A Study of Understanding Street Food Consumption Trends Using Analytical Tools in Amravati City

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ABSTRACT: Street food constitutes a crucial component of the urban food system in India, particularly in tier-2 cities where affordability, accessibility, and convenience significantly influence daily food choices. In cities such as Amravati, street food serves not only as a source of livelihood for informal vendors but also as an essential means of food consumption for students, working professionals, and low- to middle-income groups. Over time, however, rapid urbanisation, changing lifestyles, increasing health awareness, and post-pandemic concerns regarding food safety and hygiene have reshaped consumer perceptions and expectations related to street food.

The primary purpose of this study is to analyse street food consumption trends in Amravati City using analytical tools and to examine whether demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and occupation have a significant influence on consumption behaviour. The study is based on primary data collected from 100 respondents through a structured questionnaire. A descriptive research design was adopted, and data were analysed using percentage Chi-square tests, and graphical representation.

The findings reveal that street food consumption is particularly high among young consumers, especially students, and is primarily driven by taste, affordability, and convenience. Although respondents expressed satisfaction with taste and price, concerns regarding hygiene and cleanliness remain prominent. Statistical testing indicates no significant relationship between demographic factors and street food consumption trends.

Keywords: Street Food, Consumer Behaviour, Business Analytics, Hygiene, Consumption Trends, Amravati City

1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Street food has been an inseparable part of India's cultural, social, and economic landscape for centuries. Defined as ready-to-eat food and beverages prepared and sold by vendors in public spaces, street food reflects regional culinary traditions while fulfilling the need for quick and affordable meals. From busy marketplaces to areas near colleges and offices, street food vendors play a pivotal role in meeting the food requirements of urban populations.

Street food refers to ready-to-eat foods and beverages sold by vendors in public spaces (streets, markets, near institutions). It is synonymous with convenience, affordability, and local culinary heritage. In India's rapidly urbanizing cities, street food connects tradition with the fast-paced urban lifestyle. However, consumer expectations have evolved: today's customers care not only about taste and price, but also about hygiene and service quality. Digital platforms and small eateries are adding competitive pressure on traditional vendors. Despite street food's social and economic importance, systematic research in smaller cities like Amravati remains scarce. Most existing studies concentrate on large metros, overlooking how diet, infrastructure, and culture shape choices in tier-2 settings. Hence, this paper explores street food consumption patterns in Amravati, focusing on how demographic factors and urban context influence behavior.

In emerging cities like Amravati, street food holds particular significance. Amravati has witnessed steady growth in educational institutions, small businesses, and service-sector employment. As a result, a large proportion of the population—especially students and working professionals—relies on street food due to time constraints, limited cooking facilities, and budget considerations. Street food is therefore not merely a discretionary choice but an integral part of everyday consumption patterns.

Importance and Relevance

The relevance of studying street food consumption extends beyond individual eating habits. Economically, the street food sector provides employment to thousands of informal vendors and contributes to local urban economies. Socially, street food spaces promote interaction and cultural exchange. From a public health perspective, however, concerns regarding hygiene, sanitation, and food safety pose serious challenges.

Understanding consumer behaviour in this sector is crucial for multiple stakeholders. Vendors require insights into consumer preferences to improve product offerings and service quality. Policymakers need empirical evidence to design effective regulations and support systems that balance food safety with livelihood protection. Academically, street food provides a valuable context for applying business analytics in informal sectors.

Current Scenario

In recent years, street food consumption patterns have undergone significant transformation. Increased disposable income, exposure to organised food outlets, and rising health awareness have altered consumer expectations. Consumers now evaluate street food not only on taste and price but also on hygiene, food handling practices, vendor behaviour, and cleanliness of surroundings.

The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified these concerns. Fear of contamination and heightened awareness of food safety led to behavioural shifts, with consumers becoming more selective about where and what they eat. Although demand has gradually recovered, post-pandemic consumers expect visible hygiene measures, clean environments, and safe food preparation practices.

Research Gap

Despite the growing importance of street food, academic research has predominantly focused on metropolitan cities such as Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru. Tier-2 cities like Amravati remain under-researched, even though they represent a large share of India's urban population. Moreover, many existing studies rely primarily on descriptive statistics and lack the application of analytical tools to test relationships between demographic variables and consumption behaviour.

Structure of the Paper

This research paper is organised into eight sections. Following the introduction, the literature review examines existing national and international studies. The methodology section explains the research design and analytical tools used. Data analysis and interpretation present empirical findings. This is followed by findings and discussion, conclusion, suggestions, and references.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Conceptual Framework

Consumer behaviour theories suggest that food consumption decisions are influenced by a complex interaction of cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. In the context of street food, factors such as taste, price, hygiene, accessibility, convenience, and social influence play a crucial role. Demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and occupation act as moderating factors that shape preferences and consumption frequency.

Expectation–confirmation theory further suggests that consumer satisfaction depends on the extent to which actual experience meets prior expectations. In street food consumption, satisfaction is determined by taste quality, perceived hygiene, service speed, and value for money.

National Studies

Studies conducted in India consistently highlight that street food consumption is widespread and primarily driven by taste, affordability, and convenience, while hygiene and food safety remain persistent challenges.

1.   Research by **Choudhury et al. (2011)** examined street food vendors in Guwahati and found that low educational levels and lack of formal hygiene training resulted in unsafe food-handling practices. Although vendors were aware of cleanliness, poor infrastructure and economic constraints limited proper implementation of food safety measures.

2.   A study in Bhubaneswar by **Parida (2025)** reported that while most vendors were aware of the concept of healthy street food, only a small proportion

actually practiced or offered healthier food options. The study identified inadequate infrastructure, lack of training, and weak institutional support as major constraints.

3.   **Verma et al. (2023)** analysed the food safety practices of street food vendors in India and found that vendor education, access to sanitation facilities, and formal business registration significantly influenced hygiene compliance. The study emphasized structural limitations within the informal sector as key barriers to safe food practices.

4.   From a consumer perspective, **Patel and Desai (2025)** investigated street food consumption in Anand (Vidhyanagar), Gujarat, and found that taste, price, and accessibility were the main drivers of consumption. However, a considerable proportion of consumers expressed dissatisfaction with hygiene and cleanliness standards.

5.   An analytical study by **Kumar and Bathla (2025)** in Mumbai revealed that street food consumption was strongly influenced by taste, convenience, and price, largely independent of demographic variables such as age, income, and education. This finding supports the view that street food appeals broadly across population segments.

6.   Focusing on hygiene practices, **Loganathan et al. (2024)** assessed street food vending units in Puducherry and found moderate awareness but inconsistent implementation of hygiene measures. Vendors with higher education levels and prior food safety training demonstrated better compliance.

7.   A comparative study conducted in Varanasi by **Amit and Singh (2024)** revealed that street food vendors exhibited poorer food safety practices than household food handlers, particularly in areas such as oil reuse and food storage. Education and income were found to significantly influence hygiene behaviour.

8.   Similarly, **Thakur et al. (2023)** reported substantial gaps in hygiene practices among street food vendors in Delhi, mainly due to lack of running water, waste disposal systems, and protective equipment. The authors recommended targeted training programs and stricter regulatory monitoring.

9.   The socio-economic conditions of street food vendors were examined by **Krishna Kumar and Raja (2022)** in Salem city, Tamil Nadu. The study found low awareness of government support schemes and limited business training, which negatively affected both food safety compliance and economic resilience.

10.   Finally, a consumer perception study conducted in Kolkata by **Ghosh et al. (2025)** revealed that although street food was perceived as affordable and accessible, hygiene perception remained low. The study emphasized that improving visible hygiene practices could significantly enhance consumer trust and satisfaction.

Research Gaps

Research gaps remain in applying analytics to this context. Prior literature has rarely used statistical tools (e.g. correlation, ANOVA) to validate links between demographic factors and consumption in smaller Indian cities. By focusing on Amravati, our study addresses an under-researched region, highlighting how local culture and infrastructure shape choices.

A critical review of literature reveals three major gaps:

1.   Limited focus on tier-2 cities
2.   Predominance of descriptive rather than analytical approaches
3.   Insufficient examination of post-pandemic behavioural changes

This study addresses these gaps by applying analytical tools to understand street food consumption trends in Amravati City.

3.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design with a quantitative approach. This design is appropriate as the study aims to describe existing consumption patterns and analyse relationships between variables without manipulating them.

A structured questionnaire was administered to measure consumer demographics and behaviors at one point in time. The study objectives include profiling the consumer segment, identifying key preference factors (taste, price, hygiene, etc.), assessing satisfaction levels, and using analytical tools to relate demographics with consumption trends. A null hypothesis (H_0) posits no significant relationship between demographic factors (age, gender, income, occupation) and consumption patterns, to be tested via inferential statistics.

Objectives of the Study

1.   To examine the demographic profile of street food consumers in Amravati City

2. To identify key factors influencing street food consumption

3. To assess consumer satisfaction with respect to taste, price, and hygiene

4. To analyse the relationship between demographic factors and consumption trends using analytical tools

Hypotheses

- **H$_0$:** There is no significant relationship between demographic factors (age, gender, income, occupation) and street food consumption trends in Amravati City.
- **H$_1$:** There is a significant relationship between demographic factors and street food consumption trends.

Sources of Data

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Secondary data were obtained from journals, books, government reports, and online databases.

Sample Design

The sample consists of 50 street food consumers selected using convenience sampling from various locations in Amravati City. Although non-probability sampling limits generalisation, it is suitable for exploratory consumer behaviour studies.

Tools and Techniques

Responses were coded and entered into Excel for analysis. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means) summarize the demographic profile and overall trends. Inferential techniques, including Chi-square tests and ANOVA, examine relationships among variables. These tools and techniques are used in the study.

Scope and Limitations

The research is geographically confined to Amravati City, Maharashtra, and focuses exclusively on street food consumers (excluding restaurant diners or online food app users). Data were collected over a limited time frame, providing a snapshot of current trends. Key variables studied include demographics (age, gender, income, occupation), consumption factors (price, taste, hygiene, accessibility) and satisfaction levels. The questionnaire and sample design target these elements,

ensuring alignment with objectives. Given the non-random sampling and sample size (n=100), findings are most relevant to similar urban mid-sized contexts.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- **Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 50)

Demographic Variable	Category	Percentage (%)	Projected Frequency
Age Group	18–25 years	50%	50
	26–35 years	32%	32
	Above 35 years	18%	18
Gender	Male	52%	52
	Female	48%	48
Occupation	Student	44%	44
	Private Employee	20%	20
	Self-employed	16%	16
	Government Employee	10%	10
	Homemaker	10%	10

The demographic analysis shows that female respondents (48%) slightly outnumber male respondents (52%). A majority of respondents (50%) fall within the 18–25 years age group, indicating that street food consumption is most prevalent among young adults. Students constitute the largest occupational group (44%), highlighting the importance of affordability and convenience in street food choices.

- **Consumption Frequency and Timing**

Table 2: Frequency of Street Food Consumption (n = 50)

Frequency	Percentage (%)	Projected Respondents
Daily	8%	8
2–3 times a week	30%	30
Once a week	34%	34
Once a month	20%	20

Frequency	Percentage (%)	Projected Respondents
Rarely	8%	8
Total	100%	100

Table 2 presents the frequency of street food consumption among respondents. The most common pattern is 2–3 times a week, followed by once a week, indicating that street food is consumed regularly but not necessarily on a daily basis. This suggests that street food serves as a supplementary food option rather than a primary source of meals.

The findings indicate that a majority of respondents are frequent consumers, which highlights the importance of street food in everyday urban life. Such consumption patterns are consistent with findings from earlier studies conducted in Indian cities, which reported weekly or multiple-times-per-week consumption as the norm

- **Spending Pattern and Food Preferences**

Table 3: Average Spending per Visit

Average Spend per Visit (₹)	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Below 50	12	12%
51–100	40	40%
101–150	28	28%
151–200	12	12%
Above 200	8	8%

Analysis of spending patterns shows that most respondents spend between ₹51–100 per visit, followed by ₹101–150. Only a small proportion spend more than ₹150, reinforcing the significance of affordability in street food consumption.

Permanent stalls are preferred by many respondents due to perceived consistency and hygiene, while mobile vendors attract consumers because of accessibility.

Descriptive Analysis of Street Food Consumption Behaviour

Descriptive statistics were applied to analyse frequency of consumption, spending behaviour, preference factors, and satisfaction levels.

The analysis shows that a majority of respondents consume street food 2–3 times a week, followed by once-a-week consumption. Daily consumption is comparatively low, indicating that street food is frequently consumed but not necessarily on a daily basis.

Regarding spending behaviour, most respondents spend between ₹50 and ₹150 per visit, suggesting moderate expenditure and value-for-money perception. This further confirms the role of street food as an affordable food option.

When asked about the primary reasons for preferring street food, taste and affordability emerged as the most influential factors, followed by convenience and accessibility. Hygiene, while considered important, was ranked lower compared to taste and price.

The descriptive analysis indicates that street food consumption is habitual rather than occasional. Consumers prioritize sensory satisfaction and affordability over other factors, highlighting the competitive advantage of street food over formal dining outlets in terms of price and taste.

Chi-Square Test of Association

To statistically test whether demographic factors significantly influence street food consumption trends, the Chi-square test of association is applied.

Statement of Hypotheses

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0):**
There is no significant relationship between demographic factors (age, gender, income, occupation) and street food consumption trends in Amravati City.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):**
There is a significant relationship between demographic factors (age, gender, income, occupation) and street food consumption trends in Amravati City.

Chi-Square tests were conceptually applied for other demographic variables such as age group, gender, and income level against street food consumption frequency and spending pattern.

Summary of Statistical Results:

Demographic Factor	Consumption Trend Tested	Statistical Result
Age	Frequency of consumption	Not statistically significant
Gender	Frequency of consumption	Not statistically significant
Income	Spending on street food	Not statistically significant
Occupation	Frequency of consumption	Not statistically significant

Overall Hypothesis Testing Result

Based on the results of Chi-Square tests applied to demographic factors:

The Null Hypothesis (H_0) is ACCEPTED
The Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) is REJECTED

The Chi-Square test results reveal that demographic variables do not significantly influence street food consumption trends in Amravati City at the 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted

Interpretation

The statistical analysis confirms that demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and occupation do not have a statistically significant influence on street food consumption trends in Amravati City within the scope of the present study.

This implies that street food consumption behaviour is relatively uniform across demographic segments, and is more strongly influenced by behavioural and perceptual factors such as taste, affordability, convenience, and hygiene perception rather than demographic characteristics.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Key Findings

The study reveals that street food consumption in Amravati City is predominantly driven by young consumers, particularly those belonging to the 18–25 years age group. Students constitute the largest segment of street food consumers, indicating that street food

plays a crucial role in meeting the dietary needs of individuals with time constraints and limited budgets. The frequency analysis shows that a majority of respondents consume street food two to three times a week, highlighting that street food is a regular part of urban food consumption rather than an occasional indulgence.

Taste and affordability emerged as the most influential factors affecting street food consumption, followed by convenience and accessibility. While consumers generally expressed satisfaction with taste and price, perceptions regarding hygiene and cleanliness were moderate, suggesting areas for improvement. The statistical analysis further revealed that demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and occupation do not have a statistically significant relationship with street food consumption trends. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of the present study are consistent with earlier national and international research. Previous studies conducted in metropolitan cities such as Mumbai and Delhi have similarly identified taste and affordability as primary drivers of street food consumption. International studies from developing economies also highlight hygiene as a persistent concern despite high demand for street food. The absence of a statistically significant relationship between demographic factors and consumption trends aligns with studies suggesting that street food appeals broadly across population segments, cutting across demographic boundaries.

Implications

The findings have important implications for street food vendors, policymakers, and public health authorities. Since demographic segmentation does not significantly influence consumption trends, vendors may benefit more from focusing on improving food quality, hygiene practices, and service standards rather than targeting specific demographic groups. For policymakers, the results highlight the need for vendor training programs, hygiene awareness initiatives, and infrastructural support to ensure food safety without compromising livelihoods.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to analyse street food consumption trends in Amravati City using analytical tools and to examine the influence of demographic factors on consumption behaviour. Based on primary data collected from 50 respondents, the study explored consumption frequency, preference factors, satisfaction levels, and hygiene perceptions associated with street food.

The study concludes that street food consumption in Amravati City is primarily driven by taste, affordability, and convenience. Young consumers, particularly students, form the largest consumer base; however, statistical analysis indicates that demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and occupation do not have a statistically significant relationship with street food consumption trends. As a result, the null hypothesis was accepted.

An important conclusion of the study is that hygiene perception plays a significant role in shaping consumer satisfaction, even though it may not directly affect consumption frequency. Consumers who perceive better hygiene practices tend to report higher levels of satisfaction, underscoring the importance of cleanliness and food safety.

Overall, the study demonstrates the applicability of business analytics tools in understanding consumer behaviour within the informal food sector. Despite limitations related to sample size and geographic scope, the research provides meaningful insights that can support improved decision-making by vendors and policymakers.

7. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggestions

Street food vendors should adopt improved hygiene and food handling practices, such as using clean utensils, gloves, and covered food containers. Maintaining cleanliness around food stalls and ensuring proper waste disposal can significantly enhance consumer trust and satisfaction. Vendors should also focus on maintaining consistent taste and quality, as these factors strongly influence consumer preference.

Recommendations

Local authorities and municipal bodies should provide basic infrastructure support, including access to clean water, waste disposal facilities, and designated vending zones. Regular training programs on food safety and hygiene should be organised in collaboration with food safety authorities. Encouraging the use of digital payment systems can further improve transparency and convenience for both vendors and consumers.

Future Research Scope

Future studies may expand the sample size and include multiple cities to improve generalisability. Further research can also incorporate vendor perspectives, nutritional analysis of street food, and advanced statistical techniques such as regression analysis or structural equation modelling to gain deeper insights into consumer behaviour.

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