

# Customers' Attitude and Satisfaction on Restaurant Services during COVID - 19: An Analytical Study with Reference to Chennai City

**Dr. K. Shyamala** Assistant Professor, Department of B.Com. Corporate Secretaryship,

S.D.N.B.Vaishnav College for Women, Chromepet, Chennai - 600 044. Email Id: saatvikram@gmail.com

**Fathima Farhana S.I.** Assistant Professor, Department of B.Com (G), SDNB.Vaishnav College for women, Chromepet Chennai- 600 044

## ABSTRACT

*A Restaurant or an eatery is a business that prepares and serves food and drinks to customer. The food industry is a complex, global collective of diverse businesses. The term Food Industry covers series of industrial activities directed at the processing, conversion, preparation, preservation and packing of food stuff .This services is not only an important sources of jobs and career ,it is vitally important to the success of many other industries in the economy where employees and bachelors are depended on. Importance of customer satisfaction can make or break the success of any restaurant. Recovery will obviously be a challenge for all restaurants both large and small.*

**Keywords:** Restaurant services, Post COVID scenario, hotel management, safety measures.

## 1. Introduction

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness and transmission route through person to person contact and through direct contact with the respiratory droplets generated, when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Our lives including our work have been driven indoors amid the ongoing covid-19 pandemic. But now with some sectors are reopening around the country .This study especially focuses with restaurant services where the measures like wearing a mask for safety, washing hands thoroughly, switching off air conditioners , avoiding crowded places ,booking and paying online etc. are initiated.

As the people gradually step out of their houses after the covid lockdown, they are realizing the world has indeed changed. Among other things many people have missed eating out the most. As restriction is being eased, hotels and restaurants came up with their own plans to give people a novel experience even during such unprecedented times. The restaurants settings have changed to ensure physical distancing and also provide contactless dining and encouraging digital payments. Additionally, the hotels have also set up a food truck from where the customers are encouraged to take away their orders besides providing home delivery services.

There is no evidence that viruses that cause COVID-19 is transmitted by food. Government establishes policy objectives for food safety and the importance of hotel cleanliness and hygiene has become particularly important. The growing consumer demand for hotel hygiene following the covid-19 outbreak

enhance the cleanliness and sanitization to prevent or limit the spread of disease which can be promoted at selling point during and after this pandemic.

## 2. Review of Literature

**Yang Jiang and Jun Wen (May 2020)**, "Effects of COVID-19 on Hotel Marketing and Management". The study discusses the effects of COVID-19 on hotel marketing and management as well as guest behavior to stimulate knowledge development in hotel sector. It is time for scholar and practitioners to carefully examine the impacts of this crisis and seeks to enhance industry practices.

**Bodh R Sharma and Nikita Gupta (2020)**, "Ameliorating service quality and delivery during covid-19", The study explored that it becomes very imperative for the service providers to meet the quality norms as before and make essential changes so that neither the consumers get dissatisfied nor the firms have to suffer. Service providers need to come out with some innovative ideas to get the best during these times also. COVID-19 has hindered the growth of the nation but following the rules and other safety measures can prove a boon during these bad times.

**Fei Hao, Qu Xiao and Kaye Chon (2020)**, "COVID-19 and China's Hotel Industry: Impacts, a Disaster Management Framework, and Post-Pandemic Agenda". This exploratory study reviews the overall impacts of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic on China's hotel industry. A COVID-19 management framework is proposed to address the anti-pandemic phases, principles, and strategies. In this regard, the study provides scenarios and suggestions in the post-COVID-19 hotel industry context in China, which will shed light on industry transformation and up gradation.

**Julie Patel and Vilas Kulkarni (2020)**, "COVID-19: Issues faced by hospitality industry". The present study finds the impact and issues for the hospitality industry after Covid19. There is a loss in sectors such as

restaurants, hotels, bars, pubs, guest houses, resorts, accommodation, and food services. The sudden pandemic has changed the current scenario of the hospitality industry. Therefore, the government and hotel managements must have to implement new legislation and incentives to regaining the travel and hospitality sectors.

**David Williamson (2020)**, This study seeks to understand future intent of restaurant consumers in the wake of covid-19 restriction. The study concluded the guidelines call for the food and beverage industries to operate with limited seating capacity and maintains social distancing. In addition to the recommendation on sanitization in the restaurant, it also advises the establishment to implement daily health screening of all employees. If workers appear to be sick with signs of covid-19, they must be sent home immediately notifying health officials for further needs.

**Yang Yang, Hongboliu, and Xiang Chen (2020)**, this paper aim to evaluate the early effects of the pandemic of covid-19 and accompany stay-at-home orders on restaurant demand. The study represents a pioneering attempt to investigate the economic impact of covid-19 on restaurant business. The result indicated that a 1% increase in daily new covid-19 cases led to 0.0556 % decrease in daily restaurant demand while staying at home orders were collected associated with is 3.30% drop in demand.

## 3. Research Methodology

Area of the study	Chennai
<b>Sample Size</b>	375 ( pre-Covid-19 = 300) (post- Covid-19 = 75)
<b>Sources of Data</b>	Primary and secondary
Primary data	Collected through structured Questionnaire (Google forms)
Secondary data	Magazines and journals
<b>Research Tools</b>	Percentage Analysis, one sample t-test and ranking analysis
<b>Sampling method</b>	Convenience sampling

#### 4. Data Analysis and Results

##### 4.1. Socio-Economic Profile of Customers

Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile of Customers

Sl.No	Demographic variables	Before COVID - 19		Post COVID - 19		
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
1	Gender	<b>Male</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>75.66</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>66.67</b>
		Female	73	24.34	25	33.33
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Age	<b>Below 30</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>42.67</b>
		30-40	78	26	18	24
		40-50	60	20	12	16
		Above 50	6	2	13	17.33
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Academic Qualification	School Level	18	6	12	16
		Diploma	76	25.34	16	21.33
		<b>Graduate</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>38.67</b>
		Post Graduate	53	17.66	18	24
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
4.	Marital status	Married	56	18.66	12	16
		<b>Unmarried</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>81.34</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>84</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
5.	Monthly Family Income (in Rs.)	Below 10,000	50	16.60	16	21.33
		10,000 - 20,000	72	24	23	30.67
		<b>20,000 - 30,000</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>30.66</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22.67</b>
		30,000 - 40,000	92	30.67	14	18.66667
		Above 40,000	38	12.67	5	6.66
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

- From the above table, it is found that maximum percentage of respondent before and post COVID-19 is male with 75.66% and 66.67% respectively.
- Majority of respondents fall below the age group of 30.
- 51% and 38.67% of respondents for pre and post Covid analysis have completed their under graduation.
- The Sample Surveyed shows majority of unmarried respondents.
- 30.66% and 22.67% of Chennai surveyed population earns average monthly income between Rs.20, 000 to Rs.30, 000.

Table 2: Restaurant Food Profile

Sl.No			Before COVID - 19		Post COVID - 19	
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Which of the following factors you like more in the restaurant food?	<b>Service</b>	86	28.66	<b>23</b>	<b>30.6</b>
		<b>Food quality</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>32</b>	10	13.33
		Ambience	24	8	8	10.67
		Menu	56	18.67	14	18.67
		Price	38	12.67	20	26.66
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Occasions to prefer to restaurant	<b>Business event</b>	70	23.33	<b>58</b>	<b>77.33</b>
		<b>Special occasions</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>37.33</b>	8	10.67
		Social	34	11.34	4	5.33
		Romantic	22	7.33	2	2.67
		Don't want to cook	62	20.67	3	4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Budget to go to restaurant	<b>Rs.1000/-p.m.</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>92</b>
		Rs. 2000/-	80	26.67	2	2.67
		Rs. 3000/-	60	20	1	1.33
		More than 3000	25	8.33	3	4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>
4	The opinions about dinning out in the selected restaurants	<b>Close home</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>69.33</b>
		Entertain	60	20	8	10.67
		Others		0	10	13.33
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>93.33</b>
5	Opinion of consumers regarding to food and products of restaurants	<b>Menu choices</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>61.33</b>
		Nutrition	25	8.33	8	10.67
		Freshness	35	11.67	21	28
		<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

- Before Covid-19, 32% of respondents prefer food quality in restaurant and after covid-19, 30.67% of respondents prefer service in restaurant.
- Before Covid majority of respondents of 37.33% to go restaurant on special occasions. After Covid respondents of 77.33% go to restaurant only during business events.
- 45% and 92% of respondents frame budget for Rs.1, 000 per month for restaurant expenses during pre and post Covid period.
- The opinions about dinning out in the selected restaurants are near home option for 80% and 69.33% of respondents.
- Opinion of consumers regarding to food and products of restaurants are menu choices for 80% and 61.33% of respondents during pre and post Covid.

## 4.2. One Sample Test and Ranking Test

**Table 3: Ranking of Mean and One-Sample Statistics for Reason to like Restaurant Food**

Reason to like restaurant food	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t- value	Sig (2-tailed)	Rank
Food portion size	375	8.1013	4.71831	.24365	33.250	.000	15
Temperature of food	375	8.7947	4.71520	.24349	36.119	.000	4
Variety of food/beverage	375	8.5653	4.47935	.23131	37.029	.000	7
Quality and taste of food	375	8.7760	4.61664	.23840	36.812	.000	5
Cleanliness of the dining area	375	8.0320	4.49885	.23232	34.573	.000	16
Value received for the price paid	375	8.2160	4.61904	.23853	34.445	.000	14
Comfortable and welcoming feeling	375	8.6400	4.74212	.24488	35.282	.000	6
Convenience of Washroom	375	8.9120	4.43795	.22918	38.887	.000	3
Timeliness of service	375	9.0560	4.62087	.23862	37.951	.000	1
Accuracy of order - taking	375	8.5120	4.84567	.25023	34.017	.000	9
Communication	375	9.0533	4.59916	.23750	38.119	.000	2
Skills of the staff	375	8.8320	4.64816	.24003	36.795	.000	12
Attentiveness of the staff	375	8.2347	4.50886	.23284	35.367	.000	13
Payment of bill	375	8.4533	4.54124	.23451	36.047	.000	10
Working hours	375	8.5440	4.63912	.23956	35.665	.000	8
Working of parcel section	375	8.4107	4.58688	.23687	35.508	.000	11

From the table 3, it can be seen that the mean value ranges between 9.0560 and 8.0320. It is clearly evident that Timeliness of service in restaurant ranks first. Communication, convenience of washroom and temperature of food ranks 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Quality and taste of food, Comfortable and welcoming feeling and variety of food ranks 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> respectively. Working hours of the restaurant, accuracy of order-taking and payment of bill facility takes the ranks 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively. Working hours of parcel section, skills of the staffs and attentiveness of the staffs occupies 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> positions. Value for price paid, food portion size and cleanliness of dining area stands 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> respectively. The T-test values (33.250, 36.119, 37.029, 36.812, 34.573, 34.445, 35.282, 38.887, 37.951, 34.017, 38.119, 36.795, 35.367, 36.047, 35.665, 35.508) are statistically significant at 5% level.

## 4.3. Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis aims at grouping the original input variables into factors which underlie the input variables. Each factor will account for one or more input variables. Theoretically, the total number of factors in the Factor analysis is equal to the number of factors in the study can be reduced by dropping the insignificant factors based on certain criterion. Here, the results of Factor analysis carried out on the variables of level of satisfaction towards the service aspects of the restaurants.

**Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.469
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	120.228
	df	153
	Sig.	.977

The KMO measures the sampling adequacy (which determines if the responses given with the sample are adequate or not), which should be close than 0.5 for a satisfactory factor analysis to proceed. Kaiser (1974) recommended 0.5 (Value for KMO) as minimum, values between 0.7 - 0.8 as acceptable, and values above 0.9 as outstanding, in this study to test the sampling adequacy, the KMO test was carried out and its value is satisfactory.

#### Factors influencing Level of satisfaction towards the service aspects of the restaurants

Variable no	Variable	Factor Loading Value
LS 12	Presentation of food	.876
LS 07	Fresh food	.726
LS 09	Cost of the food	.712
LS 10	Meal exactly as ordered	.768
LS 02	Healthy options	.628

This first factor is called as **Food Value factor**

Variable no	Variable	Factor Loading Value
LS 04	Staff did not keep me waiting	.758
LS 01	Quick and prompt service	.830
LS 13	Meal served within reasonable time	.638
LS 08	Staff knowledgeable about menu items	.660

This second factor is coined as **Service oriented factor**

Variable no	Variable	Factor Loading Value
LS 14	Presentation of food	.876
LS 11	Inside temperature	.620
LS 15	No unpleasant odors	.487
LS 05	Lighting Facility layout	.639
LS 03	Background music	.636
LS 06	Fresh food	.726

This Third factor can be labeled as **Atmosphere Factor**

## 5. Discussion and Summary of Results

This research study examined customers' attitude towards restaurant services. Out of 375 respondents, 75 were interested to taste restaurant food after Covid-19. They prefer Timeliness of service, Communication of the employees working in the restaurant, Convenience of Washroom facility in the restaurant, temperature of food. The previous studies have focused only on pre-Covid -19 customers' attitude and restaurant services. They investigated the influencing Factors of Level of satisfaction towards the service aspects of the restaurants like Food Value factor, Service oriented factor and Atmosphere Factor. The present study contributes towards understanding and need for restaurants to improve their customers' restaurant safety, precautionary requirements and experience.

## 6. Conclusion

COVID-19 has affected every sector across the globe and the hospitality industry is no exception. The impact is hazardous as we already know, especially in context to the hospitality industry, due to the fear of the spread and the travel restrictions; the hotel industry is the first business to be affected and unfortunately could be the last to recover. Once the situation normalizes, it would take another six to eight months at least for the industry to recuperate. Even though it's the current unlocking phase of the country, the impact has hit hard on the mentality of the people, but it will take time for people to accept the new normal.

Thus in one way or the other, we depend on restaurant services for various above mentioned factors. But this is one probable reality. There will be a hyper-awareness of safety and sanitation on the part of consumers in the post-pandemic world. Generally, the consumers' are going to pay more attention to hygiene standards at food outlets in restaurants. In fact, a restaurant's cleanliness is directly proportional to the way their washroom commodes and face mirrors are maintained. Some started expanding their services to include deliveries, take-outs and meal kits. It was evident that new health and safety protocols were

going to be implemented when the economy reopened, and there was a new need to address and allay consumers' fears over dining out. Contactless ordering, payment and pickup will continue on in the foreseeable future as consumers continue to practice social distancing.

### References

1. **Gangitano, Alex** (March 18, 2020). "Restaurant industry estimates \$225B in losses from Coronavirus". *The Hill*. Retrieved March 23, 2020.
2. **Mali, Meghashyam** (17 March 2020). "Restaurant industry reeling under coronavirus". *TheHill*. Retrieved 22 March 2020.
3. **Noguchi, Yuki** (22 March 2020). "Closed All At Once: Restaurant Industry Faces Collapse". *NPR.org*. Retrieved 22 March 2020.
4. "**Food And Beverage Industry Hit Hard By Coronavirus Outbreak**". *NPR.org*. Retrieved 22 March 2020.
5. **McCarthy, Kelly** (24 July 2020). "Nearly 16,000 restaurants have closed permanently due to the pandemic, Yelp data shows". *ABC News*. Retrieved 2 August 2020.
6. "**Restaurant Industry**". Retrieved August 27, 2019.
7. "**Food Service Industry**". *USDA Economic Research Service*. Retrieved 27 August 2015.
8. "**Early Restaurants in America**", *Menus: the art of dining, Digital Collections, University of Nevada Las Vegas, 2018*