



BUYER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS FAST FOOD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHICKING RESTAURANTS

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ABSTRACT

The Indian fast food Industry has witnessed high growth strides in the past years, with increasing disposable income, exposure to a number of cuisines and consumers' willingness to experiment a mix of both western and local menu. Apart from this, busy life schedule, standardized food and less time consuming processes are also fuelling the demand from domestic consumers in the industry. ChickKing is one such fast food conglomerate, specializing on fried chicken using a special recipe, spanning over a network of more than 70 outlets world over. This paper tends to analyse the buyer's behaviour towards the fast food restaurants based on a questionnaire survey made among the customers to 3 branches of Chicking Restaurant in Malappuram district of Kerala. The evaluations are done based on the responses marked in the 105 completely filled questionnaires among the total 150 circulated. Statistical tools like Percentage Analysis and Weighted Average Score test are used for meaningful analysis and clear presentation. This study flashes light upon some unknown factors regarding the buyer's behaviour towards fast food restaurants.

KEYWORDS : Consumer Behaviour, Perception, Attitude, Fast Food, Fried Chicken, Buyer.

INTRODUCTION

It has been a noticeable trend that food consumption pattern of urban Indian families has changed dramatically with times owing to the growing influence of western culture. Indians have started dining out and moved on to accept different varieties of delicious food from the world. Further, studies indicate a radical change in the consumption patterns of Indian consumers, who have traditionally been known for their price sensitiveness. Instant food is scoring over traditional food due to influence of western countries and rise in income and subsequent standard of living, convenience, etc. As a result, fast food menus are gaining wider acceptance from the Indian consumers who do not want to spend much time in cooking in the middle of their hectic lifestyles.

As per a new research report titled 'Indian Fast Food Market Analysis', there has been a major shift in food habits in the metropolitan cities. About 86 per cent of households prefer to consume instant food over traditional food. Currently the Indian fast food industry stands at a massive size of 47 billion, driven by a growing number of working professionals and increasing westernization. This industry at the moment thrives on international appeal endorsed by niche chains. The development of nutritious and healthier replacements for the traditional servings at fast food restaurants has transformed into mass promotion of portable foods. It has not only provided the convenience to people who shuttle between home and work for a bigger part of the day but also eliminated the requirement of conventional cutlery. As demand for all types of fast food items are consistently on the rise, pizza, burger, and French fries have become the all time favorite among young Indians, more so with some of the well-known burger and pizza restaurants like McDonald's, Domino's, KFC, Pizza Hut, Chicking etc. operating in India.

Various initiatives by the Government of India in the recent past have resulted in the entry of many international Fast Food Retailers in the country. With the economic liberalization in 1991, nearly all tariff and non-tariff barriers have been removed or minimized from the Indian boundary that has helped many retailers to enter the growing Indian fast food industry. This foray of multinational fast food retailers into India has impacted the taste buds of Indian consumers significantly. Chicking is one such brand who recently forayed into the Indian market after commencing its operations in the GCC. Owned by an Indian this company has tasted success

within a short span of time with its innovative cuisine and top class customer service. This study tends to analyse the buyer's behaviour towards fast food chains with special reference to Chicking Fried Chicken Restaurants.

ABOUT CHICKING RESTAURANTS

ChickKing is a rapidly growing fast-food chain in the region, specializing in serving the tastiest crumb fried chicken using a secret recipe which includes a unique blend of the choicest herbs and spices serving Real Recipe, Real Taste, Real Fried Chicken since the year 2000. ChickKing has grown from a single unit outlet to a conglomerate having more than 70 outlets world over. ChickKing, established as Al Bayan Foods, is a part of the highly reputable and renowned Dubai based Al Bayan Group of Companies & a registered trademark of Banquet Foods International, RAK-FZE, UAE. From starting an outlet in UAE, they have spread their wings to not just the GCC, but to different continents around the world including Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Singapore, Malaysia and India under the stewardship of its Founder cum Managing Director, Mr. A K. Mansoor - Al Bayan Group of Companies.



ChickKing began its journey with a simple yet determined dream – To create a brand that brings happiness, satisfaction and smiles to their customers world-over. Over the years, they have successfully realized this dream by making ChickKing a favorite destination for real and tasty fried chicken. ChickKing – A brand that has been built with over a decade of commitment and unmatched quality continues to make tremendous strides within its sphere of business. ChickKing offers the complete Dine-in Outlets experience worldwide. All restaurants have spacious sit-down dining with a carpet spread of 800-2000 sq. ft. These restaurants are located in places with a mix of local and floating population, like Shopping

malls, Hypermarkets and High Street Locations. These restaurants also have play areas for children, thus providing a complete experience with full of fun, food and relaxation.

With ambitious global plans and unbeatable product range, a strong corporate backing and a robust reputation across its worldwide operations, ChickKing is expanding in Africa, Middle East, and Asian Market. With its brand potential and growth prospective, ChickKing is well on its way to achieving the status of best fast-food chain of restaurants.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Shetty (2002): Rising Americanization of eating out tracks a culture of fast food and provide more importance to convenience and eating out behaviour due to certain reasons, dramatic changes occurred in fast food consumption of Asian countries.

Huang and Howarth (1996): Structural changes in the demand for food in Asia have projected that Asian countries have been undergoing transformations in their economies supported by rapid urbanisation and this trend would continue in the years to come.

Kashyap et. al (2013): Consumers in today's market are more fascinated to western culture and increase in the facilities offered by fast food services driving the growth of the industry. The frequency of visiting the fast food outlets relates with the ages of the consumers as well as the income affects the spending habits of an individual.

Prabhavathi et. al (2014): Young, unmarried, working professionals having own lifestyle and well educated persons forms major consumer segment in fast food sector. Male and female have equal life style behaviour with regard to consumption of fast food. Taste, convenience and alternate to home food are found to be major reasons for consuming fast food by the young consumers.

Deivanai (2013): Convenience, family outings and celebration of special occasions are considered important in buying fast food. Customers eat out for a change from home prepared food, but they do not believe that fast food provide good nutritional value.

CRISIL Research (2013): Annual spends on QSRs by middle-class households in Tier II cities are expected to surge by 150 per cent to Rs 3,750 per annum over the next three years. In comparison, annual spends in Tier I cities are expected to increase by more than 60 per cent to about Rs.6,000 by 2015-16. The quantum jump in QSR spends in urban areas will be propelled by an increase in nuclear families and working women, steady growth in incomes, changing lifestyle and eating patterns, and more importantly, greater accessibility of QSR outlets.

Modern Food Processing (2013): The foray of multinational fast food retailers into India has impacted the taste buds of Indian consumers significantly. Instant food is scoring over traditional food due to influence of Western countries, and rise in income and subsequent standard of living, convenience, etc. As a result, fast food menus are gaining wider acceptance from the Indian consumers.

However, the present study differs from the above, in that the buyer behaviour in Tirur town in Malappuram district of Kerala state is sought to be analyzed here. The scope and the area of the study are unique in nature.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to study the behaviour of consumers, perception of product attributes and level of satisfaction with respect to fast foods with special reference to Chicking Fried Chicken Restaurants. The following are the objectives:

1. To analyze the socio-economic profile of the sample respondents.
2. To identify and analyze the factors influencing the consumption

offast food.

3. To understand the factors motivating the customers to dine at a fast food outlet.

4. To evaluate consumers' perception and behaviour pertaining to the consumption of fast food.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present research work is conducted within the Malappuram district of Kerala. According to 2011 census, Malappuram district have a population of 4,110,956. At a population growth rate of 13.39%, the district has a population density of 1,158 inhabitants per square kilometer. The census statistics also indicates a sex ratio of 1096 females for every 1000 males and a literacy rate of 93.55% in this district. Agriculture is the primary occupation of the people which is supplemented by other industries like timber industry, fishery, tourism, textile and spice trading. The income earned abroad by the native migrants in Middle-East is a significant source of revenue to the district. The main reason for selecting this location for study is that this place is one of the booming markets for fast food in Kerala.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The time available at disposal of the research is limited for an independent study.
2. The number of respondents interviewed for this study is limited to the visitors of 3 branches of a fast food brand called Chicking in Malappuram district of Kerala.
3. Respondents lack of time to give information and casual attitudes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A sample of 150 consumers (50 each from 3 branches) of Chicking Restaurants in Malappuram district of Kerala is studied for this research. A structured questionnaire is designed and administered among the respondents to give a fair representation to various attributes of the consumers. A total of 150 Interview schedules are prepared and out of this, only 120 interview schedules are filled up and collected. A scrutiny of these schedules led to the rejection of 15 interview schedules on account of incomplete responses. Thus 105 completed interview schedules are used for the present study. The secondary data are collected from the various published articles, journals, magazines and also through the internet. For the purpose of evaluation, the statistical tools like Percentage Analysis and Weighted Average Score test are used for the meaningful analysis and clear presentation.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

A proper knowledge of the social, economic, cultural, behavioral, demographic and psychographic pattern of the respondents are very much crucial for the clear cut understanding of the findings of a research project and its further successful implementation. The socio-economic characteristics of the 105 respondents interviewed for this study are as below:

Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents

Features	Parameters	No. of Respondents	Percenta
Age	Up to 15	15	14.29
	16-30	38	36.19
	31-45	29	27.62
	46-60	18	17.14
	Above 60	5	4.76
Sex	Male	56	53.33
	Female	49	46.67
Occupation	Government Staff	26	24.76

	Businessmen	8	7.62
	Private Job	27	25.71
	NRI	12	11.43
	Student	19	18.10
	Agriculture	4	3.81
	Daily Wage	6	5.71
	Retired/Unempl oyed	3	2.86
Monthly Income	upto 15,000	23	21.90
	15001-30000	19	18.10
	30001-45000	30	28.57
	Above 45000	16	15.24
	No Income	17	16.19
Education Qualification	Up to Matriculation level	18	17.14
	Intermediate	29	27.62
	Graduate	44	41.90
	Post Graduate & Above	14	13.33
Marital Status	Married	78	74.29
	Single	27	25.71
Family Size	2 members	12	11.43
	3 members	31	29.52
	4 members	26	24.76
	More than 4 members	36	34.29
Regional Background	Urban	74	70.48
	Rural	31	29.52

Source: Primary Data

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The customers' response regarding their frequency of visit to the Chicking restaurants, with whom they visit, when they visit, amount spent on a single visit, sources of information about the restaurant, influencers in the decision making related to the selection of restaurants etc can be well understood from the below table.

Table 2: Customers' Buying Behaviour with respect to Chicking Restaurants

Questions & Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage
How often do you eat at Chicking Restaurant?		
Once in a Week	1	1
Once in a Month	22	21
Twice in a Month	5	5
Occasionally	77	73
How do you come to know about Chicking?		
From Friends/Colleagues	31	30
From Family/Relatives	10	10
Through Advertisements	54	50
From Fliers & Notices	10	10

Who influence you to go to Chicking?		
Friends	45	43
Relatives	14	13
Colleagues	18	17
Spouse	9	9
Children	19	18
With whom do you prefer to visit Chicking?		
Family	60	57
Friends	33	31
Colleagues	6	6
Alone	6	6
How do you prefer to have food at Chicking?		
Dine at the Restaurant	76	72
Take Away Parcel	19	18
Get Home Delivery	10	10
What time do you think is the best to dine at Chicking?		
Noon Time	12	11
Evening	45	43
Night	48	46
What is your preferred occasion to dine at Chicking?		
Festivals	17	16
Weekend/Holidays	41	39
Special Occasions/Celebrations	47	45
How much you will spend on average during a visit?		
Up to Rs.500	18	17
Rs.501 - Rs.1000	42	40
Rs.1001 - Rs.1500	33	31
Rs.1501 - Rs.2000	7	7
Above Rs.2000	5	5

Source: Primary Data

According to the Table 1, 73% of the respondents have responded that they use to visit Chicking Restaurant occasionally where as 21% of the respondents visits once in a month. 5% of the respondents use to visit twice in a month, while only 1% of them are visiting this restaurant once in a week. The table also shows that 51% of respondents state that the advertisements are their primary source of awareness about the brand, while 30% of the respondents get informed by their friends and colleagues. 10% of the respondents get information from the fliers and notices circulated by the restaurant, whereas 9% of them come to know about the brand from their family members and relatives. The Table 1 further indicates that 43% of the respondents have stated that they are influenced by their friends to have food at Chicking Restaurants, while 18% respondents are influenced by Kids. 17% respondents visit the restaurant due to the influence of their colleagues and 13% by relatives, whereas 9% of the respondents are motivated by their spouse. Also, 57% of the respondents have stated that they prefer to dine at Chicking Restaurant with their family, while 31% likes to visit with friends. While 6% of the respondents like to visit with colleagues, another 6% likes to visit alone. 72% of the respondents mentioned that they prefer to consume Chicking Fried Chicken at the restaurant itself, while 18% likes to take it parcel and 10% are interested in getting home delivery. 46% of the respondents have stated that they prefer night time to dine at Chicking restaurant while 43% prefer evening time and only 11% likes to have it on noon time. 45% of the customers prefer to dine at Chicking restaurants during special occasions and for celebrations. While 39% favours weekends/ holidays, only 16% considers festivals as the right occasion for dining at Chicking restaurants. When it comes to the amount spend on a visit, the Table 1 shows that 40% of the respondents spend an amount between Rs.501-1000 during a visit to the Chicking restaurant, while 31% spends an amount in the

range of Rs.1001-1500. While 17% customers spend below Rs.500, 7% and 5% of the customers spend Rs.1501-2000 and above Rs.2000 respectively on a single visit.

Reasons for Visiting Chicking Restaurant

There may be different motives for people to dine from a particular fast food outlet. In this study an inquiry is made on the factors motivating the customers to dine at Chicking Restaurants using the 6 variables, namely, Convenience, Ambience, Taste of food, Pleasure of dining out, Brand Image and Sense of Pride. The Table 3 shows the ranking of the responses marked by the respondents.

Table 3: Ranking of the Customers' Reasons for Visiting Chicking Restaurant

Feature	1	WS	2	WS	3	WS	4	WS	5	WS	6	WS	Total WS	Rank
Convenience	33	198	9	45	14	56	17	51	17	34	15	15	399	6
Ambience	41	246	13	65	15	60	14	42	18	36	4	4	453	4
Taste of food	63	378	10	50	12	48	9	27	8	16	3	3	522	1
Pleasure of dining out	49	294	18	90	19	76	11	33	5	10	3	3	506	2
Brand Image	45	270	16	80	17	68	12	36	8	16	7	7	477	3
Sense of Pride	36	216	11	55	16	64	15	45	19	38	8	8	426	5

Source: Primary Data

It clearly understand from the above table that Taste of the food is the main reason that motivates the customers to dine at Chicking restaurant followed by pleasure of dining out, Brand image, ambience inside the restaurant, customers' sense of pride and convenience.

Likeable Factors

This study also tends to identify the factors/facilities like of the customers the most with respect to the Chicking Restaurants upon the 6 variables, namely, Kids Play Area, Parking Facility, Cleanliness, Friendly Staff, Interior Style and Promptness in Service. The Table 4 shows the ranking of the responses marked by the respondents.

Table 4: Ranking of Factors liked by the Customers about the Chicking Restaurant

Feature	1	WS	2	WS	3	WS	4	WS	5	WS	6	WS	Total WS	Rank
Kids Play Area	45	270	16	80	17	68	12	36	8	16	7	7	477	3
Parking Facility	33	198	9	45	14	56	17	51	17	34	15	15	399	6
Cleanliness	63	378	10	50	12	48	9	27	8	16	3	3	522	1
Friendly staff	41	246	13	65	15	60	14	42	18	36	4	4	453	4
Interior Style	36	216	11	55	16	64	15	45	19	38	8	8	426	5

Promptness in Service	49	294	18	90	19	76	11	33	5	10	3	3	506	2
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Source: Primary Data

The Table 4 indicates the ranking of the responses marked by the respondents on the factors/features they like the most about the Chicking restaurant. The ranking shows that Cleanliness is the major factor liked by most of the customers followed by promptness in service, play area for kids, friendly behaviour of the staff, interior style and parking facility.

FINDINGS

The major findings from this study are:

1. 73% of the respondents have responded that they use to visit Chicking Restaurant occasionally where as 21% of the respondents visits once in a month. 5% of the respondents use to visit twice in a month, while only 1% of them are visiting this restaurant once in a week. This implies that most of the people are not regular visitors to this restaurant, but use to have food here only once in a while for a change.

2. 51% of respondents state that advertisements are their primary source of awareness about the brand, while 30% of the respondents get informed by their friends and colleagues. 10% of the respondents get information from the fliers and notices circulated by the restaurant, whereas 9% of them come to know about the brand from their family members and relatives. From this it is understood that advertisements are the biggest source of information about Chicking Restaurants.

3. 43% of the respondents have stated that they are influenced by their friends to have food at Chicking Restaurants, while 18% respondents are influenced by Kids. 17% respondents visit the restaurant due to the influence of their colleagues and 13% are influenced by relatives, whereas 9% of the respondents are influenced by their spouse. This states that friends, kids and colleagues are the most influencing persons in the selection of a fast food restaurant.

4. 57% of the respondents have stated that they prefer to dine at Chicking Restaurant with their family, while 31% likes to visit with friends. While 6% of the respondents like to visit with colleagues, another 6% likes to visit alone. This clearly indicates that most of the people would prefer to have food at Chicking Restaurant with family.

5. 72% of the respondents mention that they prefer to consume Chicking Fried Chicken at the restaurant itself, while 18% likes to take it parcel and 10% are interested in getting home delivery. This shows that majority of the customers prefer to dine at the restaurant than buying parcels or getting home delivery.

6. 46% of the respondents have stated that they prefer night time to dine at Chicking restaurant while 43% prefer evening time and only 11% likes to have it on noon time. This shows that the time between 4 PM-11 PM is the best time for dining at Chicking restaurant and no one is interested to eat it during the early hours of a day.

7. 45% of the customers prefer to dine at Chicking restaurants during special occasions and for celebrations. While 39% favours weekends/ holidays, only 16% considers festivals as the right occasion for dining at Chicking restaurants.

8. 40% of the respondents spend an amount between Rs.501-1000 during a visit to the Chicking restaurant, while 31% spends an amount in the range of Rs.1001-1500. While 17% customers spend below Rs.500, 7% and 5% of the customers spend Rs.1501-2000 and above Rs.2000 respectively on a single visit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Though the customers like the taste and flavor of the food at the Chicking restaurants, they are not frequent visitors. Most of the customers prefer to visit only during special occasions like birthdays, anniversary etc. Hence the management should take adequate measures to increase their frequency of visit and also to attract more new customers in order to achieve better sales and profit.

2. The results indicate that the Advertisement is the biggest source of product information to the public. So the management should focus on the extensive advertising of the product to attract more customers and boost up the sales.

3. Friends and children are the main influencers for visiting Chicking restaurant. Hence the promotional strategies and customer service should be streamlined in such way that it derives more word-of-mouth publicity.

4. Most of the customers prefer to visit fast food restaurants in groups rather than alone. Hence more special schemes and offers should be planned and implemented for group customers.

FUTURE SCOPE OF STUDY

In the light of the above findings more in-depth analysis can be done on the influence of Brand Name, Sales Promotion and Advertisements upon the buying behaviours of the customers towards fast food. This study tends to open new avenues for specialized research on how the buying behaviour of the customers differs on the basis of their age, gender, monthly income, occupation and other demographic attributes. Also there is wide scope for conducting a critical analysis on the health implications of the ever increasing tendency of the customers to dine at the organised fast food joints and the level of awareness among the customers towards these health issues of consuming fast food.

CONCLUSIONS

Consumer Behaviour consists of all human behaviour that goes in making purchase decisions. An understanding of the consumer behaviour enables a marketer to take marketing decisions which are compatible with its consumer needs. There are four major classes of consumer behaviour determinants and expectations, namely, cultural, socio-economic, personal and psychological. If the challenges are met with serious considerations, the Indian fast food industry is anticipated to achieve glorious milestones in the coming years. Increasing inclination of people to eat outside (restaurants) will be the major driving force behind the projected growth. Besides, healthy food options and low-price menu will also contribute to its growth, to attain a CAGR of around 33 per cent during 2010-2015. Moreover, continuous economic growth and improving employment situation will lead to higher personal expenditures on outside food by 2015. Also certain product attributes are identified as having a greater influence over the purchase decision of the customers and satisfying them. The manufacturers and marketers who study the behaviour of consumers and cater to their needs will be successful. It may be concluded that the consumer behaviour has a greater role to play in the LPG era of the economic activities for which a necessary survey and research should be conducted in an efficient manner.

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