



The Admiration of Street Food & Role of Social Media in stimulating it with reference to Kolkata City

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Abstract

The change in the socio-cultural activities of human beings has resulted in the habit of eating outside. People are getting busier day by day with burden of works and responsibilities. Hence, they don't get that considerable amount of time to cook foods at home. The various cultural interactions, the employability of the female population, a much faster living and huge population has forced to change the lifestyle of the entire community. To meet the nutritional needs, people buy food from the market which is readily available and easy to digest. Convenience and accessibility have forced the people to run after this. However, the innovative preparation methods have made those foods more and more admired. Social media plays a pivotal role here. One comment under a post and it starts spreading like a bon-fire. It doesn't take much time to reach out to more than thousands at a single go. The study targets to ascertain the acceptance of the various street foods and the character that is being played the social media in promoting it and making it more and more attainable. Around 150 respondents

have participated in this study to make it more lucrative and show us the current trends of the society in around the vicinity of Kolkata, West Bengal.

Introduction

Over the past few decades, street food has gained enormous attention amongst the locals of a specific place. It is basically a ready-to-eat food or a liquid product which is being sold by a vendor on the streets or other public places such as inside a market, near the cinema halls, multiplexes or fairs. It is being often sold from a portable food distribution place such as food truck or a food cart. The notion of this kind of a product is an immediate consumption.

According to a statistical calculation done in the year 2007 by the Food & Agriculture Organization, 2.5 billion people consume street food on a daily basis. This is because of the life-style changes along with the socio-cultural transformations through which the society is going through every given day. Most significantly, it is increasing day by day. The increase in work time, the disbalance of work and family time, the furious rise in the population count every year, the cultural interactions, the passion to travel experience all contribute to the growing rise of the business. Another very notable thing is the increasing employment of the women which cuts their contribution to the household works is also enlarging this trade.

Society is a blend of different categories of people starting from the below poverty level to the rich. We see unemployment all over the country. This trade is a rise from that segment. Preparation of foods and selling them on the streets is a regular trade of millions today which fetches them constant income to suffice and continue the struggle for existence. However, this also bears risk such as mishaps during the busiest traffic hours, unlicensed trading, pavement occupying illegally, minors involved, etc.

Adding to this, street food involves a very capital investment which is bearable by many small entrepreneurs. A research has also shown results that majority of the traders are females. It has been observed that 69% of these vendors are females which shows the inclination of this gender towards acting as a continuous financial support for the families. Simultaneously, it has been watched that trader women is providing a continuous source of nutrition for the women who are working. There is a tranche of population who consider it to be very unhygienic because of its direct exposure to the pollution and the roads but that is being ignored by that population chunk who have more reasons to depend upon it.

In a general sense, food lovers hop from stall to stall for change of taste and food variations. However, there has been several examples when food bloggers' post create a havoc amongst the public and make it popular over-night. A small creates tremendous hype and here comes the role of the social media. It is a super-effective tool to create commotion about the products or foods. Not only this but people and companies also create channels over social networking

websites to reach out to more and more crowd. Trends have shown that the attraction to foods have pulled people from one city to another. Not all companies and small vendors have the money to advertise over televisions or through other means. Hence, they opt for this easy method in the wake of success. Some out-of-the-box ideas also erupt from the grey matters in relation to product promotion.

Some of such unique concepts has given a thrust to the Food Tourism in India which makes this country unique for travel specially for those who love variety of foods. This is an idiosyncratic experience which fascinate people all round the globe to grab this adventure. Comination of travel tourism and food tourism makes the blend perfect to create the enocunters noteworthy for a lifetime. Eating is an eloquent which a traveller looks forward to which clearly describes why backpackers are always in pursuit of good eateries.

One must take into account the usage of different online apps and sites by the population for search of good eating places. They have also started to rate the places on the apps and sites based on their gastronomic experiences. Sites and applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube have craeted a benchmark in promoting such places and people. They also share the recipes for a better understanding.

Objectives

- ✚ To study the rate of demand for street foods in the city Kolkata
- ✚ To investigate the variety of foods available in the Kolkata city
- ✚ To learn the various components that influences the social media usage for a better promotion of street foods.
- ✚ To study the ascendancy and aura of the social media on the street food of Kolkata

Review of Literature

Researchers like James Petrick & Steve Micagaz did a thorough study on the street foods and the sale of it. The conducted survey had the target to analyze whether the social media is being used by the street food vendors or not as a mean for promotion. They also tried to review whether food influences gender or not and how the behavioral intentions change with the social media acting as a tool for it. The results sharply indicate that street food is gaining huge reputations from all round the corners because of its cost efficiency and fast spreading capacity. Since the operating cost is too low and maintenance cost is almost null with comparison to other trades thus inclination towards this business is growing with a huge pace.

A study was also done in the capital city of Delhi to check on the variety and the hygienic conditions of food. It raised questions related to the cleanliness and demanded more accuracy. Social media is building relationships by connecting the demand to the supply and fulfilling the chain. It is also increasing the visibility. Sharing the experience and giving expertise views are also some of the basic characteristics of the social media. The access to the latest updates

is becoming handier. Food bloggers are posting on a daily basis to gain attention and create awareness. The communication becomes very useful for the locals and outsiders target those places in case of arrival to those places or cities.

Big restaurant owners at the first go didn't consider the street food to be a competitor of their standard. As the status varies and the food quality also, so they didn't pay much heed to it. However, with the passage of time, they have started taking it as a rivalry. The reason being a study which revealed that many families prefer to stand out on the stalls of street for easy food which saves the time and also makes very much cost effective. This has forced to think big honchos of the market and questioned their grip over the market.

M Sekar studied the different factors regards to the preference of the street vendor foods. Statistical tools such as correlation and regression was used to analyze the impact such food category and the consumer influence. In India, this type of food is consumed more with the view that it is cost friendly, time saving and the ease of availability. In the first world countries, people generally tend towards the street vending shop owing to income, investment and employment. The taste, aroma, flavor are the foremost preference as per the study suggests.

There has been research study on the role of social media in aiding consumer decision making in respect of food quality choices and augmenting the food security. The study showed that around 58% of respondents are frequent users of a particular website or an application to order food online. The analysis showed a clear correlation between the frequencies of online ordering of food by the buyers and number of buyers who were in the search of copious information about the food quality.

Atinkut, in the year 2018, studied the factors which influence the choice of food of the street and also the fast foods of China. The major intention was to understand the pragmatic findings on the hippodrome of consumer behavior and their attitude towards the consumption of street and fast food. The urbanization of China has seen a drastic transition of domain shift from the home-made foods to the street foods.

Research Methodology

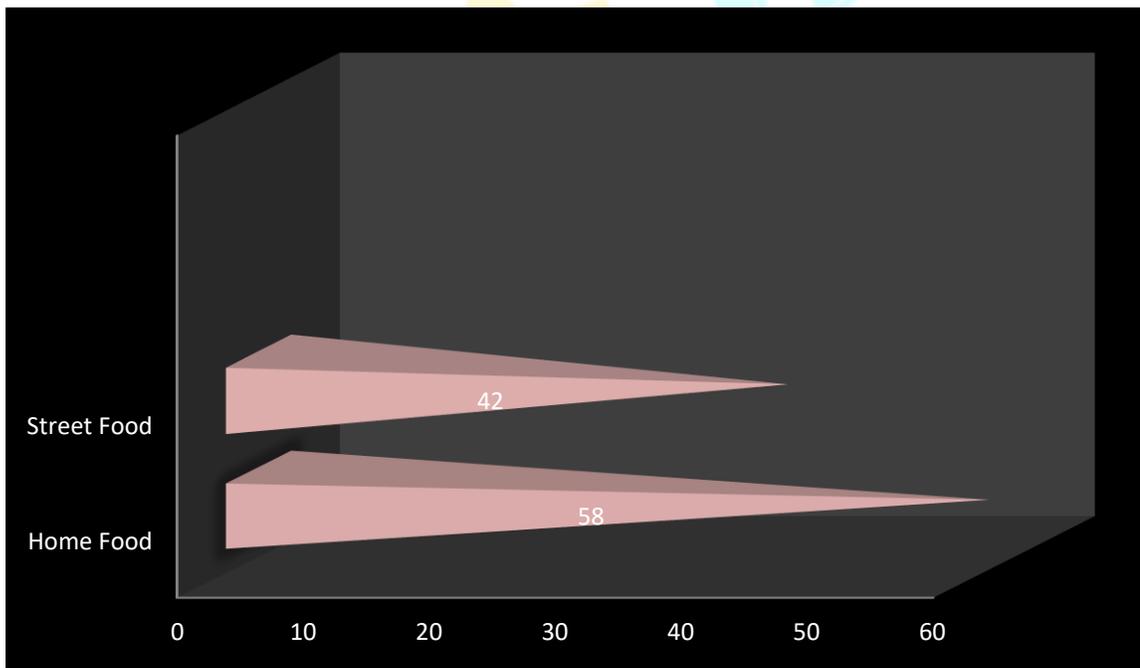
The Statistical Assembling

- Questionnaire – A questionnaire was prepared and circulated among the public of Kolkata city. The social media such as Facebook & Instagram was of great help in this regards. People were firstly asked whether they are a proper resident of Kolkata or not. If not, then they ought to be a regular or a frequent traveler to the city or else the audience will not be proper.

- **Sample Selection** – It was very closely observed that regular office goers and the proper residents of Kolkata should only be reached. Monthly visitors to the city or people visiting the city weekly or fortnightly basis were also ignored to gather the best survey.
- **Personal Interactions** – Quick encounters were done in some places of Kolkata like Park Street, Esplanade, Salt Lake and Shyam Bazaar. The intention was to catch the live reviews of the people regards to the food community that settles down in these areas. These places are actually the office hubs of the city and none other than the regular audience can give the best insight.

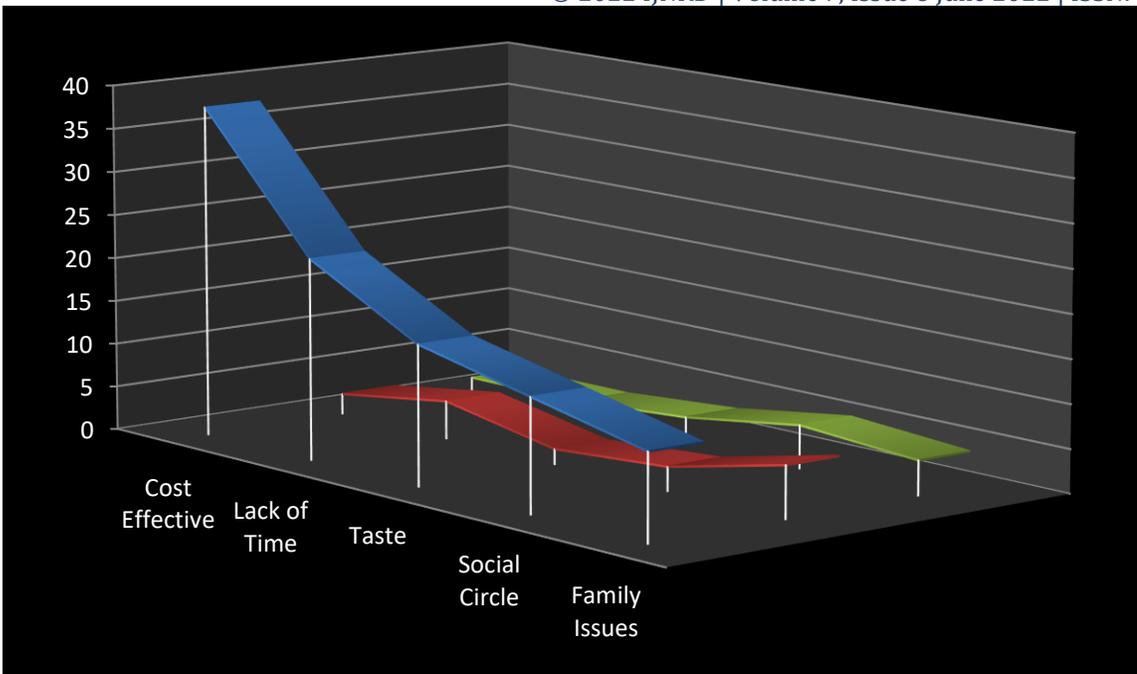
Data Anatomy & Simplification

A list of structures was being acquired based on the responses. They are as follows:



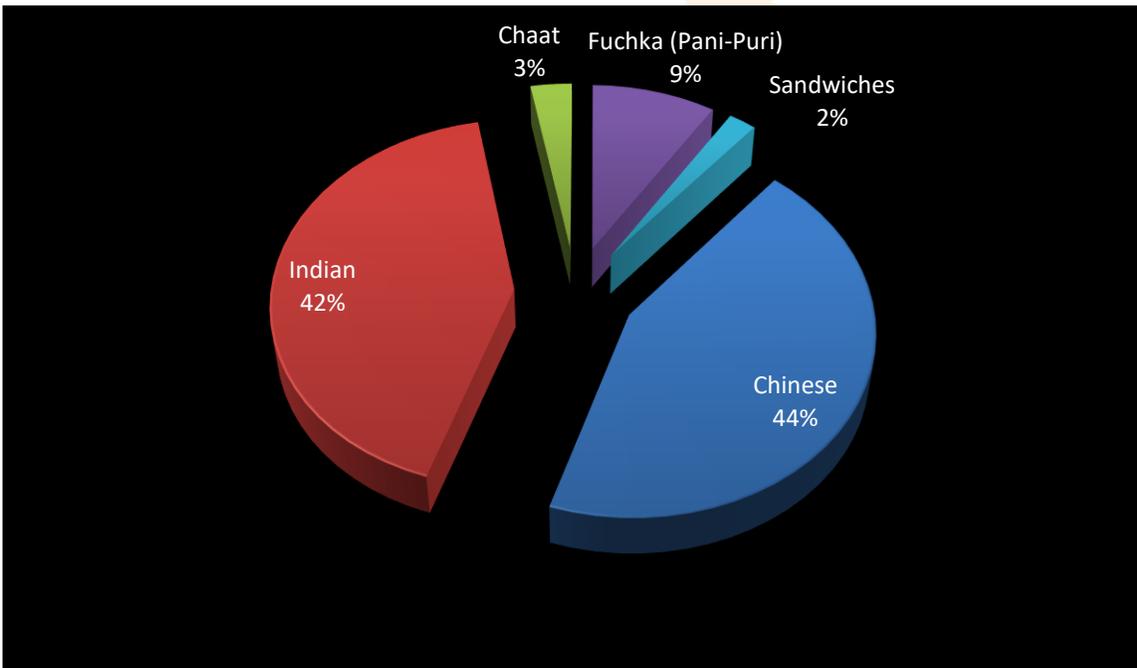
Grid 1: The Food Rapport

This survey showed us the empathy of the food lovers on what choice they make in case of their food habits. Street food gets the hand of 42% of the respondents. The reason being maximum of the people who are traveling for the work purpose starts from home early which forced them previously to suffice on the street foods. With the passing days, they starting adoring the variety and the cost were very much nominal for them to bear. This gradually increased the frequency.



Grid 2: The Influencer

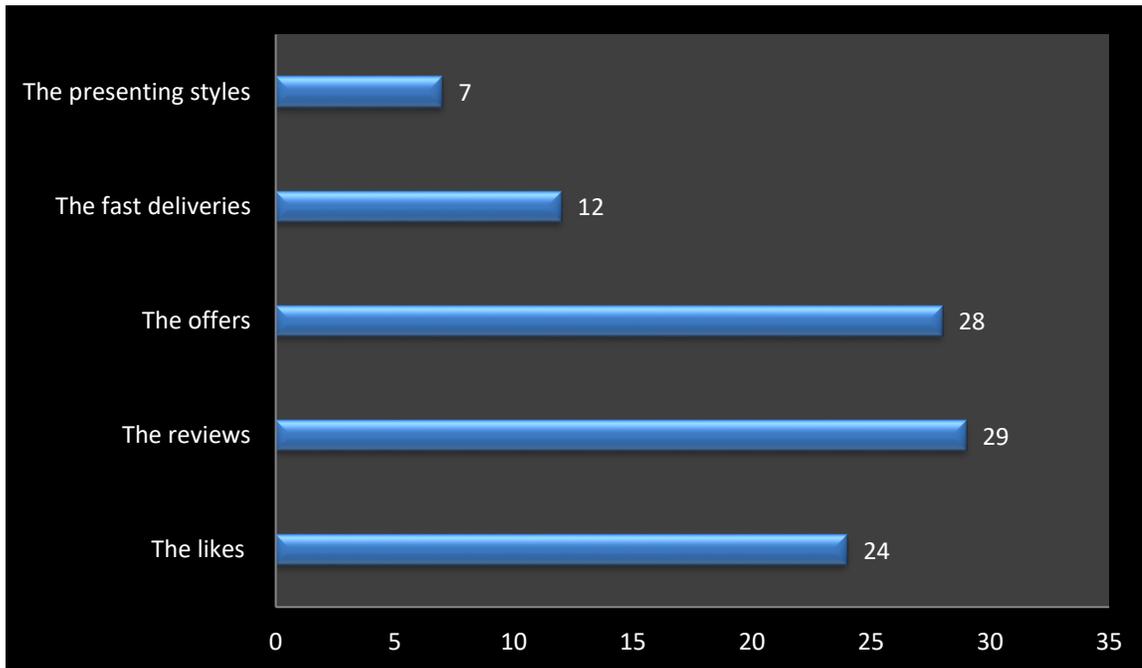
There were some of the best driving factors that came up during the survey. Cost effectiveness being the first winner in this case for the city of Kolkata with 38%. Shortage of time was the second reason with 23% of the votes. The taste and aroma factor won the third title with 16% of the nods. Some were also of the view that eating out increase their social circles and that percentage is 13. People with family issues were 10%. Maximum of the last one were those who are not residing with families so they have the cooking issue.



Grid 3: The Cleaving

Very clearly the above break-up shows that the Bengali people hover around the Chinese or the Indian street foods. The Chinese foods involve momos, noodles, fried rice & chicken

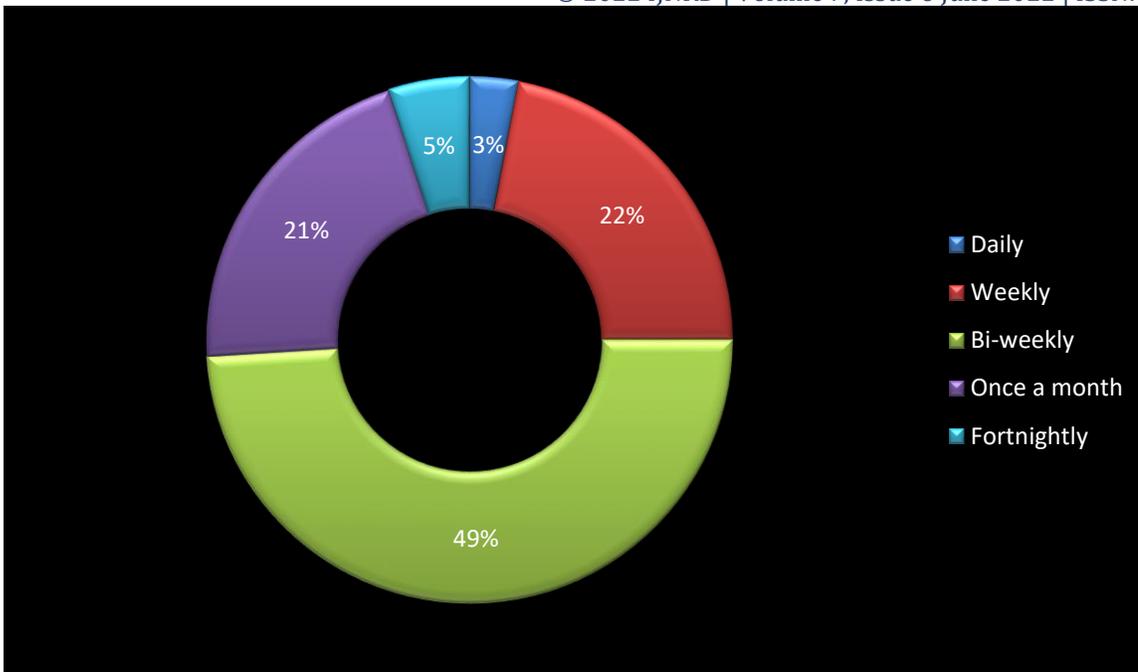
pakoda whereas the Indian foods include egg rolls, mughlai parantha and biryani. Sandwiches refer to the spring rolls and other relatable bread combinations. Fuchka or Pani-Puri is very famous amongst the public but couldn't win much of the votes because the people were targeting the heavy foods. Same reason was applicable for the chaats also like bhel-puri, jhaal-muri and many more.



Grid 4: The Social Media Angle

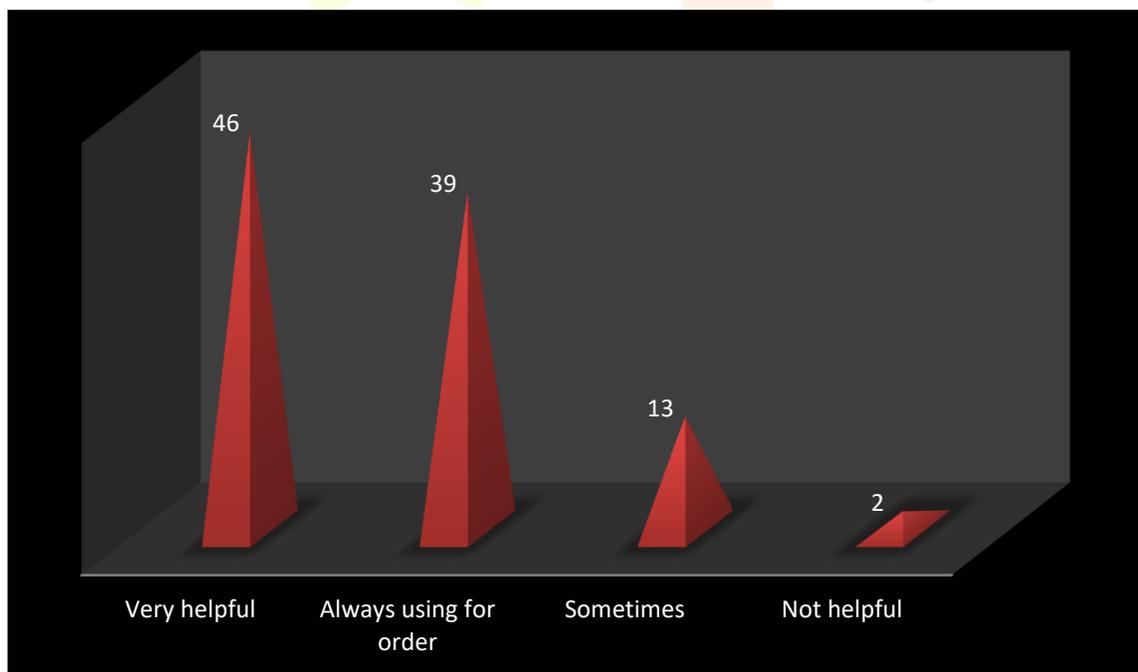
The question was preparing to ascertain the social media impact on the common mass. It showed that the mass really checks out all the parameters over the networking sites. The reviews won the majority but the offers and the likes did fair enough to steal the second & third spots. This graphical representation clearly suggests that the networking has already gathered a very fast pace among the commoners. Putting a bluff and selling a product is no easier in this competitive and live market.

Research Through Innovation



Grid 5: The Frequency

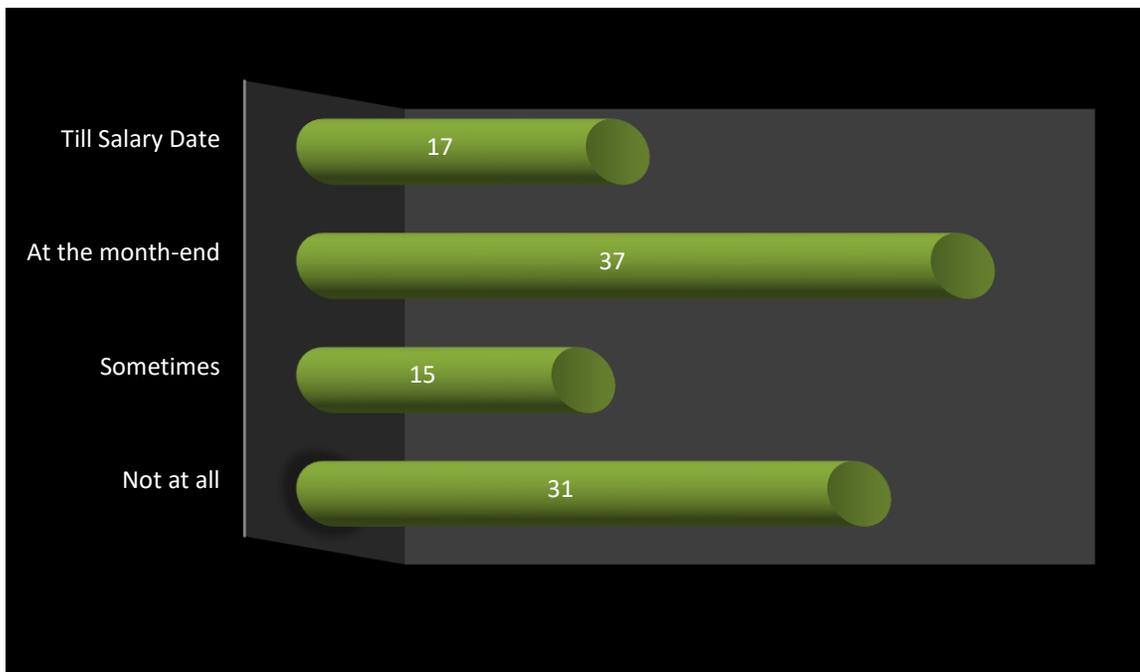
This study was done to work out on the periodicity of using the social media applications or websites to book a food online. Current trends show that bi-weekly food ordering over the apps or websites is the most regular fashion currently. Daily ordering is the least famous but once a month is a very familiar trend among many to maintain the social touch with the community where they invite some guests or it is just “No Cooking Day” at home.



Grid 6: The Search

This diagram depicts the way people are using the internet to get to the targets. The question was to describe the role social media plays to discover new outlets and places. Only 2% of the category says that they don’t find it useful however, the rest of 98% find is useful in any of the

ways. This shows how much popular the sites have become which is getting viewed every single second for the present updates. The viewers are also taking the comments and likes into their consideration very seriously.



Grid 7: The Decider

The question was how the budget matters to someone while ordering food online and the reaction was overwhelming. This shows that the GDP of the country is growing and that is an impeccable good sign. Over a decade ago, such expenses were considered to be lavish and couldn't be afforded by the middle-class. The days are changing and so are the circumstances.

Conclusion

Social media in today's date plays an essentially critical role in the fate of a product, a business or may be a food. The technology and its gradual improvement results out to be one of the most effective tools for promotion of street foods with a very low cost and less bothering.

Bibliography

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