



Customer Satisfaction Towards Quick Service Restaurants – A Study on KFC

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Abstract- The Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) industry has experienced exponential growth in India over the past decade, driven by urbanisation, rising disposable incomes, changing food preferences, and the proliferation of food delivery platforms. Among QSR brands operating in India, KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken) has established itself as a dominant player with a strong brand presence, standardised menu offerings, and a loyal consumer base. Customer satisfaction is a critical metric for QSR brands as it directly correlates with repeat purchase behaviour, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term brand equity. This study examines customer satisfaction towards KFC with specific focus on the dimensions of food quality, service speed, pricing and value for money, restaurant ambience, staff behaviour, and digital ordering convenience. A descriptive research design was employed using a structured questionnaire administered to 150 respondents across urban areas. Statistical tools including percentage analysis, weighted average scoring, and chi-square tests were applied to analyse the data. Findings indicate that food quality and service speed are the two most significant determinants of customer satisfaction at KFC, while ambience and pricing emerged as moderately influential factors. The study identifies notable satisfaction gaps in the areas of waiting time during peak hours and customisation options. The results provide actionable insights for QSR managers and marketing strategists aiming to enhance service delivery, optimise customer experience, and build sustained brand loyalty in the highly competitive Indian fast food market.

Keywords- Customer Satisfaction, Quick Service Restaurant, KFC, Food Quality, Service Speed, QSR Marketing, Consumer Behaviour.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian food service industry has undergone a dramatic transformation over the last two decades. What was once dominated by traditional dhabas, street food vendors, and home-cooked meals has progressively given way to a vibrant ecosystem of organised restaurant formats — among which Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) have emerged as the most dynamic and fastest-growing segment. QSRs, characterised by their standardised menus, rapid service delivery, and affordability, have resonated deeply with India's expanding urban middle class, particularly the millennial and Gen Z demographics who value convenience, consistency, and experiential consumption.

KFC, originally founded in the United States by Colonel Harland Sanders in 1952, entered the Indian market in 1995 and has since grown to over 700 outlets across more than 150 cities. As a subsidiary of Yum! Brands, KFC operates in India through a franchise model and has successfully localised its menu



offerings to cater to Indian taste preferences — introducing products such as the Zinger Burger, Hot & Crispy Chicken, and a range of vegetarian options. KFC's market positioning as a premium yet accessible QSR brand has enabled it to carve a distinct identity in an increasingly crowded competitive landscape that includes McDonald's, Burger King, Domino's, and a growing number of homegrown QSR chains.

Customer satisfaction in the QSR context is a multidimensional construct that encompasses consumer evaluations of tangible service attributes (food quality, portion size, pricing) as well as intangible service dimensions (staff courtesy, waiting time, restaurant cleanliness, brand ambience). The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) provides a foundational framework for measuring service quality and its linkage to customer satisfaction across service industries. In the QSR context, researchers have further adapted this framework to account for the unique operational characteristics of fast food environments, where speed, standardisation, and sensory experience play amplified roles.

Despite the burgeoning literature on QSR customer satisfaction globally, studies specifically examining KFC's customer satisfaction profile in the Indian urban market remain relatively limited. Most existing research either focuses on the broader QSR category without brand-specific analysis, or draws upon international consumer samples that may not fully capture the nuances of Indian consumer expectations and cultural attitudes towards fast food. This study addresses this gap by conducting a focused empirical investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction at KFC among urban Indian consumers.

The objectives of this study are: (1) to analyse the demographic profile of KFC customers and their consumption patterns; (2) to assess levels of customer satisfaction across key service quality dimensions at KFC; (3) to identify the most significant predictors of overall satisfaction and revisit intention; and (4) to provide strategic recommendations for improving customer experience at KFC outlets. The novelty of this work lies in its granular, brand-specific focus within the Indian QSR context, integrating consumer psychology with service marketing frameworks to yield both theoretical and practical contributions.

II. MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENTS

Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature

The theoretical foundation of this study rests on three key frameworks. First, the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) operationalises service quality along five dimensions — tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy — each of which has direct relevance to QSR service evaluation. Second, Oliver's (1980) Expectancy- Disconfirmation Theory posits that customer satisfaction is a function of the gap between pre-purchase expectations and post-consumption performance perceptions. Third, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is incorporated to account for the growing role of digital ordering platforms and mobile applications in shaping QSR customer experience.

Peri (2006) argued that food quality encompasses dimensions of safety, healthfulness, sensory appeal, and convenience, all of which interact to shape consumer satisfaction in food service settings. Namkung and Jang (2007) demonstrated that food quality is the single strongest predictor of customer satisfaction in restaurants, with presentation, taste, freshness, and portion size as key sub-dimensions. Ha and Jang (2010) further established that the relationship between food quality and satisfaction is moderated by consumer involvement and cultural background — findings particularly relevant in the Indian market context.

With respect to service quality in QSRs, Qin and Prybutok (2008) developed a five-dimension QSR service quality scale encompassing food quality, service quality, atmosphere, convenience, and price-value ratio, finding that all five dimensions significantly predicted customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. In the Indian context, studies by Joshi and Kulkarni (2018) and Sharma and Mehta (2020)



confirmed that KFC customers prioritise food taste and service speed over other satisfaction dimensions, while also noting growing sensitivity to hygiene standards in the post-COVID consumer environment.

Research Instruments

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire comprising three sections: (a) demographic and consumption profile; (b) satisfaction rating scale (5-point Likert scale, 1 = Highly Dissatisfied to 5 = Highly Satisfied) across six service quality dimensions; and (c) overall satisfaction and revisit intention measures. The questionnaire was pilot-tested on 20 respondents before the main data collection phase, and minor revisions were made to improve clarity. Secondary data sources include peer-reviewed journal articles (2015–2025), industry reports from the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI), Euromonitor International QSR market data, and KFC India's official brand communications.

III. EXPERIMENTAL DATA

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design, which is appropriate for empirically profiling a defined population's attitudes, perceptions, and satisfaction levels. The research is both quantitative and analytical in nature, employing statistical tools to examine relationships between variables and draw inferential conclusions.

Sampling and Data Collection

The target population comprises regular KFC customers (defined as individuals who have visited KFC at least once in the past three months) in urban Indian cities. A convenience sampling method was employed, and the final sample size was fixed at 150 respondents. Data was collected through both online (Google Forms) and in-person modes at KFC outlet locations across Tier-I cities over a five-week period. Respondents were ensured of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses.

Statistical Tools Used

The data collected was analysed using the following statistical tools: (1) Simple Percentage Analysis — to describe the frequency distribution of demographic and satisfaction data; (2) Weighted Average Score (WAS) — to rank satisfaction dimensions by importance; (3) Chi-Square Test of Independence — to examine associations between demographic variables and satisfaction levels; and (4) Correlation Analysis — to determine the relationship between individual satisfaction dimensions and overall satisfaction.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Of the 150 respondents surveyed, 56% were male and 44% were female. The dominant age group was 18–25 years (52%), followed by 26–35 years (31%), reflecting KFC's strong appeal among younger urban consumers. In terms of occupation, 48% were students, 34% were working professionals, and 18% were self-employed. Monthly household income ranged from ₹20,000–₹50,000 for 55% of respondents, indicating a predominantly middle-income customer base. As shown in Table 1, the demographic distribution confirms KFC's positioning as a youth-oriented, middle-class QSR brand in the Indian urban market.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of KFC Customer Respondents.

| Demographic Variable | Category | Frequency (n=150) | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 84 | 56 |
| | Female | 66 | 44 |



| | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|----|----|
| Age Group | 18–25 years | 78 | 52 |
| | 26–35 years | 47 | 31 |
| | 36–45 years | 25 | 17 |
| Occupation | Student | 72 | 48 |
| | Working Professional | 51 | 34 |
| | Self-Employed | 27 | 18 |
| Monthly Income | Below ₹20,000 | 28 | 19 |
| | ₹20,000– ₹50,000 | 82 | 55 |
| | Above ₹50,000 | 40 | 26 |

KFC Visit Frequency and Ordering Behaviour

Regarding visit frequency, 38% of respondents reported visiting KFC once a week, 35% visited fortnightly, and 27% visited monthly or less frequently. This indicates a moderately high visit frequency among the study sample, consistent with KFC's position as a regular dining destination for urban youth. In terms of ordering mode, 52% preferred dine-in, 31% used online delivery platforms (Swiggy/Zomato), and 17% utilised the takeaway format. Notably, a chi-square analysis revealed a statistically significant association between age group and ordering mode ($\chi^2 = 14.37$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.01$), with younger respondents (18–25) showing significantly higher preference for online delivery compared to older age groups.

Customer Satisfaction Across Service Quality Dimensions

Respondents rated their satisfaction across six key service quality dimensions on a 5-point Likert scale. The weighted average scores (WAS) for each dimension are presented in Table 2. Food quality recorded the highest satisfaction score (WAS = 4.41), followed by staff behaviour (WAS = 4.18) and restaurant hygiene (WAS = 4.09). Service speed (WAS = 3.87) and value for money (WAS = 3.72) received moderate scores, indicating areas of reasonable but improvable performance. Restaurant ambience recorded the lowest WAS (3.61), suggesting that KFC's physical environment and seating comfort are relatively less satisfying compared to other dimensions.

Table 2: Weighted Average Scores of Customer Satisfaction Dimensions at KFC.

| Satisfaction Dimension | Weighted Average Score (/5) | Rank | Satisfaction Level |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------|--------------------|
| Food Quality | 4.41 | 1 | High |
| Staff Behaviour | 4.18 | 2 | High |
| Restaurant Hygiene | 4.09 | 3 | High |
| Service Speed | 3.87 | 4 | Moderate |
| Value for Money | 3.72 | 5 | Moderate |
| Restaurant Ambience | 3.61 | 6 | Moderate |

Overall Satisfaction and Revisit Intention

Overall satisfaction was measured on a 5-point scale and recorded a mean score of 3.96 (SD = 0.62), indicating a generally positive satisfaction disposition among KFC customers. However, 18% of respondents reported neutral or negative overall satisfaction, representing a meaningful segment of dissatisfied customers whose concerns — primarily around service speed and pricing — warrant managerial attention. Revisit intention was high, with 74% of respondents indicating that they would visit KFC again and 68% stating they would recommend KFC to friends or family. Correlation analysis confirmed that food quality ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$) and service speed ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$) were the strongest predictors of revisit intention, underscoring their strategic importance in retention marketing.

Table 3: Overall Satisfaction Score and Revisit Intention at KFC.

| Measure | Response Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Overall Satisfaction | Highly Satisfied (5) | 41 | 27.3 |



| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----|------|
| | Satisfied (4) | 72 | 48.0 |
| | Neutral (3) | 24 | 16.0 |
| | Dissatisfied (1-2) | 13 | 8.7 |
| Revisit Intention | Yes | 111 | 74.0 |
| | Maybe | 28 | 18.7 |
| | No | 11 | 7.3 |
| Recommendation Intent | Yes | 102 | 68.0 |
| | Maybe | 31 | 20.7 |
| | No | 17 | 11.3 |

Discussion

The findings of this study align with and extend the existing literature on QSR customer satisfaction in several important ways. The primacy of food quality as the leading satisfaction determinant is consistent with Namkung and Jang's (2007) findings and confirms that for QSR brands like KFC, the core product experience remains the bedrock of customer satisfaction regardless of the growing importance of ancillary service dimensions. KFC's sustained investment in recipe standardisation, supplier quality control, and localised menu innovation appears to be paying dividends in terms of consistently high food quality ratings.

The moderate satisfaction scores recorded for service speed and value for money present a nuanced picture. During non - peak hours, KFC's service delivery was rated positively by a majority of respondents; however, waiting time dissatisfaction spiked during weekends and lunch/dinner peak periods. This operational bottleneck is a common challenge for QSR formats globally and underscores the need for dynamic workforce management, queue optimisation technologies, and digital pre-ordering systems to smooth service delivery curves.

The relatively lower satisfaction with restaurant ambience is an interesting finding given KFC's recent investments in outlet redesigns and experience-based store formats. This gap suggests that consumer expectations for in-store experience are rising faster than the pace of physical infrastructure upgrades — a challenge that KFC will need to address strategically, particularly as casual dining competitors continue to raise the bar on restaurant experience quality. The strong correlation between revisit intention and food quality reinforces the brand's best strategic asset and highlights the importance of maintaining rigorous quality standards as the brand continues its aggressive expansion across Indian cities.

V. FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

Future research may extend this study in several productive directions. First, longitudinal studies tracking customer satisfaction over time — particularly through periods of menu changes, price revisions, or service model shifts — would offer richer insights into the dynamics of QSR brand loyalty. Second, comparative studies examining customer satisfaction across competing QSR brands (KFC, McDonald's, Burger King) using a consistent measurement framework would enable more precise competitive benchmarking and strategic differentiation analysis.

Third, the growing role of digital technology in QSR customer experience — including mobile ordering apps, AI-powered personalisation, drone delivery, and virtual menus — warrants dedicated empirical investigation. As KFC and other QSR brands invest increasingly in digital transformation, understanding how technology-mediated interactions influence customer satisfaction and loyalty will become a critical research priority. Fourth, post-COVID consumer behaviour studies examining how health consciousness, hygiene sensitivity, and contactless service preferences have permanently reshaped QSR satisfaction expectations would provide timely and actionable insights for industry practitioners. Fifth, the integration of sentiment analysis of online customer reviews (from platforms such as Zomato, Google



Reviews, and Swiggy) with primary survey data could offer a richer, mixed-methods understanding of the KFC customer satisfaction landscape.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study was undertaken to examine the levels and determinants of customer satisfaction towards KFC, one of India's leading Quick Service Restaurant brands. Through a primary survey of 150 urban KFC customers, the research has yielded a comprehensive empirical portrait of customer satisfaction across six service quality dimensions — food quality, staff behaviour, restaurant hygiene, service speed, value for money, and ambience. The overall satisfaction mean score of 3.96 out of 5 reflects a predominantly positive customer experience, though notable satisfaction gaps exist in the areas of service speed, value for money, and restaurant ambience that require targeted managerial intervention.

The study confirms that food quality is the dominant driver of customer satisfaction and revisit intention at KFC, with a correlation coefficient of 0.71 between food quality satisfaction and overall revisit intent. Staff behaviour and hygiene standards emerged as the second and third most influential satisfaction dimensions, underscoring the importance of both human resource management and operational cleanliness standards in the QSR service delivery chain. The demographic analysis revealed that young adults aged 18–25 constitute KFC's core customer segment and are the primary users of digital ordering channels, signalling the urgency of continued investment in seamless, tech-enabled customer experiences.

From a strategic standpoint, KFC must address the service speed bottleneck through technology-enabled queue management and expanded digital ordering infrastructure. Value for money perceptions can be enhanced through targeted loyalty programmes, combo meal innovations, and transparent pricing communication. Restaurant ambience improvements— particularly in seating comfort, noise levels, and digital engagement touchpoints — would help KFC compete more effectively with casual dining formats that are increasingly encroaching on its premium QSR positioning. In sum, sustaining customer satisfaction in the rapidly evolving Indian QSR market requires KFC to simultaneously excel at its core product offering while continuously innovating across service, technology, and experiential dimensions. The insights generated by this study provide a data-driven foundation for such strategic excellence.

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