15001 to 30000	12	20.0

4	Rs. 30001 and above	18	30.0
	Total	60	100.0

Source: Compiled primary data

The table gives the monthly earning capacity of the respondents. The earning capacity of the fast food consumers ranges up to Rs.30001. 30.0 percent of the sample respondents earn up to Rs 30,001 and above per month. Nearly 20.0 percent of the sample respondent earn from Rs. 15,001 to 30,000, 11.6 percent of the respondents earn from Rs.5,000 to 15,000 and below. 38.3 percent of the sample respondents earn from Rs.5,000 and below. From this table it is clear that those who are working in government, private, self employed earn high income.

Classification of respondents based on the amount spent on fast food in a month

Table No: 6

S.No	Spending amount	Frequency	Percentage
1	Rs. 1000 – 1500	23	38.3
2	Rs. 1501 to 2000	7	11.6
3	Rs. 2001 to 2500	12	20.0
4	Rs. 2501 and above	18	30.0
	Total	60	100.0

Source : Primary data

The table reveals that 38.3 percent of the consumers spent on fast food range from Rs.1000-1500 every month whereas, 20.0 percent of the respondents spent on fast food range between Rs. 2001-2500 every month. About 11.6 percent spent Rs. 1501- 2000 per month on eating outside and 30.0 percent of the respondents spent Rs. 2501 and above per month. On an average, the sample respondents spent Rs. 1530 per month towards fast food. Hence, it is evident that sample respondents spend sizeable amount of their income for eating outside due to convenient lifestyle as it saves their time.

Reasons for demand of fast food

Table No: 7

S.No	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Taste	18	30
2	Quality /Quantity	13	22
3	Variety of menu	6	10
4	Eating out with friends/ change	21	35
5	Family situation (both working unable to cook at home)	5	8
6	Restaurant environment /combo offers /	4	7

	credit system		
	Total	60	100

Source : Primary data

In the above table, 35 percent of the respondents prefer to buy fast food for going out with friends. 30 percent respondents prefer fast food for its taste, 22 percent respondents prefer fast food for quality and quantity. 8 percent respondents prefer fast food for family situations. 10 percent respondents prefer fast food for variety of menu and rest of the 7 percent respondents prefer fast food for environment, combo offers, and credit system. From this data, it can be understood that most of the respondents preferred fast food in order to eat out with friends and the taste factor.

Classification on the basis of Respondents visit of fast food restaurants

Table No: 8

S.No	Consumed fast food	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Weekly twice times	23	38
2	Weekly once	19	32
3	Monthly once	13	22
4	Occasionally	5	8
	Total	382	100.0

Source: Primary data

It is observed from the above Table No. 8 shows that 38 percent respondents visit for the fast food restaurants weekly twice, 32 percent respondents go to the fast food restaurants weekly once, 22 percent respondents visit to the fast food monthly once and rest of the 8 percent respondents go to the fast food restaurants occasionally. This result indicates that the young age consumers have passion for visiting fast food outlets for fun and change. Therefore, from the table it can be understood that majority of the respondents visit fast food restaurants weekly three time comparatively to monthly once.

Classification on the basis of Respondents visit of fast food restaurants with favourite time

Table No: 9

S.No	Favourite time	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Afternoon	13	22
2	Evening	19	31
3	Night	28	47
	Total	60	100

Source: Complified primary data

It could be seen from the table No. 9, among the 60 respondents, 47 percent of the sample respondents viewed that night is their favourite time to eat fast food, 22 percent respondents prefer for evening time and 22 percent of the sample respondents desire for afternoon time because they are young working people and college going students do not take lunch because they have restaurants nearby college and office. Hence, it is identified that fast food is more wanted in night times and hence the fast food restaurants may set up or modify new fast food stuff to go well with for these timings.

Opinion about regular consumption of fast food

Table No: 10

S.No	Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	4	7
2	Agree	10	17
3	Neutral	11	18
4	Strongly disagree	15	25
5	Disagree	20	33
	Total	60	100

Source : Primary data

The above Table No. 10 shows that 7 percent of the respondents strongly agreed with the opinion of consuming fast food regularly, 17 percent of the respondents agreed by the opinion that they consume frequently, 18 percent of the respondents neutral by the opinion of takes regularly, 25 percent respondents strongly disagreed with the opinion regards consuming fast food regularly, 33 percent respondents disagreed among the opinion of consuming fast food frequently. From this table it can be seen that majority of the respondents disagreed with the regular consumption of fast food which indicates their awareness about the dangers of consuming fast food.

Findings

- In the study, of the total sample respondents' male consumers are consuming more fast food than female consumers. It is because of the working ratio of men and women.
- Among the consumers, youngsters and unmarried persons are high in number. It is because of the place where, they are staying (away from home) and the situation they facing. People are running like their machines so they don't have time for cooking.
- One of the reasons for consuming fast food depends upon their occupation. The occupation of their family members confronts them in a social status where they can eat what they want
- 38 percent of the fast food consumers are having fast food weekly twice especially college students and working young people.

- Thus, it is identified that fast food is consumed more in the night time. Most of the young working men and college students dining out at restaurants becomes a trend and carrying food parcels are considered as old style.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The fast food restaurant in India has gone forward with the shifting way of life of the young Indian inhabitants. India has achieved quick growth in fast food restaurant business due to rising disposable income and changing purchaser behaviour. Supplementary motive include exposure to western cuisine, the growing number of nuclear family units and development in the number of working women, which are also having a major impact the 'eating out' trends and growth of fast food industry in the country. Most of the fast foods are rich in fats and poor in nutrients. Excess consumption of fast food would lead to a wide variety of health disorders. It is highly necessary to avoid fast foods to live a healthy life. Well balance nutritious diet will cut down the risk of obesity disorders and improve physical health. Every consumer has to know the impact of fast food before consuming. Government can also heaven safety awareness among the fast food consumers. The researcher desires to understand fast food commerce and bring out the effects of this industry on society.

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