

A STUDY ON CONSUMER PREFERENCE ON STREET FOODS

Ebenezer Raj A¹, Praveen. S V²

¹MBA student Jerusalem College of Engineering, Chennai, India.

²Assistant Professor MBA, Jerusalem College of Engineering, Chennai, India.

ABSTRACT

The street food industry is a dynamic and integral component of global culinary culture, offering a diverse array of flavors and experiences. This study investigates the multifaceted world of consumer perception of street foods, delving into the factors that shape preferences, influence choices, and impact the industry's growth. Drawing on a comprehensive review of literature and empirical research, our study explores the intersections of taste, affordability, convenience, hygiene, cultural significance, and sustainability within the context of street food. Consumer preferences for street foods are analyzed, revealing the pivotal role played by taste, affordability, and convenience. Sensory appeal and cultural familiarity emerge as influential factors, intertwining with the hedonistic pleasures of street food consumption. The study uncovers heightened concerns surrounding hygiene and safety, highlighting the need for enhanced vendor practices and regulatory measures. Cultural significance and authenticity are explored, illuminating how street foods often serve as vessels of identity and tradition. As consumers increasingly embrace technology, our research unveils the transformative impact of mobile apps and social media in redefining the consumer-vendor relationship within the street food landscape. Furthermore, the study investigates the paradigm shift toward health and sustainability considerations, where fresh, locally sourced ingredients and eco-friendly practices gain prominence in consumer choices. Cross-cultural comparisons provide insights into variations in taste preferences and cultural contexts, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and respecting cultural nuances. Marketing strategies, including effective signage and promotional activities, are revealed to significantly influence consumer perceptions and behaviors, shedding light on the power of visual and experiential cues. Lastly, emerging trends in sustainability practices and eco-friendly packaging are explored, reflecting the industry's response to growing environmental concerns. In conclusion, this study contributes to a nuanced understanding of consumer perception of street foods, offering valuable insights for vendors, policymakers, and researchers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Street food is an integral part of the culinary landscape in many cultures around the world. These humble yet flavorful offerings have been cherished for generations, weaving themselves into the fabric of urban life. The allure of street food lies not only in its diverse flavors but also in the unique experience it offers the sizzle of a hot griddle, the tantalizing aromas wafting through bustling streets, and the opportunity for an immediate, unpretentious gastronomic delight. In recent years, the global street food scene has witnessed a remarkable resurgence, captivating the palates of both locals and tourists. Beyond the confines of established restaurants, street food vendors beckon with a tempting array of dishes that span the culinary spectrum. From savory tacos on Mexican streets to the aromatic kebabs of Middle Eastern markets, these gastronomic gems have earned a special place in the hearts and stomachs of many. However, as street food continues to gain popularity, questions arise concerning the perceptions and preferences of consumers. What factors influence individuals when they stand before a street food cart or stall, considering their choices? What elements play a pivotal role in shaping their decisions: the sensory delight of taste and aroma, concerns about hygiene, familiarity with the vendor, or perhaps the aesthetics of presentation? These questions form the crux of our study. In this research endeavor, we aim to delve into the intricate world of street food from the consumer's perspective. Through comprehensive surveys, interviews, and observations, we seek to unearth the drivers behind consumer choices and perceptions related to street foods. By exploring these dimensions, we hope to not only gain insights into consumer behavior but also provide valuable information for street food vendors, urban planners, and policymakers. The findings of this study will not only contribute to a deeper understanding of the street food phenomenon but may also aid in enhancing the quality, safety, and overall experience of street food consumption. As societies continue to evolve and embrace culinary diversity, a closer look at the world of street food is both timely and invaluable. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected and diverse, street food serves as a cultural bridge, bringing together people of different backgrounds over shared meals. It embodies a unique blend of tradition and innovation, representing not only the flavors of a region but also the ingenuity of its people. This study seeks to shed light on how these culinary treasures are perceived and embraced in our rapidly changing urban landscapes. In an era marked by the globalization of tastes and the emergence of foodie culture, street food holds a special allure. It is often

seen as an affordable, authentic, and accessible culinary adventure, making it a preferred choice for urbanites seeking both sustenance and novelty.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Yatmo, 2008 cited in Sangwan &Boora, (2015) defines street food as food that is sold on streets near colleges, hospitals, schools, markets, cinema halls, and busy public places, they are often served or cooked or prepared on a pushcart or small kiosks. Customers prefer street food they are readily available for immediate consumption they can be eaten without further processing. Or preparation is brought at home or a place where the consumer wants to eat later. They are comparatively cheaper than the restaurant food. Cuneo, (1998); Madran, (1999) cited in Sezgin&Şanlıer, (2016) people prefer to eat outside or street food because they have less time to cook at home, the lifestyle of people have changed drastically in cities where people have fast-moving life, the contribution of women working outside the home is also changed, migration of people from rural life to urban cities also increased the demand of selling street food as well as eating street food as it is easily available at a lower cost, in developing countries. (Holy & Makhoane, 2006; Muzaffar et al.,2009; Steyn et al.,2011 Cities in Sezgin & Şanlıer,2016) The most popular street food is very convenient beverages. (Barro et al., 2002; Buscemi et al.,2011; Kok and Balkaran, 2014 Cities in Sezgin & Şanlıer 2016) Street food is an essential part of any country's cuisine, it reflects the country's culture, the way people eat, use local ingredients, and sometimes fusion food where flavors are mixed with local and international flavors, Street food contributes to the tourism industry greatly, where it attracts domestic as well as international tourist, food tourism has taken a new form and its new trend where people would take street food tours and explore the food from streets to authentic cuisine. The popularity of street food has increased over the years as it contributes to the employment generation and earns profits for local people, therefore, a lot of people would want to sell street food, these foods are highly in demand for dominant reasons like their tastes, ease of availability, low cost, social and cultural values are attached its habit of people to eat street food. Grace P. Perdigon (1986). In his study "Street Vendors of Ready-to-Eat Food: As a Source of Income and Food for Low-Income Groups", mentioned that the daily net income of the food vendors ranged from a low P.10 per day to higher than P.500 per day. Street vending was found to be a 39 source of family meals. The majority of the vendors were married. They were income earners and food providers. The vending places were congested and potholed. The vending operations were assisted by their kin or some hired workers. The vendors sold food every day of the week, putting in 12 or more hours of work per day. The working capital was taken from the operator's savings

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: RESEARCH DESIGN: DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH

Descriptive design refers to research questions, the design of the study, and data analysis for the study. Descriptive research includes surveys, fin, and inquiries. The descriptive research method can be used in multiple ways and for various reasons. This design can be identified by characteristics, and data trends, conduct comparisons, validate existing conditions, and conduct research at different periods. The descriptive research design method is used in social problems and to acquire knowledge. The characteristic of this method is researcher has no control over the variable target population are users of printers and then, Populations are infinitely the Sample.

4. PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

1. Consumption Of Street Food In A Month

How often do you consume street food in a month?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	10	8.8	8.8	8.8
	2-3 times a week	39	34.5	34.5	43.4
	Once a week	32	28.3	28.3	71.7
	Occasionally (less than once a week)	26	23.0	23.0	94.7
	Rarely or never	6	5.3	5.3	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation: From the survey 8.85%, 34.51%, 28.32%, 23.01%, and 5.31% are 1 time, 2-3 times a week, once a week, occasionally, and rarely or never do they consume street food a month respectively.

2. Income:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 25000	80	70.8	74.1	74.1
	25000 - 35000	18	15.9	16.7	90.7
	35001 - 50000	1	.9	.9	91.7
	Above 50000	9	8.0	8.3	100.0
	Total	108	95.6	100.0	
Missing	System	5	4.4		
Total		113	100.0		

Interpretation

From the above table, it shows that out of 113 respondents, 80% are earning below 25000, 18% are earning 25000 to 35000, 1% are 35001 to 50000 and the other 9% are earning above 50000.

3. Consumer Willingness On Spending Money Per Meal In Street Foods

How much are you willing to spend on street food per meal? (In rupees)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 50	18	15.9	15.9	15.9
	51-75	24	21.2	21.2	37.2
	76-100	28	24.8	24.8	61.9
	101-150	25	22.1	22.1	84.1
	more than 150	18	15.9	15.9	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation: The above table shows that 18% are willing to spend on street food per meal Rs. less than 50, 24% spent Rs. 51 to 75, 28% spent 76 to 100 rupees, 25% spent 101 to 150 per meal, and 18% were spent more than 150 rupees per meal.

4. Influence Of Online Reviews Or Ratings On Trying Out New Street Food Vendors

Are you influenced by online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	26.5	26.5	26.5
	Sometimes	62	54.9	54.9	81.4
	No, I stand on my own opinion	21	18.6	18.6	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation: From the above table it shows that the majority of the respondents are sometimes influenced by online reviews or ratings on trying out new street food vendors 62%.

5. Influence Street Food Vendors On Social Media By Giving Updates And Promotions To Consumers

Do you follow any street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes, I follow my favorite vendors for updates	47	41.6	41.6	41.6
	No, I'm not active on social media	37	32.7	32.7	74.3
	No, but I would be interested in doing so	29	25.7	25.7	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation: The above table shows that the majority of the respondents said yes for they were influenced by street food vendors on social media by giving updates and promotions to consumers 47%.

5. ANOVA

ANOVA stands for analysis of variance, used to analyze the difference between how often you consume street food in a month and does the investor prefers to buy street food. The result of the above shows that the significance value is 0.419. The result shows that there is no significant difference between how often you consume street food in a month and does the investor prefers to buy street food.

There, fore null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

Null hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference between

Alternative hypothesis (H1): There is a significant difference between

ANOVA					
How often do you consume street food in a month?					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.404	4	1.101	.985	.419
Within Groups	120.693	108	1.118		
Total	125.097	112			

CHI-SQUARE,TEST

Chi-square test between income and the amount willing to spend on street food per meal by the respondents.

The result of the chi-square test shows a significant value of 0.477. The result shows that there is no significant association between income and the amount willing to spend on street food per meal by the respondents. Therefore, H0 is accepted and H1 is rejected.

Null hypothesis (H0): There is no association between income and the amount willing to spend on street food per meal by the respondents.

Alternative hypothesis (H1): There is an association between income and the amount willing to spend on street food per meal by the respondents.

Test Statistics		
	Income	How much are you willing to spend on street food per meal? (In rupees)
Chi-Square	144.074 ^a	3.504 ^b
df	3	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.477
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 27.0.		
b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 22.6.		

CORRELATIONS:

To find out the significant relation between the online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors and street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions

H0: There is no significant difference between online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors and street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions

H1: There is a significant difference between online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors and street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions

Correlations			
		Are you influenced by online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors?	Do you follow any street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions?
Are you influenced by online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors?	Pearson Correlation	1	.224 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.017
	N	113	113

Do you follow any street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions?	Pearson Correlation	.224*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	
	N	113	113
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

Inference:

From the above table, we find that the significant value is 0.17, which is greater than the table value of 0.05, so the Null hypothesis is accepted and the Alternative hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, there is no significant difference between online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors and street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions.

6. FINDING

From the survey, 8.85%, 34.51%, 28.32%, 23.01%, and 5.31% are 1 time, 2-3 times a week, once a week, occasionally, and rarely or never do they consume street food a month respectively. From the above table, it shows that out of 113 respondents, 80% are earning below 25000, 18% are earning 25000 to 35000, 1% are 35001 to 50000 and the other 9% are earning above 50000. The above table shows that 18% are willing to spend on street food per meal Rs. less than 50, 24% spent Rs. 51 to 75, 28% spent 76 to 100 rupees, 25% spent 101 to 150 per meal, and 18% spent more than 150 rupees per meal. The above table shows that the majority of the respondents are sometimes influenced by online reviews or ratings on trying out new street food vendors 62%. From the above table, it shows that the majority of the respondents said yes for they were influenced by street food vendors on social media by giving updates and promotions to consumers 47%. From the above table, we find that the significant value is 0.17, which is greater than the table value of 0.05, so the Null hypothesis is accepted and the Alternative hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors and street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions. The result of the above shows that the significance value is 0.419. The result shows that there is no significant difference between how often you consume street food in a month and does the investor prefers to buy street food. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The result of the chi-square test shows a significant value of 0.477. The result shows that there is no significant association between income and the amount willing to spend on street food per meal by the respondents. Therefore, H₀ is accepted and H₁ is rejected. From the above table, we find that the significant value is 0.17, which is greater than the table value of 0.05, so the Null hypothesis is accepted and the Alternative hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between online reviews or ratings when trying out new street food vendors and street food vendors on social media for updates and promotions.

7. SUGGESTION

Diverse Menu Options: Offer a diverse range of street food options to cater to different tastes and dietary preferences. This might include vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and meat-based options. **Fresh Ingredients:** Consumers often prefer street foods that use fresh, high-quality ingredients. Ensure that your food is prepared with fresh produce, meats, and spices. **Cleanliness and Hygiene:** Maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene in food preparation and handling. Clean surroundings and visibly hygienic practices can attract more customers. **Authenticity:** Authentic flavors and recipes can be a big draw for consumers. If you are offering a specific type of cuisine, ensure that it stays true to its regional or cultural roots. **Customization:** Offer customization options whenever possible. Allow customers to choose their preferred toppings, sauces, or spice levels to tailor the food to their liking. **Portion Sizes:** Consider offering different portion sizes to cater to varying appetites. Some customers may want a small snack, while others might prefer a larger meal. **Price Point:** Street food is often associated with affordability. Keep your prices competitive and reasonable to attract a broader customer base. **Food Safety:** Display food safety certificates or practices to reassure customers about the safety of your food. This can build trust and encourage repeat business. **Unique Selling Proposition (USP):** Differentiate your street food stall by offering a unique twist or specialty item that sets you apart from competitors. It could be a signature sauce, a fusion dish, or a creative presentation.

8. REFERENCE

- [1] Alimi, B. A. (2016). Risk factors in street food practices in developing countries: A review. Food science and human wellness, 5(3), 141-148.
- [2] Morano, R. S., Barrichello, A., Jacomossi, R. R., & D'Acosta-Rivera, J. R. (2018). Street food: factors influencing the perception of product quality. RAUSP Management Journal, 53, 535-554.

-
- [3] Choi, J., Lee, A., & Ok, C. (2013). The effects of consumers' perceived risk and benefit on attitude and behavioral intention: A study of street food. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(3), 222-237.
- [4] Seo, K. H., & Lee, J. H. (2021). Understanding risk perception toward food safety in street food: The relationships among service quality, values, and repurchase intention. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(13), 6826.