Factors Influencing the Selection of Fine Dining Restaurant in Delhi & NCR: An Empirical Study

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Abstract: **The tourism sector is one of the largest growing sectors, this sector comprises of many sub-sectors like food, traveling, leisure, transportation are few among others but food industry is considered the 'back bone' of this sector. There has been a lot of research on consumer buying behavior most of which are directed towards products and services in general. However this research focuses on restaurant industry and more specifically towards the factors that influence the choice of customer in selecting the restaurant.**

Generally, the process of selecting the restaurant is based on the various services being offered by the restaurant, information available about the restaurant online, variety in menu and above all the personal preferences of the consumer.

This paper is based on primary data collected through a questionnaire. The study was carried out in selected fine dining restaurants of Delhi & NCR. Question related to respondent's gender, age, and marital status, educational qualification, designation, experience, purpose of visits, monthly income, and religion they are associated with. The samples were drawn from the population of 200 respondents, who were either local residents or tourists at Delhi & NCR region. The study was carried out at selected fine dining restaurants in Noida, Faridabad and South Delhi. The data was analyzed using Chi-square test, ANOVA and t-test method using SPSS.

This paper is based on primary data collected through a self constructed questionnaire. The samples were drawn from the population of 200 respondents who were dining in 10 different restaurants in Delhi & NCR.

Key Words: **Fine Dining, Service Quality, Hospitality, Customer's Satisfaction, Customer's Loyalty**

I. INTRODUCTION

India is known for its cuisine food is a very big part of our Indian culture. Indians have always bounded over food. The *fine dining* restaurant establishment is related to the development of culinary skills in France. In the year 1765.Boulanger, soup seller, opened the first restaurant in Paris. This represented a new era in the development of gastronomy and culinaryskills.1The first luxury restaurant, called "La Grande Taverne de Loudres", was opened in Paris in 1782, if we talk about the history of restaurants in India it can be traced back to early 250BC where the travelers were provided with food and were provided place to rest. The change in lifestyle and the increase in nuclear families, more women coming out of their traditional roles and stepping out to work, rapid urbanization are few of the major factors responsible for the growth of the restaurant industry in India.

With the change in time people are getting increased exposure to the international lifestyles and cuisines because of which Indians are getting inclined towards a variety of cuisines like Chinese, Italian, Mexican, Continental and Middle Eastern etc. With increased awareness about these cuisines and disposable income people are looking for experience and fine dining. As the concept of fine dining is not about just going out and eating but it is about enhancing the experience of dining through ambience, décor, service quality of food etc.

India is the fastest growing economies with the second largest population in the world .With the changing demographics, favorable economic policies and a positive response, the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is projected to grow at 7.4 percent, as estimated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), over the Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) and FY18. Relatively, the world economy is expected to grow at 3.1 per cent over 2016, assuming unaffected trade ties between the European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (U.K.).The Indian Food and Beverage (F&B) services industry is one of the most vibrant industries to witness rapid and exceptional growth over the recent past. The industry contributes significantly to the nation's economy and has been the frontrunner in terms of attracting investments. The Gross Value Added (GVA) by hotels and restaurants has witnessed an annual increase in both absolute and relative terms. It grew from INR1,084.2 billion in FY14 to INR1,211.7 billion in FY15, growing its contribution in country's overall GVA from 1 per cent in FY14 to 1.1 per cent in FY15. The restaurant industry is expected to contribute about 2.1 per cent to the total GDP of India by 2021. NRAI IFSR 2016 estimates that the total contribution of the restaurant industry alone will contribute 2.1% to the GDP of India by the year 2021. Shri Amitabh Kant, quoted in a report that, *"India has been on a high growth trajectory over the last couple of years. India's exponential growth and consumption in terms of frequency of eating out and experimentation with cuisines and concepts has given the F&B services sector such a fillip that this industry is currently estimated to be worth USD 48 billion in terms of overall market size.*

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As most of the studies have done with the impact of customer satisfaction on loyalty and Behavioral intention, this paper attempted to study the impact of demographic variables on customer satisfaction.

Auty (1992) identified the choice factors in the restaurant decision process based on four occasions: a celebration, social occasion, convenience/quick meal, and business Meal. Food type, food quality and value for money were found as the most important Choice variables for consumers when choosing a restaurant.

Any feelings customers may have when they arrive at the restaurant, and when they leave, should be taken into account and included as part of the total restaurant experience (Kotschevar & Withrow, 2008).

Although it is difficult to define exactly where the restaurant experience actually starts, and indeed ends, it is usually assumed that the main part of the experience begins when customers enter a restaurant and ends when they leave (Liu & Yang, 2009).

The Kevel's (1997) results Showed that the relative importance of the restaurant choice factors differed considerably by restaurant type, dining occasion, age, and occupation. The studies of consumer behavior in ethnic restaurants are relatively limited. Previous ethnic restaurant studies have focused on consumers' perceptions and attitudes or on a particular cuisine (e.g., Josiam & Monteiro, 2004 ;) Lewis (1981) investigated the influence of the benefit features of advertising on consumers' decision to go to a restaurant. Three types of restaurants: family/popular, Atmosphere, and gourmet were analyzed. Food quality was found as the most important feature determining patronage in tensions to any type of restaurant.

Food quality is rated as the most important attribute influencing restaurant decisions in many studies on consumers' restaurant selection behavior (e.g., Auty, 1992; Lewis, 1981; Soriano, 2002; Sulek & Hensley, 2004). The elements that constitute food quality proposed in this study are unique tastes and ingredients, menu variety, Appearance and presentation, healthy food options, and familiar food.

Demographic variables play a decisive role in influencing customers' dining experience, such as the way customers evaluate a food item for quality, the friendliness and politeness of staff and the attractiveness of interior decor (Geissler & Rucks, 2011).

They provide a powerful determinant of consumer behavior which affects the meal experience in a restaurant (Chung & Kim, 2011). In restaurant literature, demographic variables are one of the major factors determining consumer experiences and subsequent behaviors (Tinne, 2012).

Rahman (2012) concurs that experiences of customers for food are influenced by their age groups. Rahman (2012) avers that older restaurant customers are more concerned about their health and the quality of food is identified as important.

Kaura (2011) found that food quality does not stand out as the most important reason for young restaurant customers;

however, customers over 60 years of age indicate food quality as the most important attribute determining their experience.

For the purpose of this study, these attributes will be discussed under food, service and ambience since they all contribute to overall satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the restaurant experience (Sulek & Hensley, 2004). Lee (2011) studied the influence of demographic variables on restaurant experiences. He argues that experiences of customers are influenced by their age groups and income levels. He found ambience factor as an important determining choice variable for 25-34 year olds.

Spielberg (2005) posits that education influences people's experiences and shapes their values, beliefs, attitudes, interests, activities and lifestyle. The preceding points show that as people's level of education increases so do their experiences of food and beverage and level of restaurant service (Turgeon & Pastinelli, 2002). Kivela *et al.* (1999) assert that high income groups are more inclined to dine out because of quality, comfort, prestige and personalized service perceived in full-service restaurants. High income groups have more disposable income and, presumably, some of the greater disposable income is spent on pleasure seeking activities such as fine dining restaurants (Liu & Jang, 2009).

Kivela *et al.* (2000) also found a significant difference in experiences of the level of service calculated for customers of different genders in Hong Kong in which females were more cautious about spending money on dining out.

Haghighi *et al.* (2012) found that price actually has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. In addition, price of service, among the factors that influence guest satisfaction, is at the second place, right after the quality of service of the restaurant staff, and before food quality (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006).

Cullen (2004) has recognized the food quality, menu, tidiness of the restaurant, its location and reputation as key variables in decision making process. Furthermore, Jung *et al.* (2015) have recognized food quality, service quality and price as important determinants, too. Food, physical evidence and service provided by the restaurant staff are considered as key components that directly influence the guest's perception of the restaurant quality.

The restaurant experience results from a confluence of several attributes (Kivela, Inbakaran & Reece, 1999). Knowing that one attribute is more important than another explains little of how purchase and repeat-purchase decisions are made, because these attributes interact (Dube, Renaghan & Miller, 1994).

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the impact of different factors in selection of fine dining restaurant.
2. To find out the relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings.

3. To find out the relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu.
4. To find out the relationship between choice of restaurant and purpose of visit.
5. To analyze the impact of demographic factors in selection of fine dining restaurant in city.
6. To understand the consumption pattern in fine dining restaurant.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

1. There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings.
2. Choice of restaurant is dependent on what is being offered in menu.
3. Choice of restaurant and purpose of visit are positively related with each other.
4. There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and customer's demographics.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers have used primary data for the study. In order to collect primary data, self-administered questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was administered to about two hundred and fifty people and out of which one hundred ninety two responded correctly and completely. The respondents included 148 males and 44 females. The survey was carried out in selected 10 fine dining restaurants of Delhi & NCR during three months period from August to October 2016. Convenience sampling approach was adopted in order to collect the primary data; however questionnaire was administered diligently to avoid biased errors. The respondents were the local visitors of restaurant and few of them were tourists from Dubai, Canada and Middle East. Percentage analysis, Chi Square Test, Descriptive analysis and Weighted score method have been applied for the data analysis.

VI. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Demographic Variables	No. of respondents (n-192)	Percentage
1	**Age** Between 20-30	30	15.6%
	31-40	67	34.9%
	41-50	70	36.5%
	51-above	25	13.0%
2	**Gender** Male	139	58.6%
	Female	52	21.9%
3	**Marital Status** Married	125	65.1%
	Unmarried	65	33.9%
4	**Religion** Muslim	48	25%
	Hindu	80	41.7%
	Christian	22	11.5%
	Sikh	24	12.5%
	Other	18	9.4%
5	**Occupation** Salaried	64	33.3%
	Self Employed	12	6.2%
	Retired	16	8.3%
	Student	40	20.8%
	Housewife	60	31.2%
6	**Income** 20000-30000	44%	22.9%
	31000-40000	55	28.6%
	41000-50000	60	31.2%
	51000 & above	33	17.2%
7	Preference to visit restaurant with Family	101	52.6%
	Friends	57	29.6%
	Colleagues	26	13.5%
8	How often do you visit restaurant in a month Once in a month	20	10.4%
	Twice in a month	52	27.1%
	Thrice in a month	85	44.3%
	Every week	35	18.2%
9	Education Level Post Graduate	79	41.2%
	Graduate	112	58.8%
10	Types of Family Nuclear Family	69	35.9%
	Joint Family	96	50%
	Extended Family	27	14.1%
11	Purpose of Visit Official Meetings	14	7.3%
	Family Get together	152	79.2%
	Celebrations	16	8.3%
	General Visits	10	5.2

Table No-1

VII. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Association between choice of restaurant and quality determinants

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
FOOD QUALITY	Between Groups	1.898	2	.949	.105	.900
	Within Groups	1701.180	189	9.001		
	Total	1703.078	191			
SERVICE QUALITY	Between Groups	176.127	2	88.064	5.680	.004
	Within Groups	2930.352	189	15.505		
	Total	3106.479	191			
ATMOSPHERICS QUALITY	Between Groups	268.952	2	134.476	1.560	.213
	Within Groups	16296.860	189	86.227		
	Total	16565.812	191			

Table No-2

The analysis was done to determine the association between different quality factors and their impact on selection of restaurants. From the above table it is clearly seen that ANOVA table no. 2 tells that there is a significant association between service quality and its impact on selection of restaurant as $F = 5.680$ and $p = .004$ So, the individual variable service quality has a significant relationship with the dependent variable selection of restaurant. On the other hand the significance value of food quality and atmospheric quality are .900 and .213 which is greater than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant relationship between food quality, atmospheric quality and their role in restaurant's selection.

1. *Relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings.*

The second objective was to study the relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings. The following hypothesis was formulated on the basis of this objective.

H1: There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings.

In order to examine the relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings, statistical tool of Chi-square has been used. it signifies the magnitude and direction of relationship between two variables.
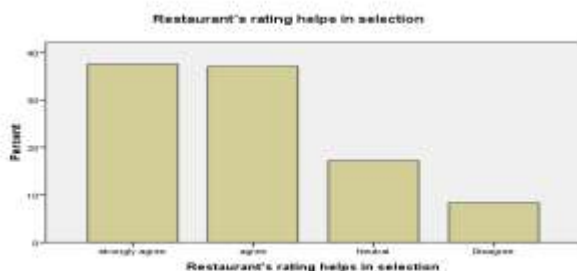

Figure 1

From figure no. 1 it is seen that 70% respondents found restaurant's rating, one of the important determinant in restaurant's selection.

H1 a): There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across age

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	69.031[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	70.641	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	20.362	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No-3

It is seen from table no. 3 that the Chi-Square value is 69.031 and the Asymp sig value is .000 which is lesser than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across age.

H1 b): There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across occupation

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	61.705[a]	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	49.909	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.618	1	.432
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No. 4

The table no. 4 shows the relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across occupation. It is seen that

the Chi-Square value is 61.701 and the Asymp sig value is .000 which is lesser than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across occupation.

H1 c): There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across income

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.312[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	37.111	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.250	1	.134
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No. 5

The table no. 5 shows the relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across income. It is seen that the Chi-Square value is 34.312 and the Asymp sig value is .000 which is lesser than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and their ratings across income.

2. *Relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu.*

The second objective was to study the relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu. The following hypothesis was formulated on the basis of this objective.

H2: There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu.

In order to examine the relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu, statistical tool of Chi-square has been used. it signifies the magnitude and direction of relationship between two variables.
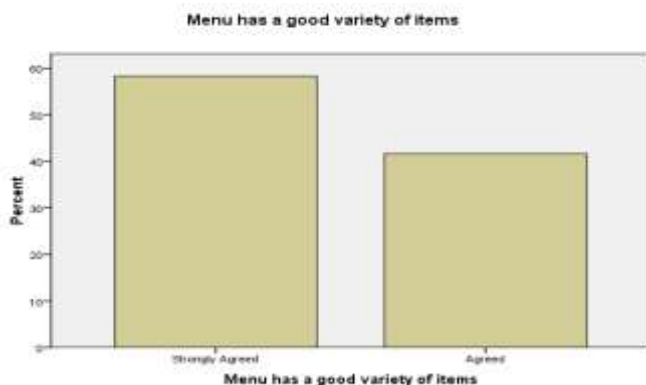

Figure no. 2

From figure no. 2 it is seen that 80% respondents found that there is a strong relationship between variety of food offered in menu and restaurant's selection.

H2 a): There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu across the religion

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.811[a]	4	.007
Likelihood Ratio	4.807	4	.308
Linear-by-Linear Association	.255	1	.614
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No. 6

The table no. 6 shows the relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu across the religion. It is seen that the Chi-Square value is 4.811 and the Asymp sig value is .007 which is lesser than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and variety of food offered in menu across the religion.

.H2 b): There is a significant relationship between purpose of visit restaurant and variety of food offered in menu.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.109[a]	3	.164
Likelihood Ratio	5.174	3	.159
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.053	1	.305
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No. 7

The table no. 7 shows the relationship between purpose of visit restaurant and variety of food offered in menu. It is seen that the Chi-Square value is 5.109 and the Asymp sig value is .164 which is greater than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant relationship between purpose of visit restaurant and variety of food offered in menu.

H2 c): There is a significant relationship between types of family and variety of food offered in menu.

Types of family and menu			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.329[a]	2	.312
2Likelihood Ratio	2.388	2	.303
Linear-by-Linear Association	.295	1	.587
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No. 8

The table no. 8 shows the relationship between types of family and variety of food offered in menu. It is seen that the Chi-Square value is 2.329 and the Asymp sig value is .312 which is greater than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null

hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant relationship between types of family and variety of food offered in menu.

3. *Relationship between choice of restaurant and customer's purpose of visit*

The third objective was to study the relationship between choice of restaurant and customer's purpose of visits. The following hypothesis was formulated on the basis of this objective.

H3: There is a significant relationship between choice of restaurant and customer's purpose of visit.

In order to examine the relationship between choice of restaurant and customer's purpose of visit, statistical tool of Chi-square has been used. it signifies the magnitude and direction of relationship between two variables.

H3 a): There is a significant relationship between customer's preference to visit restaurant with and purpose of visit.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	26.059[a]	9	.002
Likelihood Ratio	23.024	9	.006
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.188	1	.276
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No. 9

The table no. 9 shows the relationship between **customer's preference to visit restaurant with and purpose of visit.** It is seen that the Chi-Square value is 26.059 and the Asymp sig value is .002.312 which is lesser than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant relationship between **customer's preference to visit restaurant with and purpose of visit.**

H3 b): There is a significant relationship between customer's marital status and purpose of visit.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.058[a]	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	20.841	6	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	.633	1	.426
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table No. 10

The table no. 10 shows the relationship between customer's marital status and purpose of visit. It is seen that the Chi-Square value is 34.058 and the Asymp sig value is ..000 which is lesser than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null

hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant relationship between customer's marital status and purpose of visit.

H3 c): There is a significant relationship between customer's family type and purpose of visit.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.299[a]	6	.018
Likelihood Ratio	18.568	6	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.550	1	.033
N of Valid Cases	192		

Table. No. 11

The table no. 11 shows the relationship between customer's family type and purpose of visit. It is seen that the Chi-Square value is 15.229 and the Asymp sig value is .018 which is lesser than the critical value (P=0.05). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant relationship between customer's family type and purpose of visit.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The time has gone when customers were only visiting nearby restaurants to their residence. The purpose of this study was to test the association between customer's demographics and their role in selection of restaurants. Research findings indicate that demographic variables were positively related with selection of restaurants. Customers prefer service quality a major determinant in selecting restaurant over food and atmospheric quality. The study concludes that these demographic factors have their influence in selection of restaurants therefore; hoteliers should understand not only the demographic variables of consumers but also should design strategies to understand the factors influencing their buying behavior. The results clearly show that among all quality factors, customers choice of selecting restaurant is determined by service quality. This study also reveals that there is a significant relationship between the customer's purpose of visiting restaurant and their selection of restaurant. Most of the respondents agreed that family get together and occasion celebrations are major determinants in restaurant's selection. From the research findings it is clear that restaurant's owners should recognize the demographics differences in determining the restaurant's selection while designing their policies in regards of food atmosphere and service quality.

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