



CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR AND AWARENESS OF STREET VENDED FOOD

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Abstract

This study examined the buying behaviour and consumer awareness towards the street vended food. Data was collected from the respondents through structured questionnaire. Chi-square and analysis of variance are used to assess the data. The result reveals that the consumers are aware of street vended food outlets' service qualities and they are rarely accessing the outlet. The consumers were often accessing the alley based outlets.

1. Introduction

The presence of Street Vended Food (SVF) culture is available from 14th century onwards. Nowadays, the street vended foods are highly criticized for the hygienic matters and health related hazards. The street vendors are mainly depends on the residential customers in the nearby streets. Changing lifestyles, family structure and increasing the number of family members' earning have led to changes in the consumer food choices and consumption. Recently, the number of meals and snacks eaten away from home has increased dramatically over decades. Further, consumers' changing needs and individual preferences in eating-out drive them to different food outlets, while, at the same time, seeking value and convenience.

Thus, the SVF outlets are capitalizing this opportunity through their service. Moreover, economy and easy accessibility are the important factor to consider the outlets. The SVF outlets have unique service qualities, certain outlets have only fast food kind of items and others have traditional food items. Therefore, according to the customers' taste they may avail any of the service. Limited numbers of study have been investigated so far in consumer perspective. Hence, this study is investigated to confirm certain hypothesis such as association between demographic factors and duration of consuming, frequency of consuming food at SVF outlets, amount spent on each access, distance travelled to reach the SVF outlets, level of awareness about the service qualities. The subsequent parts of this paper organize as follows; review of literature, methodology, analysis & results and conclusion.

2. Review of Literature

Street food vendors are now more regulated and commercialized. In some countries (e.g., Japan, Singapore, and USA), the government regulates standards and codes of practice in the street food trades. For example, in Singapore, street food vendors are housed in hawker centers as a part of an urban renewal plan (Henderson, 2000). New York City requires a mobile food vendor to have a license, a cart permit, and a valid food safety certificate from the health department (Burt, Volel, & Finkel, 2003). Many countries still do not have proper policies or programs concerning street food vending. Yet far more numbers of these vending remain uncontrolled with risk factors.

Street food vending has indeed an economic contribution, providing a livelihood for vendors (Mosupye & von Holy, 1999) and other employment opportunities (Tinker, 1999, 2003). For example, about 26Per Cent of the labour force in one city in Indonesia is employed directly in selling street foods (Tinker, 1999, 2003). In addition, street vending is owned exclusively by individuals and families. According to Blair (1999), 30Per Cent of food dollars were spent on street foods among studied families in Asia and Africa, and poorer families spent more of their budget for street food than others. Furthermore, researchers have reported that food consumption at street vendors accounts for from 15Per Cent up to half of the total food budget in cities in some Asian and African countries (e.g., Bangkok in Thailand and Lagos in Nigeria; Cohen, 1986; Tinker, 2003). Accordingly, the profits obtained from their businesses plough back into the local economy.

The inexpensive to moderate price and availability at convenient times are characteristics that attract consumers on the street (Arambulo, Cuellar, Estupinian, & Ruiz, 1995; Castillo et al., 1995; Taylor et al., 2000). Such enterprises selling street foods run in the vicinity of busy places such as transportation hubs, office blocks, and school districts (Streetfood.org, 2012b). Street food vendors provide meals that are tasty and various in terms of menus and ingredients (Haryani et al., 2007; Simopoulos & Bhat, 2000; Tinker, 1999). Despite mass production, central distribution, sales of foods at grocery stores, reputed fast-food chains and fullservice restaurants, the demand for and consumption of foods at roadside vendors should continue to grow commensurate with increasing public attention.

In recent years, mobile food services serving ethnic cuisines (e.g., Korean, Mexican, and Chinese) have become popular in U.S. metropolitan cities like New York, Los Angeles, and Portland (Gordon Food Service, 2009). Although the popularity of the street foods is expected to continue because of the aforementioned benefits, many issues related to the street food vending remain to be addressed. Numerous researchers (Bryan, Michanie, Alvarez, & Paniagua, 1988; Dawson, Liamrangsi, &

Boccas, 1996; Ekanem, 1998; Miles & Frewer, 2001) have identified issues of food safety and health hazards with streetvended foods. In spite of their close relationship with local dwellers' lives, street food trades are often viewed as a "nuisance" (Tinker, 2003, p. 332) because of accompanying activities described as "disorderly, untidy and disturbing to traffic" (Chakravarty & Canet, 1996, p. 30) and the overuse of disposable serviceware, not to mention wastewater, both of which have a detrimental impact on the environment. Consequently, consumers often perceive risks in street food and consequently develop a negative attitude toward street food (Blair, 1999).

3. Objectives

1. To analyse the buying behaviour of consumers of street vended food.
2. To study about consumers awareness towards street vended food.

4. Methodology

This study contains 500 samples which are collected in Coimbatore city through a structured questionnaire. The non-probability based on convenience sampling method is applied to select the respondents. This paper exhibits the consumer buying behaviour and their level of awareness toward street vended foods.

5. Data Analysis and Results

This section describes analysis and interpretation of the factors considered for evaluation. The observed data were analysed using percentage analysis, average score, average rank, chi-square and ANOVA analysis.

The following table 5.1 describes the percentage analysis of the selected factors.

Table 5.1: Percentage Analysis – Consumer Buying Behaviour

Duration of Consuming SVF	n	Per Cent
1 - 3 years	233	46.6
4 - 6 years	160	32.0
7 - 9 years	45	9.0
More than 9 years	62	12.4
Frequency of consuming SVF	n	Per Cent
Daily	53	10.6
Weekly	175	35.0
Fortnightly	40	8.0
Monthly	49	9.8
Need Based	183	36.6
Amount Spent on each Consumption	n	Per Cent
Less than Rs.200	314	62.8
Rs.201 - Rs.400	149	29.8
Rs.401 - Rs.600	22	4.4
Above Rs.600	15	3.0
Distance Travelled to reach Outlet	n	Per Cent
Less than 1 km	197	39.4
1 - 2 kms	181	36.2
3- 4 kms	56	11.2
5 - 6 kms	37	7.4
Above 6 kms	29	5.8

The above table states that 46.6 Per Cent of respondents were consuming food for 1 – 3 years from the street vended food outlet, 32 Per Cent of them were consuming about 4 – 6 years, 12.4 Per Cent of them were consuming around more than 9 years and 9 Per Cent of the respondents were consuming food around 7 – 9 years. Similarly, the frequency of accessing SVF outlet result states that 36.6 Per Cent of the respondents were accessing the street vender on need basis, 35 Per Cent of them were accessing the street vender on weekly basis, 10.6 Per Cent of them were accessing on daily basis, 9.8 Per Cent of the respondents were accessing on monthly basis, 8 Per Cent of the respondents were accessing street vendor on fortnightly basis. Amount spent of each access result states that 62.8 Per Cent of the respondents were spending less than Rs.200 per visit in the street vended food outlet, 29.8 Per Cent of them were spending Rs.201 – Rs.400 per visit, 4.4 Per Cent of the respondents were spending Rs.401 – Rs.600 per visit and 3 Per Cent of the respondents were spending above Rs.600 per visit

in the street vended food outlet. The distance travelled to reach the SVF outlet result states that 39.4 Per Cent of the respondents were travelling less than 1 km, 36.2 Per Cent of them were travelling 1 – 2 kms, 11.2 Per Cent of the respondents were travelling 3 – 4 kms, 7.4 Per Cent of the respondents were travelling 5 – 6 kms and 5.8 Per Cent of the respondents were travelling above 6 kms to reach the street vended food outlet.

The following table 5.2 depicts the average score analysis for frequently accessing SVF outlets type.

Table 5.2: Average Score – Frequency of Accessing SVF Outlets

Frequently Accessing SVF Outlets Type	Avg. Score	Preference Order
Main Road	2.468	4
Alleys	3.004	1
Residential Streets	2.516	3
Shopping Streets	2.566	2

Above table depicts the weighted average score analysis to predict the preference order of SVF outlet location by the respondents. The observed result shows as follows; by alleys (3.004), shopping streets (2.566), residential streets (2.516) and main road (2.468). It is concluded that alley based SVF outlets are frequently accessed by the consumers than other categories considered in this study.

The following table 5.3 shows the consumers’ awareness towards SVF outlets’ service qualities.

Table 5.3: Average Score – Awareness towards SVF Outlet’s Service Qualities

Level of Awareness – SVF Outlet’s Service	Avg. Score	Preference Order
Food	4.362	1
Price	3.994	4
Quality	4.086	3
Quantity	3.936	6
Availability	3.738	7
Taste	4.230	2
Service	3.952	5

The above table depicts the weighted average score analysis for the level of awareness towards the service qualities of SVF outlet. Preference order is generated based on the value of average score value and the level of awareness is observed as follows; food (4.362), taste (4.23), quality (4.09), price (3.99), service (3.95), quantity (3.94) and availability (3.74). It is concluded that among the list of SVF outlets’ service qualities considered, the consumers were well aware of the food types available in the outlets.

The following table 5.4 shows the weighted average rank analysis for the main influencing source of awareness about the SVF outlets.

Table 5.4: Average Rank – Sources of Awareness about SVF Outlets

Source of Awareness - SVF Outlet	Avg. Rank	Final Rank
Family Member	3.422	4
Friends	1.724	1
Relatives	2.926	2
Neighbours	2.996	3
Pamphlets / Notice	3.954	5

The above table depicts the weighted average rank analysis for the source of awareness about the SVF outlets. The observed final rank order for the source of awareness are as follows; friends (1.724), relatives (2.926), neighbours (2.996), family members (3.422) and pamphlets/notice (3.954). It is concluded that friends are considered as the primary source of awareness about the SVF outlets.

The following table 5.5 shows the chi-square analysis between demographic factors of the respondents and duration of consuming street vended food.

H₀: Demographic factors of the respondents have no significant association with duration of consuming street vended food.

Table 5.5: Chi-Square – Demographic Factors vs. Duration of Consuming Street Vended Food

Demographic Factors	Chi-square value	df	p-value	S/NS
Gender	55.010	3	0.000	S
Age	37.640	9	0.000	S
Educational Qualification	33.474	12	0.001	S
Occupation	44.004	15	0.000	S
Marital Status	7.237	3	0.065	NS
Employment Status	7.208	3	0.066	NS
Type of Family	34.997	3	0.000	S
No. of Members in the Family	15.022	6	0.020	S
Family Monthly Income	38.339	12	0.000	S

df – degrees of freedom, S – Significant (P 0.05), NS – Not Significant

The above table exhibits chi-square analysis between demographic profile of the respondents and duration of consuming street vended food. Pearson chi-square analysis is tested at 5Per Cent level of significance and the observed chi-square, p-value are as follows; gender has 55.010 & 0.000, age 37.640 & 0.00, educational qualification 33.474 & 0.001, occupation 44.004 & 0.000, marital status 7.237 & 0.065, both employed (employment status of husband and wife) 7.208 & 0.066, type of family 34.997 & 0.000, number of members in the family 15.022 & 0.020 and family monthly income 38.339 & 0.000. The result states that all demographic factors except marital status and employment status have found significant association with duration of consuming street vended food. It means that marital status and employment status were not directly associated with duration of consuming street vended food. Therefore, it confirms that street vended food consumption is integral part of life.

The subsequent table 5.6 shows the chi-square analysis between demographic profile of the respondents and frequency of consuming street vended food.

H₀: Demographic factors of the respondents have no significant association with frequency of consuming street vended food.

Table 5.6: Chi-Square – Demographic Factors vs. Frequency of Consuming Street Vended Food

Demographic Factors	Chi-square value	df	p-value	S/NS
Gender	40.853	4	0.000	S
Age	49.083	12	0.000	S
Educational Qualification	92.181	16	0.000	S
Occupation	142.817	20	0.000	S
Marital Status	46.410	4	0.000	S
Employment Status	30.995	4	0.000	S
Type of Family	12.990	4	0.011	S
No. of Members in the Family	33.021	8	0.000	S
Family Monthly Income	63.544	16	0.000	S

df – degrees of freedom, S – Significant (P 0.05), NS – Not Significant

The above table depicts chi-square analysis between demographic profile of the respondents and frequency of consuming street vended food. Pearson chi-square analysis is tested at 5Per Cent level of significance and the observed chi-square, p-value are as follows; gender has 40.853 & 0.000, age 49.083 & 0.000, educational qualification 92.181 & 0.000, occupation 142.817 & 0.000, marital status 46.410 & 0.000, employment status 30.995 & 0.000, type of family 12.990 & 0.011, number of members in the family 33.021 & 0.000 and family monthly income 63.544 & 0.000. The resultant table states that all demographic factors have found significant association with frequency of consuming street vended food. The result confirms that irrespective of the demographic profile the respondents were frequently consuming street vended food.

The subsequent table5.7 shows the chi-square analysis between demographic profile of the respondents and amount spent on consuming street vended food.

H₀: Demographic factors of the respondents have no significant association with the amount spent on consuming street vended food.

Table 5.7: Chi-Square – Demographic Factors vs. Amount Spent on Consuming Street Vended Food

Demographic Factors	Chi-square value	df	p-value	S/NS
Gender	16.901	3	0.001	S
Age	18.650	9	0.028	S
Educational Qualification	290.540	12	0.000	S
Occupation	68.154	15	0.000	S
Marital Status	35.575	3	0.000	S
Employment Status	14.502	3	0.002	S
Type of Family	41.588	3	0.000	S
No. of Members in the Family	38.836	6	0.000	S
Family Monthly Income	49.329	12	0.000	S

df – degrees of freedom, S – Significant (P 0.05), NS – Not Significant

The above table depicts chi-square analysis between demographic profile of the respondents and the amount spent on consuming street vended food. Pearson chi-square analysis is tested at 5Per Cent level of significance and the observed chi-square, p-value are as follows; gender has 16.901 & 0.001, age 18.650 & 0.028, educational qualification 290.540 & 0.000, occupation 68.154 & 0.000, marital status 35.575 & 0.000, employment status 15.502 & 0.002, type of family 41.588 & 0.000, number of members in the family 38.836 & 0.000 and family monthly income 49.329 & 0.000. Key finding states that all demographic factors have found significant association with the amount spent on consuming street vended food.

The following table 5.8 shows the chi-square analysis between demographic profile of the respondents and distance travelled to reach the street vended food outlet.

H₀: Demographic factors of the respondents have no significant association with distance travelled to reach the street vended food outlet.

Table 5.8: Chi-Square – Demographic Factors vs. Distance Travelled to Reach the Street Vended Food Outlet

Demographic Factors	Chi-square value	df	p-value	S/NS
Gender	26.169	4	0.000	S
Age	50.357	12	0.000	S
Educational Qualification	65.999	16	0.000	S
Occupation	76.959	20	0.000	S
Marital Status	16.045	4	0.003	S
Employment Status	23.930	4	0.000	S
Type of Family	22.390	4	0.000	S
No. of Members in the Family	23.846	8	0.002	S
Family Monthly Income	43.699	16	0.000	S

df – degrees of freedom, S – Significant (P 0.05), NS – Not Significant

The above table depicts chi-square analysis between demographic profile of the respondents and distance travelled to reach the street vended food outlet. Pearson chi-square analysis is tested at 5Per Cent level of significance and the observed chi-square, p-value are as follows; gender has 26.169 & 0.000, age 50.357 & 0.000, educational qualification 65.999 & 0.000, occupation 76.959 & 0.000, marital status 16.045 & 0.003, employment status 23.930 & 0.000, type of family 22.390 & 0.000, number of members in the family 23.846 & 0.002 and family monthly income 43.699 & 0.000. Key finding states that all demographic factors have found significant association with the distance travelled to reach the street vended food outlet.

Subsequent table 5.9 describes the analysis of variance between demographic factors and mean level of awareness towards SVF outlet service quality.

Hypothesis: Demographic factors have no significant difference on the mean level of awareness about SVF outlet service quality

Table 5.9: ANOVA – Demographic Factors vs. Mean Awareness about SVF Service Quality

Demographic Factors	df	F-value	p-value
Gender	1	1.229	0.268
Age	3	2.114	0.098
Education	4	19.796	0.000
Occupation	5	5.984	0.000
Marital Status	1	0.240	0.624
Employment Status	1	6.525	0.012
Family Type	1	0.328	0.567
No. of Members in Family	2	1.012	0.364
Family Monthly Income	4	3.884	0.004

df – degrees of freedom, S – Significant (P < 0.05), NS – Not Significant

The above table depicts the analysis of variance between demographic factors of the respondents and the level of awareness towards the SVF outlet's service qualities. The analysis is tested at 5Per Cent level of significance. The observed F-value & p-values are as follows; gender (1.229 & 0.268), age group (2.114 & 0.098), educational qualification (19.796 & 0.000), occupation (5.984 & 0.000), marital status (0.240 & 0.624), employment status (6.525 & 0.012), family type (0.328 & 0.567), number of members in family (1.012 & 0.364) and family monthly income (3.884 & 0.004). It is observed from the resultant table that educational qualification, occupation, employment status (both husband & wife are employed) and family monthly income factors' p-values are less than the level of significance 0.05. Hence the hypothesis confirms the significant difference on those factors.

6. Conclusion

The SVF outlets are playing a significant role in the low and middle income group families. It is also fulfilling the consumers' needs within the accessible distance. The result reveals that majority of the respondents were accessing the SVF outlets on need basis and they are spending around less than Rs.200 per visit. The consumers were travelling around less than 1 km to reach the SVF outlet. All demographic factors except marital status and employment status have found significant association with duration of consuming street vended food. It means that marital status and employment status were not directly associated with duration of consuming street vended food. Therefore, it confirms that street vended food consumption is integral part of life. Similarly, all demographic factors have found significant association with frequent consumption of street vended food, amount spent on consuming street vended food and distance travelled to reach the street vended food outlet. The result also confirms that educational qualification, occupation, employment status (both husband & wife are employed) and family monthly income factors have found significant difference on the level of awareness about the SVF outlets service qualities. It is suggested that SVF outlet should maintain the cleanliness and should concentrate on decorating their outlet for improving their business volume.

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