

SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR AND CONSUMER CHOICE IN BRANDED VEGETARIAN FOOD RESTAURANTS

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***Abstract:** The Services Sector also has the highest share of 54.6% in the Gross Capital Formation (GCF) of Rs. 35.4 lakhs in 2013-14. The service industries involve the provision of services to businesses as well as final consumers. It includes accounting, mechanic or plumber services, computer services, restaurants, tourism, etc. Hence, a service Industry is one where no goods are produced. The hospitality industry is a several billion dollar industry that mostly depends on the availability of leisure time and disposable income. The marketing mix is the combination of marketing activities that an organization engages in so as to meet the needs of its targeted market. The marketing mix includes sub-mixes of the 7 P's of marketing i.e. the product, its price, place, promotion, people, process & physical distribution. This study encompassed a sample of 80 respondents. The sample was collected using convenience sampling method. The data collected was analyzed using Chi Square and weighted average tool. The preliminary results show that price is the primary factor in determining consumer choice for restaurant meals followed by the use of local food ingredients and the type of restaurant.*

***Keywords:** marketing mix, Customer satisfaction, service industries*

1. INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE MARKETING MIX

The uniqueness of a preference function which identifies how consumers evaluate products in terms of product attributes. The preference function produces a scalar goodness measure for each product in a consumer's choice set. McCarthy (1964) defines marketing mix "as a combination of a set variables related to fulfilling customers' needs". McCarthy and Perreault (1990) further define marketing mix "as the controllable variables that an organization can co-ordinate to satisfy its target market". Marketing mix is also described as the core concept of marketing theory and as the tools and techniques to implement the marketing concepts (McDonald and Tideman, 1993). The traditional concept of marketing mix is 4Ps (i.e. Product, Price, Place and

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Promotion), which is proposed by McCarthy's in 1964 and focused for product marketing. Booms and Bitner (1981) extend the 4Ps concept to specific adaptations for service marketing i.e. 7Ps service marketing mix model by including the additional 3Ps (i.e. People, Physical Evidence and Process).

Economic Survey of India 2014-15: Services Sector

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1.1. The Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry is a broad category of fields within the service industry that includes lodging, restaurants, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise line, and additional fields within the tourism industry. The hospitality industry is a several billion dollar industry that mostly depends on the availability of leisure time and disposable income.

1.1.2 Hotel Saravana Bhavan: P.Rajagopal is the founder of Saravana Bhavan chain of restaurants. He is the son of a farmer who plied onion wholesale trade. He was born in a small village called Punnaiyadi, Tuticorin District, in 1947. In 1973, a few years after he came to Chennai, he started a general provisions store in K K Nagar. In 1981, he started a small hotel in K K Nagar.

Snap shots

- Genre : South Indian Vegetarian Cuisine
- Founded : 1981
- Headquarters : Chennai, India
- Number of locations : 39 (in India),43 (outside India),16 (to be opened)
- Area served : India, Malaysia, Oman, Canada, France, Germany, Singapore, U.A.E, U.K, U.S.A, Kuwait, Qatar
- Products : Food, Sweets, Bakery, Ice Cream
- Services: Fast Food, Take Away, Home Delivery and Outdoor Catering.
- Revenue : Increase \$200 million (2010)
- Employees : 7785 (in India - 2011)

Adyar Ananda Bhavan Sweets and Snacks: is synonymous with commitment to quality and high degree of professionalism and use of state of the art technique in the manufacture of sweets, savouries and snacks. The Seventy five branches of the concern speak volumes about hygiene and service rendered by the organization and the trust and reliability that the customers have reposed. Adyar Ananda Bhavan Sweets and

Snacks caters to all sections of the public, in India - be it the melting mysorepauk of South or the multi variety sonepapdi of the North or the mouth watering rasagolla of East or the ever green dry fruits of the West - Adyar Ananda Bhavan Sweets and Snacks is the pioneer in the manufacture of such sweets in the rich tradition of the respective regions.

Sangeetha Veg. Restaurant was started during the year 1984 in a small way at No.53, Armenian street, Chennai 600 001 as vegetarian restaurant, serving South Indian foods. In no time it has started gaining popularity quickly and growing very fast both in sales and customer base because of its own unique quality of food and personalized service. The name "Sangeetha" getting familiarization with non-resident Indians abroad and because of the dear customer's insistence the group has recently started stretching its hands abroad. From the year 1995 growth of the group in number of restaurants started to gain momentum. At present the group has 21 own restaurants in different status and has two franchisee restaurants within the city of Chennai.

1.2. Review of Literature

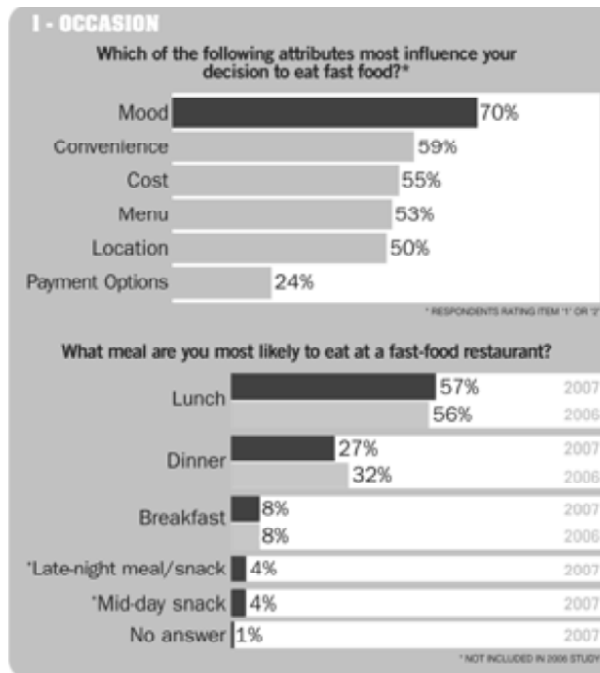
McCarthy's 4Ps mix has increasingly come under attack with the result that different marketing mixes have been put forward for different marketing contexts. It contends that the numerous and ad hoc conceptualizations under-mine the concept of the marketing mix and proposes that **Booms and Bitner's (1981)** 7Ps mix for services be extended to other areas of marketing. **Mohammed and Pervaiz (1995)** show how the 7Ps framework can be applied to consumer goods and reports the results of a survey of UK and European marketing academics which suggest that there is a high degree of dissatisfaction with 4Ps. **Lovelock, (1996); Goldsmith, (1999)** The services marketing mix differs chiefly from the 4Ps by the addition of three new decision responsibilities that must be integrated to form a coherent and effective services marketing mix.

Booms and Bitner (1981) the marketing mix is not a theory of management that has been derived from scientific analysis, but a conceptual framework which highlights the principal decisions that marketing manager's make in configuring their offerings to suit customers' needs. The tools can be used to develop both long term strategies and short term tactical programs. **Booms and Bitner (1981)** defined 7Ps of the marketing mix as follows: **i. Product** - It must provide value to a customer but does not have to be tangible at the same time. Basically, it involves introducing new products or improving the existing products. **ii. Price** - Pricing must be competitive and must entail pro-fit. The pricing strategy can comprise discounts, offers. **iii. Place** - It refers to the place where the customers can buy the product and how the product reaches out to that place. This is done through different channels, like internet, wholesalers and retailers. **iv. Promotion** - It includes the various ways of communicating to the customers of what the company has to offer. It is about communicating about the benefits of using a particular product or service rather than just talking about its features. **v. People** -This refers to the customers, employees, management and

everybody else involved in it. It is essential for everyone to realize that the reputation of the brand that you are involved with is in the people's hands. **vi. Process** - It refers to the methods and process of providing a service and is hence essential to have a thorough knowledge on whether the services are helpful to the customers, if they are provided in time, if the customers are informed in hand about the services and many such things. **Vii. Physical (evidence)** - It refers to the experience of using a product or service. When a service goes out to the customer, it is essential that you help them see what they are buying or not.

Su-Mei Lin (2011) has stated in African Journal of Business Management (28 October 2011) to fast food supplier, the selection of place is very important. Fast food put great emphasis on convenience and speed and the number of place will affect whether it is convenient or not. **Chu Ka Wai's report, (2009)** University of Hong Kong, et al states customer service is one of the "Big Four" attributes of restaurants image that can add value to total customer's experience. **Mamoun N. Akroush (2011)** Jordan Journal of Business Administration, Vol 7, No 1 (2011) that the strongest predictors of the 5Ps model on performance are people (the service providers), service price and service distribution, respectively. A major finding is that the expanded 3Ps (people, process, physical evidence) of service marketing mix have loaded on only one factor named as "people", meanwhile the 4Ps of traditional marketing mix loaded on four factors as theoretically proposed.

Figure 1



1.3. Research Methodology

The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present. Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquires of different kinds. The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no control over the variables; he can only report what has happened or what is happening.

1.4. Research Objectives

- To analyze the factors influencing in selecting a branded vegetarian restaurant using the marketing mix elements.
- To find out the relationship between the Promotion and price towards the customers

1.5. Discussion

H1: The factors influencing more in selecting a branded vegetarian restaurant.

Table 1
Weighted Average Test

<i>Variable/Rank</i>	<i>Ranks</i>
Product	I
Price	II
Place	IV
Promotion	III
Process	VII
People	VI
Physical Evidence	V

Source: Primary data

The table shows the ranks assigned to the variables using the weighted average ranking method. The first rank has been assigned to "Product", the second rank to "Price", third rank to "promotion", fourth rank to "place", fifth rank to "physical evidence", sixth rank to "people" and seventh rank to "process".

H1: To find out the relationship between the Promotion and price towards the customers.

Table 2
Chi-square Table

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Degree of Freedom</i>	<i>Table value</i>	<i>Calculated value</i>	<i>Relationship</i>
Promotion & Price	4	8.488	4.6	Not Significant

Result: Table value is greater than the calculated value, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. There is no significant relationship between the physical evidence and price.

1.5. Findings & Conclusion

In the recent time the Consumer behavior is changed and their eating habits and the perceptions toward the food is changed due to the following reasons

- The increasing number of nuclear families
- Increase growth in the number of employed women
- High Income

The vegetarian food has its challenges, from rising food costs, economic recession and changing perceptions about health. The major problems faced by the Branded food restaurant industry include the growing competitors, health related issues, changing trends, changing consumer preferences, long service hours and profit repatriation. It was found that among the 7Ps, product is the main concern of customers. The core competencies of branded restaurant are quality and taste of the food items. The organization must focus on cost reduction to attract customers and retain market share. The organization could consider the above recommendations to gain more profit. Finally, customer satisfaction is best reflected by the perception of overall service quality; desired self-congruence only plays a minor role. Ultimately, the hotel management wants to improve the loyalty of customers, which can be achieved by improving customer satisfaction and consequently overall service quality. The preliminary results show that price is the primary factor in determining consumer choice for restaurant meals followed by the use of local food ingredients and the type of restaurant.

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