Dining preference of the Domestic Tourists' of Mysore

Noufal Ponnan [1] **& Dr. Aisha M Sheriff** [2]

[1]Research Scholar, B.N. Bahadur Institute of Management Sciences (BIMS), Mysore.
[2]Professor.B.N. Bahadur Institute of Management Sciences (BIMS), Mysore.
Email Id: [1]noufal.ponnan@gmail.com & [2]aishasheriff@hotmail.com

Abstract

Food is an integral part of the culture and plays a crucial role in shaping the overall tourism experience (Richard 1996). Culinary specialties of Mysore received increased attention within the spheres of destination marketing and academia. This study aims to provide insight into the dining preference of domestic tourists visiting Mysore. Firstly, findings validate that food planning is significantly different for every category of domestic tourists visiting Mysore. Secondly, findings illustrate Word Of Mouth recommendations remain the most preferred source for dining decision-making for domestic tourists in Mysore. Lastly, the findings indicate that domestic tourists give preference to the restaurant located outside of the hotels for their dining. The analysis and outcome of this study attempt to provide insights into tourist dining behavior which can help to improve the decision-making of the tourism stakeholders.

Keywords: Food and Culture, Domestic Tourist, Dining Preference, Decision making

Introduction

The glory of Indian spices is known worldwide for their aroma, texture, and taste. The tempting flavor of Indian spices allured Arabs, Romans, and many other foreigners to India, and it is evident from the writings of legendary travelogues of, Megasthenes, Ibn Battuta, etc. The influence of spices is also reflected in Indian cuisine. Indian food has unique diverse features. Every region in India has nurtured its food tastes using different combinations of spices and implying different methods of cooking. The famous tourism slogan of Karnataka Tourism "One state and many worlds" truly showcase the cultural diversity of Karnataka and it includes a large variety of regional cuisines. Karnataka offers a multitude of relishing cuisine options such as North Karnataka cuisine, South Karnataka cuisine, Kodagu Cuisine, Udupi Cuisine, Mangalorean Cuisine, and North Canara Cuisine. A Mysore lying in the south part of Karnataka is an important tourism hub in South India. Mysore offers several tourist attractions ranging from the royal splendor of Mysore palace and its fabulous Dasara festival, Mysore Zoo, Sri Chamundeshwari temple Churches, Mosques, etc. in addition, there are several tourist places around Mysore city i.e. Brindavan gardens, Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Summer palace of Tiipu, Balmuri Falls at Srirangapattna and Najundeshwara temple at Nanjangud, The rich cultural heritage and historical significance of this city attracts tourist from around the world. In 2018-19,3.7 million(Palace board statistics -2019) tourists visited Mysore. Of the 3.7 million tourists who visited the palace, only 48,022 were foreign tourists. It implies that the tourism sector in Mysore is fuelled by domestic travelers.

Statement of the Problem

Understanding consumer buying behavior is a vital task of marketing management (Kotler, 2008). In the case of tourism, Tourists' food buying process goes through different stages like Problem/Need Recognition, Information Search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase, and post-purchase behavior. Though Mysore has a multitude of relishing cuisine options there is still a lack of research related to tourists' food consumption behavior. This study examines the food planning, decision, and Information search behavior of the domestic tourists visiting Mysore.

Research Objectives

- To analyze the food planning behavior of domestic tourists visiting Mysore
- To identify the most preferred culinary Information sources of the domestic tourist visiting Mysore.

Review of Literature

Food is an integral part of tourism and food-related expenses constitute approximately one-third of all tourist expenditures. (Belisle 1983). A positive culinary experience plays an important role in destination experience satisfaction (Monika Kristanti,

1

Regina Jokom, Deborah C. Widjaja 2018). Tourists get a sensory experience through gastronomy and gastronomy is one of the key aspects of a tourist destination culture and heritage (Jiménez-Beltrán FJ, López-Guzmán T, González Santa Cruz F 2016). Various studies supported that, food plays a key role in the tourist destination experience and the food spending of tourists is a key contributor to the economies of tourist destinations (Ying-Yu Chen, 2013, Monika Kristanti, Regina Jokom, Deborah C. Widjaja 2018, Jiménez-Beltrán FJ, López-Guzmán T, González Santa Cruz F 2016). A research study by Boniface (2003) illustrates food is a basic and crucial element of tourism products like accommodation, transportation, and attractions.

There is an extensive variety of food attributes that could be influenced when analyzing tourists' behavior. Chang, R.C., Kivela, J., & Mak, A.H(2012) state that the food consumption of tourists depends on five factors: 1) Cultural and religious factors; 2) Socio-demographic factors; 3) Motivational factors; 4) Personality; and 5) Previous experience. Another study by Tommy D. Andersson (2017) indicates that tourists experience a variety of dining choices in a destination and it is influenced by the personal, social and cultural background of the tourist. The proper identification of the different needs of the different tourist segments helps restaurants design cuisine (Sengel, Karagoz, Cetin, Dincer, Ertugral & Balık., 2015).

A wide range of sources, influence the tourist's decision-making behavior. One key aspect of decision-making has been Word-of-Mouth (WOM) (Gremler, 1994; Murray, 1991). The role of the internet and Social media in tourism is witnessing rapid growth and it is widely used as a source of information for the decision-making process. Prominent social media platforms are, Twitter, Facebook, TripAdvisor, YouTube), Wikitravel. Traditional print media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, government tourism brochures) and broadcast media are also important for giving Information to tourists,(Ying-Yu Chen 2013).

As noted above, food is an essential part of tourism. Previous studies have examined the food preferences of different demographic groups (Chang, Kivela, & Mark, 2010; Lee, Chang, Hou, & Lin, 2008; Ryu & Jang, and this study examines the food consumption behavior of domestic tourist's in Mysore.

Research Methodology

The study is based on primary data collected from 123 domestic tourists who visited Mysore City. The convenience sampling method is adopted for the data collection and a self-administered, close-ended questionnaire is used for the data collection. The research study survey was conducted in February 2020. The questionnaire consisted of three aspects of the food-related behavior of the domestic tourists namely, Food planning of tourists, Food information sources, and dining decisions. The statistical tool used in the analysis of tourist responses were a One-Sample t-test, Cross Tabulation, Percentage analysis, etc.

Demographic Profile of Sample

Table 1 Demographic profile of the respondents		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	66	53.7
	Female	57	46.3
	Total	123	100.0
Age in years	18 Years -30 Years	51	41.5
	31 Years -40 Years	54	43.9
	41 Years -50 Years	17	13.8
	51 Years -60 Years	1	0.8
	Total	123	100.0
Educational Qualification	High School	3	2.4
	Diploma	5	4.1
	Degree	49	39.8
	Master Degree/ Ph.D	66	53.7
	Total	123	100.0

Data Analysis and Discussion

Hypothesis

2

The hypothesis is formed based on different food planning behavior of the tourist visited in Mysore and responses were measured based on a five-point Likert scale Strongly agree to strongly disagree. One sample t-test of association was carried out to explore the significance.

H_0: There is no significant difference in food planning among tourists
H_1: There is a significant difference in food planning among tourists

Food planning for tourists
The one-sample t-test result (Table No 2) supports that there is a significant difference in Food planning among tourists visiting Mysore. Food planning of tourists may not be classified as similar and uniform among the tourist visiting Mysore.
H_0: Rejected, H_1: Accepted. P-Value p=0.000

Table 2 One-Sample Statistics				
Food planning for tourists	Mean	SD	T Statistics	P Value
I planned to eat at locations close to where I was staying.	3.1545	1.063	32.886	0.000
I planned to dine at locations that would allow me to meet native/local people.	3.3902	0.96	39.022	0.000
I planned to dine at locations that offer clean facilities.	3.7154	0.89	46.203	0.000
I planned to make choices based on the needs of my travel group (e.g. family/friends).	4.6260	0.57	88.721	0.000
I did not do any individual planning because I was part of a tour group.	4.0976	0.77	58.817	0.000
I had no plan or planned to eat when I got hungry.	3.9268	0.72	59.969	0.000

Tourists' culinary Source of information
Tourists were asked about the sources through which they acquired information on cuisine in Mysore. Based on the review of literature, sources of information are grouped into four categories namely;
- Travel brochures, magazines, books,
- Social media, internet, and travel review websites,
- Food and travel shows on television, and
- Word-of-mouth.

Respondents were given a multiple-choice option to select the source of information. The study result (Table3) reveals that a majority of respondents (77 or 43.2% of total responses) gained information about cuisines through word-of-mouth. Internet (Social media and review websites (35.7% of total respondents) is the second most popular source of cuisine information.

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Cuisine Source of Information	Travel brochures, magazines, books	27	14.8%	22.5%
	Social media and travel review websites (Facebook, Twitter, TripAdvisor, etc.)	65	35.7%	54.2%
	Food and travel shows on television	13	7.1%	10.8%

Table 3
Source of Information

	Word-of-mouth (through friends and relatives)	77	42.3%	64.2%
Total		182	100.0%	151.7%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Source of information Frequencies
Percent of Cases
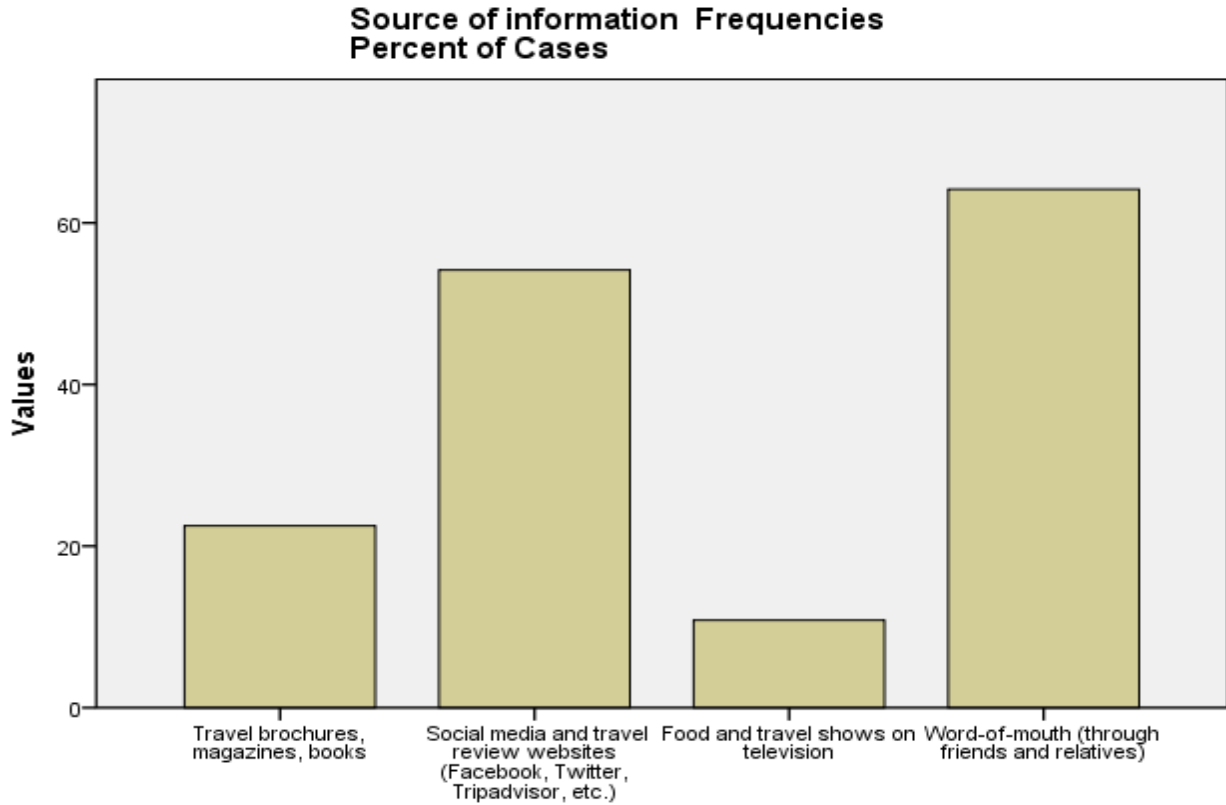
Dining Decision (Restaurant Selection)

Domestic tourists were asked to respond to dining decisions they had made while on their trip to Mysore City (Table 4). 49.2% of domestic tourists preferred independent restaurants located outside of their hotel followed by restaurants located within the hotel they stayed in (34.2%). Tourists also showed their preference (30.8%) to dine at roadside eateries(like Dhaba) and street food (20%). The preference for western fast food (9.2%) is the least preferred choice of domestic tourists in Mysore.

Table 4
Hotel Selection Frequencies

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Types of food establishments you opted for dining	Restaurant located within the hotel	41	23.8%	34.2%
	Independent/free-standing restaurant located outside of the hotel	59	34.3%	49.2%

	Roadside establishment located at highways (eg. Dhaba)	37	21.5%	30.8%
	Street-food vendors selling fast-foods	24	14.0%	20.0%
	Western fast-food establishments (McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Subway, etc.)	11	6.4%	9.2%
Total		172	100.0%	143.3%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

$HotelSelection Frequencies
Percent of Cases
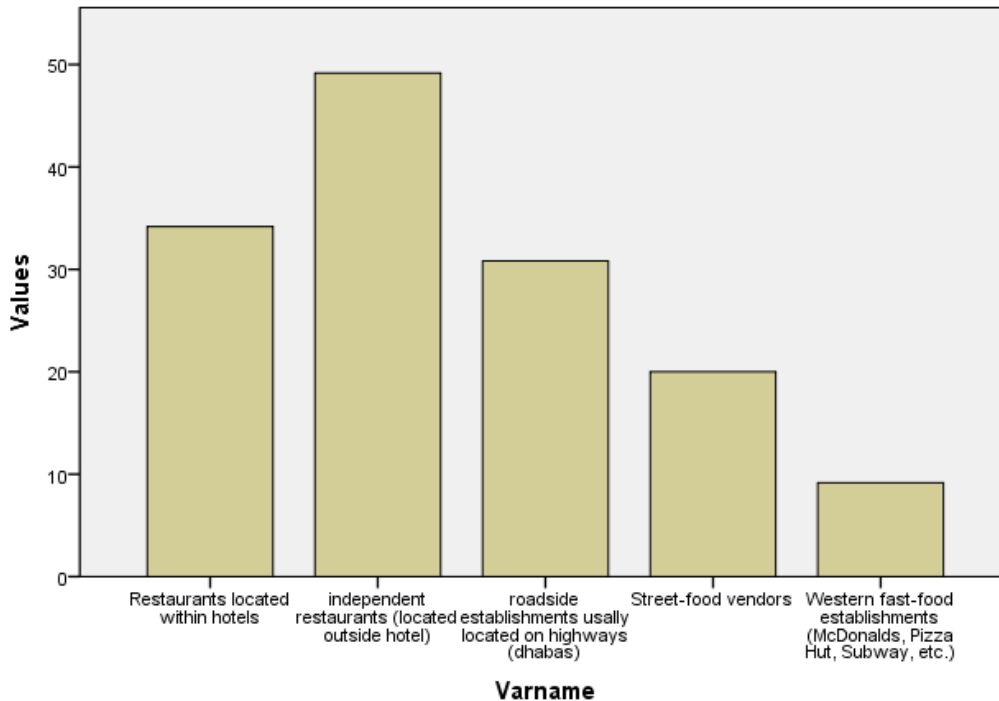
Conclusion

Tourism activities have diversified motives and attract different types of tourists to every destination. Mysore is known as 'the cultural capital of Karnataka. The cultural attraction of Mysore consists of the unique cuisine of south Karnataka and it plays a key role in the tourism experience. This study investigates the dining behavior of the tourist and understands the importance given to food planning while visiting Mysore.

The study result indicates that the food planning of the tourist is different for each category of the tourist. Further, the study response shows tourist with a primary focus on culinary experience is less compared to tourists without prior planning. Therefore, promotional activities must be intensified to familiarize the peculiar cuisine of the Mysore.

The growth and the influence of the internet and social media are very phenomenal in every industry with no exception of Tourism. Studies indicate that the use of the internet and social media is growing exponentially in information search or every stage of tourism activity. But in the case of culinary preference of the domestic tourists in Mysore, study results indicate that the 'Word of Mouth' information source still plays is major/vital role in food planning. Hence there must be greater intervention for the usage of the internet and social media for popularizing the cuisines of Mysore. In the case of a dining decision, most

5

domestic tourists preferred independent restaurants located outside of their hotel followed by restaurants located within the hotel they stayed. This result advises hotels to adopt strategies for catering to the tourist inside the hotel to generate more revenue.

References

[1]. Hjalager, A.-M., & Richards, G. (2002). Tourism and gastronomy. London: Routledge

[2]. Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Wong, V. and Saunders, J., (2008). Principles of marketing. 5th ed. Harlow: Pearson.

[3]. Bélisle, F. J. (1983). Tourism and food production in the Caribbean. Annals of Tourism Research, 10(4), 497-513.

[4]. Ying-Yu Chen (2013). The Role of Food in Tourists' Experiences: A Case Study of Taiwan (theses). https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/bitstream/handle/10012/7743/Chen_Ying-Yu.pdf?sequence=1

[5]. Chang, R.C., Kivela, J., & Mak, A.H. (2011). Attributes that influence the evaluation of travel dining experience: When East meets West. Tourism Management, 32(2), 307-316. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.02.009

[6]. Tommy D. Andersson, Lena Mossberg & Anette Therkelsen (2017) Food and tourism synergies: perspectives on consumption, and destination development, Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 17:1, 1-8, DOI: 10.1080/15022250.2016.1275290

[7]. Sengel, T., Karagoz, A., Cetin, G., Dincer, F.I., Ertugral, S.M., & Balık, M. (2015). Tourists' approach to local food. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 195, 429-437. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.485

[8]. Gremler, D. (1994). Word-of-Mouth Communications: Causes and Consequences. Marketing Review, 15(1), 3.

[9]. Paul, H., Roy, D., & Mia, R. (2019). Influence of Social Media on Tourists' Destination Selection Decision. DOI:10.36348/sb.2019.v05i11.009

[10]. Jiménez-Beltrán FJ, López-Guzmán T, González Santa Cruz F. Analysis of the Relationship between Tourism and Food Culture. Sustainability. 2016; 8(5):418. https://doi.org/10.3390/su8050418

[11]. Monika Kristanti, Regina Jokom, Deborah C. Widjaja, Culinary Experience of Domestic Tourists in Indonesia: A Study on Denpasar and Yogyakarta, Tourist Destinations Advances in Economics, Business and Management (2018) Research, volume 69, https://doi.org/10.2991/teams-18.2019.23, ISSN 2352-5428