



A study on paradigm shift in the food habits of youngsters at Patna

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Abstract : *Due to liberalization and globalization of Indian economy, there has been a radical shift in the food habits of youngsters at Patna from the conventional to today's food habits. During the course of study, we found that the main determinants responsible for this unfortunate shift at Patna were – i) opening up of various foreign food outlets, ii) rise in the economic status, iii) opening up of mall culture, iv) vast change in job schedule and v) improved communication facilities. The study is also an approach to find out the impact on the economy of Patna with the opening of multinational the foreign food outlets with regard to factors such as employment generation. We have tried to know and analyze the various*

advantages and disadvantages of this shift and to ascertain their impact on our socio-economic factor, culture and health. Based on the feedback received by the respondents who were the target customers of these outlets and managers, following were the outcomes; about 35% customers believed lunch as the most important meal though breakfast is considered as important being the first meal of the day by health experts. It was also seen that 65% customers said they had specific eating habits whereas 35% people preferred restaurant food, though street food was also chosen by others. Slightly less than half of the population investigated were frequent visitors to these food stations. This shows how much importance this restaurant culture holds in their life. Among the dishes, Chinese food had major fan following showing the changing trend of eating practices among youngsters. Consequent upon interviewing the managers, we got to know that most of them normally had more than 150 transactions which went to 300-400 a day. Maximum served age group was 15-30 i.e. 55% of the total. Majority of managers contacted agreed that there were more customers (i.e. 70%) on weekends as compared to week days.

Key words: *Food, food habits, youngsters, conventional, foreign food outlets, food culture, socio-economic factors, job market, and employment generation.*

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Introduction :

Food is any substance which is consumed in order to provide nutritional support to the body. It plays an indispensable role as a satisfier of human needs. Food habit, on the other hand, is the way in which people select, look, serve and eat food that is available to them. It differs from person to person, from one ethnic group to another, from one country to another. There may be various factors determining the food habits of people such as education, ethnicity, religion, health, family etc. Earlier, food was cooked home everyday and people ate with their family. Eating outside was reserved for special occasions. But today, people eat outside more than at home which is not a good habit and it is leading to increasing health problems worldwide. This paradigm shift in the food habit of youngsters has been noticed because of various determinants (www.scribd.com/eassy-on-changing-food-habits, 2013)

In Patna, this shift is a new development in the past few years. The reason behind this is the recent opening of Indian food market and its commercialization which has led to a wave of western food habits and foreign food outlets to enter and mix with the Indian food habits. As a result of this people are gradually shifting and imbibing the habit of eating outside. The opening of P&M Mall in Patna gave a chance to various food outlets to enter food market of Patna leading to change in food culture. Hence, it was necessary to conduct a study to ascertain the various factors causing this paradigm shift in the food habits of youngsters at Patna (www.dominos.co.in, 2013). While conducting the study various factors such as the targeted customers, age group of the people, income, their occupation etc were taken into consideration for selecting targeted group. Keeping these factors in mind, a structured questionnaire was prepared and the collected data were analyzed, tabulated and interpreted. Thus, it can be said that on one hand a radical shift is observed but on the other hand the economy of the

city is getting boosted up as these food outlets are employing nearly 30-35 workers in each outlet.

Objectives :

In our research project, we have focused our study mainly on the determinants responsible for the paradigm shift in the food habit of youngsters at Patna and its socio-economic impact.

The objectives of this research are as follows:

- To study the eating habits of youngsters and the radical switchover in their eating habits from the conventional to eating alone or with friends outside.
- To analyze the reason for the consumption of the fast food and the extent to which it affects the health of people.
- To know the impact of opening of foreign food outlets in Patna, on the people and economy of Patna.

Hypotheses of the research:

The hypotheses are as under-

- The opening of various foreign food outlets has led to switch over from conventional food habits to nuclear eating practices having an essence of western culture.
- The switchover has led to adverse effect on the health of people as a whole and especially youngsters as they have a habit of frequently visiting these outlets to relish the services they provide.
- Opening of foreign food outlets has a positive impact on the economy of the city with special reference to job market.

Methodology :

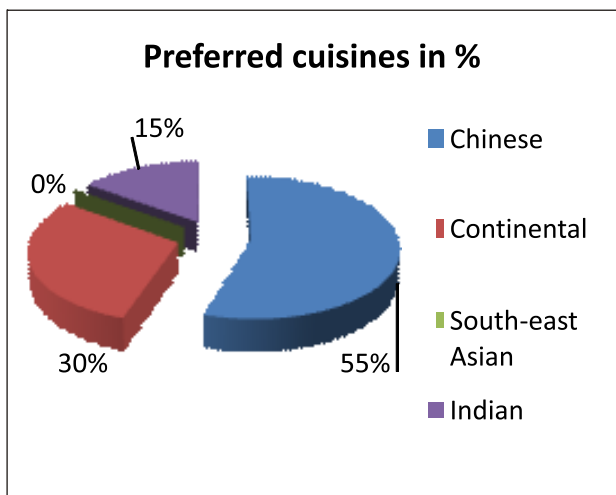
Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge. As we know that research projects must follow a well defined line of action in order to have disciplined methodology . There are

two types of methodologies of collecting the data which are as follows:-

1. **Primary Data** : The primary data consists of the first hand details gathered for specific purpose. In the survey, the primary instruments used for data collection were-
 - a) Structured Questionnaire
 - b) Interview of outlet/ franchisee and customers.
2. **Secondary Data** : The secondary data is the set of such details which are not obtained originally. In other words, these are second hand information. The main source for collection of secondary data were-
 - Magazine
 - Journals
 - Internet

Pictorial Representation :

1. Preferred Cuisines



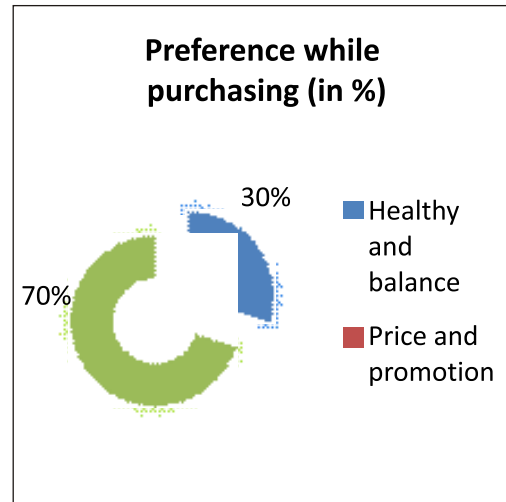
Interpretation

From the above data, we concluded that among the dishes, Chinese food had the major fan following and continental was ranked second.

Indian food was comparatively rated low which shows the changing trend of eating habits among youngsters as well as elders.

From this representation, our first hypothesis is proved that youngsters are switching over to western food items at a very steady rate.

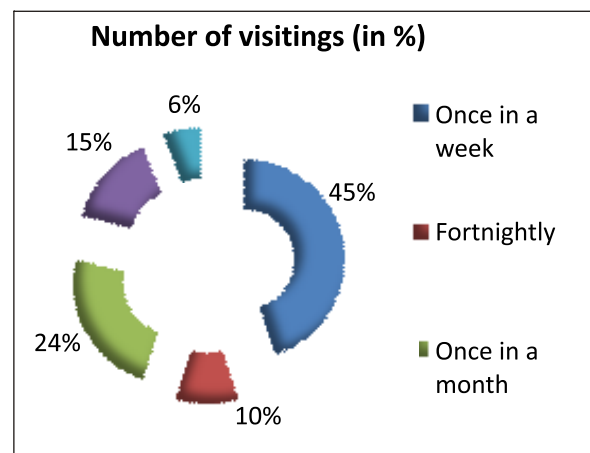
2. Priorities while purchasing



Interpretation

When the customers were asked about their priorities while purchasing, it was found that 70% response was in favour of taste of the food ordered whereas 30% chose healthy food. It clearly shows that customers are ready to compromise the health prospect as compared to taste.

3. Visits to Food Outlets



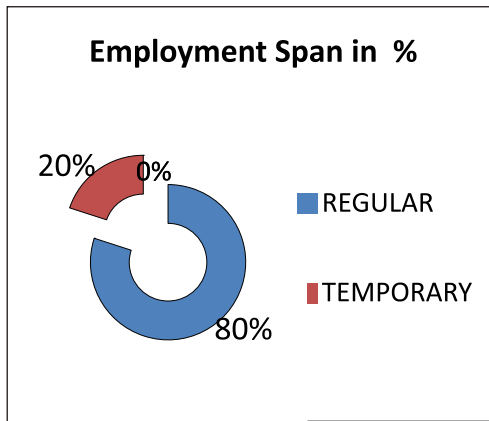
Interpretation

Slightly less than half of the population interviewed were frequent visitors to the respective

food stations. Whereas maximum of the rest used to visit at least once in a month. This shows how much importance this restaurant culture holds in their life.

From the above two representations, the second hypothesis is proved as maximum people preferred taste to health and visited outlets on weekly basis which has adverse effect on their health.

4. Employment Span

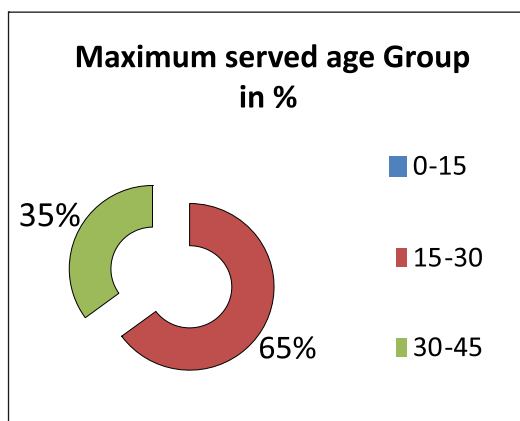


Interpretation

It was found after talking to outlet managers that most of the outlets were employing regular workers. However, there were some workers who were employed on a temporary basis.

From the above pie chart the third hypothesis is proved showing the percentage of workers employed in restaurants and food outlets on regular or temporary basis. This has a slight but positive impact on the economy of the city.

5. Maximum served age Group



Interpretation

It was found that the maximum served age group was of 15-30 years whereas age group of 30-45 occupied the second place. This shows that youngsters hold first position among the customers of different age group.

Suggestions :

1. Eat regular meals: Skipping meals can lead to out of control hunger leading to over eating.
2. Eat moderate portion: If portion sizes are kept reasonable, it's easier to eat the food we want and can stay healthy.
3. Eat a variety of nutrient rich food because for good health one should eat nutritious food.

However, as change is the essence of nature, no one can stop change from taking place; but we should see that this change is not harming us, our health and culture. We should strike a balance between both forms of food:– healthy homemade and yummy, smiling restaurant food, so that it doesn't affect our health in the long run.

Our research paper has proved all the hypotheses. It has proved that there has been a switch over from conventional food habits to today's food habits.

With the opening of these food outlets the job market has boosted up leaving a positive impact on the economy of Patna.

Conclusion :

Today, a radical shift is observed in the eating habits of youngsters where they have started eating out at various outlets and also skipping their meals or eating very less at home with family members. The reason may be on a wide the opening of various multi-national food outlets. This continuous shift has affected our society, culture and economy (www.kfc.co.in).

Globalization and FDI in some of the sectors have led to the opening of foreign food outlets and a chance to penetrate into the food market of India. The opening of these food outlets on the other hand generated employment opportunities thus becoming a source of revenue generation.

This shift is a recent one and may be ranked as a deliberate shift affecting adversely our food culture, especially of the young generation.

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