



A Study on Horeca Consumers' Preference and Perception Towards Cooking Masalas

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ABSTRACT

The HoReCa (Hotels, Restaurants, and Catering) sector represents a significant segment of bulk consumption within the food industry, particularly in the usage of cooking masalas.

Unlike individual consumers, HoReCa establishments operate on large-scale consumption patterns and are influenced by multiple operational and cost-related factors.

This study aims to analyse the purchasing behaviour, preferences, and perception of HoReCa establishments towards cooking masala products. The research focuses on key factors such as purchase frequency, bulk quantity requirements, pricing considerations, supplier benefits including discounts and credit facilities, and preferred purchasing channels.

The study is based on primary data collected from 30 HoReCa respondents using a structured questionnaire, supported by secondary data from academic literature and industry sources.

The findings indicate that price competitiveness, consistent product quality, availability, and strong supplier relationships are the most influential factors in purchasing decisions.

The study provides valuable insights for masala manufacturers and suppliers, particularly brands such as Aachi Masala, to enhance their supply strategies, pricing models, and distribution efficiency in order to better serve the HoReCa

segment.



INTRODUCTION

India has a rich and diverse food culture, where spices and masalas play a vital role in defining taste, aroma, and overall food quality. In the HoReCa sector, the importance of masalas is even more significant due to large-scale food preparation and the need for consistency in taste across multiple servings.

Hotels, restaurants, and catering businesses rely heavily on a continuous and reliable supply of masalas to maintain operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Unlike individual consumers, HoReCa buyers focus less on branding and more on functional aspects such as cost efficiency, bulk pricing, product consistency, supplier reliability, and timely delivery.

In a highly competitive food service industry, even minor disruptions in supply or quality can directly impact customer experience and business performance. Therefore, understanding the purchasing behaviour and expectations of HoReCa buyers becomes essential for masala manufacturers and suppliers.

This study attempts to examine the key factors influencing purchasing decisions in the HoReCa sector and provides insights into how companies can align their strategies to meet market expectations effectively.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The study is conducted with the following objectives:
- To analyse the frequency and quantity of masala purchases among HoReCa establishments
- To evaluate the importance of pricing, bulk discounts, and credit facilities in purchase decisions
- To identify the preferred purchasing channels such as wholesalers, distributors, and retailers
- To examine the availability and accessibility of masala products in the HoReCa market
- To analyse the key factors influencing supplier selection in the HoReCa sector

PROBLEM STATEMENT

HoReCa establishments require a consistent supply of high-quality masalas to maintain food standards and customer satisfaction. However, they frequently encounter challenges such as price fluctuations, inconsistent supply, limited product availability, and lack of credit facilities from suppliers.

Additionally, dependency on intermediaries such as wholesalers and distributors may sometimes lead to delays and increased costs. These challenges can affect operational efficiency, cost management, and service quality.

Therefore, it is essential to understand the actual needs, expectations, and preferences of HoReCa buyers in order to improve supplier performance, ensure efficient distribution, and enhance customer satisfaction.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework explains the process followed by HoReCa establishments in purchasing masala products.



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Masala Purchasing Decision

This framework shows that purchasing decisions are influenced by both financial and operational factors.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Kotler and Keller (2017) state that customer satisfaction is driven by perceived value, which is influenced by product quality, pricing, and overall benefits offered. In the HoReCa sector, maintaining consistent quality at competitive pricing is essential for long-term customer retention.

Christopher (2016) highlights that efficient supply chain management ensures timely delivery and product availability, which are critical for businesses operating in high-demand environments such as hotels and restaurants.

Chopra (2019) explains that effective distribution networks reduce operational costs and improve accessibility of products, thereby enhancing supply efficiency.

Slack (2016) emphasizes that operational efficiency and supplier reliability are key factors in maintaining stable business relationships and ensuring uninterrupted production processes.

Dale (2015) stresses that maintaining consistent product quality is crucial for customer satisfaction, particularly in food-related industries where quality directly impacts end consumers.

Ulrich (2015) discusses the importance of product standardization in ensuring uniformity, especially in large-scale consumption sectors such as HoReCa.

Cooper (2019) highlights that companies must continuously adapt their pricing and product strategies based on market demand and customer expectations.

Jeston (2014) emphasizes structured business processes as a means to improve efficiency and coordination between different stakeholders in the supply chain.

Brown (2013) concludes that strong supplier relationships and efficient operational strategies contribute significantly to long-term business success.

Porter (2008) explains that competitive advantage is achieved through cost leadership and supplier efficiency, which directly influence purchasing decisions in bulk consumption markets.

Overall, the literature indicates that pricing, supply chain efficiency, product quality, and supplier relationships are critical determinants of purchasing behaviour in the HoReCa sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyse the purchasing behaviour of HoReCa establishments.

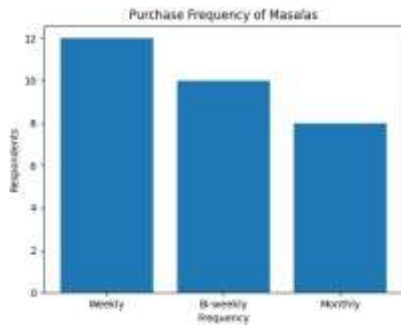
Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 30 respondents, including hotel, restaurant, and catering business owners. Secondary data was collected from books, journals, and industry reports.

Purposive sampling was used to select respondents involved in purchasing decisions. The data was analysed using percentage analysis and tabulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Purchase Frequency of Masalas

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Weekly	12	40%
Bi-weekly	10	33%
Monthly	8	27%
Total	30	100%

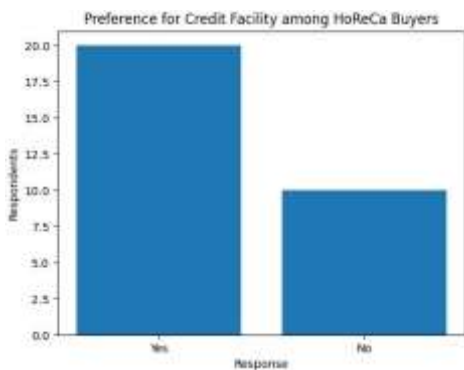


Interpretation:

The majority of HoReCa establishments (40%) purchase masalas on a weekly basis, indicating high demand and frequent consumption. This highlights the importance of continuous supply and efficient inventory management.

Table 2: Credit Facility Preference

Response	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	20	67%
No	10	33%
Total	30	100%



Interpretation:

A majority of respondents (67%) prefer suppliers who offer credit facilities. This indicates that financial flexibility plays a significant role in supplier selection and helps businesses manage working capital effectively.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings suggest that masala companies should focus on offering competitive pricing, maintaining consistent product quality, and ensuring continuous product availability.

Providing credit facilities can strengthen relationships with HoReCa customers and improve retention. Additionally, improving distribution efficiency can help companies meet demand effectively and gain a competitive advantage.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

Limitations

- The study is based on a small sample size of 30 respondents
 - The study is limited to specific HoReCa establishments
- Future Scope**



- The study can be extended to a larger sample size
- Future research can include different geographical regions
- Advanced statistical tools can be used for deeper analysis

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that HoReCa establishments have a distinct purchasing behaviour compared to individual consumers. Their decisions are mainly influenced by price, credit facilities, supplier reliability, and product availability.

For masala companies, focusing on bulk pricing, strong distribution networks, and customer relationship management can improve business performance. Understanding HoReCa preferences is essential for achieving long-term success in the market.

REFERENCES

- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2017). *Marketing Management*. Pearson.

This book provides a strong foundation in marketing concepts, particularly focusing on customer satisfaction, value creation, and buying behaviour. It explains how price, quality, and perceived value influence customer decisions. In this study, these concepts help in understanding how HoReCa buyers evaluate masala products.

- Christopher, M. (2016). *Logistics and Supply Chain Management*. Pearson.

Christopher emphasizes the importance of efficient supply chain systems in ensuring product availability and timely delivery. The book highlights how supply chain performance directly impacts customer satisfaction. This is relevant to the study as HoReCa businesses depend on continuous and reliable supply of masalas.

- Porter, M. E. (2008). *Competitive Strategy*. Free Press.

Porter's work explains how businesses achieve competitive advantage through cost leadership and efficient operations. It discusses the role of suppliers and pricing strategies in business success. This concept is useful in understanding how pricing and supplier efficiency influence HoReCa purchasing decisions.

- Chopra, S. (2019). *Supply Chain Management*. Pearson.

This book explains the role of distribution networks in improving product accessibility and reducing costs. It highlights how efficient logistics systems support business operations. In the HoReCa context, it helps explain why wholesalers and distributors are preferred purchasing channels.

- Slack, N. (2016). *Operations Management*. Pearson.

Slack focuses on operational efficiency, process management, and supplier reliability. The book explains how smooth operations are essential for maintaining consistent output. This is important for HoReCa businesses that require consistent quality and uninterrupted supply of masalas.

- Dale, B. G. (2015). *Managing Quality*. Wiley.

Dale emphasizes the importance of quality management in achieving customer satisfaction and long-term success. The book explains how consistent product quality builds trust and loyalty. This is highly relevant in the food industry, where quality directly affects customer experience.

- Ulrich, K. T. (2015). *Product Design and Development*. McGraw-Hill.

Ulrich discusses product standardization and its importance in maintaining consistency. The book highlights how uniform product quality is essential in large-scale consumption industries. This concept supports the need for consistent masala quality in HoReCa operations.

- Cooper, R. G. (2019). *Winning at New Products*. Basic Books.

Cooper focuses on product strategy and market-oriented decision-making. The book explains



how companies must adapt their pricing and product offerings based on customer needs. This is useful in understanding how masala companies can align with HoReCa expectations.

- Jeston, J., & Nelis, J. (2014). *Business Process Management*. Routledge.

This book explains how structured processes improve efficiency and coordination within organizations. It highlights the importance of streamlined operations and decision-making. This is relevant in managing supplier relationships and improving procurement processes in HoReCa businesses.

- Brown, S. (2013). *Strategic Operations Management*. Routledge.

Brown emphasizes the role of strategic operations and supplier relationships in achieving long-term success. The book explains how effective coordination and planning improve business performance. This supports the importance of strong supplier relationships in HoReCa purchasing behaviour.