FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMERS' PREFERENCES ON FAST FOOD ITEMS IN BANGLADESH

Dr. Nazrul Islam, Professor and Dean
Faculty of Business and Economics
Coordinator of Graduate Studies
Department of Business Administration
East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: 880-2-8812336
Email: nazrulislam@ewubd.edu

&

G. M. Shafayet Ullah, Lecturer
School of Business Studies
Southeast University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Email: shafayet_seu@yahoo.com

Correspondence:

Nazrul Islam, Professor
Faculty of Business and Economics
Coordinator of Graduate Studies
Department of Business Administration
East West University
43 Mohakhali C/A
Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh
Fax: 880-2-8812336
Email: nazrulislam@ewubd.edu

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Abstract

Fast food industry is a high growing sector of Bangladesh. It is concerned with the tastes and habits of the people. The food-taking habit especially in fast food segment has been changing very fast over last decade among the people of Dhaka - the capital city of Bangladesh. The reasons could be attributed by the increase of awareness, growth of education, development of information technology, and expansion of television channels and print media in Bangladesh. Hence, this paper aims at identifying the preference factors of fast food consumers living in Dhaka city. This study was conducted among the university students who usually eat fast food at their leisure time. To conduct the study, a total of 250 respondents were interviewed with a structured questionnaire. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data. Multivariate analysis technique like factor analysis was performed to identify the preference factors of the fast food student-consumer of Bangladesh. Multiple regressions were run to identify the relationship between the factors identified and the overall preference of the consumers. Results show that the consumers give most importance on brand reputation of the food followed by nearness to receive and accessibility, similar taste with their previous experience, cost and quality relationship, discount and taste, cleanliness and hygiene, salesmanship and decoration, fat and cholesterol level, and self-service. This study suggests that the brand reputation, nearness and accessibility, similarity in taste, and cost and quality relationship should be emphasized to improve the attraction of the university students towards the fast food consumption in Bangladesh.

Key Words

Fast Food Preferences, Brand Reputation, Similarity in Taste, Cost and Quality, Nearness and Accessibility.

FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMERS' PREFERENCES OF FAST FOOD PRODUCTS IN BANGLADESH

1. Introduction

Taking food is very important for the survival of human being. Food provides the necessary nutrition for the body of the human being and is indispensable. Due to the differences in culture, geographic location, environment, climate etc. food items of the people vary from society to society. Some may change in terms of ingredients such as, soybean oil in Asia and or palm oil in other continents while some may change in terms of presentation such as, food spread over banana leaves in India and or on ceramic plates in other places. Whereas tastes of some food items may change in processing or cooking such as, ovens in the west, gas/wood stove in the east. Eating methods are also different in many cases such as, using spoons and forks in the west as opposed to using chopsticks or hand in the east. New branch of food items are also visible in the different parts of the world. One such type of food is fast food.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Fast food is an important item of the people while they eat. It is ready-made and easy to eat. The term "Fast food" was recognized in a dictionary by Merriam–Webster in 1951. According to Merriam–Webster, Fast food is the term given to food that can be prepared and served very quickly. Generally any meal with low preparation time can be considered as fast food. But typically the term refers to the foods sold in a restaurant or store with low preparation time and served to the customer in a packaged form for take-away. Fast foods are mostly designed for ready availability, use, or consumption and with little consideration given to quality or significance[1]. Fast foods are different from convenient ready-to-eat-on-the-go confectionary items i.e. cakes, biscuits, breads etc. snack items i.e. potato chips, candies, peas etc. and the fruit items. Examples of most prominent fast food items include burger, pizza, fried chicken, hamburger and sandwich. Fast food restaurants are also known as Quick Service Restaurants (QSR's) and fast foods are often termed as Food Away From Home or FAFH.

The habit of taking fast food varies from society to society. In Bangladesh, the habit of taking fast food is changing very fast. People who are living in the city have the higher level of tendency to consume fast food compared to the people living in the rural areas. The reason for the change is the urgency and the time factor of the people. They do not have much time to prepare food at their home. As society develops, the economic activities also expand and, therefore, people become busy and that discourages them to prepare food at their home. As such, the only alternative is to consume food that is prepared by others and preferably light in nature and ready-made. While the people select fast food, a number of factors are considered by them. Therefore, this study was designed to identify the factors related to the preferences of the consumers of fast food in Bangladesh. This study only includes the university students of Bangladesh. The main objective of this study is to study and develop a consumer behavioral profile for the fast-food selection in Bangladesh. The specific objectives are outlined below.

   i.   To describe the fast food industry of Bangladesh.
   ii. To identify the factors related to the consumer preferences of the fast food products.
   iii. To find out the group and situational influences that affect the selection of fast food.
   iv. To explore the criteria the consumers use for selecting fast food.
   v.   To provide suggestions to the sellers and the policy makers in this regard.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

The study on fast food is a new field of research in Bangladesh. The outcome of the study is the identification of the factors influencing the student-consumers of fast food products in Bangladesh. The global fast food business has been discussed in this paper that might be useful for the fast food users. The study also will create interest for the fast food consumers of Bangladesh to know about the selection model of the Bangladeshi consumers. Today's business is all about delighting consumers. And fast food sellers/business can achieve it by knowing what the

consumers want or think beforehand. From the sellers' perspective, this study provides a unique opportunity to have a glance for making decision for fulfilling the needs of their target consumers. The findings of this paper would be useful to them to improve the quality of the overall business decisions. The findings of this paper also will provide fast food business a competitive edge over their competitors.

2. Fast Food Consumption in the World

The first fast food restaurants were originated in the United States with White Castle in 1916[2]. Today, American-founded fast food chains such as McDonald's, KFC and Pizza Hut are multinational corporations with outlets across the globe[3]. Fast food restaurants represent one of the largest segments of the food industry with over 200,000 restaurants and $120 billion in sales in the U.S. alone[4]. QSR's are noted for their short food preparation time. Some of the largest players in this category include international giants like McDonald's and Yum! Brands (Pizza Hut, KFC). International chains maintain a considerable presence outside of the United States. Usually relying on a franchise system to do so, large international players have performed much more strongly than their domestic and regional competitors in the past few years as double digit same store sales gains in emerging markets such as China, India and Eastern Europe have propelled growth. International chains including McDonald's and Yum! Brands have 65 percent and 50 percent of their sales overseas respectively[5].

According to a survey of American school children found that 96 percent could identify Ronald McDonald. The only fictional character with a higher degree of recognition was Santa Claus. The impact of McDonald's on the nation's culture, economy and diet is not easy to ignore. Its corporate symbol - the Golden Arches - is now more widely recognized than the Christian cross. In a particular day, about one-quarter of the adult population of the United States visits a fast food restaurant. Americans spent about $6 billion on fast food in 1970. They spent more than $110 billion in 2000. Americans' expenditure on fast foods is more than their expenditure on higher education, personal computers, software or new cars. They spend more on fast food than on movies, books, magazines, newspapers, videos and recorded music - combined. Jim Hightower, a farm activist warned of 'the McDonaldisation of America' almost 25 years ago. He viewed that the emerging fast-food industry as a threat to independent businesses, as a step toward a food economy dominated by giant corporations and as a homogenizing influence on American life.[6]

The global fast food market grew by 4.8 percent in 2006 to reach a value of $102.7 billion. In 2011, the global fast food market is forecasted to have a value of $125.4 billion, an increase of 22.2 percent since 2006. The global fast food market grew by 1.5 percent in 2006 to reach a volume of 80.3 billion transactions. In 2011, the global fast food market is forecasted to have a volume of 86.4 billion transactions, an increase of 7.6 percent since 2006. Sales of QSR's account for 67.4 percent of the global fast food markets value. America is the most lucrative regional market, generating 63.1 percent of the global fast food market revenues.[7] According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), FAFH increased from 33 percent of total food expenditures in 1970 to 47 percent by 2003, with most occurring at table service and fast food restaurants (Binkley, 2008).

A rapid rise has been observed in the number of western fast food chains serving the big cities, and increasingly spreading out into smaller towns with significant implications for urban diets. The observed growth in fast food chains does not derive only from multi-national corporations, such as McDonald's, but also from domestic firms which are copying the products and operational procedures of their foreign competitors (Pingali and Khwaja 2004). While the presence of large retail outlets and fast-food chains respond to consumer demand for their products and services, they also influence the dietary patterns in developing countries. Studies show that about 75 percent of a person's daily requirement for salt may be provided in one processed meal purchased from a retail outlet. Fast foods are also rich in animal fat and sugar. Their regular consumption can certainly be a cause for concern from the point of view of nutrition.

In light of the discussions above, the fact is clear the fast food industry has been experiencing steady growth. But the growth rate has seen a significant decline over the past couple of years, reflecting the maturity of the industry. This inevitable stagnation has been caused by several factors such as over saturation, slowing economy, anti-westernization, the rise of fast casual restaurants, and obesity. The various players in the category have been trying to combat the losses due to over saturation, anti-westernization, and the rise of fast casual restaurants by developing

new products, pricing strategies, and cutting food and labor costs. But obesity remains as the greatest threat to the long term future of the industry as it continues to come under fire for offering high calorie food that lacks nutrition. The drastic rise in obesity has caught the attention of many lawmakers, parents, doctors, lawyers, and activists. This attention has caused fast food to become the main cause of obesity in the public's eye, which has tarnished the industry's image. These pose short-term and long-term risks to the industry. Successfully addressing these issues would affect the industry in areas besides sales and profits as well.

3. Fast Food Consumption in Bangladesh

The fast food culture started in Bangladesh in the nineties and became very popular. Fast food affects a community in many ways. It is mainly geared towards the younger end of the market and the employees of the fast paced corporate world. Fast food can be clearly distinguished from snack/confectionery items by its perishable nature. Starting around 1990's, the fast food culture in Bangladesh has taken the country by storm. The first fast food shops started their businesses in the Bailey (a name of a road) road. After that the number of fast food shops started to grow exponentially. Local entrepreneurs were leaders in pioneering the fast food industry of Bangladesh. New brands i.e. Swiss, Helvetia etc. were to name some Bangladeshi fast food shops. In early 2000, Bangladesh saw the entry of the first international brand of fast food franchise come into the country. Pizza Hut and then KFC came into the Bangladeshi market having franchise with Transcom Foods Limited (TFL).

Both Pizza Hut and KFC are subsidiaries of the world's largest restaurant company Yum! Restaurants International. TFL has opened 3 Pizza Hut and 3 KFC outlets in Bangladesh in a span of five years. Pizza Hut, the first International Chain Restaurant in Bangladesh, opened its flagship restaurant in 2003 at Gulshan in Dhaka. Pizza Hut has over 12,000 outlets across 100 countries. Following its grand success in Dhaka, the Chittagong outlet was opened in September 2005. The third Pizza Hut restaurant was launched in Dhanmondi, Dhaka in January 2008. Meanwhile Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) stands for high-quality fast food in a popular array of complete meals to enrich the consumer's everyday life. TFL successfully launched the flagship KFC on South Avenue, Gulshan in September 2006; gaining attention of the people with its taste, high standard of hygiene, cleanliness, interior and affordable pricing. Following its enormous success in Gulshan, the second outlet was opened in Dhanmondi in November 2008 and yet another in Banani in December 2008.[8]

There were two major shakeups in the fast food industry as well as the whole food industry. In September 2005, the government of Bangladesh started a major drive against the individuals and the organizations that were found adulterating fruits, using pesticides, unauthorized food colors and food items that expired their date of uses etc. These conducts were serious threats against the public health. Many renowned restaurants and fast food shops were found guilty and these events were highly publicized. This lead to the mistrust of the common people towards a temporary halt in the fast food industry. Due to this shakeup, many middle and small fast food shops were out of the business and only a few restaurants, mostly the expensive and franchise ones, were left standing.

Fast food shops in the city had incurred heavy losses following surprise raids by mobile courts. The number of customers had dropped significantly at popular fast food destinations of Bailey Road and Gulshan after mobile courts in separate drives found unhygienic conditions prevailing at some of the outlets and adulterated, stale or date expired items being used to prepare snacks. The normally buzzing snack shops at Bailey Road no longer draw the same attraction after September 2005. The mobile court's raids and reports in the media had severely damaged the fast food shops reputation, resulting in loss of almost 60 percent of business that month. A big portion of the customers at these shops were teenagers and students, many of which had stopped going to the snack shops following the news reports of stale items being sold. Many shop owners meanwhile complained that the magistrates, inspectors and the newsmen never want to hear their side of the story.

According to some owners of fast food shops in Bailey Road, the charges the mobile court officials were bringing against fast food shops were not entirely fair. Some owners alleged that mobile teams were demanding money openly. The fines would increase if anyone argues with them[9].

The people of Bangladesh were shocked as the mobile court team sent out to stop food adulteration and contamination in eateries and processed-food factories around town revealed their findings. The mobile teams

included an official from the Bangladesh Standards Testing Institute (BSTI), a department of public health official, a DCC official as well as members of the police and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and was led by two magistrates[10]. The mobile court operations also expanded to other cities outside the capital. The mobile court of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), conducting drive against adulterated food, fined businesses as the discrepancy in maintaining regulations occured.[11]

Sales in Dhaka city's fast food shops took a further fall as customers continued to ignore chicken items due to bird flu fear, hitting hard the booming fast-food business.[12]

4. Consumers' Preferences on Fast Food

Consumers' preferences on fast food are very strong in some societies. This is because of the parallel changes in working and social life and habits of dining out. In social context, gradually the numbers of working families are increasing worldwide (Stamoulis, Kostas G. *et al.,* 2004). This allows the families less time to cook and eat at home. Now we need to socialize with people around us, colleagues and friends, neighbors more than before, for business or social purposes. And the customs of today are to do the socialization over some food items away from home, as people tend to keep business separate from their families. Due to shortage of time, many modern nuclear families tend to prefer convenient, quick meals to rather traditional long meals. Here nuclear family refers to the type of family consisting of only husband, wife and one to two children. Today people prefer to have dinner in front of TV with the family members than to have dinner in the dining table i.e. TV dinner. Moreover, more and more families tend to hold programs i.e. birthdays, anniversaries, other special occasions etc. out of home i.e. in a restaurant or any other places instead of home due to convenience and privacy. Influences on the choice to dine out include insufficient time to cook at home, opportunities to socialize or conduct business, convenience or the need for a quick meal, enjoyment and family outings or celebrations (birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions). Such changes in dining habits have led restaurants and other dining-out units to offer a greater variety of foods and beverages, providing customers with many more choices. This has encouraged people not to cook at their homes

Urbanization can significantly influence the consumption of fast foods. A significant proportion of the addition to the world population between 2000 and 2030 will be located in urban areas. Projections show that the urbanization rates will increase between 2000 and 2030 relative to that of the past 30 years. The urban population, estimated at about 2.9 billion in 2000, is projected to reach 4.9 billion by 2030. Most of the increase will be in the cities of developing countries, the population of which is expected to increase from 1.9 billion people in 2000 to about 3.9 billion people by 2030 (UNFPA, 2001). This change will account for almost the entire increment in developing countries' population growth. At the beginning of the 1960s, only about 20 percent of the population of the developing countries lived in city areas. By 2000, the share had risen to nearly 40 percent and is expected to rise to 56 percent by 2030. The comprehensive picture of a rapidly urbanizing world covers up large regional differences. Urbanization will proceed gradually in many developed and transition countries in future, where the vast majority of the population is already living in urban areas. At the other end of the scale are sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, where urban populations will be growing at an astonishing rate of nearly 5 percent per year (Stamoulis, Kostas G. *et al.,* 2004). The projection is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 4.1: Trends in Urbanization

Source: UN World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision (http://esa.un.org/unpp)

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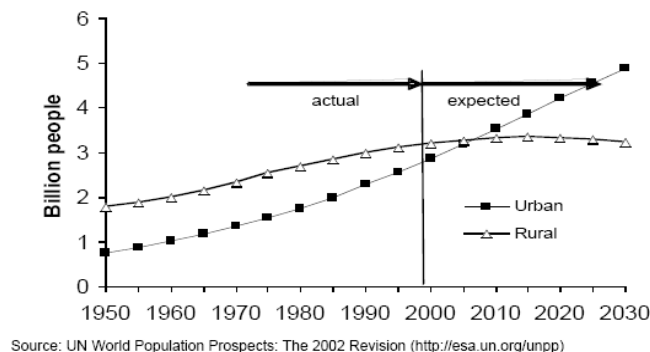
Urbanization is also accompanied by changes in habitual dietary practices and food consumption patterns. Important forces driving the differences between rural and urban diets are the higher average wages and opportunity cost of time in urban areas and the higher participation of women in the labor force. Other determinants of the structure of diets in urban areas include demographic factors, the organization of food markets, and the lower relative prices of processed foods relative to staples in urban areas relative to rural areas.

All factors above induce a move away from traditional time-consuming food preparation towards precooked, convenience food at home but also fast food, snacks, and street foods for outside meals. Urbanization is now recognized to contribute to an increase in the consumption of food cooked outside the house and an increase in purchase and consumption of precooked and processed meals. Evidence shows that following internal migration from rural to urban areas, the shift in the dietary pattern that leads to marked changes in the intakes of sugar, salt and fat by urban populations is related to the length of stay in urban areas and influenced very strongly by the access to mass media such as television ownership. Urban diets are higher in fat content, higher in sugar and salt content, and contain higher amounts of meat and dairy products than rural ones and contain lower amounts of fiber and higher intakes of alcohol (Popkin 2002). International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) calculations have shown that countries with an urban population share of 75 percent or more consume about 4 percent points more calories from vegetable and animal fat and 12 percent points more energy from sweeteners than countries with an urban population share of 25 percent. The trend towards FAFH is also strong among the poorest segments of urban populations. Empirical evidence shows that smaller and poorer households have higher expenditure shares on prepared street foods. Data from an Accra-wide survey show that households in the lowest income quartile consumed 31.4 percent of their caloric intake away from home, more than any other income group (Maxwell et al. 1998). Mostly for the urban underprivileged, the shift towards fast and convenience foods is also a shift away from fresh fruits and vegetables, pulses, potatoes etc. towards a diet with increasing consumption of sugar, salt and fat (Smil 2000). It is also often a shift from a diet rich in fiber, minerals and vitamins towards one rich in energy, saturated fats and cholesterol.

There is considerable evidence that the meals eaten in restaurants are generally of lower nutritional quality than meals eaten at home. That is mainly due to higher fat and calorie content (Lin, Guthrie, and Frazao, 1999). Fast foods are frequently linked to the epidemic of obesity. But there has been very little scientific appraisal of a possible causal role (Prentice, 2003). Consumption of fast food among children in the United States seems to have an adverse effect on dietary quality in ways that plausibly could increase risk for obesity (Bowman, et. al., 2004). Kuchler claims that promotion strategies by fast food companies are at least partly responsible for rising obesity rates and these claims are now common (Kuchler, et. al., 2005). A logical response would be to lower the energy density of foods and reduce portion sizes, the precise opposite of fast food marketing practices. The introduction of low fat, low-energy foods is a trend being pursued successfully and profitably by some parts of the food industry. Fast food companies should be encouraged to adopt a similar strategy focusing in particular on reducing energy density which can be achieved by reducing fat and added sugars and increasing the fruit and vegetable content of meals. There are many companies with their new healthy food options proving that this is not incompatible with commercial success. A few other outlets are starting to introduce a limited range of lighter options with lower energy density but the core menus remain unchanged. However, a much more drastic approach is immediately needed worldwide and across the remainder of the fast food industry. Particular attention should be given on products targeted to young family members and adolescents. Fast food retailers have a global impact. They may also target the most vulnerable members of society in terms of obesity. By accepting their share of global responsibility and by taking constructive steps to address the issue, the fast food retailers could greatly assist in international efforts to combat the obesity pandemic (Prentice, 2003).

Consumption of fast foods, which have high energy densities and glycemic loads, and expose customers to excessive portion sizes are greatly contributing to and escalating the rates of overweight and obesity in the USA. However, whether an association exists between fast food consumption and weight gain is unclear. Sixteen studies (six cross sectional, seven prospective cohort, three experimental) meeting methodological and relevance criteria were selected for inclusion in a systematic review. There are more research needed to be conducted specifically in regard to effects of fast food consumption among subpopulations such as children and adolescents. Sufficient evidence exists for public health recommendations to limit fast food consumption and facilitate healthier menu selection. As the fast food industry continues to increase both domestically and abroad, the scientific findings and

corresponding public health implications of the association between fast food consumption and weight are critical (Rosenheck, 2008).

When there was not enough time to prepare a traditional meal, variety of fast foods were chosen by girls and young women of African and South Asian countries (Lawrence, J. M. *et al.,* 2007). It indicated that all the communities in the study took time, price, health and availability into consideration when making food purchases. Many issues that affect the food choice of people who move to the UK are common within different ethnic groups. Richard's (2009) study considered only measurable attributes of fast food—nutritional profiles, vendor identity or the distance from a consumer's home. However, the study suggested that more detailed experimental analysis would be able to determine the effect of perceptual attributes on consumer demand as well. Specific qualities of taste, consumer self-esteem, the reputation of each restaurant and other non-measurables may be relevant to a comprehensive treatment of an attribute-based fast food model.

Clark and Wood (1998) comment on the basis of their evidence, that food quality and value appear to be the most significant restaurant attributes. Lewis (1981) considered five factors in this regard such as food quality, menu variety, price, atmosphere and convenience. Food quality was found to be the most important attribute influencing customers' selection of a restaurant. Auty (1992) undertook a study of customers' perceptions of restaurants and the way that they select a particular eating place. Food type and quality were the most frequently cited variables, regardless of the occasion for dining out, but image and atmosphere or style were critical in the final choice between restaurants serving a similar quality and type of food. Carey and Genevieve (1995) determined food quality to be the most important variable in restaurant choice. The five factors most commonly included in respondents' rankings were: (1) range of food; (2) quality of food; (3) price of food; (4) atmosphere; and (5) speed of service. The quality of food and types of food were the key determinants of restaurant choice/customer loyalty in this study. In general, evidence from all these studies suggests that the more concrete factors play the most important role in the consumer's choice of a dining-out unit. Besides the factors related to the dining-out unit itself, those related to the customer's socio-cultural background are also influential in their dining-out behavior. For example, attitudes, social values, family influences, group influences, social class and cultural background are also important in determining choice (Buttle 1986; Bareham 1995). During the past several decades, physical environment has become an important area in the study of hospitality and retail environment, with researchers beginning to study the influence of such physical environments of a restaurant or store environment on consumer behavior (Turley and Milliman, 2002). A conceptual framework is given in Appendix 1.

5. Research Methods

This research selected the local fast food shops which were operating for a long time here in Bangladesh in the capital city of Dhaka. The chains of fast food stores in Dhaka city mostly residing on the Baily road like the ancient Swiss, Capital, Bamboo Castle, Palki, Dahlia, Golpea, Euro Hut, Golden Food and Dominous pizza came up[13]. For this research, we needed to have secondary data regarding the fast food industry of Bangladesh. It was assumed that there were some forms of owner's association will be operating in the capital city as well as the whole country-given the vast spread of the fast food shops. However, the observation shows that the major fast food shops in the capital city Dhaka do not have any fast food owners' association.

The main hypothesis of this study is that the fast food preferences of the university students are influence by the number of factors. The followings are specific hypotheses of this study.

H_1: Brand Reputation determines the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh
H_2: Nearness and Accessibility determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh
H_3: Similar Taste of Fast Food determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh
H_4: Cost and Quality Relationship determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh

H₅: Discount and Taste determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh

H₆: Clean and Hygiene determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh

H₇: Salesmanship and Decoration determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh

H₈: Fat and Cholesterol determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh

H₉: Self-Service determine the consumers' preference in consuming fast food by the university students of Bangladesh

For secondary data we conducted literature review. We collected data from various national newspaper articles. Several international journals, scholarly articles, industry specific magazines and books related to the fast food industry, both worldwide and the Bangladeshi market were included in the literature review. The primary data for this research were collected from the fast food consumers, specifically the university students in Dhaka city, the capital of Bangladesh through structured questionnaire. To conduct this study, a total of 250 respondents from different leading private universities in Dhaka city were interviewed with a structured questionnaire. The samples were selected using random sampling method. Five-point likert scales were used in designing the questionnaire. A total of 33 questions were used in the questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. Direct, one to one personal interviews were conducted among the university students living in Dhaka city to test the attitudes of the consumers' regarding various factors influencing their choice of fast food products.

After collecting the data, it was scrutinized and analyzed using SPSS 12.0. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data. Descriptive statistics such as simple percentage, mean, standard deviation, tabulation etc were used to describe the situation. Multivariate analysis like factor analysis was performed to identify the preference factors of the fast food consumers living. Multiple regressions analyses were conducted to identify the relationship between the factors identified through factor analysis and the overall measure of preference of the respondents. Three regression analyses were done with the factors identified through factor analysis and the dependent variables. Three dependent variables were identified through literature review such as, (i) fast food energies the respondents (ii) when the people are outside their home they prefer fast food and (ii) fast food are good for lifestyle. Although there had been previous researches focusing on the preference factors of consumers of fast foods, no research had been conducted on the subject from the perspective of fast food consumers of Bangladesh. This paper will indeed be the first of its kind. Not only will the paper identify the unique factors that influence the preferences of the consumers of fast food in Bangladesh, but also it will try to explain the factors influence based on the current situation prevailing in the fast food industry of Bangladesh.

6. Results and Discussions

The results of this study were discussed primarily in two following sections such as, results of factor analysis and the results of regression analysis.

6.1 The Results of Factor Analysis

Factor analyses results show that the communalities of the variables are quite high, indicating that the variable used in the data set are highly cohesive in nature. The following factor, the questionnaire item "Consumption of the unwanted fast food items due to friends' influences." has the highest score; 0.726- meaning this factor has the highest importance among all the other factors in the group. The questionnaire items with the higher than average scores (0.6-0.7) are the following- meaning these factors have the higher importance among all the other factors in the group. They are- Costlier fast foods offer better quality (.616), Avoiding fast food shops that have past records of using hazardous materials in their products. (.645), Preferring the fast food shops that are close to own university (.622), Preferring the fast food shops that are easily accessible from anywhere in Dhaka city (.650), Favorite fast food item purchased from any fast food shop offers the same tastes (.617), Even though not liking the food, like to go to the well reputed fast food shops (.639), Willing to try new fast food items only from well reputed fast food shops (.652), Willing to buy any fast food from well reputed fast food shops (.661), Willing to go to the fast food shops that offer group discounts (.604), Going to the not favored fast food shops due to friend's influences (.639),

Avoiding the fast food items that carry the most fat and cholesterol (.624), Preferring the fast food shops that have smart personnel working (.692) and Preferring the fast food shops with self service (.619). The questionnaire items with the middle scores (0.5-0.6) are the following, - meaning these factors have the moderate importance among all the other factors in the group. They are- Quick delivery of the item ordered in a fast food shop is important (.577), Preference of the fast food shops that manages the long cues efficiently (.556), Price of favorite fast food is acceptable (.565), Preferring the fast food shops that use fresh ingredients everyday (.596), Preferring the fast food shops that offer privacy (.560), Preferring the fast food shops that are located in the busiest areas of Dhaka city (.583), Preferring items from well known fast food shops to little known fast food shops (.590), Considering the food values of the fast food items regularly consumed (.549), Preferring the fast foods that are most tasty (.548) and Avoiding the tasty fast food items that are not easily digestible (.597). The questionnaire items with the lower scores (below .5) are the following - meaning these factors have the lowest importance among all the other factors in the group. They are- Fast food outlets with clean hygiene records are more preferred by consumers (.478), Clean packaging of the fast food is important to consumers (.486), The service people present in the fast food shop is important to consumers (.489), Favorite fast food item offers a unique taste to consumers (.447), Not consumption of favorite fast food item if it does not taste right to consumers (.370) and Considering the lighting, decoration etc. of the fast food shops before revisiting them (.497).

Factor analysis identified 9 factors that are related to the consumers' preferences related to fast food in Bangladesh. The total variance of the factors is 58.31 percent. From the table we can conclude that the following 9 factors constitute 58.316 percent of the total variance (Table 6.1). Brand reputation is the most important factor of the fast food consumers in Bangladesh followed by nearness and accessibility, similar taste of fast food, cost and quality relationship, discount and taste, clean and hygiene, salesmanship and decoration, fat and cholesterol, and self-service.

Table 6.1 Factors related to Consumers' Preferences on Fast Food in Bangladesh

Factors	Eigenvalues	percent of Variance	Cumulative percent
1. Brand reputation	4.088	13.626	13.626
2. Nearness and accessibility	2.554	8.513	22.139
3. Similar taste of fast food	2.331	7.770	29.909
4. Cost and quality relationship	1.837	6.123	36.032
5. Discount and Taste	1.738	5.794	41.826
6. Clean and Hygiene	1.556	5.186	47.012
7. Salesmanship and Decoration	1.221	4.069	51.081
8. Fat and Cholesterol	1.150	3.832	54.914
9. Self-service	1.021	3.402	58.316

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Brand reputation is the number one factor used by the consumers of fast food in selecting the item. This factor was constituted by the variables like reputation of the fast food shop for both new fast food and old fast food (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 Factor 1: Brand Reputation

Variables	Factor loading
I will buy any fast food from well reputed fast food shops.	.763
I am willing to try new fast food items only from well reputed fast food shops.	.712
Even though I do not like the food, I like to go to the well reputed fast food shops.	.642
I prefer items from well known fast food shops than to little known fast food shops.	.621

Nearness and accessibility is another factor of preference of taking fast food in Bangladesh (Table 6.3). Tables 6.4 to 6.10 are shown in appendices.

Table 6.3 Factor 2: Nearness and Accessibility

Variables	Factor loading
I prefer the fast food shops that are close to my university.	.768
I prefer the fast food shops that are easily accessible from anywhere in Dhaka city.	.753
I prefer the fast food shops that offer privacy.	.659

6.2 Results of Regression Analysis

Three regression analyses were done with the factors identified through factor analysis and three dependent variables. The dependent variables are (i) fast food energies the respondents (ii) prefers fast food when the people are outside their home and (ii) fast food are good for lifestyle. These relationships are discussed in the following sections.

6.2.1 Fast Food Helps Energize University Students

First retrogression analysis was run between the factors identified through factor analysis and the energy impact of fast food. The analysis revealed that the nine factors can explain up to 22.9 percent of the dependent variable (R^2 22.90 percent). This indicates that the factors related to students' preferences have about 23 percent impact on the energy by fast food of the students (Table 6.11).

Table 6.11 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.478(a)	.229	.200	1.065

a Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 9 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 8 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 7 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1.

Table 6.12 shows that the preference factors related to the fast food choice of the students are as whole significantly related to the overall energizing capacity of the fast food.

Table 6.12 ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	80.426	9	8.936	7.879	.000(a)
	Residual	271.076	239	1.134		
	Total	351.502	248			

a Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 9 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 8 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 7 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1
b Dependent Variable: Fast food helps me to energize whenever I study.

Table 6.13 shows that the factors like brand reputation, nearness and accessibility, similar taste of fast food, and cost and quality relationship are the significant factors. This means that these factors have significant relationship with the energy gained by the fast food by the students.

Table 6.13 Coefficients (a)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.

	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.815	.067		41.713	.000
1. Brand reputation	*.151*	*.068*	*.127*	*2.234*	*.026**
2. Nearness and accessibility	*.302*	*.068*	*.254*	*4.468*	*.000**
3. Similar taste of fast food	*.322*	*.068*	*.271*	*4.763*	*.000**
4. Cost and quality relationship	*.296*	*.068*	*.248*	*4.370*	*.000**
5. Discount and Taste	.056	.068	.047	.834	.405
6. Clean and Hygiene	.029	.068	.025	.432	.666
7. Salesmanship and Decoration	-.035	.068	-.029	-.511	.610
8. Fat and Cholesterol	.036	.068	.030	.533	.595
9. Self-service	-.112	.068	-.094	-1.655	.099

a Dependent Variable: Fast food helps me to energize whenever I study.
* Significant

6.2.2 Prefer Fast Food whenever they are Out of Home

Second regression analysis was run between the preference factors of the students and the preference of the fast food when the students are out of their home. The analysis revealed that the nine factors can explain up to 9.3 percent of this dependent variable (Table 6.14).

Table 6.14 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.304(a)	.093	.058	1.027

a Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 9 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 8 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 7 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1

Table 6.15 shows that the preference factors related to the fast food choice of the students are as whole significantly related to the preference of the fast food when the students are out of their home.

Table 6.15 ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	25.694	9	2.855	2.708	.005(a)
	Residual	251.968	239	1.054		
	Total	277.663	248			

a Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score 9 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 8 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 7 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1 , REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1

b Dependent Variable: I prefer fast food whenever I am out of home.

Table 6.16 shows that the factors such as, brand reputation and discount and taste are the significant factors. This means that these factors have significant relationship with the preference of fast food of the students whenever they are out of their houses. This means that brand reputation and discount and taste induces the students to consume fast food when they are out of their home.

Table 6.16 Coefficients (a)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.337	.065		51.289	.000
1. Brand reputation	*.157*	*.065*	*.148*	*2.409*	*.017**
2. Nearness and accessibility	.019	.065	.018	.296	.767
3. Similar taste of fast food	.065	.065	.061	.996	.320
4. Cost and quality relationship	.063	.065	.060	.972	.332
5. Discount and Taste	*.192*	*.065*	*.182*	*2.949*	*.004**
6. Clean and Hygiene	.056	.065	.053	.855	.393
7. Salesmanship and Decoration	.090	.065	.085	1.373	.171
8. Fat and Cholesterol	-.109	.065	-.103	-1.664	.097
9. Self-service	-.102	.065	-.097	-1.569	.118

a Dependent Variable: I prefer fast food whenever I am out of home.
* Significant

6.2.3 Fast Foods are Good for Lifestyle

Third regression analysis was run between the preference factors of the students and good impact of fast food on the students' lifestyle. The analysis revealed that the nine factors can explain up to 18.5 percent of this dependent variable (Table 6.17).

Table 6.17 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.430(a)	.185	.154	.967

a Predictors: (Constant), REGR factor score   9 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   8 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   7 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   6 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   5 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   4 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   3 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   2 for analysis 1, REGR factor score   1 for analysis 1

Table 6.18 shows that the preference factors related to the positive impact of fast food on the students' lifestyle are as whole significantly related to the preference of the fast food when the students are out of their home.

Table 6.18 ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.575	9	5.619	6.015	.000(a)
	Residual	223.280	239	.934		
	Total	273.855	248			

Table 6.19 shows that the factors such as, nearness and accessibility and cost and quality relationship are the significant factors. This means that these factors have significant relationship with the lifestyle of the students.

Table 6.19 Coefficients (a)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.024	.061		49.371	.000
1. Brand reputation	.030	.061	.029	.491	.624
2. *Nearness and accessibility*	*.228*	*.061*	*.217*	*3.710*	*.000**
3. Similar taste of fast food	.066	.061	.063	1.070	.286
4. *Cost and quality relationship*	*.342*	*.061*	*.326*	*5.577*	*.000**
5. Discount and Taste	.092	.061	.087	1.494	.137
6. Clean and Hygiene	-.097	.061	-.092	-1.579	.116
7. Salesmanship and Decoration	.090	.061	.086	1.467	.144
8. Fat and Cholesterol	.025	.061	.024	.403	.687
9. Self-service	-.056	.061	-.054	-.920	.359

a Dependent Variable: I believe that fast foods are good for my lifestyle.
* Significant

6.3 Revised Model of Consumers' Preferences on Fast Food Products

Our study conforms to the model of factors influencing the preferences of consumers of fast food products. But at the same time it also omits and introduces several factors that are unique to the situation of Bangladeshi fast food market. Our revised model is presented below-

Factors (in order of importance)

Brand reputation
Nearness and Accessibility
Similar Taste of Fast Food
Cost and Quality Relationship
Discount & Taste
Clean and Hygiene
Salesmanship and Decoration
Fat & Cholesterol
Self-Service

Other Environmental (uncontrollable) Factors

Fast Food Consumers' Preferences

Consumers' Decision to Purchase and Consume Fast Food

Positive/Negative Feedback to the Decision Made.

Reinforced preferences to previous (incase of Positive Feedback)/other factors (incase of Negative Feedback)
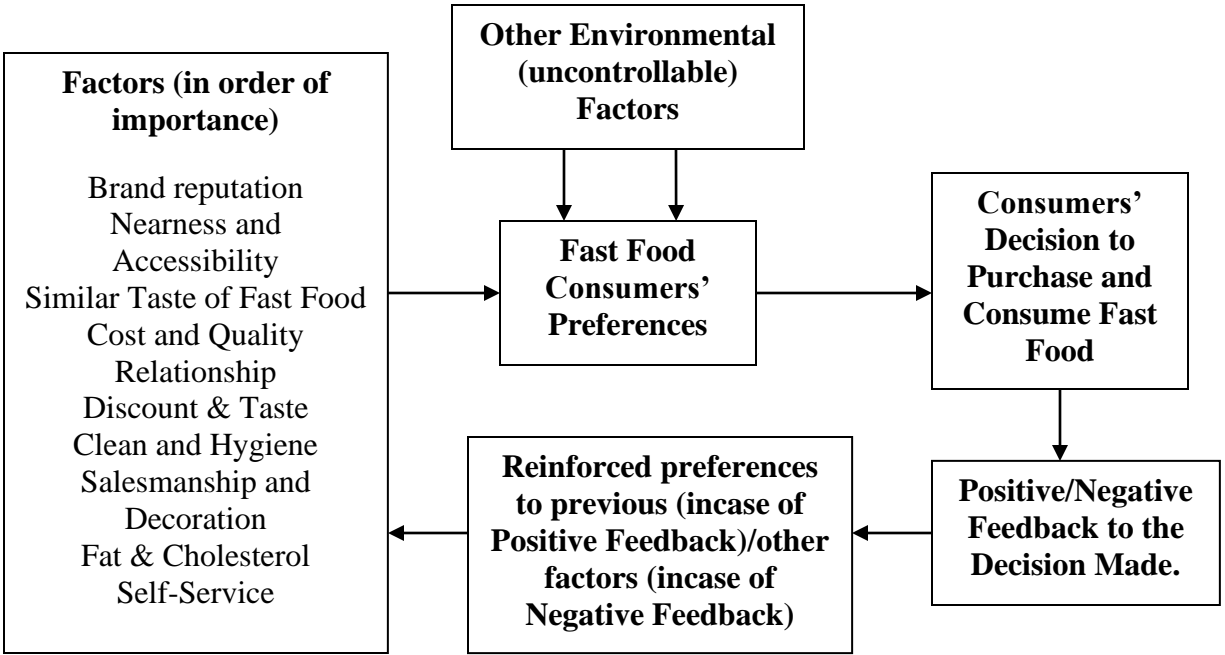
Figure-3: Model of Factors Influencing the Consumers of Fast Food Products in Bangladesh

This study identified that brand reputation is the most important factor of the fast food consumers in Bangladesh followed by nearness and accessibility, similar taste of fast food, cost and quality relationship, discount and taste, clean and hygiene, salesmanship and decoration, fat and cholesterol, and self-service. Factor analyses identified nine factors that are related to the consumers' preferences related to fast food selection by the students in Bangladesh. Brand reputation is the most important factor of the fast food consumers in Bangladesh followed by nearness and accessibility, similar taste of fast food, cost and quality relationship, discount and taste, clean and hygiene, salesmanship and decoration, fat and cholesterol, and self-service.

Brand reputation of the fast food is number one factor used by the students in selecting the items. Regression analysis between the factors identified through factor analysis and the energy impact of fast food are conducted. It identified that the factors related to students' preferences have about 23 percent impact on the energy of the students. The preference factors related to the fast food choice of the students are as a whole significantly related to the overall energizing capacity of the fast food. The factors like brand reputation, nearness and accessibility, similar taste of fast food, and cost and quality relationship are the significant factors. This means that these factors have significant relationship with the energy gained by the students by consuming fast food.

Regression analysis between the preference factors of the students and the preference of the fast food when they are out of their home shows that the preference factors are as a whole significantly related to the preference of the fast food when the students are out of their home. The factors such as, brand reputation and discount and taste are the significant factors independently. This means that the factors have significant relationship with the preference of fast food of the students whenever they are out of their houses. This also indicates that brand reputation, discount, and taste induce the students to consume fast food when they are out of their home. Regression analysis between the preference factors of the students and good impact of fast food on the students' lifestyle were also run. The preference factors related to the positive impact of fast food on the students' lifestyle are as a whole significantly related to the preference of the fast food when the students are out of their home. The factors such as, nearness and accessibility, and cost and quality relationship are the significant factors independently. This means that the factors have significant relationship with the lifestyle of the students. If there is a change there will be change in their lifestyle.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Fast food consumers of Bangladesh, especially the university students, considered brand reputation as the most important factor when choosing fast foods followed by nearness and accessibility, similarity in taste, cost and quality relationship, discount and taste, clean and hygiene, salesmanship and decoration, fat and cholesterol, and self-service. The recent upset in the fast food industry of Bangladesh that was created by the discovery of unethical practices conducted by several fast food businesses resulted in consumers putting their trusts on renowned fast food brands only. Thereby it is seen that the fast food houses with reputed brand name and recognition i.e. KFC, BFC, Pizza Hut, Coopers etc. are carrying out their businesses in a usual manner even in the toughest time of the industry. The majority of the fast food brands that passed with flying colors during the mobile courts inspection for quality maintenance were able to either establish or revitalize their brand reputation. Eventually as suggested by our research findings, our sample consumers i.e. university students will be drawn to such fast food brands as they (the university students) put high importance on brand reputation as factor when choosing fast foods for consumption.

Besides the brand reputation, the other important factors were nearness and accessibility, similar taste of fast food, cost and quality relationship, discount and taste. Incase of nearness or proximity and accessibility factor, consumers prefer to go to the fast food outlets that are close from their own home or study institutions. It is seen that the fast food shops in Bangladesh has already considering this factor by establishing their outlets near big corporate houses and private universities. Especially in Dhaka city this practice is seen where in Baily road majority of fast food shops started business. Near Baily road, there are 3 girls' school and collages, and 3 boys' school and 2 collages in walking distance. Almost similar situation prevails in Gulshan banana area of the city where KFC and Pizza Hut outlets are situated near 3 private universities. It is understandable that the students studying in these institutions will consider these nearby fast food outlets whenever they decide to consume fast foods. There is an opportunity here however, for new fast food shops to compete with the existing fast food outlets. Since establishing a new outlet in an already competitive business space is expensive and difficult, the new fast food businesses can introduce mobile fast food outlets. Through mobile fast food outlets, new fast food businesses can deliver their fast foods that are already cooked fresh in their shops, but kept hot and delivered to the students instantly with their own choice of accompanying taste enhancers i.e. tomato sauce, cheese etc. These mobile fast food outlets could be on top of a mini-truck, van etc.

The similar taste of fast food factor refers to the fact that no matter which fast food outlet a particular fast food item is bought from, the taste should be similar. For example, if a chicken burger is bought from an outlet of KFC, the taste would be similar to any other chicken burger bought from any other KFC outlet. The taste could differ from other fast food shops as the different business use taste as differentiating factor incase of food items. But the businesses have to keep in mind that too much difference in taste incase of similar fast food items will make the consumers confused.

The cost and quality relationship is also an important factor considered by the consumers of fast food. If the cost of a fast food item is high, it is usually considered to be carrying high quality and vice versa. So, the businesses of fast food products have to be careful in setting the prices of the fast food items. The pricing should be such as it offers the right amount to value to the consumers in a competitive price that at the same time ensures adequate profit margins for the fast food businesses.

Finally in terms of discount and taste factor, the consumers consider the availability of discounts in fast food outlets. Usually these discounts are offered as group discounts i.e. arranging a party or social gathering at a reduced price package etc. Consumers consider this option when choosing fast food products. They might not immediately use this factor but it puts the fast food shop in their consideration set for later use.

This study recommends that the fast food producers or distributors at Dhaka should focus more on the brand reputation, nearness or proximity and accessibility, cost, quality, discount, and similarity in taste factors. If they are able to ensure or fulfill these needs, university students of Bangladesh will be induced to buy and consume fast food whenever they are out of their houses. However, there is an ample scope to conduct study on the preference factors used by the office-goers, housewives, and or visitors in buying fast food in Bangladesh to determine if there are any more common or unique factors prevailing among these different groups that might be important in making decisions regarding the choice of fast food products in Bangladesh.
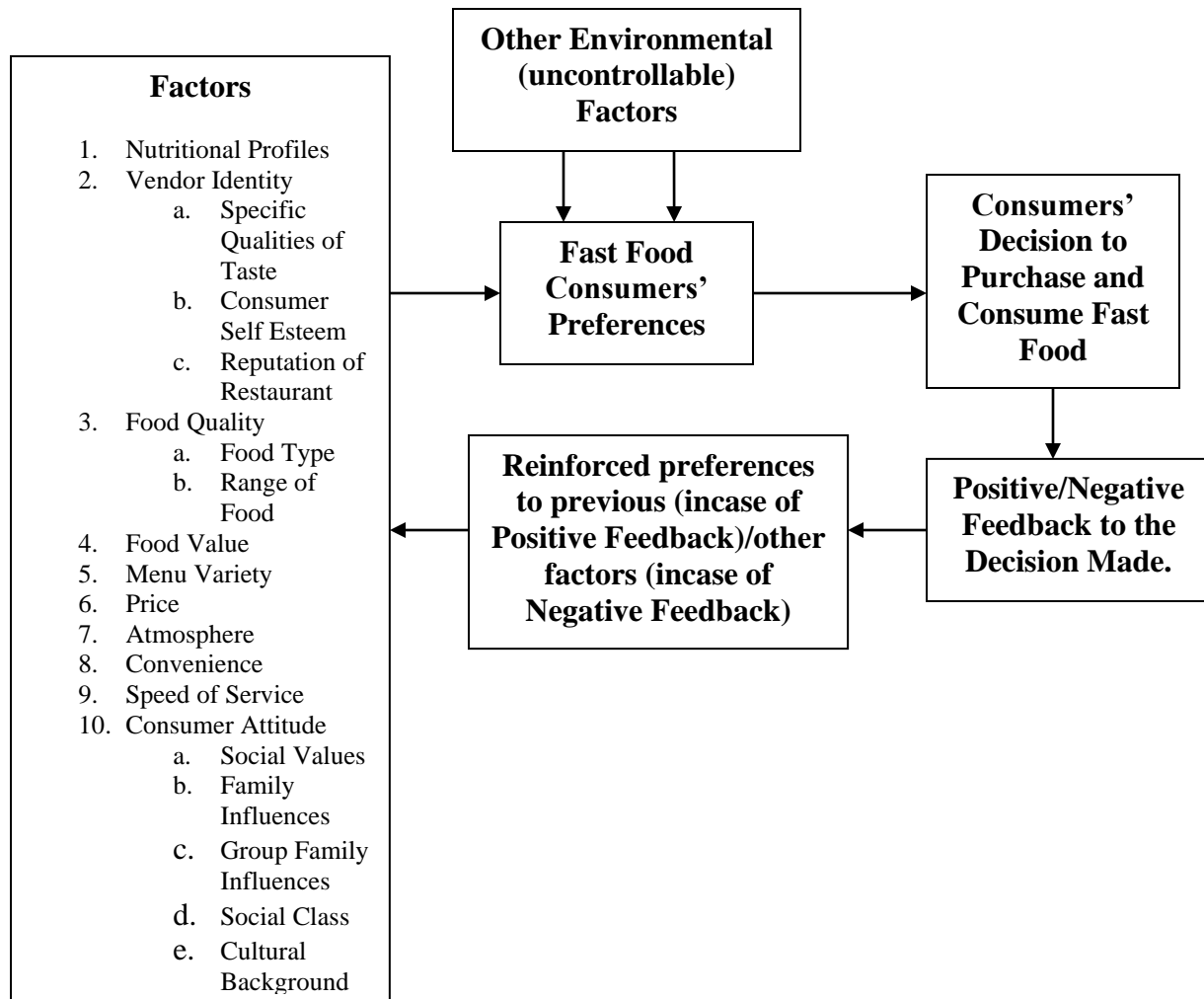
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Footnotes

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Appendices

Factors	Other Environmental (uncontrollable) Factors		Consumers' Decision to Purchase and Consume Fast Food

Appendix 1: A Conceptual Model of Factors Influencing the Consumers of Fast Food Products

Table 5.4 Similar Taste of Fast Food

Variables	Factor loading
My favorite fast food item purchased from any fast food shop offers me the same tastes.	.689
I go to the fast food shops that my friends like but I don't.	.686
I consume the fast food items that my friends like but I don't.	.675
I prefer the fast food shops that are located in the busiest areas of Dhaka city.	.422
I consider the food values of the fast food items I regularly consume.	.417

Table 5.5 Cost and quality relationship

Variables	Factor loading
Costlier fast foods offer better quality.	.745
Price of mine favorite fast food is acceptable to me.	.720
Quick delivery of the item I order in a fast food shop is important to me.	.498
I like the fast food shops that manage the long cues efficiently.	.497

Table 5.6 Discount and Taste

Variables	Factor loading
I go to the fast food shops that offer group discounts.	.733
My favorite fast food item offers a unique taste to me.	.625

Table 5.7 Clean and Hygiene

Variables	Factor loading
Fast food outlets with clean hygiene records are more preferred by me.	.581
I prefer the fast food shops that use fresh ingredients everyday.	.532
I prefer the fast foods that are most tasty.	.511

Table 5.8 Salesmanship and Decoration

Variables	Factor loading
I prefer the fast food shops that have smart personnel working.	.816
I consider the lighting, decoration etc. of the fast food shops before revisiting them.	.499

Table 5.9 Fat and Cholesterol

Variable	Factor loading
I avoid the fast food items that carry the most fat and cholesterol.	.686

Table 5.10 Self-service

Variable	Factor loading
I prefer the fast food shops with self service.	.697

Appendix 1 Communalities of the variables

	Extraction
Quick delivery of the item I order in a fast food shop is important to me.	.577
I like the fast food shops that manage the long cues efficiently.	.556
Price of mine favorite fast food is acceptable to me.	.565
Costlier fast foods offer better quality.	.616
Fast food outlets with clean hygiene records are more preferred by me.	.478
Clean packaging of the fast food is important to me.	.486
The service people present in the fast food shop is important to me.	.489
I prefer the fast food shops that use fresh ingredients everyday.	.596
I avoid fast food shops that have past records of using hazardous materials in their products.	.645
I prefer the fast food shops that are close to my university.	.622
I prefer the fast food shops that are easily accessible from anywhere in Dhaka city.	.650
I prefer the fast food shops that offer privacy.	.560
I prefer the fast food shops that are located in the busiest areas of Dhaka city.	.583
My favorite fast food item offers a unique taste to me.	.447
My favorite fast food item purchased from any fast food shop offers me the same tastes.	.617
I do not consume my favorite fast food item if it does not taste right to me.	.370
I prefer items from well known fast food shops to little known fast food shops.	.590

Even though I do not like the food, I like to go to the well reputed fast food shops.	.639
I am willing to try new fast food items only from well reputed fast food shops.	.652
I will buy any fast food from well reputed fast food shops.	.661
I go to the fast food shops that offer group discounts.	.604
I consume the fast food items that my friends like but I don't.	.726
I go to the fast food shops that my friends like but I don't.	.639
I consider the food values of the fast food items I regularly consume.	.549
I prefer the fast foods that are most tasty.	.548
I avoid the fast food items that carry the most fat and cholesterol.	.624
I avoid the tasty fast food items that do not suite my stomach.	.597
I prefer the fast food shops that have smart personnel working.	.692
I consider the lighting, decoration etc. of the fast food shops before revisiting them.	.497
I prefer the fast food shops with self service.	.619

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis