

Students' attitude towards mobile restaurant at university campus –A case study of Manipal University, Manipal

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Abstract: Food is considered to be evergreen business of the hospitality industry and with raise in the income level, food as a product is served in different formats such as fine dining, casual dining, fast food, take away. Mobile restaurants which has seen huge success in the US market is slowly trying to penetrate the growing Indian market. In this study, efforts are taken to learn the attitude of students' towards mobile restaurant in Manipal University campus which has pool of 25,000 students from different parts of India and from across the world. From the analysis, results have shown positive sign towards mobile restaurants for different formats of food items.

Keywords: mobile restaurant, university campus, hospitality, Manipal.

INTRODUCTION

A food truck, mobile kitchen, mobile canteen, roach coach, or catering truck is a mobile venue that transports and sells food. Some, including ice cream trucks, sell mostly frozen or pre-packaged food; others are more like restaurants-on-wheels. Some may cater to specific meals, such as the breakfast truck, lunch truck or lunch wagon, and snack truck, kebab trailer, break truck or taco truck[1]. In recent years, the food truck resurgence was fueled by a combination of post-recessionary factors. The construction business was drying up, leading to a surplus of food trucks, and chefs from high-end restaurants were being laid off. For experienced cooks suddenly without work, the food truck seemed a clear choice[2]. The food truck trend has grown as they are now being hired for special events, such as weddings, school dances, birthday parties, retirement parties, and such public gatherings as art festivals and movie nights. Food trucks are now even Zagat rated. Another thing to develop is the food truck festival phenomenon. These festivals are gatherings in which people can find their favorite trucks all in one place and as well provide a means for a variety of diverse cultures to come together and find a common ground over a love for food[3].

Tracking food trucks has become much less difficult. With the help of social media like Facebook and Twitter, a person can find where their favorite gourmet truck will be at any moment and get up-to-the-minute updates on specials, new menu items and location changes[4]. In fact, it could be argued that

these social media outlets were the biggest contributing factor to the success of the gourmet food truck. In addition to social media, there are a number of food truck tracking programs for smartphones. Some cover specific geographical regions, and others work everywhere. Food trucks are subject to the same range of concerns as other foodservice businesses. They generally require a fixed address to accept delivery of supplies. A commercial kitchen may be needed for food prep. There are a variety of permits to obtain, and a health code to observe. Labor and fuel costs are a significant part of the overhead[5]. Legal definitions and requirements for food trucks vary widely by country and locality. For example, in Toronto, Canada, some of the requirements include business and liability insurance, a Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration for the truck, permits for each municipality being operated in (downtown, various suburbs), a food handler certificate, appropriate driver's licenses for drivers, assistant's licenses for assistants, and a health inspection. As the rising number and popularity of food trucks push them into the food mainstream, region by region, problems with local legislators and police reacting to new situations, and brick-and-mortar restaurants fearing competition, have to be worked through, in some cases creating significant business uncertainty[6, 7].

In Asia, the cuisine offered by food trucks requires simple skills, basic facilities and a relatively small amount of capital. They are plentiful, with large potential for income and often a very large sector for

employment. Individuals facing difficulty finding work in formal sectors, will often venture into this industry, as it allows entire families to involve themselves in the preparing and cooking of foods sold to the public. The appeal involved in sustaining a food truck lie not only in the low capital requirement, but also in the flexibility of hours, with minimal constraints to locale. Street foods predominantly reflect local culture and flavor. Food trucks appeal to consumers in that they are often an inexpensive means of attaining quick meals. Location and word of mouth promotion has been credited for their widening success[8].

About Manipal University and Manipal

Manipal University is synonymous with excellence in higher education. Over 28,000 students from 57 different nations live, learn and play in the sprawling University town, nestled on a plateau in Karnataka's Udupi district. It also has nearly 2500 faculty and almost 10000 other support and service staff, who cater to the various professional institutions in health sciences, engineering, management, communication and humanities which dot the Wi-Fi-enabled campus.

The University has off-campus in Mangalore and Bangalore, and off-shore campuses in Dubai (UAE) and Melaka (Malaysia). The Mangalore campus offers medical, dental, and nursing programs. The Bangalore

Campus offers programs in Regenerative Medicine. The Dubai campus offers programs in engineering, management and architecture, and the Melaka campus offers programs in medicine and dentistry.

Manipal is a university town located in the state of Karnataka in India. It is a suburb within Udupi city and is administered by Udupi City Municipality. It is located in the rocky hinterland of the Malabar Coast of south west India, about 8 km (5.0 mi) east the Arabian Sea. From its location on a plateau, it commands a view of the Arabian Sea to the west and the Western Ghats range to the east. Manipal Group of Institutions alone attract over two hundred-thousand students every year.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study used questionnaire as a survey tool which was designed consisting eleven close ended questions. The questionnaire were distributed physically to 250 students from different colleges of Manipal University in the university campus following convenient sampling method. The data which was collected over a course of one week during different break times was fed into statistical package SPSS V16 for analysis. The analysis included descriptive statistics and cross tabulation of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Frequency of eating out vs. factors determining choice of restaurant

	Price	Distance	Variety	Ambience	Service quality
Daily	85.3	26.3	54.7	41.1	26.3
Twice a week	56.5	39.1	47.8	26.1	21.7
Thrice a week	72.2	44.4	66.7	33.3	38.9
Weekly	37.5	25	97	25	50
Monthly	83.3	33.3	50	83.3	66.7

*all the figures in %, multiple options were allowed to tick in the questionnaire

Inference: from the above table, it can be learned that price is dominant factor for students eating out daily followed by variety who eat out weekly,

ambience and service quality by students who eat monthly, distance who eat out thrice a week.

Table 2: Time of the day chosen for eating out vs. preference

	Fine dining	Casual	Take away
Breakfast	10.4	94.8	32.5
Lunch	8.2	89.8	26.5
Snacks	25	75	12.5

*all the figures in %

Inference: Among the students, 94.8% of students chose a casual environment for dining and

breakfast being the choice of meal. Fine dining was the least chosen with only 8.2% of students choosing it.

Table 3: Preference towards mobile restaurant in university campus vs. factors that will influence

Price	Quality	Service	Variety	Timings	Distance
79.6	43.8	51.8	38.7	25.5	51.1

*all the figures in %

Inference: among the students' who have shown their preference towards mobile restaurant have chosen price as main factor, followed by service, distance, quality, variety and timings as factor that influence them.

Inference: students' in the age group of 18-22 years and above 30years have shown higher interest than in the age group from 23-26years and 27-30 years (Table-4).

Inference: from the table-5 it is learned that, majority of the students breakfast followed by lunch and snacks at mobile restaurant.

Inference: from the table-6 it can be learned that, for breakfast, majority prefer Chicken sandwich, for lunch, majority prefer pasta and for snacks, students prefer, chicken popcorn.

Table 4: Age group and preference towards mobile restaurant in university campus

Age group (yrs.)	(%)
18-22	93.3
23-26	89.2
27-30	71.4
Above 30	98

Table-5: college vs. type of meal preferred at mobile restaurant

College	Breakfast	Lunch	Snacks
Hotel Management	0.7	7.8	11.1
Engineering	14	2.6	3
Medical	6.5	8.5	4.6
Communication / Business studies	12.7	3.9	3
Dental	8.5	9.2	2

*all the figures in %

Table 6: time of the day and type of food preferred from mobile restaurant

Breakfast	Cereals	Parantha	Maggi	Egg Sandwich	Chicken Sandwich	Pancake	Waffles	Juice	Milkshake	Fruit
(%)	19.6	30.9	29.9	33	49.5	32	34	38.1	40.2	37.1
Lunch	Falafel Sandwich	Veg Manchurian submarine	Cheese Submarine	Chilly chicken submarine	Meat balls submarine	Chicken cheese submarine	Pasta	Tacos	Fajitas	Mac & Cheese
(%)	13.6	17.3	39.1	38.2	46.4	36.4	50	40	33.6	36.4
Snacks	Momos	Samosa	Kachori	Vada Pav	Dahi vada	Cutlet	Banana fritters	Chicken popcorn	Tea	Coffee
(%)	49.4	29.1	17.7	43	36.7	27.8	24.1	55.7	57	59.5

Table 7: Comparison between factors determining a normal eatery and a mobile restaurant

Price factor of a restaurant	Price	Quality	Service Timeline	Variety	Timings	Distance
	85.3	35.3	53.4	31.9	24.1	50
Distance factor of a restaurant	Price	Quality	Service Timeline	Variety	Timings	Distance
	65.2	52.2	45.7	30.4	30.4	58.7
Variety factor of a restaurant	Price	Quality	Service Timeline	Variety	Timings	Distance
	69.8	51.2	47.7	39.5	27.9	45.3
Ambience factor of a restaurant	Price	Quality	Service Timeline	Variety	Timings	Distance
	75.9	50	56.9	41.4	34.5	46.6
Service Quality factor of a restaurant	Price	Quality	Service Timeline	Variety	Timings	Distance
	71.1	46.7	42.2	44.4	31.1	60

*all the figures in %

Inference: from the Table-7, it can be learned that majority of the respondents 85.3% was given to price factor for a mobile restaurant by those who chose price factor for a normal restaurant. Among the respondents who chose distance factor for a normal restaurant, maximum chose the price factor at 65.2% for a mobile restaurant. Among the respondents who chose variety factor for a normal restaurant, maximum chose the price factor at 69.8% for a mobile restaurant. Among the respondents who chose ambience factor for a normal restaurant, maximum chose the price factor at 75.9% for a mobile restaurant. Among the respondents who chose service quality factor for a normal restaurant, maximum chose the price factor at 71.1% for a mobile restaurant.

CONCLUSION

From this study, it can be concluded that mobile restaurant will be of immense demand in the campus of Manipal University where students are ready to try different food items during lunch, breakfast and during time of having snacks. From the hospitality college students have not shown much interest during breakfast as it is been served in the hostel mess due to its residential setup but it has got positive response from other institutes. Further since students have culture in this campus of eating out apart from having good food mess, the opportunity for the mobile restaurant will be enormous for different kinds of cuisine.

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