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Factors Affecting Eating out in Restaurants: A Study on Customers of Dhaka City

Dr. Rezwanul Huque Khan[α] & Farah Naz Aditi [σ]

Abstract- Eating out in restaurants is becoming a part of lifestyle among Bangladeshi citizens. While the popularity of eating out is increasing, parallelly, the number of restaurants has been rising at an astounding speed. Given the potential of the restaurant business in the country, this study investigates the reasons for which customers choose a particular restaurant to eat out and whether those reasons vary across demographic variables. Our study shows ambiance and quality of food are the top two factors that customers consider to choose a restaurant for eating out. It also shows that customers do not usually care much about menu variety, food presentation, and value-added deals. We found differences in preference exist among these factors across gender and age and showed the influence of gender and age on the frequency of visit and purpose of the visit. The findings of this study provide major implications for the marketers and entrepreneurs which we articulate at the end.

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I. Introduction

A good number of people, nowadays, believe that eating out is fun. Consequently, the number of people visiting restaurants to eat out has been increasing over the last few years, resulting in a modest growth of the restaurant industry all over the world. Though the contribution of this sector in the economy is still tiny (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2017), in 2018, the whole restaurant market in Bangladesh has been estimated at BDT 4,500 crores. It is expected that the restaurant sector will contribute 2.1 percent of the country's GDP by 2021 (Business Daily 24, 2019).

The advancement of the economy of Bangladesh has brought about significant changes in the fast food and restaurant industry in this country. Urbanization has given rise to consumerization in Bangladesh, which in turn has developed the fast food and restaurant industry of the county. Whereas there were a handful of fast food shops in Dhaka even a decade ago, there are now thousands of small to large-scale fast food shops and restaurants around the city (Abir, 2019). Fast-food industry started in Bangladesh in the early 90s. A handful of names like Helvetia, Western Grill, Swiss were among the top names at that time. About 25 years later, there are more than 200+ fast food shops in Dhaka alone. Some of these names include Takeout, Mad chef, Chef's Cuisine, Steak house, etc. The lucrativeness of the industry has brought in international franchises like KFC, Pizza Hut, Gloria Jeans, Burger King, Nando's, Crimson Cup in the country (Islam & Ullah, 2010). This has also given rise to other services such as food delivery services (e.g., Foodpanda, Hungrynaki, Pathao Food, Shohoz Food, Uber Eats) as well as restaurant rating services (Harriken). Eventually, the restaurant industry is also addressing the unemployment problem of the country to a large extent and encouraging entrepreneurial ventures too (Business Daily 24, 2019).

Several factors have contributed to the growth of this restaurant industry. From the entrepreneurs' perspective, catering to the large population with fast food, frozen food, organic food, or food in any other form is a profitable venture to invest in (The Financial Express, 2018). It is perceived that the profit margin in the restaurant business is quite big. On the other hand, eating out is seen as a time-efficient alternative as women who once played the primary role of preparing food are increasingly entering the workplace, home-cooked meals are becoming a difficult option for many (Farhana & Islam, 2011). Second, the need to socialize with friends, colleagues, or business associates over food has become a common trend that plays a significant role in shaping our behavior related to eating out. Moreover, restaurants are also an outlet nowadays for family gatherings, celebrations, birthdays, which poses a low effort and cost-efficient option. Thus, in the face of increased urbanization resulting in increased economic activities, people are willing to go to a restaurant than cook themselves, which has given rise to the number of restaurants (Islam & Ullah, 2010). Third, being an emerging economy, people now have more disposable income in their hands than ever before, which they are willing to spend on occasional dining out (Islam et al., 2018). All these factors are contributing to the consumer's affinity towards the fast food shops and restaurants and led the restaurant business to grow remarkably at an astounding speed.

However, the customer segment is still on the rise, and demand is not yet exhausted, eating out in a restaurant is gradually becoming a cultural integration of our country (Abir, 2019). In such situations, the need for a study to understand consumer preferences and choices while selecting restaurants goes without saying

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and sets the premises for this research paper. Thus, the research aims to investigate- how consumers choose restaurants to eat out and whether demographic characteristics have any influence on their choices.

II. Literature Review

As like in any other decision-making process, the choice of restaurant to eat out is also influenced by many factors. This section discusses different factors that affect customers' choice of a restaurant to eat out.

a) *Factors Affecting Choice of a Restaurant*

Extant literature discusses multifarious factors that consumers prefer when they choose a restaurant to eat out. Mhlanga and Tichaawa (2016), in their study in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, identified the top five factors that affect consumers in choosing formal full-service restaurants. The factors identified are: good service (21.25%); food quality (19.5%); ambience (16%); recommendations (9.25%); social occasion and been here before/frequency (7%). Again, Clark and Wood (1998) cited the range of food, quality of food, price of food, atmosphere, and speed of service as the five determining factors of choosing a restaurant. In another study based in Pakistan, Azim et al. (2014) found food quality & taste (96.62%), cleanliness (87.84%), physical environment (82.43%), staff cooperation (80.41%) and suitable environment for a family gathering (80.41%) as the most important five factors that highly influence the customers' selection of restaurants. Similarly, the most important attribute identified by Longart (2015) is the quality of food. Second in importance was service following Atmospherics, as combining ambiance (noisy or quiet), décor and lighting, and music appeared as a third important factor. The other attributes found in that study are location, food presentation, menu options, and cleanliness. While aspects such as portion sizes and offers had relatively less importance, the least important attribute to the customers was the range of beverages.

Through an experiment, Scozzafava et al. (2017) highlighted how price and service quality are always considered as the most important ones to select a restaurant. They argued that the presence of the menu with local foods, organic foods, and OGM-free products is never decisive for the final choice. Still, it is a much-appreciated attribute for almost 30 percent of consumers. Scozzafava et al. (2017) continued that if a restaurant offers local products, the likelihood of choosing that restaurant is three times higher than that of a restaurant not offering it, all other conditions being equal. Again, June and Smith (1987) conducted a conjoint analysis on a sample of fifty affluent upper-middle-class professionals and concluded that the preference of attributes differs across different events. For example, they ranked liquor availability followed by service, food quality, atmosphere, and price as desired attributes for an intimate dinner. In contrast, for a business dinner, service is the most critical factor followed by price, liquor availability, food quality, and atmosphere are the important ones. They also showed how the preference of attributes varied when the event was birthday celebrations and family dinner. In another house-to-house survey conducted by Auty (1992) in the northern of English city, the three most important attributes in three different situations of social, celebrations, and speed/convenience were found food quality, food type, and value.

As such, based on the reviewed literature, ambiance, quality of food, price, service, and friendliness of employees, value for money, cleanliness, location, portion size, speed of service, value-added deals, food presentation, and menu variety are factors that influence the selection of restaurant to eat out.

b) *Effect of Demographic Characteristics*

In a study of restaurant patrons in Spain, Ribeiro-Soriano (2002) found that customers of different ages perceived the relative importance of restaurant attributes differently. However, in that study, there were no significant differences between male and female consumers. Harrington et al. (2010) conducted another study of restaurant attribute according to age and gender and added a third component: dining frequency. The latter did not appear to reveal any differences between customers who eat out more frequently and those who patronize restaurants less. Contrary to Ribeiro-Soriano's findings, they found that the female market segment requires greater emphasis on quality indicator attributes, restaurant setting requirements, and dietary considerations. Longart (2015) stated that female consumers mirror the perceived importance of aspects of older customers who also place greater weight on marketing efforts, enticing promotions, and convenient access to the restaurant. They further mentioned that women seem more interested in offers and promotions than men.

In a survey administered on 350 consumers from Dhaka city in Bangladesh, it was found that age, gender, and income play a mediating role in selecting a restaurant and that consumers' age differences have the strongest influence on their behavior of choosing a restaurant (Rahman, 2012). Srivastava (2015) showed that socialization through hanging out with friends as a major reason for dining outside the home. In that study, no significant difference was found in male and female diners when analyzing their frequency to dine out and preferred purpose. Again, Kivela et al. (2000) linked income with consumption patterns. They argue that less disposable income leads to a lower visits to restaurants. Similarly, Logart (2015) showed thepresentation of food is more important for married or cohabiting couples than by the single respondents.

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In another study, Huda and Hossain (2009) asked corporate executives about their preferences for eating out during lunchtime based on restaurants in the Gulshan area of Dhaka city. The study indicated that consumers had more favorable attitudes towards fast-food restaurants than regular food restaurants in terms of having lunch during working hours. It was observed that customers had a more positive attitude toward fast food restaurant for the bundle of attributes like the atmosphere of the restaurants and food quality. In contrast, the customers showed their favorable outlook towards regular food restaurants because of the characteristics like a reasonable price, variation in food menu and due to the closeness of the restaurant to the work place (Huda & Hossain, 2009).

Reynolds and Gutman (1988, p. 816) in their study advanced the idea that "consumption differs by occasion." Mehta and Maniam (2002) conducted a survey of restaurant attributes based on market segmentation, which considered only two variables, leisure or business, for the purchase occasion, or reasons for dining. Mehta and Maniam assert that professionals who attend restaurants for economic benefits and meeting with clients comprise what they call the business market. These customers aim at impressing a client, closing business deals, or achieving intangible or tangible benefits from co-workers. In contrast, the leisure segment consists of those who are visiting a restaurant to entertain friends and relatives, or for special celebratory occasions (a birthday, a wedding, or other special moment), or just for pure convenience. These consumers are concerned with satisfaction for themselves or for the close group of friends/relatives who accompany him/her.

As such, existing literature identifies different demographic variables, e.g., age, gender, income, occupation, which directly affect customers' preference of attributes to select a restaurant for eating out. However, this study considers only age and gender as demographic variables to explore its influence on choosing a restaurant since the literature shows conflicting findings of the influence of age and gender on the choice of restaurants (see Ribeiro-Soriano (2002); Harrington et al. (2010); Rahman (2012); Srivastava (2015); Longart (2015) for details).

III. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative method to investigate customers' preferred attributes to select restaurants for eating out and seeing whether demographic variables have any influence on this preference. We collected data from both primary and secondary sources. The source of secondary data was various relevant books, journals, newspapers, and online sites. For collecting primary data, a structured questionnaire was developed, and used for the survey. The questionnaire developed had mostly closed-ended questions, which included a checklist of items, MCQ questions, and few statements with a Likert scale. The first section of the questionnaire was regarding demographic variables of the respondents, while the second section focused on their preferences and consumption. The respondents were required to answer how frequently they visit restaurants and the primary purpose of visiting restaurants. The purpose of these two questions was to determine their consumption pattern. The next questions were on different attributes a consumer considered important to select a restaurant to eat out. It also included questions to explore the importance of those factors in different social settings. To find out the importance of those factors' statements with5-point Likert scale was provided wherein 1 indicated "Not at all important" and five represents "Extremely Important." Since the sampling frame for the customers who eat out in restaurants in Dhaka city cannot be determined, convenience sampling was used to select the respondents. The formula used to determine the sample size for our research is: $n = (z^2pq)/d_0^2$; Where, n =Sample Size; z= Cut-off Value for Desired Confidence Level; P=Proportion of households able to afford the basic amenities q= 1-p and d0 = Precision. Here, we desire a confidence level of 90%, which yields a z-value of 1.65 and a precision level of ±5.5%. The value of p and q will be taken as 0.5 because we want an equal representation of the population. Hence, the required sample size for this study is $n = (1.65*0.5*0.5)/0.055^2 = 220$. The questionnaire survey was conducted with 250 customers who were getting out of different restaurants in Bashundhara Shopping Mall, Jamuna Future Park, and restaurants in Baily road. All the restaurants were in Dhaka City and were selected based on convenience. Discarding a few of the erroneous (most questions were unanswered) questionnaires, we kept only 237 filled in questionnaires.

We entered the collected data into IBM SPSS Statistics software, and conducted one sample t-Test, Independent sample t-test, Frequency analysis, and Chi square test to analyze the data.

IV. Analysis and Findings

a) Respondents' Profile

Our analysis shows that we had diversified respondents in terms demographic variables: age, gender, occupation, and salary. About 50.6% of our respondents are Female, while 49.4% are Male. This represents almost equal participation of both genders in our research. Almost 43% of the respondents are of ages between 21-25 years, whereas 12.2% of them are 15-20 years of age, 16.9% are 26-30 years of age, 14.3% are 31-40 years of age, and the rest 13.5% are 40+ years old. In terms of occupations, about 48.5% of

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respondents are students, followed by 22.4% in private sector jobs, 13.1% in public sector jobs, 7.6% are entrepreneurs, and the rest selected 'others' as their profession. Our analysis shows that 43.5 % of the respondents have a monthly salary below BDT 20,000 while 21.1% of the respondents have a monthly salary of BDT 20,000- 50,000, 16% were in the BDT 50,001-80,000 salary range, followed by 10.1 % in BDT 80,001-150,000 range, 5.9% in BDT 150,001 - 300,000 range and 3.4% in the above BDT 300,000 range.

b) Consumers' Consumption Pattern Relating to Eating Out

i. *Purpose of Visit*

Our analysis shows that around 38% (37.6%) of the respondents visit a restaurant mostly to hang out with friends, followed by recreation (27.4%) and for family gatherings (11%). We notice that a certain percentage of respondents (5.1%) recognized that going to restaurants has become a part of their lifestyle. On the other hand, only 1.3% of the respondents attributed official/business purpose for their visit to restaurants. These findings reflect that visiting restaurants has become a leading social activity among the residents in Dhaka city.

Table 1: Purpose of visit to the restaurant

Purpose	Recreation	Celebration	Official/Business Purpose	Lunch Hour	Family Gathering	Part of Lifestyle	No Cooking Day	Hanging out with friends
Percentage	27.4%	6.6%	1.3%	7.6%	11%	5.1%	3.4%	37.6%

ii. *Frequency of Visit*

We found that the majority of the respondents (40.9%) visit restaurants 3-4 times in a month while 32.9% of customers visit 1-2 times a month. The study shows a decent percentage of respondents (7.7%) visit restaurants frequently (more than eight times a month).

Table 2: Frequency of visit to the restaurant

Frequency of Visit/month	Rarely (1-2 times)	Sometimes (3-4 times)	Fairly Occasionally (5-8 times)	Frequently (8+ times)
Percentage	32.9%	40.9%	18.5%	7.7%

iii. *Average Monthly Spending for Eating Out*

Our analysis shows that more than 83% of the customers spend below BDT 10,000 monthly for eating out in restaurants, while 48.3% of respondents spend BDT 1,001-5,000 following 19.5% of them spending BDT 5,001-10,000. However, almost 5% of the respondents spend a handsome amount (above BDT 20,000) for their restaurant bills monthly.

Table 3: Average monthly spending to eat out in restaurants

Monthly Avg. Spending	Up to BDT 1000	BDT 1001-5000	BDT 5001-10000	BDT 10001-15000	BDT 15001-20000	Above BDT 20000
Percentage	14.8%	48.3%	19.5%	9.7%	3.0%	4.7%

iv. *Attributes Affecting Customers' Choice of Restaurant*

Our analysis shows that customers' choice of visiting a particular restaurant is impacted by multiple factors, among which 'Ambiance' is the most preferred attribute having a mean value of 4.54 followed by 'Quality of Food' (mean value: 4.51). We also observed 'Value for Money' which beats 'Price' in 4th place has a mean value more than 4. These findings reflect that customers in Dhaka city are more conscious about ambiance and quality of food rather than price, i.e., they are willing to pay more for the greater value offered, and their decisions are not just based on price and only lowering prices will not win customers' heart.

Table 4: Customers' preferred attributes to choose restaurant

Factor Considered	Mean Value
Ambiance	4.54
Quality of Food	4.51
Value for Money	4.04

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Price	4.01
Service & Friendliness of Employees	3.91
Cleanliness	3.81
Location	3.65
Portion Size	3.64
Speed of Service	3.6
Value Added Deals	3.51
Food Presentation	3.18
Menu Variety	3.14

On the flip side, we see that 'menu variety,' 'food presentation,' and 'value-added deals' are not so critical to choose a restaurant. It can be argued that customers are more interested in specialty restaurants that serve a few dishes of specific cuisine than a variety of menu. Similarly, food presentation does not matter much as one of their most preferred criteria is quality of food or taste. Table 4 above shows customers' preferred attributes to choose a restaurant in terms of the mean value.

Our analysis also explores that there is a variation of preferred attributes based on the purpose of the visit (see Table 5 for details). It shows, irrespective of the purpose of visit, the most critical factors considered by customers to eat out in a restaurant is ambiance, and quality of food. Whereas, customers who visit during lunch hour considers 'speed of service' and 'price' as essential factors. During lunch hour, customers are in a rush and 'speed of service' is the most important thing, whereas if they visit frequently, 'price' becomes a vital factor for them. Similarly, customers visiting restaurants for official purposes prefer 'service quality' along with 'ambiance.' Interestingly, almost 47% of the respondents whose foremost purpose of the visit is to hang out with friends are noted to be concerned with 'price.' Again, those who visit restaurants to enjoy no-cooking day prefer 'menu variety,' which might be attributed to the fact that they are bored with regular food and are out looking for variety and to try out new things.

Table 5: Variation of factors preferred at different events

Occasion	Factor 1	Frequency	Factor 2	Frequency
Family Gathering	Ambience	50%	Quality of Food	30%
Celebrations	Ambience	33.8 %	Quality of Food	22%
Friends Hangout	Price	46.8%	Quality of Food	16%
Official Purpose/ Business Meeting	Ambience	41.4%	Service Quality	24.9%
Recreation	Ambience	27.4%	Quality of Food	25.7%
Lunch Hour	Speed of Service	45.1%	Price	26.6%
No Cooking Day	Menu Variety	29.5%	Quality of Food	29.1%

c) Influence of Demographics on Consumption Pattern

i. *Influence of Gender*

ii. *Influence of Gender on Purpose of the Visit*

Our analysis shows that the purpose of visiting restaurants differs marginally between males and females. While 17.8% of males consider hanging out with friends as the prime purpose of the visit, 19.8% of females consider the same. Similarly, for almost all purposes, there is hardly a significant difference (see Table 6 for details) between the male and female groups of respondents.

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Table 6: Influence of Gender on Purpose of Visit

	Recreation	Celebration	Official Purpose	Lunch Hour	Family Gathering	Part of Lifestyle	No cooking Day	Hanging out with friends
Male	14.8%	3.1%	1.3%	4.2%	4.7%	1.6%	2.1%	17.8%
Female	12.6%	3.5%	0.0%	3.4%	6.3%	3.5%	1.3%	19.8%

The Pearson Chi-square coefficient is 6.550, with an alpha value of 0.477. At a 90% confidence level, it can be said that the variables are independent of each other.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.550	7	0.477

iii. *Effect of Gender on Frequency of Visit*

Similar to the purpose of the visit, our analysis identifies that the frequency of visits for both males and females does not show significant differences.

Table 7: Influence of Gender on Frequency of Visit

Frequency of Visit/month	Rarely 1-2 times	Sometimes 3-4 times	Fairly Occasionally 5-8 times	Frequently 8+ times
Male	15.6%	21.1%	8.9%	3.8%
Female	17.3%	19.8%	9.6%	3.9%

The Pearson Chi-square coefficient, in this case, is 0.393, with an alpha value of 0.942. At a 90% confidence level, we can say that the variables are independent of each other.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.393	3	0.942

iv. *Influence of Gender on Average Spending for Eating Out*

Our analysis shows that gender has an effect on the average spending for eating out. Table 8 shows how the monthly spending varies due to gender variation.

Table 8: Influence of Gender on Average Spending

Monthly Avg. Spending	Up to BDT 1000	BDT 1001 -5000	BDT 5001-10000	BDT 10001-15000	BDT 15001-20000	Above BDT 20000
Male	5.5%	26.3%	7.6%	5.5%	2.1%	1.7%
Female	9.3%	22%	11.9%	4.2%	.9%	3.0%

The Pearson Chi-square coefficient is 10.081, with an alpha value of 0.073. At a 90% confidence level, we can state that the variables are not independent of each other.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.081	5	0.073

v. *Influence of Gender on Preferred Attributes*

Our analysis shows, there are no significant differences in the attributes preferred by males and females apart from the quality of food and cleanliness. Males focused more on the quality of food, whereas females are more concerned on the hygiene factor.

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Table 9: Influence of Gender on Preferred Attributes

Attributes	Mean		Significance	Results
	Male	Female		
Service and friendliness of Employee	3.92	3.89	.789	No Significant Differences
Ambiance	3.82	3.8	.865	No Significant Differences
Location	3.72	3.58	.301	No Significant Differences
Quality of Food	4.62	4.41	.026	Significant Differences
Menu Variety	3.44	3.57	.330	No Significant Differences
Food Presentation	3.13	3.23	.450	No Significant Differences
Value Added Deals	2.95	3.33	.367	No Significant Differences
Value for Money	4.03	4.08	.685	No Significant Differences
Cleanliness	3.74	4.58	. 014	Significant Differences
Speed of Service	3.7	3.5	.107	No Significant Differences
Price	3.98	4.02	.776	No Significant Differences
Portion Size	3.71	3.57	.288	No Significant Differences

d) Influence of Age

i. *Influence of Age on Purpose of Visit*

Our analysis shows, the purpose of the visit varies at different age group. While recreation is the primary reason for visiting restaurants across age groups 15-20 years and 21-25 years, all three remaining age groups (26-30 years, 31-40 years, 40+ years) were noticed to visit restaurants mainly to hang out with friends. Also, it is observed that consumers in the age group 31-40 years visit restaurants in their lunch hour to a great extent, while family gathering is a central reason for visiting a restaurant for the 40+ age group.

Table 10: Influence of Age on Purpose of Visit

Age and Purpose of Visit					
Purpose	Age Group (in year)				
	15-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	40+
Recreation	5.1%	19.0%	0.8%	2.1%	0.4%
Celebration	1.3%	4.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Official/ Business Purpose	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
Lunch Hour	0.1%	1.0%	1.4%	4.6%	0.4%
Family Gathering	1.7%	1.1%	2.1%	0.8%	5.3%
Part of Lifestyle	0.8%	0%	0%	3%	1.3%
No cooking day	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	2.3%
Hang out with friends	1.3%	5.9%	13.1%	7.6%	9.7%

A chi-square test also supports this dependence on the purpose of a restaurant visit with changes of age group.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	134.782[a]	28	0.000

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ii. *Influence of Age on Frequency of Visit*

Our analysis shows that the highest percentage of respondents in all groups usually visit restaurants 3-4 times each month, except for the respondents of age group 31-40, where most customers make around 1-2 visits to restaurants each month. We also note that although younger age groups of 15-20 and 21-25 tend to visit restaurants fairly occasionally, people from the senior age groups do so rarely. It reflects the age group has influence on how frequently customers would visit the restaurants.

Table 11: Influence of Age on Frequency of Visits/Month

	Frequency of Visits			
Age Group (in year)	Rarely (1-2 times)	Sometimes (3-4 times)	Occasionally (5-8 times)	Frequently (8+ times)
15-20	3.0%	6.8%	1.7%	0.0%
21-25	15.6%	17.3%	5.2%	0.8%
26-30	5.5%	5.9%	3.6%	1.9%
31-40	6.3%	5.1%	1.8%	2.9%
40+	2.5%	5.8%	2.2%	2.1%

A chi-square test was done to see if the frequency of restaurant visits were dependent on age group, and they were found to be dependent.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.773[a]	12	0.072

iii. *Average Spending*

Our analysis shows that the average monthly spending is, to some extent, induced by age. Respondents from almost all age groups (except 15-20 years) spendan average of BDT 1,000-5,000 every month on restaurant visits. However, customers of age group 15-20 years spend less than BDT 1,000 per month. On the other hand, a moderate percentage of customers of age groups 26-30, 30-40, and 40+ tend to spend more than BDT 5,000 per month to eat out in the restaurants.

Table 12: Influence of Age on Monthly Average Spending

	Age Groups				
Monthly Avg. spending	15-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	40+
Upto 1,000	4.2%	8.5%	1.3%	0.0%	0.8%
1,001-5,000	1.3%	26.3%	5.9%	6.4%	4.2%
5,001-10,000	1.3%	6.4%	5.1%	3.4%	3.4%
10,001-15,000	0.8%	1.3%	2.1%	2.5%	3.0%
15,001-20,000	0.4%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Above 20,000	0.0%	0.4%	1.7%	1.3%	1.3%

The influence of age group on monthly spending is also supported by the chi-square test that shows the dependence of average expenditure on age groups.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	57.433[a]	20	0.000

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iv. *Influence of Age on Attributes Preferred*

An independent sample t-test was conducted to see whether there was any significant variation in preferred attributes across the age groups. To observe the influence of age groups, all the age groups were considered into two broad major groups: 15-25 years, and 26 and above. Significant differences were detected in the attributes: Value for

Table 13: Influence of Age on Attributes Preference

Attributes	Mean		Significance	Results
	15-25	25+		
Service & Friendliness of Employee	3.87	3.94	.535	No Significant Difference
Ambiance	3.82	3.8	.907	No Significant Difference
Location	3.69	3.61	.580	No Significant Difference
Quality of Food	4.5	4.52	.757	No Significant Difference
Menu Variety	3.43	3.57	.268	No Significant Difference
Food Presentation	3.17	3.20	.821	No Significant Difference
Value Added Deals	3.31	2.98	.035	Significant Difference
Value for Money	4.16	3.95	.090	Significant Difference
Cleanliness	4.51	4.57	.488	No Significant Difference
Speed of Service	3.75	3.46	.020	Significant Difference
Price	4.18	3.83	.003	Significant Difference
Portion Size	3.99	3.3	.000	Significant Difference

Money, Value Added Deals, Speed of Service, Price and Portion Size. For Respondents of age up to 25 were found to be concerned about all those attributes, whereas respondents over 25 focused less on those five attributes. The following table shows details of the results.

V. Discussion

By analyzing the data from our survey, our study sheds light on two aspects- the decision to choose a restaurant as per demographics and whether demographic characteristics (age, gender) influence such decisions.

It is seen from the study that the focal purpose of visiting a restaurant is hanging out with friends followed by recreation, indicating a link between visiting a restaurant and the need for socialization. It is supported by the fact that even the 3rd and 4th top choices of respondents were family gatherings and celebrations, which are also major socializing events. Hence, we get a strong indication that restaurants are now deemed as the center for social livelihood.

The majority of the respondents visit restaurants 3-4 times a month, indicating roughly once a week, and almost half of the respondents (48.3%) spend an average of BDT 1,001-5000 per month.

The ambiance is the most preferred attribute that people look for while choosing a restaurant followed by the quality of food, and value for money irrespective of the occasion. Thus, we can infer that despite the choice of a restaurant being directly related to the quality of food offered at a fitting price, consumers are first and foremost concerned about the atmosphere or surroundings of the place they dine out. Such ambiance may be related to the seating arrangement, décor, availability of privacy for confidential conversations, or even just for aesthetic pleasure.

The influence of demographics on the choice of restaurants is also examined. It can be concluded at a broad level that age influences almost all dimensions of decision making while choosing a restaurant, whereas gender plays more or less a neutral role.

Gender dose not influence the purpose or frequency but influences the average monthly spending for visiting a restaurant. The instances where differences among male and female respondents were evident in the preferred attributes of choosing a restaurant are- while women are more inclined to cleanliness as a preferred attribute, men prefer the quality of food.

Age, on the other hand, is a relevant influencer. Whereas, the younger generation visit restaurants for recreation, those above 25 years of age visit for hanging out with friends. The study shows that the frequency of visits and average monthly spending is also variable on age. The significant differences in attributes endorsed by the younger generation being value-added meals, a value for money, the price all indicate that the young people are more price-conscious and like to get the best value for their money since their income might be limited to a great extent.

Deriving useful insight from the analysis, our study suggests a few implications for strategy formulation by marketers and policy makers-

1. People who visit restaurants irrespective of purpose regard "Ambiance" as the most favored aspect. This can be a signal for restaurants to move towards creating a better environment/ambiance and moving

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towards experiential marketing. Nowadays, many restaurants are differentiating themselves by including specialized sections, for example, book corner/bookshop for booklovers, gaming zone for kids/young adults, culturally appropriate indoor décor in Japanese/Italian restaurant, outdoor lawn to enjoy refreshments in the fresh air. Restaurants should no longer focus on selling just food but an extended experience, an enjoyable ambiance. This concept can be beneficial in differentiating restaurants as competition continue to grow even stronger.

2. As more and more women are entering the workforce with decreased time for cooking a homemade meal for their families, marketers can position restaurants as a place to spend quality family time by launching campaigns to support women's empowerment by making lives easier for them. It will change the slightly negative attitude that Bangladeshi society has about eating out or a no cooking day often because it portrays the wife as a bad homemaker.
3. Since young people want value for their money, a restaurant should position itself as price reasonable to target the youth. They should understand that it is the perception that matters. Even if they are not priced reasonable, marketing communication should be directed towards creating an image of rational prices.
4. Established jobholders, but the young population can be a good target market which focuses on speedy service and price reasonability.
5. Lunch hours are becoming an increasingly popular reason for restaurants visit, and as such, developing novel products for the lunch hour, and communicating speedy delivery can be profitable for restaurants.
6. As a massive percentage go to restaurants for recreation (27.4%), communication can portray models having a refreshing/enjoyable time. Taglines can incorporate the spirit of fun & enjoyment.
7. Women (Mothers in the family) are a key influencer while choosing a decision to eat out. Since women have a concern for cleanliness and hygiene, restaurants can display the cleanliness and professionalism of the kitchen to gain consumer confidence. Many restaurants now have open glass kitchens that people can look through. It inspires confidence in consumers and creates loyal returning customers.
8. Since socialization is the most important reason to visit restaurants, communication should be tailored to various age groups according to their socialization appeal. For example, for attracting business professionals, restaurants should communicate a calm and professional environment with speedy service. In case of attracting celebrations and family gatherings, it should create a separate corner for celebratory events with readymade décor suitable for customization as per the customer's need.
9. Restaurants can adopt targeted marketing towards a certain age groups or occasions rather than trying to attract the mass population for all occasions.

VI. Conclusions

As the country's food industry undergoes a massive overhaul, restaurants are the go of the town now. Rapid industrialization, as well as urbanization, has mechanized our lives. Dhaka city, with a population of about 20 million, has undergone phenomenal changes, which has led to dense housing and abolishment of recreational parks, walkways, and natural scenic beauty. In such circumstances, restaurants remain as peoples' go-to place for recreation, family get-together, business meetings, friends' hangout. Our study shows purpose, frequency, average spending on monthly visits to restaurants vary for a diverse population as Dhaka city. The elements that people seek in a restaurant also vary. The study also shows that these factors, in turn, vary altogether with changes in demographic variables like gender and age. Future studies should investigate the influence of other variables on the preference of attributes. Moreover, further investigation is also needed to explore whether the findings of this study could be generalized for other cities in the country. The study offers few useful recommendations for the marketers and also for the entrepreneurs that can be put into practice to provide superior customer service and gain consumer confidence for a much more profitable venture.

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