

Identifying the Consumer Expectations from Fast Food Outlets in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Identifying the consumer expectations is very important to any industry as all the industries depend on consumers. Consumer expectations change from time to time and sellers should know what consumers really need from them at the particular moment to make more profits and develop long lasting relationships with consumers. Consumer expectations change due to the changes in external environment and changes in consumer's black box. Changes in external environment are visible to the sellers and sellers can drive their business according to these changes. However, the changes in consumer's black box are not visible to the sellers and sellers may drive their business in to a wrong path without knowing the changes in this black box. This research looked in to the consumer's black box and identify the expectations from the fast food outlets. Fast food industry is one of the growing industries in Sri Lanka. This industry has evolved in the country with the contribution of local and foreign sellers from many years ago. Researcher identified the economic, social and cultural factors which promote fast food in Sri Lanka while studying the background of the industry. This research focused the urban working consumers to identify consumer expectations from the fast food outlets. Consumer expectations were gathered in terms of food package features and service delivery of the outlet. Researcher identified the requirements of consumers from the food package when consume the fast food while traveling or working. Service delivery expectations were identified according to the five factors of SERVQUAL model. Frequency of consuming fast food and reasons for these frequencies were also identified as a result of looking in to the consumer's black box. Finally, business opportunities from the consumer expectations were concluded for the usage of the fast food outlet owners in the country.

Keywords: *consumer expectations, fast food, SERVQUAL model, urban working consumers*

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