

A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMERS' FAST FOOD BEHAVIOUR: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PIZZA HUT IN THE JAFFNA PENINSULA, SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

In modern days, where life is at a fast pace with the time precious to every person, "Fast Foods" play an essential role in everyone's day to day life. Recently, the role of culture became important in conducting marketing and other business activities due to the advanced communication and transportation facilities which reduce the barriers between cultures as well as national boundaries. The study population represented by every customer located in Jaffna peninsula and representative sample was selected including school children to foreigners and entrepreneurs those who have consumed pizza. 124 members out of 150 responded to the researcher, where they were contributed to examine nine variables was Location, Atmosphere, Sales person's behaviour, Awareness, Price, Quality, Image, Promotion, Fast services with demographic variables and the required data was collected through a structured questionnaire. Data were analysed through descriptive techniques where percentages, mean, standard deviation and t-test were facilitated. At the end of the researcher identified that all factors were significant towards consumer buying behaviour but related to the selected region, customers were not satisfactory awareness about various brands of pizza, the culture of pizza. Location was confused about parking and low freedom even with an atmosphere. Finally, the researcher suggested to change the location of pizza outlets and commented on increasing awareness of consumers related to pizza culture.

Keywords: consumer behaviour, awareness, price, quality, image.

1. INTRODUCTION

The fast foods play has been growing up, the main factor which stay behind the success in Jaffna consumer choice are related with the demographic factors and the marketing factors. One of the driving forces behind the growth of the quick service restaurant in Jaffna is the change in consumer's preference. So, studying demographic consumer variables such as, age, gender and income can help to understand consumer behaviour in the fast food restaurant industry and thereby help to gain a better understanding of consumers by learning the effects of the consumers' perceptions.

The fast food market all over the world is made up of different companies offering closely related products and services but under different brand names. In Jaffna district majority of food consumption is still at home than outplace. Nevertheless out of home food consumption is increasing due to several consideration such as increasing in urbanization, breaking up of the traditional joint family system, desire for quality, time which translates into an increased need for convenience, increasing number of working women, changing lifestyle and increasing level of affluence in the middle income group had brought about changes in food habits.

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1.2 statement of the problem

Related to the identification of research problem, researcher contributed relevant literature on fast food and empirical evidence. In relation to the researcher experience with fast food at pizza's initiated period in Jaffna, who was unable to reserve even a table in pizza hut for his friends as the place was overcrowded by customers even week days. But today the place rarely crowded by customers even weekends or some holidays.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research was carried out with following objectives

- To study consumer behaviour of fast food restaurants in Jaffna.
- To study what extent of consumer awareness towards Pizza fast food Product.
- To investigate Jaffna consumer attitude toward fast food service restaurant on Jaffna Consumer choice.
- To identify the factors influencing on consumer buying behaviour of Pizza fast food product in Jaffna.

1.4 Research Question

On the premises of the stated objectives, this research attempts to answer the following question:

- What are the factors that influence the fast food consumption behaviours of customers of Jaffna districts?
- What extent of consumer awareness towards Pizza fast food Product?

1.5 Literature Review

To support this research, this section reviews the concepts or theories and related research as following:

Consumer behaviour such as consumers' cognition, affection and behavioural reactions in the fast food industry is one of the interesting topics in today's cutthroat competitive marketing arena (Brüggen, Foubert and Gremler, 2011). Despite the pervasiveness of customer satisfaction modelling, research to date does not provide a sufficient understanding of consumer responses to fast food makeovers.

Nezakati, Kuan and Asghari (2011) reveal that they found a growing demand for fast food in Malaysia. The study investigated the factors that can influence the customer loyalty towards the fast food outlets. The findings of the study indicate that product quality, customer satisfaction and brand trust are the most important factors to statistically signify the customer loyalty.

Farhana and Islam (2011) explore the customer behaviour towards fast food restaurants in Bangladesh. The results of the study reveal that quality of foods, conveniences, income, age and overall services provided to the customers are significant to influence the customer perception towards fast food restaurants. The study also reviews the customer loyalty which has an important relationship with customer services. Driving up the sales volume is one of the short term goals of all marketers. In order to attain this objective, marketers follow different strategies.

A research, done by de Rezende and de Avelar (2012) in the case of Brazil, reports that variety of foods, convenience, younger age, higher income and higher education are observed to be significant to influence the habit of consuming fast food. The study compares its result with the case of England and it finds similar outcome that consumption of fast food is growing there.

Mason, Jones, Benefited and Walton (2013) investigated the consumer perception of fast food restaurants in America incorporating several explanatory variables such as food price, service speed, location of restaurant, quality of food, cleanliness, menu variety, quantity of food, ease of getting in and out and atmosphere. The results suggest that consumers are highly price sensitive. Besides, they put high importance on service speed, location of the outlets, food quality and clean environment of the restaurants. Food habits of the people of a community are heavily influenced by their custom and tradition.

1.6 Hypothesis

Based on the literature review, this research formulated the following hypotheses

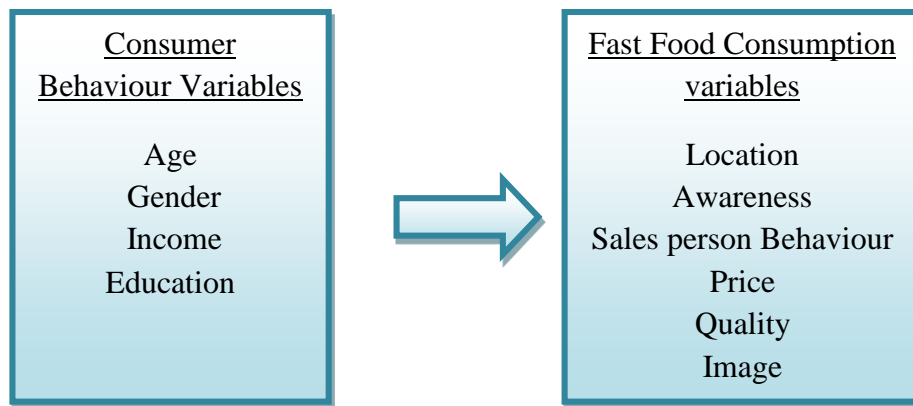
H1: There is high level of consumer awareness about pizza fast food in Jaffna Peninsula.

H2: Location, Awareness,, Price, Quality and Image are significantly impact on consumer fast food buying behaviour.

1.7 Conceptualization

Based on the literature review and problem statement of the study the following conceptual framework has been constructed to show the relationship between Consumer Buying Behaviour and Fast food Consumption. This conceptual framework clearly shows the pattern of relationship between two variables. In this study selected Age, Gender, Income and Education as Independent variables and Pizza Awareness, Price, Quality, Image, Cleanness and Promotion as Dependent Variables.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Developed by Researcher

1.8 Operationalization

Table 1: Operationalization

Variables	Concept	Indicators	Measurement
Consumer Behaviour Variables	Consumer Behaviour	Age Gender Income Education	Questionnaire
Fast Food Consumption variables	PIZZA Consumption	Location Awareness Sales person behaviour Price Quality Image Promotion	Questionnaire

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data collected for this study. Questionnaire was used to collect primary data. Questionnaire has been designed with five points likert scaling system. Primary data has been collected through structured questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher individually. Each completed questionnaire was checked immediately, and was entered for data analysis. In this study researcher expected to quantify the preference for fast foods products on demographic, situational, lifestyle, and cognitive factors. In this study selected 120 respondents who have the tendency of consume fast food regularly or occasionally. The sample consisted of 90 males and 30 females. The study may enriches being with dependent and independent variables where suitable statistical tools are to be facilitated to identify and define the relationship among variables.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic profile of the sample

In relation to the study the respondent rate was 85% (102 respondents from 120) on supported supervision of researcher. According to the table 4, 90 heads in sample represented Male, Remaining was represented by Female. It says that fast food related dominance may retain on male than female based to the sample. The demographic characteristics of the sample taken for the study have been summarized in table 2

Table 2: Demographic profile of the sample

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	90	75
	Female	30	25
	Total	120	100
Occupation	Students(School/ University)	50	42
	Entrepreneurs	20	17
	Professionals	40	33
	Foreigners	10	08
	Total	120	100

Source: Research Data

3.2 Behaviour towards Fast Food

It is found from the study (table: 3) that average time of taking fast food in a week is 2.9928 with a std. deviation of 1.65812 which shows that people positive attitude towards fast food industry.

Table 3: Frequency of eating fast food

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
120	.00	10.00	2.9928	1.65812

Source: Research Data

3.3 Income and Age sample composition

Table 5: Income and Age sample composition

Variables	sample composition				Total
	Students(School/ University)	Entrepre neurs	Professio nals	Foreigners	
Income Level					
500- 10000	50	0	0	0	50
Percentage	42%	0%	0%	0%	42%
10000-30000	0	15	15	0	30
Percentage	0%	12.5%	12.5%	0%	25%
30000+	0	5	25	10	40
Percentage	0%	4%	21%	8%	33%
Age					
19- 29 Years	50	0	0	0	50
Percentage	42%	0%	0%	0%	42%
29-39 Years	0	9	25	5	39
Percentage	0%	7.5%	21%	4%	32.5 %
Above 39 Years	0	11	15	5	31
Percentage	0%	9%	12.5%	4%	25.5 %

Source: Research Data

In table 5 shows income distribution among the sample 50 respondents were at below income level that was 500- 10000 monthly income while 30 represented middle income level that was 10000-30000 monthly income and 40 consumers represented higher income level that was more than 30000 monthly incomes. As a percentage it was 42%, 25%, 33% respectively. This implies that Pizza is highly attracted by school and University students than other consumers.

3.4 Mean, Standard Deviation & T value for variables

Table 6: Mean, Standard Deviation & T value for variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig
Brand awareness	3.02	1.175	27.343	.000
Pizza awareness	4.75	0.434	104.106	.000
Aware of ingredient	2.85	1.075	27.434	.000
Value of price	2.87	1.087	29.943	.000
Location	2.43	1.056	27.456	.000

Parking facility	2.24	0.956	25.143	.000
Fast services	3.90	0.765	55.647	.000
High Nutrition	3.11	1.043	31.456	.000

Source: Research Data

According to the table 6 shows high consumer awareness can be seen on pizza as a food, as it present the high mean value and T value that is 4.75 and 104.106 respectively. But awareness of ingredient in a pizza and Brand awareness are not in satisfactory level as it shows very low mean value according to the above table. According to the study location of Pizza outlets was not attracted well in Jaffna. Parking facility also not enough. The first hypotheses (H1) of this study states that there is high level of consumer awareness about pizza fast food in Jaffna Peninsula. Based on this results it is supported in this research.

As an important factor to consumer attraction price was not strongly help to convey the value of pizza as it bring 2.87 mean value, it is moderately satisfied. Finally when considering the significant contribution of identified variables on pizza fast food, researcher identified that each and every variable significantly impact on consumer behaviour related to pizza fast food in Jaffna .Therefore the second hypotheses of this study states that (H2) Location, Awareness, Price, Quality and Image are significantly impact on consumer fast food buying behaviour. It is Accepted this research.

3.5 Hypotheses Testing

Table 7: Hypotheses Testing Results

Serial No	Hypotheses	Accepted/ Rejected
H1	There is high level of consumer awareness about pizza fast food in Jaffna Peninsula	Supported
H2	Location, Awareness,, Price, Quality and Image are significantly impact on consumer fast food buying behaviour	Accepted

Source: Research Data

4. CONCLUSION

Fast food has been developed in the world economy over the past four decades. Fast food has become very popular today. Eating habits are formed in early years and become the most unchangeable practice in life. Children learn everything from the family and society.

The pressures of working life along with time constraints have resulted in an increasing number of consumers opting for fast food restaurant. Consumers have a positive perception regarding attributes, quality of food and convenience of taking food in the restaurants, but have strong attributes related perception.

They basically perceive quality product if that is supported by their income level. There is a relationship of consumers' attributes related perception and quality and value related perception with overall customer service. But quality and value related perception is more closely related with overall impression of customer service.

The consumer's attitude about the economy, their lifestyle, financial planning and shopping habits and eating behaviour– it has all changed. Why? Due to busier consumer lifestyles and dual-working families with children, emphasis is increasingly being placed on quick meal solutions (Atkins and Bowler, 2001). In the last five years rapid growth of the fast food restaurant in Jaffna begin the necessitate of the study. The growth of the fast food market has been an effect of societal development.

4.1 Limitation & Direction for Future Research

The findings of the study cannot be generalized without reservation because of practical limitations. The following limitations are noteworthy:

- Non probability sampling technique was used in the absence of formal sampling frame.
- Some respondents showed a tendency to give biased information by giving all positive responses because they wanted to finish filling up the questionnaire.
- Inclusion of more brand food might lead to better generalization of the findings.

In future research health related perception can be considered. Confirmative factor analysis can be conducted and validity can be tested in future basing on this research.

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