

Consumer behaviour of standpoint on roadside foodstuff in Coimbatore city

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Abstract: Street side foods utilization is actually inevitable for the city dwellers; yet a little only has been recognized in India about the customer outlook on this informal or casual food segment from the point of view of safety. “Locally produced” is in general characterize as the production & marketing of food products within a certain geographic proximity of farmers and consumers. In India, food vending on streets pertains to unorganized sector of food processing. The street food mainly comprises of unorganized food processing sector where cooked food may be served on the streets without any formal establishment. The palatability, affordability and easy accessibility of street food make it highly popular across all age groups of the society. The incidence of poor hygiene and sanitation can cause contamination of food products with grave health consequences.

Keywords: Lifestyle, Customer, Road side Food, Attitude, Income

Introduction

The rapidly changing pace in our society regarding technology, information processing, had made it possible for children, as well as adolescents, to experience purchasing and consumption at a rate faster than that of their elders. Children today, have huge influence on their parent’s purchases. Parents today, have a larger income and a higher education level; there are more single parent families, more liberalization of parent-child relationship, which has resulted into more open negotiation between parent and child rather than relationship regulated by authority and command. As a consequence, children are receiving now days more love and attentions from both parents and have being described as—Little Emperors and Empresses.

Fast food is the term given to food that can be prepared and served very quickly. While any meal with low preparation time can be considered to be fast food, typically the term refers to food sold in a restaurant or store with low quality preparation and served to the customer in a packaged form for take-out/take-away. Because of commercial emphasis on speed, uniformity and low cost, fast food products are often made with ingredients formulated to achieve a certain flavour or consistency and to preserve freshness.

Consumer Inclination on Street Foods

The field of consumer behaviour has been explored extensively, with a view to understanding how, when and why consumers make purchase decisions. Common research themes have included studies that explored what factors influence the purchase making decision process and the attitudes towards a product, which depend heavily on his perception of the product (Padberg et al, 1997).

The powerful fragmentation of consumers nowadays, represents a tendency that should be taken into consideration, in order to identify and improve the quality dimensions of the products which are important for each category of consumers. Young people are not concerned with food preparation and that is why, they prefer to go out for their meals.

Statement of the Problem

As larger number of street food choices are being available before people to choose from, it is imperative to know how all these have changed the food purchase decisions. What is their perception about all these changes? What are the major factors that affect their purchasing decisions of children for fast food products in Coimbatore? How they have been socialized to act as consumers? Changes taking place in the socio cultural environment, when, why, how and where are they purchasing or eat street food, and finally how are they influencing the market, especially the street food industry in Coimbatore?

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to analyze the street food consumption lifestyle behaviour of consumers for developing new marketing strategies in street food. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To analyze the consumer’s spending behaviour on street food consumption & their preference on these street food menu,
- To analyze the influence of income on the selection of street food buying outlet
- To analyze the consumer’s consumption expenditure with respect to gender,

- To offer suggestions to the fast food industry to devise various promotional strategies to increase the customer delight of consumers

Research Methodology

Data Collection

Survey Method is employed to collect the data from the respondents through structured questionnaire designed on the basis of objectives of the study. Secondary Data have been collected through various Journals, books & internet which are restricted to the conceptual framework of the paper only.

Sampling Design

The population has comprised of Students and Youth at the collegiate level & Employment level Coimbatore city. A convenient sampling size of 150 respondents has been randomly selected.

Data Analysis

The collected data is then edited, consolidated and subjected to suitable statistical test & the data is presented in form of tables.

Statistical Tool Used

The following statistical tools have been used in the study for the purpose of analysis:

- Simple Percentage Analysis
- Chi – Square test

Simple Percentage Analysis

Table – I Demographic Factors of the Respondents

| Factors | Particulars | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 86 | 50.7 % |
| | Female | 64 | 49.3 % |
| Education Level | Under Graduate | 80 | 53.3 % |
| | Post Graduate | 70 | 46.7 % |
| Monthly Income | Less than Rs 15000 | 36 | 26.0 % |
| | Rs 15001 - Rs 20000 | 67 | 44.7 % |
| | Rs 20001 - Rs 30000 | 26 | 17.3 % |
| | Rs 30001 - Rs 40000 | 18 | 12.0 % |
| No: of Earning Members | 1 – 2 | 119 | 79.3 % |
| | 3 – 4 | 31 | 20.7 % |

Source: Primary Data

Chi - Square Analysis

Table – II Gender and Preference of choosing Street Food

| Gender | Preference for choosing Street Food | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|---------|--------------|-------|
| | Weekly | Monthly | Occasionally | Total |
| Male | 42 | 15 | 29 | 86 |
| Female | 28 | 26 | 10 | 64 |
| | 70 | 41 | 39 | 150 |

Source: Primary Data

Chi - Square Value - 10.070, DF - 3, Significance - 0.018

Ho - There is no association between Gender & Preference of choosing Street Food.

Interpretation

The Chi – Square statistics value was 10.070 & it was found to be significant at 5% level as the significance value is 0.018, hence we reject the null hypothesis & conclude that there is no association between Gender & Preference of using choosing Street Food, by the respondents.

Table – III Gender & Preference of Street Food

| Gender | Preference towards Street Food | | |
|--------|--------------------------------|----|-------|
| | Yes | No | Total |
| Male | 76 | 10 | 86 |
| Female | 56 | 8 | 64 |
| Total | 132 | 18 | 150 |

Source: Primary Data

Chi – Square Value – 0.317, DF – 1, Significance – 0.574

Ho - There is no association between Gender & Preference towards Street Food.

Interpretation

The Chi – Square statistics value was 0.317 and it was found to be significant at 5% level as the significance value is 0.574, hence we reject the null hypothesis & conclude that there is no association between Gender and Preference of choosing Street Food.

Table – IV Monthly Income and Not Preferring Street Food

| Monthly Income | Reason for not Preferring Street Foods Networking | | | |
|---------------------|---|-----------|--------|-------|
| | Taste | Not Aware | Hunger | Total |
| Less than Rs 15000 | 33 | 0 | 6 | 39 |
| Rs 15001 – Rs 20000 | 62 | 0 | 5 | 67 |
| Rs 20001 - Rs 30000 | 24 | 1 | 1 | 26 |
| Rs 30001 - Rs 40000 | 13 | 0 | 5 | 18 |
| Total | 132 | 1 | 17 | 150 |

Source: Primary Data

Chi - Square Value - 12.572, DF - 6, Significance - 0.050

Ho - There is no association between Monthly Income & Reason for not Preferring Street Foods.

Interpretation

The Chi – Square statistics value was 12.572 and it was found to be significant at 5% level as the significance value is 0.050, hence we reject the null hypothesis & conclude that there is no association between Gender and Interest in using Social Networking, by the students.

Limitation of the Study:

The limitations of the study include:

- The study has all the limitations of non random sampling,
- The study has been confined to Coimbatore city only. It may not be universally applicable, &
- The findings may be less accurate because, since the sample has been limited to 150 respondents.

Findings

The following findings have been made from the following study, which includes:

- Youngsters living in urban area prefer to consume street food.
- A large number of consumers are preferring road side foods for their convenience purpose
- Most of the people are unaware about the ill effects by consuming street food

- Street food is healthier & cheaper than fast food, as per consumer preference of choice.
- Sometimes the contamination of street food item is considered to be resulted into poor hygiene.

Conclusions

Poor socioeconomic status & lack of awareness may be the limiting factors towards observance of safe food handling practices. Authority may issue licenses to the street food vendors after they fulfil some of the basic and essential food safety and hygienic measures. Periodic training of the vendors regarding safe food handling may help in improving the situation. The provision of basic sanitation, water supply and waste management are recommended to minimize the gap between knowledge and practice of safe street food vending.

Young consumers have lifestyle behaviour of consuming fast food which shows that fast food consumption trend in Coimbatore city is growing and has lot of market potential in future. Taste, convenience and alternate to home food were found to be major reasons for consuming fast food by the young consumers. Young consumers are spending considerable amount of their income for eating outside due to convenient standard of living as it saves their time. Young consumers are looking for healthy food for their lifestyle & they expect foods which are homemade, nutritious and more of vegetable ingredients to suit for their healthy lifestyle.

Thus, it can be rightly said that the fast food industry will benefit from other factors as well, like increases in nuclear families, single-person households & the proportion of women in the workforce; as well as changing lifestyles and eating patterns. Finally to talk on about the government's role, they have consistently held back from passing legislation to limit the marketing activity of fast food industry & improve the nutritional value for their products.

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