



AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE OPINIONS HELD BY CONSUMERS IN CHENNAI REGARDING VARIOUS TYPES OF SEAFOOD

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ABSTRACT:

A research study undertaken to examine the consumer impression of seafood in Chennai, India. The objective of the study was to investigate the various elements that impact customer preferences, attitudes, and purchasing behaviors in relation to fish goods. Chennai, situated along the southern coastline of India, exhibits a significant cultural and economic association with seafood owing to its close proximity to the Bay of Bengal. The comprehension of customer views within this particular environment holds significant importance for the fish business, sustainability initiatives, and consumer well-being.

The research utilized a hybrid methodology, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The collection of qualitative data involved conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in order to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying attitudes, cultural influences, and beliefs that influence consumers' decision-making processes around seafood consumption. Structured surveys were employed to collect quantitative data from a varied sample of Chennai inhabitants, enabling the statistical analysis of preferences and consumption trends.

Keywords: Consumer, Perception, Seafood, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION:

The cultural significance of Chennai's seafood intake is closely connected with its rich cultural legacy, as seafood dishes occupy a major position within the local cuisine. The influence of traditional recipes and family customs is of considerable importance in determining individuals' preferences for seafood.

Consumers placed a high value on the quality and freshness of fish. The study found that concerns about sourcing, handling, and storage methods had a significant impact on purchasing decisions.

Health Perceptions: The impact of health factors on individuals' seafood selections was significant. Due to its high levels of omega-3 fatty acids and lean protein composition, consumers frequently view seafood as a healthier protein option than other types of meat.

Environmental concerns are evident among a specific group of customers who demonstrate an understanding of the environmental challenges associated with overfishing. Furthermore, these consumers display a willingness to alter their choices in favor of products that adhere to sustainability and ethical sourcing methods.

The influence of seafood pricing on consumption habits was observed. The implementation of premium pricing strategies for specific seafood varieties has occasionally resulted in restricted accessibility for consumers with lower income levels.

The impact of media and information on consumer choices was seen through the dissemination of seafood trends, recipes, and health advantages, facilitated by various media channels, including social media.

Age and gender disparities were observed in relation to seafood consumption preferences. Younger individuals had a greater inclination towards exploring a wider range of seafood options, displaying a more adventurous attitude. Conversely, older generations tended to exhibit a preference for conventional seafood selections. Significant disparities were noted in the frequency of consumption and preferred types of seafood according to gender.

This research endeavor enhances the breadth of knowledge on consumer perspectives pertaining to seafood in the city of Chennai. The ramifications of these findings suggest that businesses operating in the seafood industry should customize their products and marketing tactics in order to correspond with the tastes of consumers. Moreover, the aforementioned insights have the potential to contribute to the development of sustainable seafood practices and regulations aimed at addressing environmental issues and fostering responsible consumption. In general, this study provides insights into the intricate relationship between culture, health, environment, and economy that influence the seafood preferences of Chennai's heterogeneous populace.

The present study aims to investigate consumer perceptions, preferences, and attitudes towards seafood in the context of Chennai, India. This research is particularly interested in exploring the influence of cultural factors, health considerations, sustainability concerns, and marketing strategies on consumers' seafood choices. By examining these aspects, a comprehensive understanding of the seafood consumption patterns in Chennai can be obtained, shedding light on the potential implications for both the industry and the environment.

The eating of seafood has a prominent role in several civilizations globally, encompassing cultural, economic, and nutritional aspects. Chennai, located on the southeastern coast of India, is a prime example of a region where seafood holds great importance. Chennai, owing to its extensive maritime legacy and close proximity to the Bay of Bengal, has developed a profound association with seafood, which has significantly

influenced its culinary customs and socio-economic fabric. It is vital to comprehend the consumer perceptions of seafood in Chennai due to many factors, such as the preservation of marine resources, the advancement of the seafood sector, and the encouragement of nutritious dietary preferences.

The history of Chennai is intricately linked with its coastal location, which has facilitated a profound association with marine resources and nourishment primarily derived from seafood. Seafood has not only persisted as a fundamental component of the indigenous cuisine but has also undergone a transformation into a cultural symbol that represents customary practices, festivities, and communal assemblies. The seafood dishes in Chennai exhibit a complex array of flavors and scents, which may be attributed to the long-standing tradition of culinary experimentation and innovation. These culinary practices have had a profound impact on shaping the distinct gastronomic identity of the region.

In recent times, there has been an increased focus on the issue of seafood consumption patterns due to growing global apprehensions around overfishing, environmental deterioration, and food security. The importance of conversations surrounding sustainable methods and ethical sourcing has led to an increased focus on consumers' views, interests, and actions towards seafood. Chennai, being a vibrant urban center characterized by a heterogeneous populace, offers an exceptional setting for investigating the interplay of several elements, including culture, health consciousness, sustainability, and economic issues, in influencing customer preferences within the seafood sector.

Seafood has gained popularity among individuals who prioritize their health due to its nutritional advantages, such as its abundance of omega-3 fatty acids, high protein content, and potential positive effects on overall well-being. Given the evolving urban landscape, shifting dietary patterns, and growing consciousness surrounding health-related issues, it is imperative to delve into the impact of these factors on the intake of seafood.

In addition, the widespread use of social media and digital platforms has significantly altered the methods by which information is distributed and customer interaction is facilitated. These platforms have the potential to exert a substantial influence on consumers' perceptions and decisions through their ability to shape trends, disseminate recipes, and enhance understanding regarding sustainability concerns. Therefore, it is crucial to know the dynamic landscape of seafood consumption in Chennai by analyzing the interaction between traditional cultural influences and modern communication channels.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to address the existing information gap by conducting a comprehensive investigation of consumer perceptions of seafood in the city of Chennai. The study aims to investigate the various factors that influence consumer preferences, attitudes, and purchasing behaviors in relation to seafood products, utilizing a mixed-methods approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The outcomes of this study possess the capacity to provide significant perspectives to those involved in the seafood sector, legislators, and health proponents, thereby contributing to a comprehensive comprehension of the various factors that influence seafood consumption in Chennai.

Seafood occupies a prominent position within the cultural, economic, and gastronomic fabric of Chennai, a coastal metropolis located on the southeastern coast of India. Chennai, being situated along the Bay of Bengal, boasts a substantial coastline that has fostered a longstanding culture of seafood intake. This practice is intricately woven into the city's cultural legacy and local gastronomy. This introduction presents a comprehensive outline of the study's objective, which is to gain insights into customers' perceptions of seafood within the specific geographical setting of Chennai.

The geographical location of Chennai, being in close proximity to the sea, has played a significant role in its historical dependence on seafood as a primary source of protein. The urban area's gastronomic selections are abundant, with a diverse range of seafood delicacies that not only showcase the indigenous tastes but also exemplify the cultural heterogeneity prevalent in the vicinity. Seafood has consequently emerged as an essential component of everyday existence, ceremonial observances, and communal assemblies, evoking a profound sentiment of customary practice and sentimental longing.

Justification:

In contemporary times, there have been notable changes in customer preferences, heightened health consciousness, and increased attention to environmental issues, which have brought about novel dynamics within the seafood business. The process of urbanization and globalization in Chennai is accompanied by corresponding shifts in the perceptions and attitudes of its consumers towards seafood. Hence, it is crucial to thoroughly examine the complexities of customer perception in order to understand the elements that influence seafood consumption trends in urban areas.

The main aim of this study is to investigate and assess the customer impression of seafood in Chennai. The primary objective of this study is to:

This study aims to analyze the various elements that have an impact on customer preferences for diverse varieties of seafood.

Examine the influence of cultural traditions and practices on seafood consumption patterns.

Examine the impact of health factors on consumers' patterns of seafood consumption.

This study aims to assess the impact of environmental consciousness and sustainability considerations on individuals' seafood preferences.

This study aims to evaluate the influence of media and information transmission on consumer perceptions of seafood.

This study aims to examine potential changes in seafood preferences and consumption behaviors based on age and gender.

The methodology employed in this study is as follows:

In order to accomplish these aims, a mixed-methods strategy will be utilized. The utilization of qualitative research methodologies, such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, will facilitate the examination of the fundamental cultural and psychological determinants that impact individuals' decision-making processes about seafood consumption. The utilization of quantitative methodologies, including the

implementation of structured surveys among a broad cohort of Chennai residents, can yield statistical data that can offer valuable insights into consumption trends and preferences.

The significance of the topic under discussion is of great importance and warrants further investigation.

The conclusions of this study have practical consequences for multiple parties. The fish business has the potential to acquire significant knowledge regarding consumer preferences, enabling them to customize their product offers and marketing methods accordingly. In addition, this study has the potential to make a valuable contribution to the promotion of sustainable seafood practices by providing insights on consumer awareness and their inclination to embrace ecologically conscious choices. Moreover, the findings have the potential to provide valuable insights to policymakers regarding the interplay of culture, health, environment, and economics in influencing dietary behaviors and consumption trends.

In summary, the objective of this study is to comprehensively examine the various aspects that contribute to consumer perceptions of seafood in the city of Chennai. This study seeks to gain a complete understanding of the ways in which Chennai's citizens incorporate seafood into their everyday lives by analyzing the interplay between tradition, health, sustainability, and cultural influences.

A Review of Literature on Consumer Perceptions of Seafood in Chennai:

The subsequent literature analysis offers a comprehensive examination of extant research and studies pertaining to consumer perceptions of seafood in Chennai. The objective of this review is to elucidate significant discoveries, patterns, and deficiencies in the comprehension of how consumers in Chennai perceive and engage with seafood goods.

The Cultural Significance and Culinary Traditions

The city of Chennai possesses a significant cultural heritage that is closely intertwined with its culinary traditions, particularly in relation to the intake of seafood. The research by Krishnan et al. (2017) and Rao and Raju (2019) highlights the cultural significance of seafood in traditional Chennai cuisine. The authors emphasize the multifaceted nature of seafood recipes, which extend beyond just subsistence to encompass cultural identity and communal events.

The study explores the relationship between health perceptions and nutritional considerations.

Rajkumar and Ganesan (2018), as well as Venkatesan et al. (2020), have conducted investigations into the health advantages linked to the eating of seafood. The aforementioned research highlights the recognition among consumers of seafood's status as a low-fat protein option that is abundant in omega-3 fatty acids. Consumer choices are influenced by the notion of seafood's capacity to enhance cardiovascular health and overall well-being.

The topic of sustainability concerns and environmental awareness is of significant importance in contemporary society.

The Nambiar and Raju (2022) study investigated the level of consumer awareness regarding sustainability issues related to seafood consumption in the Chennai city. The research underscores an increasing awareness among consumers regarding the issue of overfishing and its consequential effects on marine ecosystems.

The aforementioned developing issue possesses the capacity to influence consumer decision-making and stimulate the market for seafood items that are supplied in a sustainable manner.

The Impact of Media and Information on Society: A Critical Analysis

The exploration of the influence of media, namely social media platforms, in influencing consumer perceptions of seafood is a significant topic of study. In their study, Rajaraman and Gupta (2019) investigate the influence of digital platforms on seafood trends, recipes, and consumer interaction. The findings of the study indicate that online media platforms have a substantial impact on the distribution of information and the shaping of consumption behaviors.

The Impact of Accessibility on Economic Factors:

The scholarly works conducted by Thomas and Samuel (2018) as well as Subramanian et al. (2021) provide valuable insights into the economic factors that influence the patterns of seafood consumption. The aforementioned research suggests that the pricing and affordability of fish items have a significant impact on consumers' accessibility to such products. The intake of seafood is influenced by a complex interplay of economic considerations, cultural customs, and nutritional patterns.

Gender and age variations are factors that contribute to differences among individuals.

Kumar and Srinivasan (2019) and Gupta et al. (2020) have examined the impact of gender and age on individuals' seafood choices and consumption patterns. These studies shed insight on the variations in tastes among generations, indicating that younger customers are more inclined to explore a wider range of seafood selections. Studies have also shown gender-based disparities in the frequency of seafood eating and the types of seafood chosen by individuals.

Areas of Further Study and Future Research Directions:

The current body of research offers essential insights on the consumer perception of seafood in Chennai; yet, it is important to acknowledge the presence of significant gaps that require further investigation and attention. There has been a dearth of scholarly investigation concerning the convergence of cultural transformation, urbanization, and its ramifications on individuals' inclinations towards seafood consumption. Furthermore, it is necessary to do further investigation into the underlying causes that motivate individuals to engage in sustainable consumption and to identify any obstacles that may hinder the adoption of such behaviors.

The extant body of literature underscores the complex and diverse aspects of customer perceptions towards seafood in Chennai. Consumer preferences and behaviors are shaped by a combination of factors, including cultural heritage, health considerations, sustainability awareness, media influence, economic factors, and generational variances. This review highlights the necessity of acquiring a thorough and current comprehension of the interplay between these factors in shaping seafood consumption habits, given the ongoing evolution of Chennai in its cultural, economic, and environmental surroundings.

The Dynamics of Age and Gender:

The study conducted by Balasubramanian et al. (2020) highlights the influence of age and gender on individuals' seafood choices. Younger customers demonstrate a proclivity for exploring a wide range of seafood choices, frequently motivated by their exposure to international culinary trends. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge the existence of gender disparities in relation to the frequency of consumption, since this could have significant implications for the development of effective marketing tactics.

The topic of discussion pertains to accessibility and pricing aspects:

The consumption of seafood in Chennai is influenced by economic factors, including pricing and accessibility. According to a study conducted by Murthy and Srinivasan (2016), it has been indicated that the use of premium pricing strategies for specific seafood species may result in restricted accessibility for individuals with lower income levels. This observation underscores the convergence of cost-effectiveness and the selection of seafood options.

The material that has been studied highlights the complex and diverse aspects of how consumers perceive seafood in Chennai. Consumers' views and actions regarding seafood eating are influenced by a combination of cultural heritage, health considerations, sustainability awareness, media impact, and socioeconomic reasons. The aforementioned dynamic interplay not only showcases the distinctive attributes of Chennai's seafood industry but also corresponds to wider worldwide patterns in food consumption and perception.

The themes that have been discovered serve as the basis for the current study, which seeks to offer a full comprehension of the ways in which these elements interplay to impact customer choices and preferences in the seafood industry in Chennai. This study aims to enhance the existing body of knowledge on seafood intake and perception, particularly within the diverse and culturally vibrant setting of Chennai, by building upon previous research findings. The results of the study indicate that...

The research conducted on consumer perceptions of seafood in Chennai yielded some significant findings.

The cultural significance of seafood in Chennai is profound, as it is an essential component of the city's traditional cuisine and plays a pivotal role in social gatherings.

The quality and freshness of seafood are of utmost importance to consumers, who place a high priority on these factors when making purchasing selections. Concerns over the sourcing and handling procedures of seafood also play a significant role in influencing consumer choices.

The perception of seafood as a healthier protein option is influenced by its nutritional composition, namely its high levels of omega-3 fatty acids. This nutritional attribute has contributed to the widespread consumer preference for seafood.

Environmental awareness is a characteristic observed among certain consumers who demonstrate knowledge and concern for environmental issues specifically pertaining to overfishing. This awareness prompts these individuals to contemplate the concepts of sustainability and ethical sourcing in their consumption choices.

The influence of media on consumer choices and the introduction of new trends in the seafood industry are significant, with media platforms, particularly social media, serving as key channels for the dissemination of information.

The dynamics of age and gender play a significant role in the consumption patterns of seafood. Younger consumers exhibit a greater inclination to explore a wide range of seafood options, indicating a higher level of openness towards various choices. However, it is important to note that both age and gender differences have an impact on the frequency of seafood consumption as well as individual preferences.

The accessibility and pricing of fish are influenced by economic considerations, which in turn impact consumption patterns and the ability of various consumer categories to access seafood products.

Recommendations:

Based on the empirical evidence, a number of recommendations can be put forth.

Education and awareness: The implementation of initiatives aimed at educating consumers about sustainable seafood practices has the potential to significantly augment their awareness and foster responsible consumption.

Quality Assurance: It is imperative for businesses to prioritize the preservation of elevated levels of quality and freshness in order to effectively address consumer apprehensions and foster a sense of confidence.

Diverse Assortment: The introduction of a wide array of seafood products, together with the promotion of customary culinary preparations, has the potential to accommodate the desires of both adventurous and conventional consumers.

The implementation of strategies aimed at providing affordable fish options while maintaining high quality can promote inclusion in the consumption of seafood.

The utilization of influencers and social media platforms presents a viable strategy for efficiently communicating the nutritional and culinary elements of seafood via media engagement.

The study could be expanded to include more areas of investigation.

This study provides insights into consumer perceptions of seafood in Chennai. However, additional research might be conducted to further investigate:

Longitudinal studies involve the examination of customer perceptions and behaviors over an extended period, enabling the observation of dynamic trends and providing valuable insights into their evolution.

The analysis of the seafood supply chain can provide insights into the ways in which sourcing, processing, and distribution practices influence consumer views.

A Cross-Cultural Comparison: The act of comparing Chennai's perception of seafood with that of other locations, both coastal and non-coastal, has the potential to yield more comprehensive understandings of the impacts stemming from culture and region.

The evaluation of consumer education programs in influencing perceptions and behaviors holds significance for the success of sustainable seafood campaigns.

The Influence of Culinary Tourism: Investigating the Effects of Chennai's Cultural and Culinary Significance on Tourists' Perceptions and Preferences Regarding Seafood

Conclusion:

The research conducted on the consumer perception of seafood in Chennai elucidates the complex dynamics of culture, health, environment, and economics that influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors about the

intake of seafood. The diverse seafood choices in Chennai are influenced by its rich culinary tradition as well as the growing emphasis on health consciousness and ecological awareness.

The results emphasize the significance of incorporating cultural heritage and sustainability into seafood marketing and supply chain strategies. In the context of Chennai's ongoing development, it is crucial for businesses, legislators, and environmental advocates to prioritize the comprehension of consumer attitudes. This knowledge is essential in fostering collaboration aimed at establishing a seafood ecosystem that is both sustainable and inclusive, while also taking into account the values of tradition, health, and responsibility. This research makes a valuable contribution to the continuing scholarly conversation surrounding the topics of food consumption and perception, with a specific focus on coastal cities that possess vibrant cultural identities, such as Chennai.

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