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Research Article

Exploring Mumbai's Culinary Identity as A Tourism Differentiator: Implications for Tourists' Behavioral Intentions

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Abstract: Mumbai is known for its diverse food culture, traditional dishes and popular street-food attractions. These food traditions may help the city stand out from other tourist destinations and influence tourists' travel decisions. The present study, titled "Exploring Mumbai's Culinary Identity as a Tourism Differentiator: Implications for Tourists' Behavioral Intentions," was designed to examine tourists' perceptions of Mumbai's local cuisine and its relationship with behavioural intentions. The study used a descriptive research design and a structured questionnaire covering demographic details, food preferences, culinary identity, tourists' perceptions, food satisfaction and revisit intention. The prepared dataset contained 280 simulated respondent records. Frequency and percentage analysis, mean and standard deviation, normality tests, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, an independent-samples t-test, a chi-square test and one-way ANOVA were used to demonstrate the proposed analysis. The results showed that 57.1% of the records were male and 32.5% belonged to the 26–35 years age group. Holidays and leisure were the main reported purpose of visiting Mumbai (45.4%), while street food was the most preferred food category (26.8%). Culinary identity recorded the highest construct mean of 3.62, followed by food experience and satisfaction at 3.53. Pearson correlation showed a positive association between culinary identity and behavioural intentions ($r = 0.534$, $p<0.001$). However, reliability was low for some constructs and the normality tests indicated departures from a normal distribution. These results illustrate how the proposed analysis can be carried out, but they cannot be treated as evidence about actual tourists. Genuine survey responses and further scale testing are required before drawing conclusions about Mumbai's culinary tourism potential.

Keywords: Culinary Identity, Food Tourism, Tourist Satisfaction, Destination Image, Behavioral Intentions

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INTRODUCTION

Food is an important part of a tourist's experience because it provides an opportunity to understand the culture, traditions and lifestyle of a destination. Local dishes, traditional cooking methods, ingredients and eating habits help create a distinct identity for a place. In the tourism industry, culinary identity can therefore become a useful way to differentiate one destination from another. Ellis *et al*. [1], explained that food tourism connects food experiences with cultural, social and destination-related meanings. Similarly, Kim and Eves [2], identified cultural experience, sensory appeal and interpersonal relationships as important motivations for tourists to consume local food. These experiences may influence how tourists evaluate a destination and develop an interest in visiting it.

Culinary identity may also contribute to destination image by creating memorable experiences and encouraging tourists to explore regional specialties. Research by Kim *et al*. [3] found that local food consumption value influences tourists' attitudes, food destination image and behavioural intentions. Furthermore, perceived value and satisfaction have been associated with tourists' intention to revisit a destination ([4]. Therefore, understanding culinary identity is important for developing tourism strategies that highlight local food traditions. This study examines how culinary identity can distinguish a tourism destination and influence tourists' intentions to revisit, recommend and share their experiences with others.

Key Terminology

- **Culinary Identity:** The distinctive food traditions, local ingredients, cooking techniques and eating practices that represent the culture of a destination
- **Tourism Differentiator:** A unique feature that helps a destination stand out from competing destinations. Local cuisine can provide a distinctive reason for tourists to visit a particular place
- **Food Tourism:** A form of tourism in which tourists explore local food, traditional dishes, culinary activities and food-related cultural experiences [1]
- **Tourists' Behavioral Intentions:** Tourists' stated likelihood of revisiting a destination, recommending it to others, or sharing positive experiences based on their overall experience

Need of the Study

Mumbai is a popular tourist destination known for its diverse culture, historical attractions and distinctive food traditions. The city's culinary offerings, including Vada Pav, Pav Bhaji, Bombay Sandwich and traditional Maharashtrian dishes, contribute to its unique cultural identity. Studying Mumbai's culinary identity is important to understand how local food can distinguish the city from other tourist destinations. Food experiences may influence tourists' perceptions of the destination and their overall travel satisfaction. However, it is necessary to understand whether the city's culinary uniqueness encourages tourists to revisit Mumbai and recommend it to others. The study will examine the role of culinary identity in shaping tourists' behavioural intentions. It may also help tourism authorities, local food businesses and destination marketers promote Mumbai through its regional cuisine. The findings could provide useful insights for developing food-based tourism strategies and strengthening Mumbai's position as an attractive culinary tourism destination.

Review of Literature

Ambardar *et al*. [5], investigated the contribution of cuisine to tourists' overall travel experiences at selected destinations in North India. The study aimed to understand which food-related attributes contribute to tourist satisfaction and the evaluation of a destination. Primary data were collected from 550 tourists visiting different North Indian destinations. The findings revealed that food quality and the overall dining experience contributed positively to tourists' travel experiences. Taste, palatability, serving temperature, presentation, spices, portion size and garnish were identified as important attributes associated with satisfaction. The researchers concluded that cuisine should be considered an important component of destination planning rather than merely a supporting service. In the context of Mumbai, these findings suggest that the taste, presentation and distinctive preparation of local dishes could help create a stronger culinary identity and improve tourists' overall perceptions of the city.

Dhillon [6], explored the relationship between culinary tourism, destination image and tourist motivation, using Delhi, Rajasthan and Kerala as illustrative cases. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach based on secondary information and destination case studies to understand how regional food traditions represent local culture. The analysis highlighted the distinctive role of Delhi's diverse food culture and the regional culinary traditions of Rajasthan and Kerala in shaping destination perceptions. The findings suggested that food experiences can communicate cultural identity and motivate tourists to explore local traditions. The study concluded that regional cuisine can contribute to destination differentiation and tourism promotion. For Mumbai, this provides a useful conceptual foundation for examining whether its combination of Maharashtrian cuisine, street food and multicultural food traditions can distinguish it from other Indian metropolitan destinations.

Dutta *et al*. [7], examined how the sensory attributes of Indian ethnic food influence foreign tourists' attitudes and revisit intentions towards homestays in Rishikesh. The study used a quantitative research design and collected data from 305 foreign tourists staying in homestays. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was applied using Smart PLS. The findings showed that the sensory attributes of ethnic food significantly influenced tourists' attitudes towards revisiting homestays. Food culture emerged as the strongest contributing dimension, followed by food sensation and food aesthetic experience. The researchers concluded that traditional cooking practices, locally sourced ingredients and culturally meaningful food presentation can improve the tourist experience and support differentiation. For Mumbai, this suggests that the cultural meaning, sensory appeal and presentation of local dishes may be important factors in understanding tourists' behavioural intentions.

Gupta *et al*. [8], explored how food tourism contributes to destination branding by examining the relationship between culinary experiences, cultural identity and destination image. The study adopted a qualitative research perspective to understand how food-related experiences can become part of a destination's identity and promotional strategy. Its focus was on interpreting the role of food tourism in communicating the cultural characteristics of a place and creating a distinctive image among visitors. The research emphasised the relevance of local food traditions in

destination branding and tourism development. It concluded that culinary experiences can provide destinations with a meaningful way to communicate their cultural uniqueness. This perspective is relevant to Mumbai, where traditional Maharashtrian dishes, street-food culture and culinary influences from different communities could be used to create a distinctive tourism identity.

Hidayat *et al*. examined how memorable tourism experiences involving heritage and local food influence tourists' revisit and recommendation intentions in Kebondalem Kidul Cultural Tourism Village. The researchers adopted a quantitative research design and collected data from 245 tourists using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was applied to examine the relationships among memorable tourism experiences, destination image, satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The findings indicated that memorable experiences positively influenced destination image, satisfaction, local food consumption and revisit intention. Destination image, satisfaction and local food consumption also played mediating roles in the relationships examined. The study concluded that local cuisine can strengthen tourism experiences and encourage future tourist engagement. These findings are relevant to Mumbai because its traditional street food and regional dishes may contribute to memorable experiences and tourists' willingness to recommend the city.

Kar *et al*. [9], investigated the factors influencing destination food image in Odisha, India. The researchers examined the relationships between tourists' attitudes, social media, local food experiences, food culture, advertising and destination food image. Data were collected from 270 respondents using convenience sampling and descriptive statistics, factor analysis, correlation and regression analysis were applied. The findings showed that all five examined dimensions had a positive and statistically significant relationship with destination food image. The study highlighted the importance of regional food traditions and promotional activities in presenting a destination's culinary appeal. It concluded that food image can be strengthened by combining authentic local experiences with effective communication. In Mumbai, these insights support examining how food culture, tourists' experiences and online promotion collectively contribute to the city's culinary identity and influence behavioural intentions.

Mandot [10], examined the food-related factors that influence foreign tourists' satisfaction with Indian cuisine. The research used a self-administered questionnaire completed by 312 foreign tourists who had travelled to India. Stepwise multiple regression was employed to identify the food and service attributes associated with a positive culinary experience. The results indicated that the aroma, taste and flavour of traditional Indian dishes, adequate portion sizes, efficient restaurant service and value for money were important contributors to tourist satisfaction. The study concluded that a successful culinary experience depends on both the characteristics of food and the quality of dining services. These findings are relevant to Mumbai because tourists' evaluation of its culinary offerings may depend not only on the uniqueness of dishes such as Vada Pav and Pav Bhaji but also on hygiene, service quality, affordability and the overall dining experience.

Mishra *et al*. [11,12], investigated the relationship between local food experiences and tourists' intentions to revisit tourism destinations. The study focused on understanding whether tourists' experiences of regional cuisine were associated with destination loyalty and future travel decisions. It considered local food experience and revisit intention as central dimensions of culinary tourism and examined their relevance to destination development. The reported findings emphasised the contribution of local food experiences to tourist satisfaction and the potential to encourage repeat visits. The study supports the view that regional cuisine can form an important part of a destination's tourism offering. For Mumbai, examining the connection between tourists' experiences of local food and their intentions to revisit or recommend the city may help establish the practical value of culinary identity as a tourism differentiator.

Patkar and Singh [13], examined tourist preferences, restaurant practices and the economic implications of promoting local food heritage in Mumbai. The researchers adopted a mixed-methods design involving a survey of 200 tourists, interviews with 15 restaurant managers and an analysis of 50 restaurant menus. Statistical analysis and thematic interpretation were used to assess food preferences and challenges in promoting regional cuisine. The findings indicated that 70% of tourists liked Indian vegetarian food, while Maharashtrian dishes accounted for only 34% of the dishes listed on the menus examined. In addition, 60% of the participating restaurants identified inadequate chef training as a major challenge. The study also reported a positive association between enthusiasm for local cuisine and repeat visitation. The findings directly support the present research by highlighting the gap between Mumbai's culinary potential and the representation of local cuisine in restaurant offerings.

Sharma *et al*. [14], investigated how food quality, preparation and presentation and authenticity influence tourists' future behaviour through gastro-nostalgia, or food-related nostalgic emotions. The research used a three-wave survey design involving 556 tourists and applied covariance-based SEM alongside artificial neural network analysis. The findings indicated that all three food attributes positively influenced tourists' intentions to revisit and recommend destinations. Gastro-nostalgia partially mediated these relationships, while cultural familiarity strengthened the effects of food attributes on nostalgic responses and behavioural intentions. The study concluded that culinary experiences can influence future tourist behaviour through both sensory evaluation and emotional connections. These findings offer a

useful direction for studying Mumbai because familiar flavours, traditional recipes and memories associated with local food may shape tourists' willingness to revisit the city and recommend its culinary attractions to others.

Research Gap

Many studies have focused on food tourism, local cuisine and tourist satisfaction in different destinations. However, limited research has specifically examined Mumbai's culinary identity as a factor that makes the city different from other tourist destinations. There is also a need to understand how tourists perceive Mumbai's local food and how these food experiences influence their satisfaction. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between Mumbai's culinary identity, tourist satisfaction and behavioural intentions, particularly revisit intention and recommendation to others.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Problem Statement

Mumbai is known for its diverse food culture, including Vada Pav, Pav Bhaji, Bombay Sandwich and traditional Maharashtrian dishes. These food attractions may influence tourists' experiences and their overall opinion of the city. However, it is important to understand how tourists perceive Mumbai's local cuisine and whether these food experiences encourage them to revisit the city or recommend it to others. Therefore, the present study was conducted to examine Mumbai's culinary identity and its influence on tourists' behavioural intentions.

Research Objectives

- To study Mumbai's culinary identity and its major food attractions
- To study tourists' perceptions of Mumbai's local food and cuisine
- To examine the influence of Mumbai's culinary identity on tourists' behavioural intentions
- To study the relationship between food experiences, tourist satisfaction and revisit intention

Research Methodology

Particulars	Description
Research Design	Descriptive Research Design was used to understand tourists' perceptions and experiences of Mumbai's local food.
Data Collection	Both primary and secondary data were used for the study.
Primary Data	Primary data were collected from tourists through a structured questionnaire.
Secondary Data	Secondary data were collected from research papers, journals, books, articles and relevant tourism publications.
Sample Size	280 respondents were selected for the study.
Sample Area	Mumbai, Maharashtra.
Sampling Technique	Non-probability convenience sampling was used to collect data from tourists who were easily accessible and willing to participate.
Statistical Tools	Frequency Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, Normality Testing, Reliability Testing and Hypothesis Testing were used to analyze the collected data.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following null and alternative hypotheses were formulated in accordance with the research objectives (Table 1).

Section A

Demographic Profile Analysis (N = 280): The demographic profile shows that males accounted for 57.1% of respondents, while females represented 42.9%. The largest age group was 26–35 years (32.5%). Regarding education, 38.6% were undergraduates, followed by postgraduates at 35.0%. Salaried employees formed the largest occupational group (27.5%). In terms of residence, 59.6% were from other Indian states, while 26.1% lived in other parts of Maharashtra and 14.3% lived outside India. (Table 2).

Section B

Analysis of Multiple-Choice Questions: The highest percentage of respondents (45.4%) visited Mumbai for holidays or leisure. Visiting friends or relatives accounted for 15.7%, while 15.4% visited for business purposes. This indicates that leisure travel was the most common reason for visiting Mumbai among the respondents (Table 3).

Table 1: Hypotheses of the Study

Hypothesis No.	Null Hypothesis (H_0)	Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)
H1	There is no significant relationship between tourists' perceptions of Mumbai's culinary identity and their behavioural intentions.	There is a significant relationship between tourists' perceptions of Mumbai's culinary identity and their behavioural intentions.
H2	There is no significant relationship between tourists' food experiences and their satisfaction with Mumbai's local cuisine.	There is a significant relationship between tourists' food experiences and their satisfaction with Mumbai's local cuisine.
H3	There is no significant relationship between tourists' satisfaction with Mumbai's local cuisine and their revisit intention.	There is a significant relationship between tourists' satisfaction with Mumbai's local cuisine and their revisit intention.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	160	57.1
	Female	120	42.9
	Total	280	100.0
Age Group	Below 18 years	0	0.0
	18–25 years	75	26.8
	26–35 years	91	32.5
	36–45 years	42	15.0
	46–55 years	39	13.9
	Above 55 years	33	11.8
	Total	280	100.0
Educational Qualification	School Level	37	13.2
	Undergraduate	108	38.6
	Postgraduate	98	35.0
	Doctorate	13	4.6
	Other	24	8.6
	Total	280	100.0
Occupation	Student	54	19.3
	Salaried Employee	77	27.5
	Business/Self-employed	54	19.3
	Professional	38	13.6
	Homemaker	26	9.3
	Retired	11	3.9
	Other	20	7.1
	Total	280	100.0
Current Residence	Mumbai	0	0.0
	Other parts of Maharashtra	73	26.1
	Other Indian states	167	59.6
	Outside India	40	14.3
	Total	280	100.0

Table 3: Purpose of Visit to Mumbai

Response Category	Frequency	%
Holiday/Leisure	127	45.4
Business	43	15.4
Visiting Friends or Relatives	44	15.7
Education	15	5.4
Shopping	22	7.9
Religious Visit	11	3.9
Other	18	6.4
Total	280	100.0

Table 4: Frequency of Visits to Mumbai

Response Category	Frequency	%
First Visit	93	33.2
2–3 Times	96	34.3
4–5 Times	46	16.4
More than 5 Times	45	16.1
Total	280	100.0

The largest group of respondents (34.3%) had visited Mumbai two to three times, closely followed by first-time visitors at 33.2%. A further 32.5% had visited the city four or more times. This shows that the sample included both new visitors and tourists with previous experience of Mumbai (Table 4).

Street food was the most preferred category, selected by 26.8% of respondents, while 22.5% preferred trying all types of food. Traditional Maharashtrian food was preferred by 20.0% of respondents. These responses suggest that street food and regional cuisine are important areas to consider when studying Mumbai's culinary identity (Table 5).

Social media was the most commonly reported source of information about Mumbai's local food attractions, accounting for 28.6% of responses. Travel websites and blogs accounted for 17.1%, while 16.4% relied on their previous experience. This suggests that online platforms may play an important role in informing tourists about Mumbai's food attractions (Table 6).

Section C

Descriptive Statistics: The mean scores ranged from 3.40 to 3.78, indicating that the responses were generally around the neutral-to-agree range. CI1 recorded the highest mean (3.78), while TP1 had the lowest mean (3.40). This suggests that the statements about Mumbai's distinctive food culture received relatively favourable responses, whereas opinions about the taste and enjoyment of local food were more varied (Table 7).

Culinary identity recorded the highest overall mean (3.62), followed by food experience and satisfaction (3.53). Revisit intention recorded the lowest mean (3.46). The results indicate moderately favourable responses across the constructs, although the scores alone cannot establish whether culinary identity significantly influences tourists' behaviour (Table 8).

Section D

Hypothesis Testing and Other Statistical Tests.

Table 5: Preferred Food Type in Mumbai

Response Category	Frequency	%
Street Food	75	26.8
Traditional Maharashtrian Food	56	20.0
Local Snacks	29	10.4
Seafood	20	7.1
Restaurant Cuisine	20	7.1
Sweets and Desserts	17	6.1
All Types	63	22.5
Total	280	100.0

Table 6: Sources of Information about Local Food Attractions

Response Category	Frequency	%
Friends/Relatives	36	12.9
Social Media	80	28.6
Travel Websites/Blogs	48	17.1
Food Vlogs	32	11.4
Travel Guides	18	6.4
Local Residents	20	7.1
Previous Experience	46	16.4
Total	280	100.0

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire Items

Code	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
CI1	Mumbai has a unique food culture	3.78	1.01
CI2	Street food is part of Mumbai's identity	3.59	1.01
CI3	Maharashtrian dishes make Mumbai special	3.68	0.99
CI4	Mumbai offers food variety	3.57	1.00
CI5	Famous foods attract tourists	3.50	1.07
TP1	Local food is tasty and enjoyable	3.40	1.19
TP2	Local cuisine reflects culture and traditions	3.44	1.13
TP3	Local food is reasonably priced	3.70	1.11
TP4	Comfortable trying different local foods	3.56	1.12
TP5	Mumbai offers a good experience for food lovers	3.50	1.06
BI1	Food culture makes Mumbai attractive	3.44	1.01
BI2	Local cuisine encourages destination choice	3.53	0.98
BI3	Would recommend Mumbai for its food	3.50	0.92
BI4	Would share positive food experiences	3.50	0.96
BI5	Culinary identity gives an additional reason to visit	3.60	0.91
FS1	Satisfied with the local food experience	3.65	0.90
FS2	Food experience met expectations	3.46	0.98
FS3	Local cuisine made the visit more enjoyable	3.48	0.95
RI1	Would revisit to explore more local food	3.47	0.95
RI2	Would consider Mumbai again for its food attractions	3.44	0.96

Normality Test

The Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests were used to check whether the construct scores followed a normal distribution. In both tests, a p-value below 0.05 indicates a statistically significant departure from normality (Table 9).

Reliability Test

Culinary identity and tourists' perceptions showed acceptable internal consistency, with alpha values of 0.779 and 0.838, respectively. However, behavioural intentions, food satisfaction and revisit intention recorded low reliability. These scales should be reviewed before drawing firm conclusions; their items should not automatically be treated as reliable composite measures (Table 10).

Hypothesis Testing: Spearman's Rank Correlation

Spearman's rank correlation was applied to examine the direction and strength of the relationships between the constructs. A significance level of 5% was used (Table 11).

- **H1:** A positive correlation was observed between culinary identity and behavioural intentions ($\rho = 0.503$, $p<0.001$). The null hypothesis was rejected. Within this simulated dataset, higher culinary identity scores tended to occur alongside higher behavioural intention scores. This association does not establish a causal influence
- **H2:** Tourists' perceptions of local food and food experience/satisfaction showed a positive correlation ($\rho = 0.513$, $p<0.001$). The null hypothesis was rejected. Respondents with more favourable perceptions tended to report better food experiences and satisfaction in the simulated data
- **H3:** Food experience/satisfaction and revisit intention showed a positive correlation ($\rho = 0.332$, $p<0.001$). The null hypothesis was rejected. The association was weaker than the other two relationships, suggesting that satisfaction alone may not fully explain revisit intention

Table 8: Construct-Wise Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Number of Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Culinary Identity (CI)	5	3.62	0.74
Tourists' Perceptions (TP)	5	3.52	0.87
Behavioural Intentions (BI)	5	3.51	0.58
Food Experience and Satisfaction (FS)	3	3.53	0.68
Revisit Intention (RI)	2	3.46	0.74

Table 9: Tests of Normality

Construct	Kolmogorov–Smirnov Statistic	df	Sig.	Shapiro–Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
Culinary Identity (CI)	0.078	280	.001	0.981	280	.001
Tourists' Perceptions (TP)	0.086	280	.001	0.974	280	.000
Behavioural Intentions (BI)	0.088	280	.001	0.984	280	.003
Food Experience and Satisfaction (FS)	0.119	280	.001	0.969	280	.000
Revisit Intention (RI)	0.149	280	.001	0.954	280	.000

Table 10: Reliability Statistics

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Culinary Identity (CI)	5	0.779	Acceptable
Tourists' Perceptions (TP)	5	0.838	Good
Behavioural Intentions (BI)	5	0.573	Low
Food Experience and Satisfaction (FS)	3	0.550	Low
Revisit Intention (RI)	2	0.357	Low

Table 11: Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Variables Tested	Spearman's Correlation (ρ)	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
H1	Culinary Identity and Behavioural Intentions	0.503	<0.001	Reject H_0
H2	Tourists' Perceptions and Food Experience/Satisfaction	0.513	<0.001	Reject H_0
H3	Food Experience/Satisfaction and Revisit Intention	0.332	<0.001	Reject H_0

Table 11: Model Summary

Statistic	Value
R	0.569
R Square	0.324
Adjusted R Square	0.317
F-value	44.14
Significance	p < .001
Number of Respondents	280

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine whether culinary identity, tourists' perceptions and food experience/satisfaction were associated with behavioural intention scores when considered together (Table 12).

The model was statistically significant and explained 32.4% of the variation in behavioural intention scores. Culinary identity and tourists' perceptions had statistically significant positive coefficients, while food experience/satisfaction was not statistically significant after accounting for the other predictors. These findings are exploratory because some constructs showed low reliability (Table 13).

Mann–Whitney U Test

Female respondents recorded a slightly higher average behavioural intention score than male respondents. However, the difference was not statistically significant (p = 0.675). Thus, the analysis did not provide sufficient evidence of a gender-based difference in behavioural intentions (Table 14).

Kruskal–Wallis Test

The 26–35 years age group recorded the highest average revisit intention score, while the 46–55 years group recorded the lowest. However, the difference across age groups was not statistically significant (p = 0.136). Therefore, the analysis did not establish a significant association between age group and revisit intention scores (Table 15,16).

Findings of the Study

- **Gender of Respondents:** Out of 280 respondents, 160 (57.1%) were male and 120 (42.9%) were female. Thus, male respondents formed the larger share of the sample
- **Age and Education:** The largest age group was 26–35 years, with 91 respondents (32.5%). Undergraduate respondents accounted for 108 (38.6%), followed by postgraduates at 98 (35.0%)

Table 13: Regression Coefficients

Predictor Variable	B (Unstandardised)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Constant	1.786	9.772	< .001
Culinary Identity	0.314	6.660	< .001
Tourists' Perceptions	0.152	3.404	.001
Food Experience/Satisfaction	0.016	0.324	.746

Table 14: Gender-Wise Comparison of Behavioural Intentions

Gender	N	Mean Score
Male	160	3.50
Female	120	3.54

Test Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	9,320
p-value	.675
Decision at 5% Significance	Not significant

Table 15: Age-Wise Comparison of Revisit Intention

Age Group	N	Mean Revisit Intention Score
18–25 years	75	3.49
26–35 years	91	3.58
36–45 years	42	3.40
46–55 years	39	3.23
Above 55 years	33	3.35
Test Statistic		Value
Kruskal–Wallis H		6.995
Degrees of Freedom		4
p-value		.136
Decision at 5% Significance		Not significant

Overall Summary of Statistical Analysis

Statistical Tool	Purpose	Result
Descriptive Statistics	To summarise item and construct scores	Construct means ranged from 3.46 to 3.62
Normality Tests	To assess distribution of construct scores	All constructs departed significantly from normality
Reliability Test	To assess internal consistency	Two constructs had acceptable alpha values; three had low values
Spearman's Correlation	To test relationships between constructs	All three tested associations were positive and statistically significant
Multiple Regression	To examine predictors of behavioural intentions	Culinary identity and perceptions were significant predictors in the fitted model
Mann–Whitney U Test	To compare gender groups	No significant gender difference
Kruskal–Wallis Test	To compare age groups	No significant age-group difference

- **Occupation and Residence:** Salaried employees formed the largest occupational group, with 77 respondents (27.5%). Regarding residence, 167 respondents (59.6%) came from other Indian states, while 73 (26.1%) were from other parts of Maharashtra and 40 (14.3%) were from outside India
- **Purpose of Visiting Mumbai:** Holidays and leisure were the most common reasons for visiting Mumbai, reported by 127 respondents (45.4%). Visiting friends or relatives accounted for 15.7%, while business visits accounted for 15.4%
- **Visit Frequency and Food Preferences:** A total of 96 respondents (34.3%) had visited Mumbai two to three times, while 93 (33.2%) were first-time visitors. Street food was the most preferred food category, selected by 75 respondents (26.8%), followed by all types of food at 22.5%
- **Sources of Food Information:** Social media was the leading source of information about Mumbai's food attractions, reported by 80 respondents (28.6%). Travel websites and blogs accounted for 17.1%, while previous experience accounted for 16.4%
- **Descriptive Statistics:** The mean scores of the five constructs ranged from 3.46 to 3.62. Culinary identity recorded the highest mean (3.62, SD = 0.74), whereas revisit intention recorded the lowest (3.46, SD = 0.74). This shows moderately favourable responses in the simulated data
- **Normality and Reliability:** The Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests indicated departures from normality for the construct scores. Cronbach's alpha was 0.779 for culinary identity and 0.838 for tourists' perceptions, while behavioural intentions (0.573), satisfaction (0.550) and revisit intention (0.357) showed low reliability
- **Correlation and Hypothesis Testing:** Pearson correlation showed a positive relationship between culinary identity and behavioural intentions ($r = 0.534,\ p<0.001$). Tourists' perceptions were also positively related to satisfaction ($r = 0.519,\ p<0.001$), while satisfaction and revisit intention had a weaker positive relationship ($r = 0.363,\ p<0.001$)
- **Group Differences:** The independent-samples t-test found no significant gender difference in behavioural intention scores ($p = 0.598$). The chi-square test of gender and food preference was also not significant at the 5% level ($p = 0.051$). One-way ANOVA found no significant difference in revisit intention across age groups ($p = 0.121$)

CONCLUSION

Food is an important part of the tourism experience because it helps visitors understand the culture and traditions of a destination. In the context of Mumbai, local dishes, street food and traditional Maharashtrian cuisine may provide opportunities to create a distinctive image of the city. The analysis of the prepared dataset showed that culinary identity had the highest mean score of 3.62, while revisit intention recorded a mean of 3.46. Street food was the most preferred food category, selected by 26.8% of the records and social media was the main source of information about local food attractions, accounting for 28.6%.

The correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between culinary identity and behavioural intentions. A positive relationship was also observed between tourists' perceptions and food satisfaction, as well as between satisfaction and revisit intention. However, the group comparison tests did not show statistically significant differences in behavioural intentions by gender or revisit intention by age group. These results suggest that the proposed research can examine the role of culinary identity without assuming that all tourist groups respond differently.

The reliability results also highlighted the need to review some questionnaire statements, particularly those related to behavioural intentions, satisfaction and revisit intention. In addition, the normality tests indicated that suitable statistical methods should be selected carefully. Overall, Mumbai's culinary traditions provide a useful area for tourism research, particularly in understanding how local food experiences relate to destination image, satisfaction and future travel intentions. However, since the present analysis used simulated records, these observations are illustrative rather than actual research findings. A final conclusion about Mumbai's culinary identity should be drawn only after collecting genuine responses from tourists and completing the required statistical analysis.

Suggestions

- **Promote Local Food Attractions:** Tourism authorities and local businesses could highlight Mumbai's popular street foods and traditional Maharashtrian dishes through food trails, local food festivals and guided culinary tours
- **Improve Tourists' Food Experience:** Food vendors and restaurants should pay attention to hygiene, food quality, reasonable prices and clear information about ingredients to make local cuisine more comfortable for tourists to explore
- **Use Digital Platforms Effectively:** Local food businesses and tourism organisations could share authentic food stories, photographs, videos and location details on social media to help visitors discover Mumbai's culinary attractions

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