

Consumer Attitude toward Fast Food Consumption: A Study on University Students in Dhaka City

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyze the attitude of the university students regarding fast food consumption in Dhaka city. For the purpose of the study the data were collected from both the private and public universities and the sample size was 360. Factor analysis was conducted to recognize to preference factors of the students regarding their fast food consumption. Results show that 94.2% of the respondents like fast food and 48.10% of them make one to three visits in a month. The study reveals that the most obvious reason for taking fast food is for the sake of convenience. They also give importance to taste, price, food quality, atmosphere, payment method, service quality, location, and atmosphere of the restaurants that help the students to get pleasure and socialize with their classmates. Data suggest that students frequently consume fast food and are willing to give time, effort and price to eat at their favorite restaurant.

Keywords: Consumer Attitude, Fast Food, Bangladesh

INTRODUCTION

Fast food is the type of food which is prepared and served quickly, accessible and cheap. It saves the time of the busy people who have little time to shop or who can't prepare the meals in the same manner as the parents and grand-parents did. The term "fast food" was recognized in a dictionary by Merriam-Webster in 1951. The tendency of taking fast food differs from culture to culture. The habit of eating fast food is changing rapidly, and the demand for fast food is increasing day-by-day in Bangladesh with globalization. The demand and pressures of working life along with time limitation have resulted in the increasing demand of fast food among the people living in the city compared to the rural areas.

In Bangladesh, women are mainly responsible for preparing the meals for the family members throughout the whole day. But due to the presence of dual-earner families and the recognition of women's contribution to the economic stability of the family have led couples to reassess the family and household tasks, and made it necessary for them to consider the career paths of both spouses. Thus each member of a couple must now reconcile the requirements of two work environment, while meeting the family needs. Long working hours and irregular schedules, complication in maintaining a regular meal

pattern, less time and opportunity to participate in family meals prompt alternative to consuming food that is prepared by others and preferably light in nature.

In Bangladesh, there are thirty-five public and ninety-two private universities and millions of students are getting higher education from these institutions. Most of them are located in Dhaka City, and the students are eating at Burger King, KFC, and other fast food places more often. They go to these eating establishments even though they know about the effects of consuming too much fast food and their selection of fast food depends on several factors. Therefore, the present study was designed to identify the factors associated with the consumption of fast food of the university students. The objective of the paper is to explore the attitude of the students toward eating fast food in Dhaka city. The rest of the article is structured as follows. Section two reviews the literature on customer attitudes toward eating fast foods and the later part describes the methodology of the study, the empirical findings, and conclusion.

The objectives of the study:

- To identify the reasons associated with the eating of fast food
- To recognize the factors connected with the selection of fast food restaurant
- To give an overall evaluation of fast food industry in Bangladesh
- To provide viable suggestions for the marketers of fast food products.

Research Hypothesis:

H₁: There is no difference between the factors influencing the attitude of university students toward fast food.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies in the literature have tried to estimate the value of health for individuals under different conceptualizations. Most of the studies conducted regarding fast food in Bangladesh and overseas fail to notice that eating fast food is foreseeable at the present civilization; they just center on health impediments of fast food and pay little concentration to different attitudes among fast food consumers.

Pratima (2015) conducted a study on the differences in consumer beliefs and attitudes toward three fast food restaurants namely Domino's, Pizza Hut and McDonald's and found that customer attitude toward each fast food restaurants differs in Gwalior region. In another study, Priyadharsini (2014) exposed that the inclination of the nuclear family, raise in income and employment level of women, and advertising lead Indian consumers to get fascinated towards fast food.

Recently, Thakkar and Thatte (2014) conducted a study in Thane city of Maharashtra state and revealed that the taste and food quality mostly affect consumer behavior towards fast food restaurants. Ayesha and Tasnuva (2012) discussed the differences in consumer outlook toward selective fast food restaurants in Bangladesh and found that consumer judgment was more positive for Pizza Hut for its quality and atmosphere and they rated KFC the second position for its cost and fast service. Salami and Ajobo (2012) described that customers prefer quality food, cleanliness, consistency and staff attitude and recommended that by improving nutritional value restaurants can gain customers' trust. Munazza and Aysha (2012) reviewed the trends of fast food consumption in Pakistan and explored the factors having impact on consumer food choices are; fascination for eating out, socialization, urbanization, taste for college and university students, convenience for dual-income families in Pakistan, and many

other. Nadia and Shohana (2011) identified that customers of Dhaka City are ready to pay for quality foods and pay for the cost which suits their income level and found a positive relationship between food quality and convenience and overall customer service. Haque, Hasan et al. (2011) analyzed the effect of print media, commercial, and internet advertisement on Malaya consumer toward fast food restaurants and suggested that consumers were very much influenced by all the three modes of marketing promotion. Shaharudin *et al.* (2011) focused that Malaysian customers give more emphasis on elements like appearance, cleanness, freshness, and taste of the product and less importance on new products which influence their buying decision. Islam and Ullah (2010) found that consumers consider brand reputation, accessibility, similarity of taste, cost, quality of the food, cleanliness and hygiene, etc. as important factors in selecting fast food restaurant, and recommended to fast food marketers of Dhaka City to focus on those factors. Futoshi (2010) conducted a study on television viewing and fast food intake of American and Japanese college students and showed that male students were more likely to eat fast food than female. Currie et al. (2010) carried out a research on the effect of fast food on overweight and obesity considering geographical positions of fast food restaurants and revealed that there is a straight relation between student's obesity and location of fast food restaurants to schools. Therefore, the research suggested the policy to delimit access to fast food restaurants near school can be effective in preventing student's overweight. Timothy and Luis (2009) study considered the attributes of fast food like- nutritional profiles, vendor identity or the distance from a consumer's home and advised that more comprehensive investigational analysis would be able to find out the consequence of perceptual features on consumer demand as well. Ozcelik & Ucar (2008) carried out another research in Turkey on the preferences of fast food restaurants of both men and women and revealed that they consider the price, service, and the offerings of delicious foods. Anita and Singh (2007) have concluded that the young consumers visit fast food channels for fun and change. Referring to Marsh, Fanning, and Stiegert, (2003) argued that income is considered as one factor in Thai people fast food consumption and its effect is statistically significant toward fast food consumption.

From the above discussion, it can be stated that the role of fast food restaurants has changed overtime and hence understanding the consumer choices and attitudes especially the attitudes of the university students is considered the crucial part of marketing strategy. Thus, from this aspect as mentioned above can lead to the problem statement that "what is the driving force or the reason behind fast food consumption of the students in Dhaka City? Therefore, the research is designed to identify the factors associated with the consumption of fast food of the university students.

METHODOLOGY

The study is exploratory in nature as its objective is to explore the attitude of university students toward fast food consumption. Therefore, the population includes all the students of both private and public university in Dhaka city. At present eight public and 51 private universities have their campuses in Dhaka Division among them students of 10 private universities and 2 public universities have been considered for the purpose of the study. The sample size has been set at 360, with 30 respondents representing each of the twelve universities to measure the attitude toward fast food consumption. The sample size was selected by using judgmental sampling approach which is based on easy accessibility of the sample. The primary data were collected through self-administered questionnaire related to consumer attitude toward fast food restaurants. The questionnaire adopted five point Likert Scales where "1" was equivalent to "Strongly Disagree" while "5" was

equivalent to “Strongly Agree”. For measuring the attitude of the university students toward fast food multivariate analysis technique like factor analysis was performed to identify reasons associated with eating fast food. The data were analyzed by using frequency distribution, descriptive statistics. The secondary data were collected from various documents like reports, articles, case studies, books, and the internet. The period of study is September 2016 to January 2017, and the area of study is Dhaka city.

FINDINGS

Demographic profile of the respondents

The demographic summary of the respondents is abridged in Table 1:

In this study, the modal age of the students is 20 to 25, and the family income of the maximum respondents is between Tk. 50,000-75,000.

Table: 1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	255	70.8
	Female	105	29.2
	Total	360	100.0
Age	below 20	100	27.8
	20-25	234	65.0
	25-30	26	7.2
	Total	360	100.0
Monthly family income	below 25000	26	7.2
	25000-50000	93	25.8
	50000-75000	96	21.1
	75000-100000	76	26.7
	100000+	69	19.2
	Total	360	100.0

University students' attitudes toward fast food

The university students' likings and their monthly visits to fast food and fast food restaurant are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Respondent's likings, preferences, and the monthly visit to fast food restaurant

		Frequency	Percent
Do you like fast food?	Dislike	21	5.8
	Like	339	94.2
	Total	360	100
Monthly visit to fast food restaurant	No visit	23	6.4
	1-3 visit	173	48.1
	4-6visit	100	27.8
	7-10 visit	64	17.8
	Total	360	100
Preference of fast food restaurant	local	143	39.7
	Foreign	217	60.3
	Total	360	100.0

From Table 2 it can be stated that maximum (94.2%) university students of Dhaka city like fast food and only 5.8% of the respondents don't like fast food. From this statistics, it can be concluded that fast food is very popular with students particularly the university students and 48.10% of the students make one to three visits in a month, while 27.8% students make four to six visits to fast food restaurant in a month. Also, 60.30% of the respondents prefer foreign fast food restaurants over local restaurants. Figure 1 and Figure 2 reports the students' loyalty toward fast food restaurant and the types of meal that the university students mar most likely to eat at fast food restaurant.

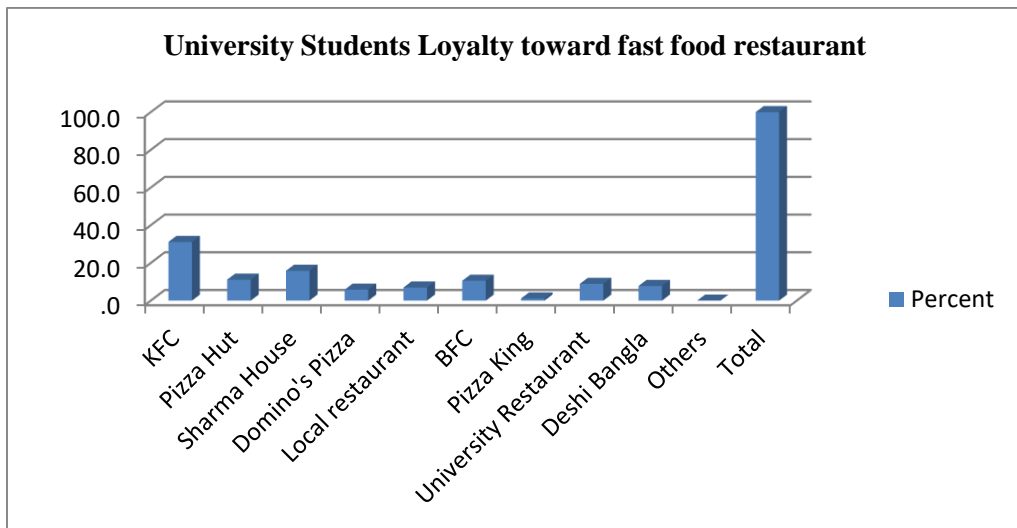


Figure 1: University Students Loyalty toward fast food restaurant

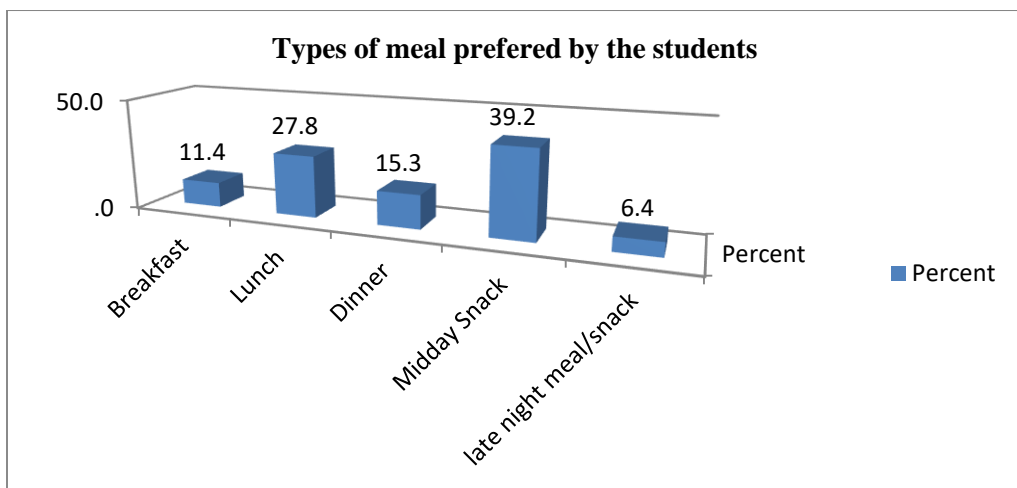


Figure 2: Types of meal that the students are most likely to eat

The study reveals that 31.1% of the respondents are loyal to KFC, 15.8% are loyal to Sharma House, 11.10% are loyal to Pizza Hut, and 10.6% are loyal to BFC. On the other hand, the most preferred meal by the university students is midday snack (39.20%) and lunch (27.80%).

Table 3: Reasons for eating fast food

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Convenience	62	17.2
Food Taste	50	13.9
Inexpensive	50	13.9
Breaking pressure of university life	37	10.3
Quality	4	1.1
Not knowing how to cook	30	8.3
working long hours	18	5
Away from home and eating alone	22	6.1
Saving time	45	12.5
socialize with their classmates	42	11.7
Total	360	100

Table 3 represents the reasons for eating fast food by the university students. As anyone who has been on a university grounds would recognize that fast foods are a vital part of students' lives while on campus. The study shows that, convenience (17.20%) is one of the main reasons students choose to eat fast foods over healthier options. It implies that, the availability of fast food restaurants along with the quality of food service in the campus cafeteria is a factor in choosing to eat fast food.

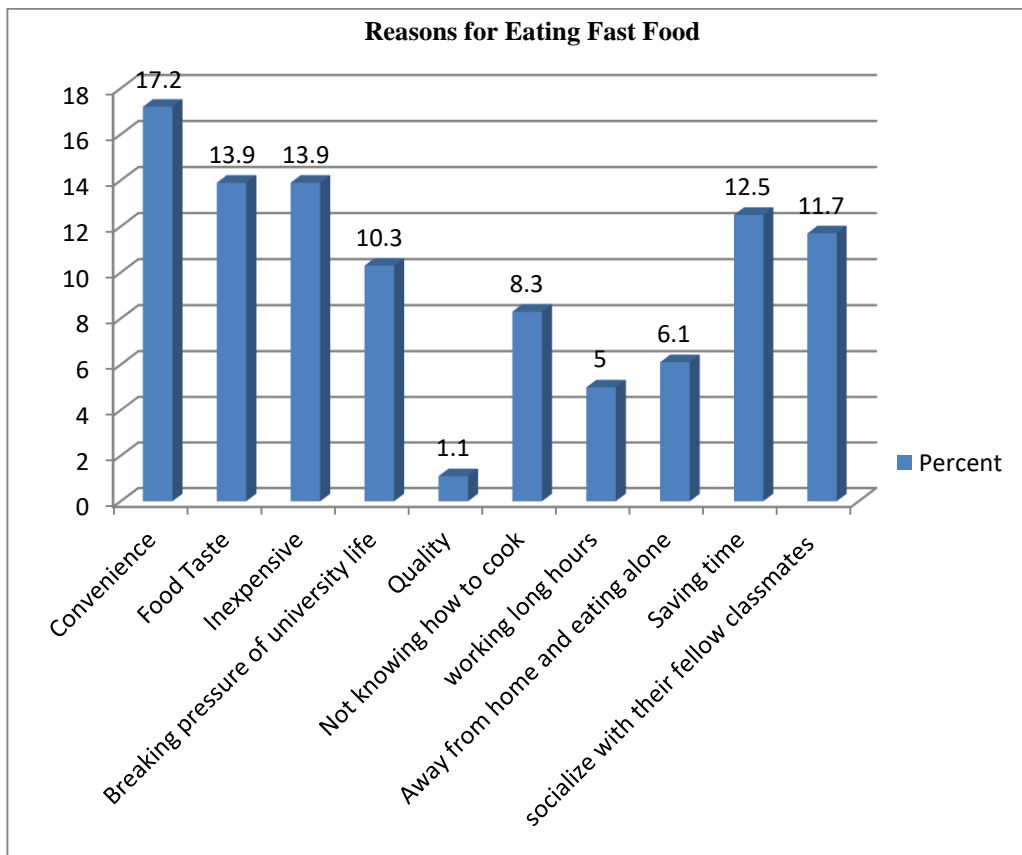


Figure 3: Reasons for Eating Fast Food

Secondly, socialization with classmates (11.7%) and the desire of complying with others strongly influence the chance of eating fast foods. Besides, some students go to fast food restaurants because it gives them a break from classes and study (10.30%), getting served quickly, and saving time (12.50%) because the meal requires no at home preparation. Moreover, fast food restaurants are also popular with the students because the food is relatively inexpensive (13.90%). Another important reason for eating fast food is for the sake of taste (13.90%). Other reasons for choosing fast food include busy lifestyles, not knowing how to cook, working long hours, and eating alone. The reasons for eating fast food by the university students can be presented in Figure 3 to get an overall picture.

Students' Evaluation of Fast Food Restaurants in Dhaka City

In this study the university students were asked to evaluate some of the famous fast food restaurants in Dhaka city on the basis of service, taste of food, cleanliness, price, opening hours, access to hygiene materials, quality, and healthiness which is projected in Table 4:

Table 4: Average Evaluation of Fast Food Restaurants

Criteria of Evaluation	KFC	Pizza Hut	Dominos	Sharma House	Other Local Fast Food Restaurants
Service	1.38	1.6	1.68	1.71	2.15
Taste of Food	1.51	1.55	1.59	1.57	1.96
cleanliness	1.58	1.51	1.61	1.53	2.35
Price	2.13	2.24	2.28	1.71	1.65
Access to hygiene materials	1.43	1.67	1.76	1.43	2.41
Quality	1.47	1.62	1.6	1.51	2.24
Healthiness	1.73	1.78	1.83	2.21	2.34

The respondents' evaluation of fast food restaurants in Dhaka city is presented in the following figure:

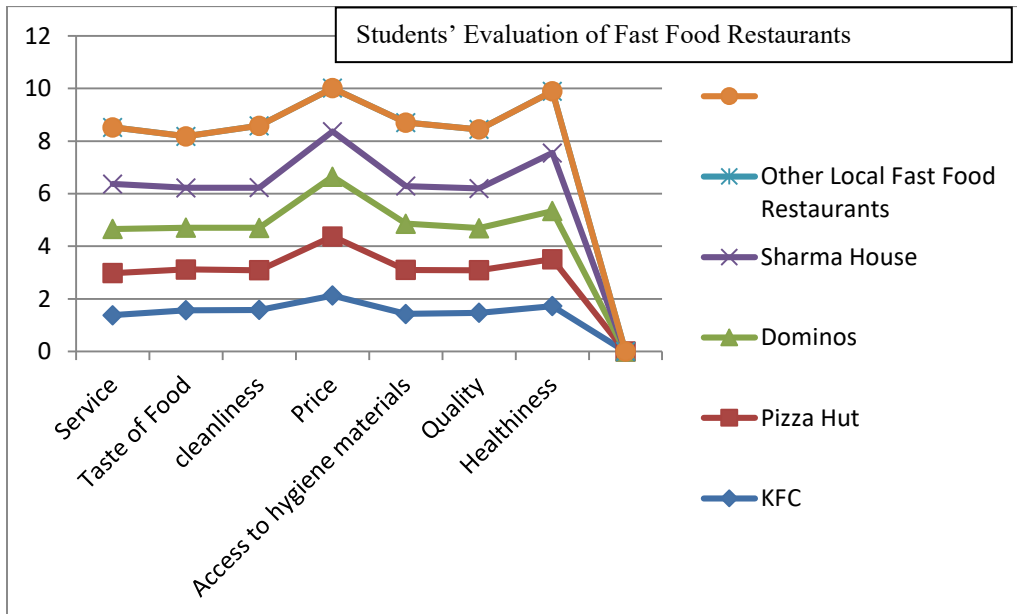


Figure 4: Students' Evaluation of Fast Food Restaurants

According to the respondent's ratings (which has been carrying out on range from 1=Excellency, 2= Medium, and 3= Insufficiency), KFC is the best in service, taste, Quality, and healthiness. On the other hand, Pizza Hut is the best in cleanliness, and both Sharma House and KFC are in the same position in access to hygiene materials. The researcher found that the price of the local fast food restaurant is lower than other foreign restaurants, and they are looking for a unique taste of food, but they have problems with the quality of services, food quality, cleanliness, and healthiness.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

From the literature review, authors revealed out various factors which have a significant impact on the formation of student's attitudes toward fast food and fast food restaurants. Factor analysis has been conducted on those factors. The student's' ratings are subject to principal axis factoring with varimax rotation to reduce potential multi-co linearity among the items and to improve the reliability of the data. Thirteen items are reduced to three orthogonal factor dimensions which explained 74.286% of the overall variance indicating that the deviation of the original values is well captured by these three factors.

Table 5: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.779
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4276.052
	df	78
	Sig.	.000

From the Table 5, it is observed that KMO is .779 that is more than the required value of 0.50. Therefore, it indicates that there is no error in 77.90% of the sample and the remaining 22.10% there may be some inaccuracy. Bartlett's test of sphericity indicates that the strength of relationship of the variables is highly strong. It presents a good idea to proceed with factor analysis for the data.

The value of Chi-Square test is 4276.052 with significance level 0.000, and it implies the refutation of the null hypothesis. It means that there is a considerable differentiation between the factors influencing the attitude of university students toward fast food.

Table 6: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.732	44.091	44.091	5.732	44.091	44.091	5.170	39.771	39.771
2	2.517	19.360	63.452	2.517	19.360	63.452	2.291	17.626	57.397
3	1.408	10.834	74.286	1.408	10.834	74.286	2.195	16.888	74.286
4	.941	7.242	81.528						
5	.623	4.794	86.321						
6	.620	4.767	91.088						
7	.379	2.914	94.002						
8	.263	2.025	96.027						
9	.173	1.334	97.361						
10	.116	.892	98.254						
11	.105	.809	99.063						
12	.070	.542	99.605						
13	.051	.395	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Communalities of each statement refer to the variance being shared or common by other statements. From the analysis, it can be seen that the communality of each variable, variable 1 to variable 13 is 1. In table 6, the Eigen values for the factors are, in decreasing order of magnitude as going from factor one to factor thirteen. The total variance accounted for by all 13 factors is 13. The Eigen value of factor 1 is 5.732, factor 2 is 2.517, and factor 3 is 1.408 respectively which is more than the required level of 1.

Factor 1 accounts for 44.091% of the total variance of which is 5.732. Factor 2 accounts for 19.36%, and factor 3 accounts for 10.834% of the total variance. It can be interpreted that 13 variables are now reduced to 3 components or factors contributing 74.286% of the total variance.

Table 7: Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
You are willing to give a special time and effort to eat in their favorite restaurant	.301	.758	-.525
You are willing to give a high price to eat in their favorite restaurant	.314	.746	-.531
Mood is a factor in selecting restaurant	.641	.550	.422
Menu is an important factor in selecting restaurant	.898	-.065	-.022
Location is important when selecting restaurant	.670	-.287	-.022
Price of the menu is considered when selecting restaurant	.905	-.163	-.035
Atmosphere of the restaurant is important	.627	.016	-.184
Payment method is an important factor in the selection of restaurant	.582	-.530	.029
Customer service should be pleasant at a fast-food restaurant	.738	-.279	-.153
Over the past five years, the quality of the food has improved	.866	-.250	.011
Over the past five years fast-food menus have gotten nutritious and healthier	.846	-.113	-.034
Price of the fast food has been reasonable over the past five years	.239	.452	.689
Over the past five years atmosphere of fast food restaurants have improved	.508	.575	.370

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. a. Three components extracted

With the help of Scree plot researcher can just visualize the three factors are reduced with Eigen value greater than 1.

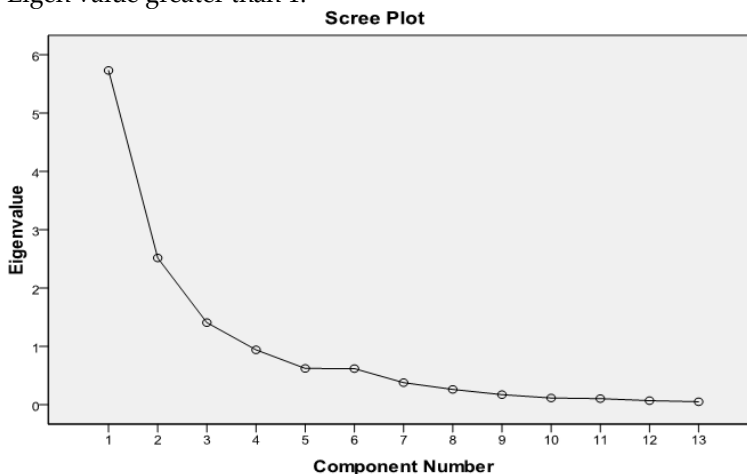


Figure 5: Scree plot

Table 5 represents the factor loadings for each variable on the un-rotated components or factors. Each figure reports the relation between the un-rotated factor and the item. This correlation facilitates to originate an elucidation of the components. It is feasible to visualize items with big loadings more than the necessary level 0.30 on many of the un-rotated factors. Consequently, it makes the interpretation complex. Therefore, it can be helpful to examine a rotated solution.

Table 8: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
You are willing to give a special time and effort to eat in their favorite restaurant	.041	.148	.958
You are willing to give a high price to eat in their favorite restaurant	.058	.141	.956
Mood is a factor in selecting restaurant	.316	.850	.261
Menu is an important factor in selecting restaurant	.847	.258	.167
Location is important when selecting restaurant	.726	.052	-.043
Price of the menu is considered when selecting restaurant	.893	.195	.106
Atmosphere of the restaurant is important	.587	.089	.271
Payment method is an important factor in the selection of restaurant	.736	.080	-.271
Customer service should be pleasant at a fast-food restaurant	.801	-.017	.063
Over the past five years, the quality of the food has improved	.886	.165	.005
Over the past five years fast-food menus have gotten nutritious and healthier	.820	.204	.128
Price of the fast food has been reasonable over the past five years	.045	.853	-.075
Over the past five years atmosphere of fast food restaurants have improved	.191	.780	.283

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization, a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

The rotated factor matrix makes it simple for taking decisions. Factor 1 has a good relationship with variable 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11; factor 2 has a relationship with variable 3, 12, and 13; while factor 3 has a deep relationship with variable 1 and 2. The maximum weight of each variable is cataloged beneath each factor.

Factor 1 comprises of the attitude toward the menu, price, food quality, atmosphere, payment method, service quality, and location that the students consider in the selection of fast food restaurant. On the other hand, Factor 2 includes the attitudes toward fast food regarding the mood of the customer and atmosphere of the restaurants that help the students to get pleasure and socialize with their fellow classmate and friends. Finally, factor 3 includes students' willingness to give a special time, price and effort to eat in their favorite restaurants.

CONCLUSION

The study indicates that choosing to eat fast food is an active choice by the university students. They wish food that is trouble-free to acquire and still taste delicious. The study identified that convenience, the taste of food, cost, quality, cleanliness, hygiene materials, services, are the important factors associated with the fast food choice by the university students and among them, convenience is the most important factor for choosing fast food.

It is seen that fast food restaurants in Bangladesh have already considered the factors by establishing their outlets near the corporate houses and universities in different areas of Dhaka city such as Gulshan, Dhanmondi, Baily Road, Banani, etc. It can be assumed that the students studying at different universities consider these nearby food shops whenever they decide to consume fast food. The study reveals that price and quality are also important factors considered by the students as a consumer of fast food. The price of the branded fast food is higher than the local fast food restaurant. The probable reason is that, the quality of the food of foreign fast food restaurant is better than the local fast food restaurants. Therefore, the research suggests that the fast food marketers should be careful in setting the price and they should charge a fair price but not compromising with the quality, and the local fast food marketers should try to improve the quality of foods. Although fast food is perfect for the students, there are some drawbacks to eating these meals. These foods are loaded with calories, but students care less about whether the food is healthy or not for them. It is noteworthy to keep in mind that any individual can still eat healthy at the university. Therefore, the study suggests that the marketers should expose the nutrition information of the fast food to the customers and they can differentiate their offerings by introducing healthier, low calorie, and nutritious food items. In fine it can be stated that, as a caution, the findings of this research should be interpreted with immense carefulness since earlier studies differs considerably across different measurement systems. In this research, the researcher has recognized the factors associated with fast-food consumption by the university students, but no focus has been given to the impact of fast-food consumption. Therefore, further study should focus on the impact of fast-food on human health and quality improvement of the fast food restaurants in Bangladesh.

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