**The Changing Landscape of Eating Out habits in India**

India's economic growth remains strong, with GDP expected to hit $5 trillion by 2025 [source for economic growth statistic]. This ongoing growth is leading to higher disposable incomes, especially among the younger population. With over 64% of Indians now under 35 and many households having dual incomes [source for demographics statistic], the stage is set for increased consumer spending. However, this spending comes with a shift in consumer behaviour. One area reflecting this shift is the dramatic change in eating habits. Gone are the days when eating out was reserved for special occasions. Today, Indians dine out frequently due to several factors: convenience and time constraints from busy lifestyles that leave little time for elaborate home-cooked meals; the socialization and experience that dining out offers, providing opportunities to unwind, connect with friends and family, and create new memories; and the variety and exploration within the restaurant industry, which boasts a diverse range of cuisines, from international fast food chains to regional specialties. Propelled by rising disposable incomes and evolving preferences, the Indian restaurant industry is booming, with a market size estimated in the tens of billions of dollars [source for restaurant industry stats]. This growth is being driven by a diverse range of restaurants, from fine-dining establishments offering premium service and ambience to casual dining for everyday meals, quick service restaurants (QSRs) for budget-conscious customers seeking convenience, and even cloud kitchens delivering a wider variety of cuisines directly to homes. Beyond basic needs, the decision to eat out is now influenced by a confluence of factors beyond just hunger. Affordability has increased due to rising income levels, making dining out more accessible. The ambiance and experience offered by restaurants provide a break from routine and an opportunity to create lasting memories. Health and wellness considerations are also significant, as many restaurants cater to specific dietary needs and offer healthy options. Additionally, convenience and technology play a role, with online food ordering platforms providing a seamless way to order meals from the comfort of home.

Keeping this in mind, a study was conducted to understand the factors that influence the eating out decisions of the individuals. A sample of 76 individuals was taken using convenience sampling. A questionnaire was designed for the purpose. The data needs of the study were identified using exploratory research. The questionnaire along with the coding scheme is presented below:

**Questionnaire Along with Coding Scheme**

1. How many times do you eat out in a week? (X1)

1. 1 – 3 (1)
2. 4 – 6 (2)
3. 7 – 9 (3)
4. 10 – 12 (4)
5. 13 – 15 (5)
6. 16 + (6)

2. Which of the following categories of eateries do you visit the most? (X2)

1. Restaurant (1)
2. Fast food (2)
3. Food court (3)
4. Dhaba (4)
5. Home delivery (5)

3. With whom do you eat out most frequently? (X3)

1. Alone (1)
2. With partner (2)
3. With family (3)
4. With friends (4)
5. With colleagues (5)

4. Approximately how much do you spend per week on eating out? (X4)

1. 0 – 300 (1)
2. 301 – 600 (2)
3. 601 – 900 (3)
4. 901 – 1200 (4)
5. 1201 – 1500 (5)
6. 1500 + (6)

5. For what reasons do you eat out? (X5a to X5e)

1. No option of home-cooked food (X5a) Yes=1, No =0
2. Special occasion (X5b) Yes=1, No =0
3. Leisure (X5c) Yes=1, No =0
4. To spend time with friends and family (X5d) Yes=1, No =0
5. Others, pls specify (X5e) Yes=1, No =0

6. When do you prefer to eat out? (X6)

1. Weekdays (1)
2. Weekends (2)
3. Any day (3)

7. Which meal of the day do you prefer to eat out? (X7a to X7d)

1. Breakfast (X7a) Yes=1, No =0
2. Lunch (X7b) Yes=1, No =0
3. Dinner (X7c) Yes=1, No =0
4. Snacks (X7d) Yes=1, No =0

8. Rank the following factors from 1 – 6, rank 1 being the most important and rank 6 being the least important

(Ranked from 1 – 6, coded as 1 – 6.) (X8a to X8f)

Parameter Rank

Food (X8a)

Price (X8b)

Service (X8c)

Friends (X8d)

Location (X8e)

Brand (X8f

9. How do you rate the following when you decide to eat out. (X9a to X9o)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Factors | Extremely important | Important | Neither important nor unimportant | Extremely Unimportant | Unimportant |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | Taste for food |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Presentation |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | External look |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Ambience |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Price |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Menu-item |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Speed of service |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Friendliness |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Clean |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Promptness |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Accessibility |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Brand |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | Promotional offers |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Recommendation from others |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | Payment options |  |  |  |  |  |

10. Age (X10)

1. < 20 (1)
2. 20 – 30 (2)
3. 31 – 40 (3)
4. 41 – 50 (4)
5. 51 – 60 (5)
6. 60 + (6)

11. Sex (X11)

1. Male (1)
2. Female (2)

12. Marital status (X12)

1. Single (1)
2. Married (2)

13. Profession (X13)

1. Student (1)
2. Professional (2)
3. Self-employed (3)
4. Retired (4)
5. Housewife (5)

14. Do you own a vehicle? (X14)

1. Yes (1)
2. No (2)

15. Any other comments?