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Consumer segmentation with Indian cuisine and acceptability of healthier options: findings from the Healthy Takeaways project in Lincolnshire (Part II)

G. Middleton¹ and K. Evans²

¹College of Social Sciences, University of Lincoln, Brayford Way, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN6 7TS, UK and

²Social Change Ltd, Sparkhouse Studios, Ropewalk, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN6 7DQ, UK

Indian cuisine has been reported to hold a 42% market share worth £556 million of the ethnic food retail industry in the UK and is a popular choice in and out of the home, for adults aged 25–44 yrs^(1,2). Consumer research has revealed that a mix of residents not only experience pleasure or enjoyment with Indian cuisine consumption, but also attach strong personal and cultural values⁽³⁾. The Lincolnshire-based *Healthy Takeaways* project (Part II) aimed to engage with regular consumers of Indian cuisine to: 1) understand and group consumer motivations and behaviour toward Indian cuisine, and 2) inquire on the consumer acceptability of increasing healthier options with this style of cuisine at restaurants or takeaways.

Surveys were conducted (*n* 254) with regular consumers and residents (female: *n* 130, male: *n* 124) in a city located in the north-east of England. Ages categories of respondents were: <25 yrs: *n* 58, 25–34 yrs: *n* 46, 35–44 yrs: *n* 55, 45–55 yrs: *n* 37, >55 yrs: *n* 58. The survey focused on Indian cuisine by using both open and closed questions for generate responses on consumption frequency, popular food selection and potential options regarding healthier changes to the cuisine preparation and menu advertising. Cluster analysis was conducted to populate distinct homogeneous segments which share common characteristics from the survey data.

Results outline a 5 group customer segmentation model based with the following labels: *Grappling with guilt* (33%, *n* 84); *Young and guilt free* (26%, *n* 66); *Healthy eaters, occasional consumers* (19%, *n* 48); *Food hedonists* (18%, *n* 46), and; *Very health conscious* (4%, *n* 10). Three groups showed a higher level of appeal for selecting or accepting healthier options at restaurants and takeaways: *Grappling with guilt*; *Healthy eaters, occasional consumers*, and; *Very health conscious* (overall 56%, *n* 142). The grouping profiles and associated viewpoints, regarding changes to promote healthier changes and options, are summarised in the table.

Consumer group profiles and views regarding healthier options to Indian cuisine		
'Grappling with guilt'	'Healthy eaters, occasional consumers'	'Very health conscious'
Likely to check nutritional information on food	Likely to check nutritional information on food	Likely to check nutritional information on food
Would choose a healthy option if available	Would consider a healthy option if available	Have asked advice or feedback on healthy dishes before
Positive about a range options or initiatives to be introduced	High appeal from a range of healthy options or initiatives to be introduced	Extremely high appeal to all healthy options or initiatives

The findings suggest changes to promote healthier restaurant and takeaway food may be receptive to a large segment of the regular Indian cuisine consumer-base. It is likely that customers will respond to a range of options to promote healthy eating at these premises.

1. Mintel (2009) *Ethnic Cuisine* Mintel Market Intelligence.
2. Leung G (2010) *Nut Bulletin* 35, 226–234.
3. White H & Kokotsaki K (2004) *Int J Con Stud* 28, 284–294.