Introduction

Variety and freshness are paramount to keeping fast foods customers happy and hungry for more. This in turn would keep the supply lines always active and vibrant. Fast foods chains look to logistics service providers for support in this aspect. Delivering quick meals at reasonable prices in an ever changing market place is no small billing, specially as chains have to prep against soaring prices, fuel costs, product quality concerns, and currently nutritional mandates as well as environmental issues. More over current customers are very fickle about what they like and how they like it. Restaurants routinely cook up new menus and deploy marketing gimmicks to draw and retain customers. Both to markets and speed out of markets which means that speed of supply for new variants and speed to move out variants which have gone out of style are extremely critical in todays context.

A continuous stream of limited time offers require planning promotions and managing variables within a flexible supply chain. This requirement of flexibility adds more pressure on the service, by placing a premium on keeping stocks low, turning around inventory, and delivering perishable shipments with just in time urgency.

The shelf life of foods requires a management strategy that other industry may not require to that extent. One has to drive more frequent inventory turn arounds.

Beyond speed and reliability quick service restaurants have also to take care of customer values and this brings up the issue of costs, which need to be kept low. This sensitivity to costs permeates the entire segment and its criticality can not be underemphasized.
Utility of the research

In the context of changing food habits of people in general and those staying in metro cities in particular, fast food outlets are becoming an integral part of the scenario.

This study will be extremely useful for industry practitioners on the one hand, logistics service providers on the other hand and finally for students and academician who are connected with consumer behavior particularly with consumers of fast foods and finally for research community who may find more scope for research.

Limitations & scope of study

Since the study will be limited to organized fast foods outlets the study will have limitation in its scope as far as applicability of the results to other non organized outlets are concerned.

The sample size being also not very large the overall applicability will also be limited.

However these would be overcome by proper choice of respondents where care will be taken to make them as representative as possible.