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Food Habits of Indians: Ipsos Study

74% Indians are content with their current body weight; 63% Indians are willing to eat a plant based substitute for meat

The study busts myths about Indians

Indians are making informed choices; experimenting; moving away from norms

New Delhi, January 14, 2019: According to a new study by Ipsos that explores world's food habits, insights about Indians are particularly interesting as they bust myths about food habits of Indians: Indians are choosing organic food, saying no to genetically modified food and are willing to choose plant-based substitute for meat; most Indians are happy with their appearance and don't have much faith in diet plans. Food is the key motivation for them to follow an exercise regimen and they would rather eat well than look emaciated. Riding on convenience and due to sheer paucity of time, Indians plan to get groceries and food home delivered more frequently in the next one year. Preparing healthy meals at home and eating out will be their priority!

Rinku Patnaik, Chief Client Officer, Ipsos India finds the findings of the survey quite interesting from the marketers' standpoint: "Consumers are clearly stating what they want; there is a plethora of opportunity to capitalize on. So, from merchandizing to distribution, to mobility and accessibility, these opportunities should be leveraged, by marketers. Also, there is no stereotypical Indian consumer. If she orders-in grocery and food, she eats out with equal élan and she even prides herself in rustling up great meals at home. And there is no point in body shaming her. She will not stop eating to appease to the spiel of brands. She is very clear about what she wants and how she should be prioritizing."

Food for thought

The findings are urban centric and reflect views of netizens.

57% Indians claim to be consuming organic food. In sharp contrast, the developed world is least likely to eat organic food – only 12% of Brits and 13% of Japanese, for instance.

65% Indians say that they are opposed to eating a genetically modified (GM) food.

We know that Indians love their food and would drool for specialties like tandoori chicken, mutton, fish and their various non-vegetarian avatars. **But 63% of Indians polled say that are willing to eat a plant-based substitute for meat.** 73 per cent Chinese too are willing to swap their meat for a plant-based substitute – this finding is in sharp contrast to popular perception about the Chinese, being active meat eaters! Further, **56% Indians say that they are OK with not consuming any type of non-vegetarian food** – and can do without mutton, poultry or fish. Globally, the trend is the reverse; across all markets polled, people prefer a diet that includes some type of meat.

Weight & Exercise

The shenanigans spouting weight management to Indians watch out! **74% Indians are content with their current weight!** And while **57% Indians have tried a diet plan to lose weight, 59 per cent Indians believe that most diet plans ultimately fail** and see futility in the exercise.

So, what motivates Indians to exercise? **67% Indians confess** that the sole trigger for them to gym or walk or follow an exercise regimen is that **they do not have to watch what they eat!** Ergo, food tends to dominate their mind and makes them alter their lifestyle – and they get to eat whatever titillates their palate!

And, if it's a toss up between eating well and being thin, 77% Indians say they would choose the former – and would not compromise on good food.

Prospects for access to food in future – cost, quality etc.

While inflation does play a role in determining the cost of essential commodities, at the same time, **47% Indians are optimistic that cost of food will improve in future** and they will have access to food at better prices. Likewise, **59% Indians are optimistic that there will be healthy food options** in the future and 48% Indians feel that the environmental impact on food will also get better in the future.

Homedelivery is the new normal? So is cooking at home. And eating out!

Crunched for time and looking for convenience, **at least 47% Indians foresee a spike in home delivery of groceries and expect it to get more frequent** in the next one year. Convenience seeking Indians also foresee **homedelivery of meals getting more frequent (38%) in the next one year**; though 36% feel it will remain the same as last year. A paradox – **48 per cent Indians expect preparing meals at home** to get more frequent in the next one year; on the contrary, **28% Indians say they will be eating out more frequently this year**, while 40 per cent say they will be eating out as many times as they did last year!

“The findings reflect an urban skew as it's an online survey and upwardly mobile consumers were interviewed,” cautions Patnaik.

About the study

Ipsos

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The findings come from surveys conducted between August 24 – September 7, 2018 on the Ipsos Global Advisor platform using the Ipsos Online Panel system with 20,788 adults across 29 countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the U.S. • All survey respondents are aged 18-64 in Canada and the U.S. and 16-64 in all other countries. • The sample size per country in each survey is approximately N=1,000 for Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the U.S. and approximately N=500 for Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and Turkey. • Weighting has been employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to the most recent country census data. • A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points for a sample of 1,000 and an estimated margin of error of +/- 4.5 percentage points for a 500 sample 19 times out of 20. • In 17 of the countries surveyed, internet penetration is sufficiently high to think of the samples as representative of the national population within the age ranges covered: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, Serbia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain, and the U.S. Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Romania, Russia, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Turkey have lower levels of internet penetration. Samples from those countries should not be considered to be fully nationally representative, but instead to represent a more affluent, connected population, representing an important and emerging middle class. • Results may not always sum to 100% or may be 1 point higher/lower than the actuals due to rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses.

About Ipsos

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