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## *An Empirical Analysis of Consumer Preference and Attitude towards Local Regional Food: With Reference to Jaipur, Rajasthan*

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### Abstract

*In Indian scenario, food is one of the most important components of routine life and apart from food its variety, preparation, presentation, etc. also play a vital role. As far as Rajasthan is concerned the local cuisines are popular all around the world and people use to remember the state by the name of cuisines served here. Some of the local food items and the regional food items are famous all around the country; as the state of Rajasthan has remained one of the favorite tourist destination for the people all around the world hence some of the local food items are being recognized on international level as well. This present study is conducted to evaluate the customer preference and attitude towards the local/regional food items as being served on the streets of Jaipur city. The total sample of the study is 150 respondents and the study is based on primary data. Chi-Square test is being use to analyze the data. Findings of the study may develop a greater sense of understanding, as far as consumer attitude is concerned and even pave a brighter path for the future researchers.*

**Keywords:** Local Regional food items, customer preference and attitude, Rajasthan.

## **Introduction**

India is an agriculture-based country and most of the economic activities are based on agriculture itself. At the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century i.e., after 1991 and the initial years of 21<sup>st</sup> century many of the economic activities had taken different forms like production, supply, machinery, logistics, IT, etc. but the value of agriculture have remained the same. Then on the other hand looking at the diversity of the country in terms of culture, religion and value system there is equal variation in the food habits and related edible items. From Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Gujarat to North-East there are so many food items that a person may not taste them all in one life time, starting from Goshtaba of Kashmir to South Indian Cuisine and from Undhiyu of Gujarat to Khar of Assam, India is a big collage of food items. Talking about the food items one should not keep aside the local and regional food items as they are the heart and soul of any given region i.e., people use to remember the place by the name of local food sometimes.

India has remained the land of many cultures i.e., there is an effect of monarchy on the local cuisines, people use to remember the quick dishes that were prepared by freedom fighters with almost zero ingredients, then many of the foreign invaders like British, Europeans, etc. have left their marks on the local food items. Then on the other hand people have adopted many of the foreign dishes with Indian flavors and the same are offered on the streets of the country.

With the increasing purchasing power people are travelling far-away places, spending money on food, travel and lodging, along with the comfort of luxury hotels and exotic places but then again local cuisines have remained the first priority of all such people. In all such exotic place Rajasthan is one name that is being recalled by all the people who have visited here. This present study is based on the capital city of Rajasthan i.e., Jaipur. It is the biggest city in the state with a population of 2,500,000 in 2011. The city is divided into 12 zones as per the lineage of Jaipur Development Authority (JDA). Of these six zones are in the main city where most of the street vendors are concentrated. It is estimated during discussion with different stakeholders, such as trade union members, commissioner of JMC, and some other local authorities such as town planning officer, urban planner; that there are about 30, 000 street vendors in Jaipur.

## **Most Popular Street Vendors and Local Food Chains in Jaipur**

As far as Jaipur is concerned, it is one of the most preferred tourist destinations in the world. Tourist from all over the world use to visit Jaipur often, not only international tourists, rather there is a heavy traffic of domestic tourists as well. Local food of the city plays vital role in the development of tourism in the city, these local foods are offered by some of the oldest and most popular street vendors. Some of them are as follows:

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Most popular Street vendors of Jaipur</b>
1	Puran Ji Kachori, Jaipur
2	Samrat Kachoriwala, Jaipur
3	Sampath Halwai, Jaipur
4	Bhateshwar Kachori, Jaipur
5	Bhusa Halwai, Jaipur
6	Sardar Sharbat, Jaipur
7	Babulal Halwai, Jaipur and many more

As far as Jaipur is concerned, eating habits of the local residents are very vivid and colorful i.e., they use to have different items for breakfast, lunch and dinner; many of such items are related to the culinary heritage of the city and the state. Identifying such food habits of the residents, organized retailing of food items has started in the starting of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the retailers have joined in the later years. Broadly speaking people are not having time as they are busy in their office or other related works, hence they start looking for more convenient options for their food, local food vendors are better options for the same. They offer ready to eat tasty food at predetermined happy hours. In a tourist city like Jaipur, a lot of innovation is being exercised with the locally available food items, for example Rawat Kachori initially offers only one type of kachori in hand made plates of papers or tree leaves, gradually they shifted to steel plates and increase the variety of kachori also. As of now they are having multistory hotel where the same cuisine is served in different varieties. As of now a number of local food chains are available in the pink city of Jaipur and they are very different from the popular street vendors stated above; it can be said that customers are having different opinion

about these local food chains in terms of taste, preference, availability, items served, price, presentation etc.

Some of the stated below:

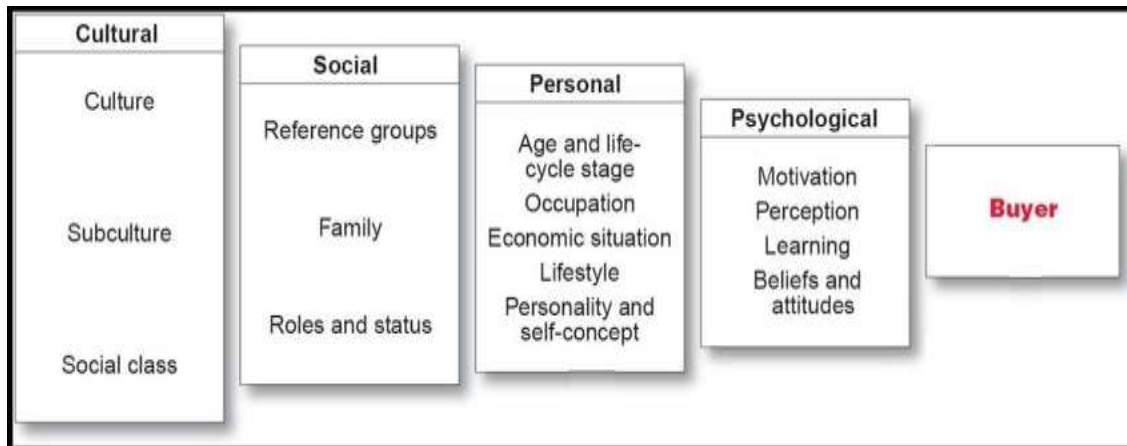
S. No.	Most popular Local food chains of Jaipur
1	Kanha, Jaipur
2	Bhagat Misthan Bhandar, Jaipur
3	Rawt Misthan Bhandhar, Jaipur
4	Kanji Sweets, Jaipur
5	Bikanerwala, Jaipur
6	Mahveer Rabri Wala, Jaipur
7	Kanhaiya Lal Halwai, Jaipur

The above stated local food chains are available in Jaipur and nearby cities only. Like Kanji Sweets and Mahaveer Rabri Bhandar are the oldest and most famous outlet in the region, people use to buy the food items with great confidence and reliability on taste. The owners of the outlets also kept on changing as per the preferences of the customers from time to time. This familiarity of the customers is one of the reasons for the success of these outlets in the long term. It can also be stated that local food chains in the city are more concerned about the acceptance of their customers, as far as, routine food items are concerned. Here it is also important to mention that many of the local food chains are offering almost same items but still they are maintaining their individuality, for the food items they are serving. The term local food chain is used with reference to the number of outlets they are having in the city itself.

As this present study is based on the consumer behavior i.e., consumer preference and attitude it is very important to consider the main components related to consumer behavior. **Kotler (2002)** stated that all the customers are different from each other in many terms and also it is not sure that they will behave as per their own previous opinion. The difference in the opinion of

customers is because of a number of factors i.e. social, economic, cultural, income and other related demographic components coming across from time to time.

some of such components are stated below:



Reference: Kotler (2002), *Principles of Marketing*; Sciffmen, Kaunak (2004)

**Figure 1: Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior**

As stated in the above given figure 1, it is clear that the major factors that influence the behavior of a consumer are cultural, social, personal and psychological. All such factors include heads and sub heads that easily elaborate the importance of the factors in more broader terms. It can be said that the behavior of a given consumer is not just the outcome of basic taste/preferences or the income level; rather there are a number of other factors that are responsible for the same.

### **A. Cultural Factors**

The wants and behavior of people are governed by their respective culture, every individual is exposed to the different set of values like, achievement and success, activity and involvement, efficiency and practicality, progress, material comfort, freedom and health. These factors are different in different societies in terms of acceptance and exercise. Then comes the social class where people having the similar values reside together rather there are some of the factors that use to create difference like occupation, income, education, etc. as people within a social class tend to exhibit similar purchase behavior.

## **B. Social Factors**

The behavior of the consumer is also affected by the social factors like family, and social role and status. Here people use to take reference from small but legitimate groups i.e., reference groups, friends, family, teachers, celebrities, etc. and fit themselves in different roles and status as required and accepted by the society. These factors are very important in framing the consumer behavior and even the purchase decisions.

## **C. Personal Factors**

Then comes the personal factors like age and the respective life cycle stage of the person, occupation in which the person is engaged, economic condition or the respective income of the person and many other similar factors. Buyers' decisions also are influenced by personal characteristics such as the buyer's lifestyle and personality and self-concept.

In this present study the researcher will focus on the lifestyle and personality related factors of the consumers; these factors are perception and attitude, the researcher will take reference from these factors and use them as the basis to proceed with the research.

## **Review of Literature**

Some of the previous studies w.r.t. above said topic are as follows:

**Scott et al (2020)** <sup>[5]</sup> stated that there are a number of physical and mental traits of customers that use to play a significant role while deciding on the purchase of food items from the local vendors or he sellers of local regional food. The study was conducted on 200 tourists visiting North Carolina, USA and the findings of the study stated that in most of the cases purchase decisions were per-determined i.e. the customer reached a vendor by the way of self-motivation and there was very meager involvement of any other related consumer trait. This was also stated that many of the consumers use to visit the vendors of local food items, 'out of curiosity' also. Such spread curiosity can be considered as the success of the vendor. Many of the other studies have confirmed this thought and stated that, some of the times the purchase patterns of the customer is UN-predictable and the most accurate marketing tools are not able to measure

the same. As far as local street food vendors are concerned, there are customers who do not leave their favorite vendors, 'no matter what' and there are some customer who use to get bored and start to search for new one in the vicinity.

**Blackmore et al (2021)**<sup>[3]</sup> stated that the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of the customer and the product related specific attributes are responsible for the purchase of food items from the street food vendors. Here the component of desire plays a vital role i.e., if a person is just passing by a specific street and there is time, then the concerned person will certainly look forward to his or her favorite food item. This phenomenon is very common in the set of respondents taken for this particular study, respondents stated that life is too busy and they would certainly give a try to their favorite food (from street vendor) whenever they will get time. The findings of the study also state that when such customer use to get married or the married customers use to start their families, their preferences change and in lieu of the same vendors of street food also change. It may happen that they choose the vendor according to their wife or according to their children. It can also be stated that up to certain extent preferences of the customer change at the various life cycle stages.

**Wang et al (2022)**<sup>[6]</sup> stated that time is very important for the customers and they may not give priority to their specific street food in place of other important work. The population of the study was around 1000 respondents and 200 street vendors. Findings of the study stated that it is very important that the preference of the customer is diverted towards the specific food item but still there is a possibility that even after making payment they may not buy the same, as they have to attend some other more important work, this is the example of extrinsic factors that use to govern the liking or disliking of the respondents for a specific food item. In many of the cases it was also found that customers use to visit the street food vendor in their leisure time to reduce the hush. This can also be viewed as the 'Diamond-Water Paradox' where water becomes more important than diamond if a person is dying of thirst, here also if the customer is hungry and the favorite street food vendor is ahead, customer will first eat and then look forward to any other important work.

**Alvino et al (2022)** [] stated that brand and price are the basic motivation for a person to buy a specific product (specially the food items). Like a person holding a burger from Mc'Donald

will show of the goodies or the merchandise but a customer holding a burger from his or her favorite vendor will feel the taste primarily in place of showing off. This is the part of intrinsic purchase intention of a given customer and this is supposed to vary from place to place and time to time. In the present times a lot of exploitation of such intrinsic factor can be viewed in the market where people are presenting the local preparations in the form of a new brand in the market and even promoting the same in that manner only. This phenomenon is good or bad for the customer, only the customers can decide on the same. It has been observed that in front of Mc'D a new brand 'Bruno' is selling burgers and presenting the same as a more familiar brand, distributing freebies and other merchandise, this can be sensed as the extension of the food market as well.

**Singh et al (2022) [2]** stated that the reference of local brands is very crucial in states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, etc. here the local brands refer to street food vendors that are operating for generation in the same place and with same item. Here it is important to mention that for such vendors, customers are also visiting them for a long time. This continuum has remained the for a long time and here the base concept of consumer behavior is clearly visible in these lines. But some of the changes in the base components of consumer behavior can bring about certain changes in this continuum like if the income of a person is increased then it might happen that in the long terms he or she may not consume the street food, or if a customer is dislocated or relocated then also this scenario may appear; in any of such cases it might happen that new customers will join and fill the gap.

## **Objective**

The main objective of the study is to evaluate the customer preference and attitude towards the local and regional food items, the researcher had tried to find the relationship in behavioral aspects and purchase patterns of the selected set of customers, as far as local and regional food items are concerned.

## **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: Customer attitude is different for local/regional food items on the basis of demographic parameters.



H<sub>0</sub>: Customer attitude is same for local/regional food items on the basis of demographic parameters.

### **Research Methodology**

This present study is based on the components of customer preference and attitude towards local/regional food items, this call for the collection and evaluation of primary data. Hence this present study follows the descriptive research design and based on primary data. Data is randomly collected from the local residents of Jaipur, Rajasthan from the places where popular street vendors are located. Then on the other hand secondary data is being used to a substantial level. Most of the data was collected from the urban part of the city and rural areas are not much explored. As this study is based on the evaluation of consumer preference and attitude of local residents for local/regional food items, hence the researcher considered primary and secondary data both.

### ***Sampling***

Total 150 respondents were selected on random basis from different parts of the city, the demographic restrictions were as follows:

- More than 18 years of age
- Specifically, males
- Married
- Should be the resident of Jaipur

These demographic components are restricted with a view to get stratified results from data analysis i.e. if there are no restrictions then normalization of the results with selected social section will be difficult and the researcher may not be able present a clear picture about the stated objectives.

This same is taken generally from the front of street food vendors i.e. people use to come across to buy their favorite food items from these vendors. The researcher has taken the sample at different time intervals, like 2 hours in the morning at the time of breakfast, then 2 hours at the time of lunch. There are certain vendors who use to sell the items like deserts and ice-creams in

the night only hence the researchers has devoted 1 hour in the night also, the location of such vendors was different from the daytime vendors.

**Tools used**

For the collection of data, the researcher has used a detailed questionnaire including questions based on scale, then some of the questions are of multiple choice, direct, dichotomous nature. This questionnaire was exercised with the respondents with their consent looking at the availability of their time.

Then for the analysis of data the researcher has applied Chi-Square test on the collected data, this test was used to find the variation in responses of the sample units. All the responses were categorized and tested accordingly.

**Analysis Platform**

The researcher has used SPSS Ver. 22.0 to perform the tests.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

On the above given lines of study, the researcher has collected the data and respective tests were performed on the same. Detailed analysis and interpretation of collected is given below:

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

**Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ )**

Test Summary								
Taste and Preferences								
	Test Component ( <i>Income</i> )				Test Component ( <i>Age</i> )			
	Preference to local/regional food items	Preference due to taste	Preference due to ingredients	Preference due to presentation	Preference to local/regional food items	Preference due to taste	Preference due to ingredients	Preference due to presentation
Calculated Value	1.227	.892	.679	3.418	.883	.583	2.107	1.240
Table Value	2.537	1.581	2.631	4.818	1.761	.367	2.917	.792
Visiting Patterns								
	Test Component ( <i>Income</i> )				Test Component ( <i>Age</i> )			
	Prefer on	Wheneve	Only on	For small	Prefer on	Wheneve	Only on	For

	holidays and Sundays	r free time	demand of family	get-to-gathers	holidays and Sundays	r free time	deman d of family	small get-to-gathers
<b>Calculate d Value</b>	1.589	1.027	3.507	1.227	1.522	2.618	3.903	1.784
<b>Table Value</b>	3.557	1.572	4.618	2.393	2.715	.948	2.604	1.818
<b>Loyalty</b>								
	<b>Test Component (Income)</b>				<b>Test Component (Age)</b>			
	<b>Will not change the vendor</b>	<b>Look for convenience of purchase</b>	<b>Wait for my order</b>	<b>Switch to another vendor</b>	<b>Will not change the vendor</b>	<b>Look for convenience of purchase</b>	<b>Wait for my order</b>	<b>Switch to another vendor</b>
<b>Calculate d Value</b>	1.539	2.670	1.483	3.637	2.558	1.070	2.829	1.632
<b>Table Value</b>	1.907	3.509	2.083	2.918	3.463	1.918	3.889	1.532
<b>External Factors</b>								
	<b>Test Component (Income)</b>				<b>Test Component (Age)</b>			
	<b>Majorly influenced by popularity</b>	<b>Taste is the only deciding component</b>	<b>Preference to price and distance</b>	<b>Selection is based on family demand</b>	<b>Majorly influenced by popularity</b>	<b>Taste is the only deciding component</b>	<b>Preference to price and distance</b>	<b>Selection is based on family demand</b>
<b>Calculate d Value</b>	2.928	1.146	2.575	.928	2.685	3.975	3.976	2.658
<b>Table Value</b>	3.545	7.151	4.447	5.745	5.978	2.013	5.432	4.618

## Interpretation

Chi Square test is used to find the variation in observed and estimated values, in this present study the researcher has tried to find the variation in the responses of selected respondents for the preference to local food chains and street food vendors. The thumb rule of decision is; if the table value is higher than the calculated value then the hypothesis is rejected and accepted vice versa.

The research has considered four basic parameters of study i.e.,

- Taste and Preference

- Visiting Pattern
- Loyalty, and
- External factors

The above given components are related to customer preference and attitude for purchase decisions against the purchase of food items from local/regional street vendors. Then on the other hand these four components are tested on the grounds of Income and Age of the respondents.

At the first level the researcher has considered taste and preference of the customers for local/regional food. Here it can be observed that in most of the cases table value is higher than the observed or calculated value, this shows that in most of the cases respondents are agreed to the point in question, rather in some of the cases like preference due to taste and preference due to presentation; the level of variation is high. This shows that in such cases there are some other factors responsible for the purchase decision of the customers.

Then for visiting pattern of the customers to their preferred food vendor there is a certain level of variation in the responses i.e., under the parameter of income table value is greater for all the cases and for the parameter of age table value is less for the test components. This shows that there is a difference in the preferences of the customers on the basis of age and income, this can also be viewed as the variation in demographic components and impact of the same on the purchase decision of the customers. Here it can also be stated that on the basis of age people become more conscious about the time and effort involved in purchase of certain items.

Then on the basis of loyalty, for all the cases table value is higher than the calculated value this shows that the customers use to prefer their respective vendors against all odds, they will wait for their orders, involve extra time and effort to reach the preferred vendor and will not switch to other vendor unless there are any extreme conditions.

Then some of the external factors were also tested in the process and the findings state that popularity of the vendor, demand of family and taste of the food offered are the main components. In all such cases the table value is higher than the calculated value which shows that the results are under the level of acceptance.

## Result

On the basis of above analysis and interpretation it can be stated that the taste and preference of the customer is being affected by a number of demographics, social, cultural parameters and only demographic components are not responsible for the same. Hence the null hypothesis *Customer attitude is different for local/regional food items on the basis of demographic parameters* can be rejected and the alternate hypothesis can be accepted.

## Conclusion

Rajasthan is the land of colors, enigma, cultural heritage and even food. Here in this study the researcher has considered the variety of food items served on the streets of Jaipur i.e., the capital city of Rajasthan. The basic objective of the study was to evaluate the customer preference and attitude for local food items. Findings from the data analysis state that as far as street food or the local food items are concerned customers are having specific preference towards them and without any extreme condition, they will not change their vendor. Then on the other hand purchase of such food items, decision is based on the taste, preference and liking of the family members as well i.e., customer is not the sole decision maker. Also, it was found in the process that only demographic components i.e., age and income are not the only components that influence the purchase decision of the customer, rather there can be a number of other components as well. The results of this present study can be normalized to bigger population as well and even can be differentiate on the basis of temporal and spatial variation, but still, most of the findings will remain same. Street food is being served and preferred by the customer in a number of countries, mostly busy life style, lack of time, travelling, nuclear families, etc. provide boost to the consumption of street food, multinational corporation in countries like USA, UK, some of the European countries, India, etc. have identified the popularity of street food and as of now many local brands are coming up to cash this preference. Irrespective of the future of such brands, some of them are very popular among the customers and companies like Swiggy and Zomato are adding value to such street food vendors in terms of revenue and popularity.

It can be stated that street food and local food chains are very easy dining options for public at large, based on the taste, price and presentation; their popularity is increasing among the local population and there are some of the social implications also, like employment generation, add on to the state GDP, food innovation, etc. may be some of the future studies emphasize on these

components and relate the same to the national perspective as far as development on various fronts is concerned.

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