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**ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGIES FOR LAUNCHING A
CUSTOMER-CENTRIC HEALTH AND TRADITIONAL CUISINE
RESTAURANT IN INDIA (COIMBATORE)**

Module : **Dissertation**
Module Code : **BMMB7003_SWAN**
Submission Date : **12- Dec- 25**
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DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, **Daniela Hellyer**, for her invaluable guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback throughout the course of this research. His/her insights and support have been instrumental in shaping the direction and quality of this dissertation.

I would also like to thank my peers and classmates for their cooperation, ideas, and motivation, which made this academic journey more enriching and collaborative. I am especially grateful to the business owners, professionals, and all survey participants who generously shared their time, experiences, and perspectives, greatly enriching the practical relevance of this study.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my family for their constant love, understanding, and encouragement. Their patience and belief in me have been the greatest source of strength in completing this work successfully.

Sincerely,

Samuel Dhinakaran Arumugaraj

ABSTRACT

In India, food represents more than sustenance it embodies a vibrant reflection of culture, history, and social identity. Yet, rapid urbanization, globalization, and technological innovation are transforming traditional food practices in unprecedented ways. This study discovers the ever-changing landscape of food consumption and consumer behaviour, with a particular focus on urban centres and the state of Tamil Nadu. Drawing on over 150 scholarly sources, field surveys, and case studies, it examines how Indian consumers navigate a complex culinary world where traditional street foods coexist with fast-food chains, cloud kitchens, and digitally mediated delivery services. The research highlights a growing tension between convenience and heritage: urban youth increasingly seek health-conscious, organic, and locally sourced options, yet are simultaneously drawn to globalized, ready-to-eat meals. Digital platforms and social media emerge as critical forces, shaping perceptions, influencing choices, and redefining the way consumers interact with food. Marketing strategies, menu innovations, and service experiences are found to play pivotal roles in guiding these evolving preferences. The findings reveal that while traditional cuisines continue to hold emotional and cultural significance, contemporary lifestyles are fostering hybrid eating habits that blend local flavours with an international influence. This dynamic interplay between culture, health, and convenience underscores the complexity of consumer decision-making in the modern Indian foodscape. By tracing these trends, the study offers valuable insights for policymakers, restaurateurs, nutritionists, and marketers seeking to align cultural authenticity, health imperatives, and market demands. Ultimately, this research portrays India's culinary evolution not merely as a shift in diets, but as a reflection of broader societal transformations, where food becomes both a marker of identity and a lens through which changing consumer values can be understood.

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ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGIES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CUSTOMER-FOCUSED, HEALTH-ORIENTED TRADITIONAL SOUTH INDIAN RESTAURANT IN COIMBATORE

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

India's culinary landscape has witnessed a remarkable transformation over the past few decades, reflecting the intersection of economic growth, urbanisation, and changing lifestyle aspirations. Traditional diets based on millets, pulses, fermented foods, and seasonal vegetables have shifted towards processed, convenience-oriented, globally influenced habits (Paul & Paul, 2022; Tak, Shankar & Kadiyala, 2019). Although this reflects modernisation, it has also contributed to rising public health issues, including obesity, diabetes, and other lifestyle-related diseases (Fardet et al., 2022). Increasingly, customers are becoming conscious of these health challenges and are now seeking culinary experiences that integrate health, authenticity, and sustainability (KPMG, 2021).

Within this evolving context, India's restaurant industry has appeared as one of the growing sectors in the country's service economy. Valued at approximately USD 95 billion by 2025, the industry's expansion is driven by a young, tech-savvy population, rising disposable incomes, and a heightened awareness of health and nutrition (IBEF, 2023). A particularly dynamic niche is represented by restaurants that combine wellness, local sourcing, and cultural authenticity. Notably, this drift is no longer restricted to major metropolitan centres but is increasingly visible in tier-two cities such as Coimbatore, where cultural pride, educational advancement, and entrepreneurial spirit converge to create fertile ground for innovative dining ventures.

1.1 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL EVOLUTION OF INDIAN FOOD

Indian cuisine is one of the most diverse and complex culinary traditions globally, shaped by millennia of social, economic, and environmental transformations (Achaya, 1998). Its growth imitates a lively interplay of agriculture, trade, religious practice, and regional interactions, producing highly differentiated regional cuisines, cooking methods, and ingredient combinations (Ray & Ray, 2022). Traditional diets emphasized millets, pulses, fermented foods, and seasonal vegetables, reflecting an implicit understanding of balanced nutrition, ecological adaptation, and medicinal properties (Bowonder, 1979; Dhanagare, 1988).

The Green Revolution that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, while instrumental in improving food security, led to the predominance of rice and wheat, marginalizing traditional grains such as ragi, kambu, and varagu (Achaya, 1998; Shetty, 2020). This structural shift also contributed to changes in dietary patterns, with a gradual move from coarse cereals and legumes to refined grains and processed foods (Popkin, Corvalan & Grummer-Strawn, 2020).

Globalisation, urbanisation, and exposure to Western fast-food culture have further transformed Indian food systems, particularly in urban areas, generating a dual burden: the co-existence of traditional, nutritionally rich diets alongside energy-dense, nutrient-poor processed foods (Fardet et al., 2022). Public health research has linked these transitions to growing rates of obesity, diabetes, and cardiac disorders, highlighting an urgent need to reintegrate traditional health-promoting foods into contemporary diets (Popkin et al., 2020).

In parallel, a revival of health-conscious and traditional diets is evident, influenced by rising education levels, media awareness, wellness trends, and urban middle-class aspirations (Mintel, 2023). This trend represents a cultural and nutritional counter-narrative to modern processed diets, emphasizing indigenous grains, plant-based proteins, fermented foods, and holistic preparation methods (Shetty, 2020). Understanding this duality is essential to examining how contemporary Indian consumers navigate food choices, and how entrepreneurial interventions can bridge health needs with cultural authenticity.

1.2 CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW OF TAMIL FOOD

Tamil Nadu's culinary heritage is a prime example of the integration of culture, identity, and nutrition. Traditional dishes emphasize seasonal produce, minimal processing, and natural preservation techniques, reflecting both ecological wisdom and cultural norms (Bharathi & Elango, 2024). Meals often include fermented preparations, lentil-based dishes, and millet-based porridges, which are nutritionally rich, easily digestible, and culturally embedded. These foods also demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of macro and micronutrient balance, long before formal nutritional science became widespread (Mohanani et al., 2025).

Food in Tamil Nadu functions as a medium of cultural transmission, linking households and communities to ancestral practices while reinforcing regional identity through festivals, religious rituals, and communal meals (Saravanakumar, 2025). For instance, the preparation of

pongal during the harvest festival is not only a culinary act but also a performative ritual that preserves knowledge, values, and social cohesion.

However, urbanisation, lifestyle pressures, and exposure to global cuisines have led to increased consumption of refined grains, fast foods, and fried snacks, challenging traditional dietary norms (Pandey & Kumar, 2021). Despite these changes, there is growing awareness among Tamil consumers about health risks associated with modern diets, which has stimulated interest in traditional preparations that are both culturally authentic and nutritionally beneficial (Mahapatra, 2022).

This tension between preserving heritage and accommodating modern health trends provides an important context for research into food entrepreneurship. Restaurateurs who successfully navigate this landscape can leverage cultural familiarity and health consciousness to differentiate their offerings, create value, and build sustainable consumer relationships.

1.3 CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW OF COIMBATORE

Coimbatore, often referred to as the "Manchester of South India", presents a unique urban food ecosystem, combining traditional culinary practices with modern lifestyle influences (Club Mahindra, 2025). Its growing middle class, working professionals, and digitally connected youth represent key consumer segments seeking convenience, quality, and culturally meaningful dining experiences.

The city's foodscape is characterised by diverse offerings: family-run eateries, street vendors, cafés, and high-end restaurants, each dazzling distinct eating patterns. Local cuisines, such as Kongu Nadu dishes, are renowned for low-oil cooking, extensive use of millets, lentils, and locally sourced spices, and reliance on fresh, seasonal ingredients (TripXL, 2024; Curly Tales, 2024).

Alongside traditional foods, urbanisation and digitisation have introduced food delivery platforms, fast-food chains, and fusion menus, creating an environment where consumer choice is increasingly informed by health, convenience, and experiential expectations (Yousefian, Wenninger & Dittrich, 2022). The juxtaposition of tradition and modernity presents both challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurship, particularly for restaurateurs aiming to cater to health-conscious consumers while preserving cultural authenticity.

Recent studies highlight a shift in Coimbatore's urban consumers toward healthier eating, including adoption of millets, cold-pressed oils, and balanced macronutrient intake, often integrated into culturally familiar dishes (Mohan et al., 2025). This trend underscores the city as an ideal context for examining culturally informed, health-oriented food entrepreneurship, combining both empirical relevance and theoretical significance.

1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK LINK

To examine the interplay between entrepreneurship, consumer behaviour, and cultural identity in Coimbatore's food ecosystem, this research adopts an integrated conceptual framework combining complementary theories. Entrepreneurial Process Theory (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991) emphasises opportunity recognition, resource mobilisation, and value creation, highlighting the strategic role of both economic and socio-cultural resources, such as local knowledge, culinary heritage, and social networks. This perspective helps explain how restaurateurs identify gaps in health-focused traditional cuisine and translate cultural assets into value.

Customer-Centricity Theory (Shah et al., 2006) foregrounds relational engagement, trust, and empathy as drivers of loyalty. In Coimbatore, where dining often evokes nostalgia and community belonging, understanding these human-centred practices is serious for supporting long-term customer relations.

Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) frames consumption as a medium for expressing identity, negotiating heritage, and reinforcing collective norms. It enables analysis of how consumers balance modern health trends with traditional culinary practices, showing food choices as culturally meaningful acts.

To translate these insights into practical business strategy, Value Proposition Design (Osterwalder et al., 2014) and the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) provide structured approaches for aligning consumer needs, cultural authenticity, and operational feasibility. Together, these frameworks allow the study to explore how Coimbatore restaurateurs convert cultural and health trends into viable business models while maintaining engagement and sustainability.

In sum, this integrated framework captures both functional and symbolic dimensions of consumption, linking theoretical constructs to entrepreneurial practice, consumer expectations, and cultural preservation, forming a coherent foundation for the empirical analysis that follows.

1.5 BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

Tamil Nadu's culinary traditions emphasise balance, sustainability, and regional distinctiveness. Diets dominated by whole grains, lentils, and fermented foods were nutritionally robust. Since the 1970s, urbanisation and global food trends have shifted patterns, replacing traditional staples with refined and processed foods (Barnett and Prieto Martín, 2017). This transformation has resulted in two key challenges: the gradual erosion of traditional food knowledge and the rise of nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (Kothari, 2016; World Food Travel Association, 2022).

Despite these challenges, Tamil Nadu's robust agricultural base provides opportunities to revive traditional diets through local sourcing. The state produces over 100 lakh metric tonnes of food grains annually, supported by a vibrant horticultural sector (Tamil Nadu Government, 2025). By integrating locally grown ingredients into restaurant menus, entrepreneurs can foster community-based agriculture, reduce supply chain dependencies, and promote nutritional sustainability (Socio.Health, 2023).

1.5.1 TRADITIONAL SPECIALITIES AND HEALTH-ORIENTED TRENDS IN COIMBATORE

Coimbatore represents a city where culinary heritage and contemporary health trends intersect. Traditional meals, such as ragi idli, varagu pongal, kambu koozh, and horse gram-based preparations, provide nutritional benefits, including high fiber, protein content, and low glycemic index, while reflecting cultural identity and regional pride (Bharathi & Elango, 2024; Mohanan et al., 2025).

Recent surveys indicate that over 70% of Coimbatore consumers prefer meals that integrate cultural authenticity with health-conscious preparation, suggesting a latent market for health-oriented traditional restaurants (Club Mahindra, 2025). Restaurateurs report increasing demand for cold-pressed oils, organic millets, and locally sourced greens, often coupled with narratives explaining ingredient origins and health benefits, enhancing the emotional and cognitive engagement of diners.

The convergence of nutritional awareness, cultural nostalgia, and modern urban lifestyles presents a compelling opportunity for entrepreneurial interventions that balance heritage with innovation, creating both societal and economic value. Such ventures can serve as vehicles for

preserving culinary traditions, promoting wellness, and differentiating within competitive urban markets.

1.6 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Even though a considerable form of literature exists on Indian food culture, nutrition, and general consumption patterns, there remains a significant paucity of research that specifically addresses the complex intersection of health consciousness, cultural heritage, and entrepreneurial strategy within urban food markets (Chhabra & Kaur, 2022; Ladhari, 2009). Existing studies tend to concentrate predominantly either on macro-level dietary trends or on operational aspects of restaurant management, such as service efficiency, menu design, or customer satisfaction, often overlooking the nuanced strategic and relational dimensions of entrepreneurship that emerge in culturally anchored contexts. In specific, there is inadequate understanding of how restaurateurs integrate traditional culinary practices with contemporary health imperatives while simultaneously cultivating meaningful consumer relationships that support trustworthiness and belief.

This study seeks to bridge this critical gap by exploring the ways in which restaurateurs in Coimbatore actively mobilise local cultural knowledge, adapt traditional cuisine to align with evolving health trends, and strategically engage consumers through relational and culturally resonant practices. By inspecting these dynamics, the study offers insights not only into operational and marketing strategies but also into broader entrepreneurial processes that link cultural reality with business feasibility. Furthermore, the findings are anticipated to contribute to policy discourse and academic theory by demonstrating how culturally grounded entrepreneurship can serve as a mechanism for sustainable urban economic development, facilitating innovation while preserving heritage and promoting health-conscious consumption.

1.7 RESEARCH AIM, QUESTION, AND OBJECTIVES

AIM

To explore and formulate entrepreneurial strategies grounded in consumer preferences and local market dynamics for launching a customer-centric restaurant in Coimbatore that integrates health-conscious practices with traditional South Indian cuisine.

QUESTION

How do consumer preferences and local market conditions contribute to the development of an effective entrepreneurial strategy for launching a customer-centric, health-oriented traditional South Indian restaurant in Coimbatore?

OBJECTIVES

1. To critically analyse the preferences, behaviours, and expectations of consumers in Coimbatore regarding health-conscious and traditional South Indian culinary offerings.
2. To examine the local market landscape in Coimbatore, focusing on understanding the competitive environment, evolving consumer behaviours, and socio-cultural factors influencing the development of the health-oriented restaurant industry.
3. To identify and critically evaluate entrepreneurial strategies that facilitate the successful launch of a customer-centric restaurant specialising in health-conscious traditional cuisine.
4. To develop a strategic business model that effectively incorporates consumer insights, current health trends, and regional culinary traditions to create a sustainable and innovative restaurant concept.
5. To formulate evidence-based recommendations designed to enhance customer engagement, establish distinct brand differentiation, and foster sustainable growth within the Coimbatore food service industry.

1.8 STRUCTURE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This thesis is structured into five chapters:

- Chapter 1 introduces the research background, rationale, aim of research, question and objectives.
- Chapter 2 reviews the literature on entrepreneurship, consumer behaviour, and health-oriented culinary innovation, forming the theoretical foundation.

- Chapter 3 explains the research design, detailing sampling strategy, data collection tools, and analysis methods.
- Chapter 4 presents and interprets the findings through comparative analysis of qualitative and quantitative results.
- Chapter 5 ends with implications, strategic suggestions, and avenues for future investigation

The study contributes by bridging theoretical insights and practical application, integrating entrepreneurship principles with consumer preferences and local culinary culture. It provides a strategic structure for creating culturally genuine, health-oriented, and customer-centric dining ventures in emerging urban environments like Coimbatore.

Chapter 2 critically examines the existing literature, building on the contextual and conceptual foundation established in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review critically examines the growing body of research guiding business strategies for customer-centric, health-conscious, and tradition-oriented restaurants in India. It synthesises academic scholarship and credible industry sources to show how entrepreneurs respond to changing food preferences, rising health awareness, and the enduring role of cultural identity in dining. The review explores how restaurateurs blend innovation with long-standing culinary practices to create offerings that are both culturally authentic and attractive to contemporary consumers.

By analysing consumer behaviour, service expectations, and entrepreneurial adaptation in emerging urban centres such as Coimbatore, this chapter bridges theoretical frameworks and practical applications. It also considers how urbanisation, lifestyle transitions, and global food trends shape strategic decisions in modern restaurants. The review identifies research gaps, emerging trends, and key factors that can inform sustainable, resilient, and customer-focused strategies in India's dynamic food service sector.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Indian food and restaurant sector exemplifies a complex confluence of culture, consumer behaviour, health consciousness, and entrepreneurial strategy (Rathore & Misra, 2020; Bharathi & Elango, 2024). Urbanisation, rising disposable incomes, and global exposure have shifted consumer expectations toward meals that are simultaneously traditional, nutritionally balanced, and convenient (Subhalakshmi et al., 2024; Mohanan et al., 2025). In cities like Coimbatore, restaurateurs navigate this evolving landscape by embedding local culinary heritage within health-oriented innovations and relational engagement strategies, highlighting the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of food entrepreneurship (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991; Shah et al., 2006; Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

This review is structured around the study's research objectives:

1. Consumer preferences and health awareness,
2. Local market and cultural influences,
3. Entrepreneurial strategies,
4. Business model design,

5. Customer engagement and operational challenges.

Each section critically engages with empirical findings and theoretical perspectives to provide nuanced insights into health-traditional food entrepreneurship and to establish a foundation for the conceptual and methodological choices in subsequent chapters.

2.2 CONSUMER PREFERENCES AND HEALTH AWARENESS IN INDIA

Consumer behaviour in India reflects both health consciousness and cultural adherence, forming a dual-motivation system that influences dining choices (Gupta & Sharma, 2019; Rathore & Misra, 2020). Recent empirical work shows that Indian urban consumers increasingly associate millets and indigenous grains with nutritional balance, immunity enhancement, and reduced glycaemic impact a shift toward sustainable, health-conscious consumption aligning tradition with wellbeing (Bharathi & Elango, 2024). Socio-economic status, education level, and nutritional awareness shape the adoption of functional foods, indicating that health motivations are intertwined with cultural familiarity (Subhalakshmi et al., 2024; Mohanan et al., 2025).

Historical and cultural perspectives further inform food choices. Ray and Ray (2022) explain that *guṇa* classifications — *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas* continue to influence modern perceptions of food purity and wellness, while Ibn Battuta Mall (2023) finds that descriptors like “fresh,” “pure,” and “traditional” increasingly influence consumer preferences, illustrating continuity between heritage and contemporary health trends. Statistics from the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI, 2024) corroborate this shift, reporting that two-thirds of Indian diners prioritise health and wellness, with a high proportion favouring vegetarian and plant-forward options.

Generational transformations shape feasting patterns. Younger consumers show openness to innovative menus, such as millet-based breakfasts and low-oil preparations, but older consumers often prefer unmodified heritage recipes as markers of cultural identity (Kaur & Singh, 2021; Seth, 2025). This intergenerational variance challenges restaurateurs to balance authenticity and innovation in menu design. Accessibility also matters: high costs and limited availability of nutritious ingredients remain barriers, even in health-oriented urban segments (Vasanth Kumar & Jayaprakasam, 2025). Hygiene and trust further influence dining

preferences, with consumers emphasising food safety alongside nutritional value (Kavya & Renugadevi, 2023; Vijay et al., 2023).

Regional culinary heritage reinforces health motivations. Studies on South Indian foods, including millets and herbal ingredients, show that these traditional items integrate wellness principles while preserving sensory appeal (Karky, 2024; Tak, Shankar & Kadiyala, 2019). Palanichamy et al. (2024) emphasise that cultural nostalgia increases receptivity to indigenous foods, and Saravanakumar (2025) links regional cuisines such as Chettinad and Kongunadu to tourism and local economic development, suggesting that culinary identity and health motivations are co-evolving. Together, these insights affirm that consumer choice is simultaneously driven by health motivations, cultural attachment, and socio-economic contexts, underscoring the need for strategies that address these multidimensional demands.

2.3 LOCAL MARKET AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES IN INDIA

India's culinary landscape is profoundly shaped by regional diversity, historical legacies, and socio-cultural norms, which collectively influence consumption patterns and entrepreneurial strategies (Achaya, 1994; Rao & Sunder, 2017). In Tamil Nadu, rice-centric meals, plant-forward diets, and spice-specific preferences reflect long-standing agricultural practices and social customs (Mahapatra, 2022; Tamil Nadu Tourism, 2024). Seasonal festivals, religious rituals, and family celebrations further shape cyclical demand, requiring restaurateurs to align offerings with local traditions and consumer expectations (Ranjana & Umabharathi, 2025; Kalimuthu, 2018).

Urban India's consumer culture is increasingly performative, with dining serving as both a medium of social expression and a mechanism for negotiating heritage within modern life (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Chakraborty & Bera, 2020). Restaurants in Coimbatore have evolved into cultural hubs that reinforce regional identity through heritage storytelling — from ingredient provenance and traditional cooking methods to festival associations — thereby enhancing emotional resonance and consumer loyalty (Saravanakumar, 2025; Palanichamy et al., 2024).

Globalisation and urbanisation introduce additional complexities. Exposure to international cuisines, digital food platforms, and shifting work patterns expands consumer choice while raising competitive pressures (Srinivasan et al., 2018; Alae-Carew et al., 2019; Perfect

Recorder, 2023). To remain relevant, restaurateurs must design offerings that uphold traditional culinary methods while accommodating contemporary health and convenience trends. Effective short supply chains, local sourcing, and transparent communication are critical tools for maintaining authenticity and fostering community trust, enabling entrepreneurs to balance customised preservation with growing market demands (Pandey & Kumar, 2021; Patel et al., 2014). Generational divergence further complicates market dynamics: younger urban consumers increasingly seek nutritionally enhanced, fusion, or convenience-oriented options, whereas older diners prioritise taste fidelity and cultural authenticity (Karky, 2024; Tak, Shankar & Kadiyala, 2019). This diversity necessitates nuanced segmentation, differentiated product development, and strategically aligned branding.

2.4 ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGY AND EXPECTATIONS IN INDIA

Entrepreneurship in India's food sector increasingly requires balancing cultural authenticity with health-oriented innovation and diverse consumer expectations. Restaurateurs in Coimbatore deploy strategies that leverage traditional culinary expertise, heritage knowledge, and local sourcing networks to differentiate offerings while responding to wellness trends (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991; Sharma & Kaur, 2020). Opportunity recognition and resource mobilisation are not solely economic activities; they are embedded within social and cultural contexts, shaped by community norms and familial culinary practices (Tak et al., 2019; Mohanan et al., 2025).

Successful entrepreneurs combine time-tested cooking techniques with contemporary innovations such as low-oil preparations, alternative grains, and functional ingredients — to cater to younger, health-conscious consumers without alienating traditionalist patrons (Ramasamy & Sundar, 2019; Mohanan et al., 2025). Relational and experiential strategies also play a central role in sustaining customer loyalty. Emotional connections, personalised engagement, and participatory culinary experiences cultivate a sense of belonging, reinforcing brands and deepening consumer trust (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Shah et al., 2006).

STP (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning) frameworks offer systematic approaches to navigate heterogeneous markets like Coimbatore, enabling restaurateurs to align offerings with varied health, heritage, and convenience expectations (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2013). Strategic flexibility is paramount; operators must adapt to supply variability, seasonal ingredient availability, and shifting dietary preferences while maintaining authenticity,

operational efficiency, and profitability (Sharma & Kaur, 2020). These practices highlight the complexity of launching and sustaining culturally anchored, health-focused ventures in mid-sized urban contexts.

2.5 BUSINESS MODEL DESIGN IN INDIA

Business model design in India's food sector is inherently multidimensional, requiring the integration of cultural authenticity, health orientation, and operational practicality (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010; Osterwalder et al., 2014; Guiné et al., 2021). Restaurateurs operationalise these elements through deliberate menu design, ingredient sourcing, service structuring, and heritage communication. Health-conscious adaptations including millet-based dishes, low-sodium preparations, and functional ingredient incorporation enable operators to meet nutritional expectations while preserving traditional sensory appeal (Ramasamy & Sundar, 2019).

Embedding cultural narratives into business operations enhances authenticity and emotional engagement, as contemporary diners value understanding ingredient origins, historical context, and festival associations (Chakraborty et al., 2021; Saravanakumar, 2025). Transparency and consumer education emerge as essential components of effective business models, reinforcing trust and long-term loyalty among urban consumers increasingly attentive to tracing, hygiene, and nutritious content (Kavya & Renugadevi, 2023; Vijay et al., 2023).

Hybrid models combining dine-in services, cloud kitchens, and digital delivery platforms present both opportunities and operational complexities. Restaurateurs must maintain consistent quality, hygiene, and brand identity while scaling operations and managing costs (IJRPR, 2022; Jadhav, 2018; Balaji, 2021). Local ingredient-focused innovations appeal particularly to younger diners and support sustainability and community engagement (SNR & SJCT, 2021–2024). Value Proposition Design guides entrepreneurs in translating consumer “pains”, such as limited healthy options or opaque sourcing, into “gains” through culturally authentic, health-conscious, and convenient offerings (Osterwalder et al., 2014). Continuous reiteration based on market criticism and consumer data ensures business models remain adaptive, culturally resonant, and commercially viable.

2.6 CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION IN INDIA

Customer engagement in India encompasses relational, emotional, and cultural dimensions that go beyond transactional interaction (Shah et al., 2006). Restaurateurs employ strategies such as personalised menus, festival-themed events, cooking demonstrations, and interactive tasting sessions to cultivate loyalty and enhance experiential value (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Chopra, Seth & Lamba, 2025; Shunmuga Jothi & Revathi, 2025). Engagement strategies are most effective when embedded within culturally authentic practices, allowing consumers to connect with heritage while participating in innovative culinary experiences (Saravanakumar, 2025; Ray & Ray, 2022).

Co-creation of value through consumer recipe contributions, tasting events, or digital engagement strengthens relationships and offers actionable insights for restaurateurs. Digital platforms, including social media, food discovery apps, and online reviews, expand engagement opportunities while introducing operative and interactive challenges (Divya Prabha & Mathipurani, 2022; Ilavarasi, Vyashini & Abarna, 2024; Ranjana & Umabharathi, 2025). Effective engagement combines empathy, responsiveness, and narrative coherence, ensuring long-term retention and brand differentiation in a competitive environment.

2.7 OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN INDIA

This section examines operational dynamics in India's restaurant sector, linking them to all five research objectives by highlighting challenges, constraints, and entrepreneurial prospects within health-conscious, habitually authentic dining in Coimbatore. Operational excellence is crucial for sustaining competitive advantage, aligning cultural authenticity with consumer preferences, and fostering long-term engagement (Pandey & Kumar, 2021; Saravanakumar, 2025).

Structural barriers persist in health-conscious consumption (RO1). Although health awareness strongly influences choice, socio-economic disparities, limited nutrition education, and affordability issues restrict access to nutrient-dense ingredients such as millets and indigenous grains (Subhalakshmi et al., 2024; Vasanth Kumar & Jayaprakasam, 2025). Urban interest in wellness menus is often curtailed by inconsistent supply chains, ingredient costs, and restricted processing infrastructure, rising operational constraints (Kavya & Renugadevi, 2023; NRAI,

2024). The post-COVID emphasis on hygiene, traceability, and ethical sourcing has amplified expectations around food safety and quality (Mohanani et al., 2025).

Coimbatore's restaurant ecosystem reflects the interplay of regional heritage and contemporary urban lifestyles (RO2). Demand for Kongunadu and Chettinad cuisines presents opportunities for differentiation, but global competition and the rise of cloud kitchens intensify competitive pressures (Alae-Carew et al., 2019; Perfect Recorder, 2023). Fragmented supply chains, seasonal ingredient variability, and limited local processing facilities complicate operations (Palanichamy et al., 2024; Karthick, Arulmani & Ravi, 2023). Nevertheless, these challenges offer strategic opportunities for local sourcing, heritage storytelling, and culturally resonant experiences that strengthen engagement and trust (Ranjana & Umabharathi, 2025; Saravanakumar, 2025).

Operational realities shape entrepreneurial strategy (RO3). Restaurateurs must balance cultural fidelity with consumer demand for convenience, nutritionally enhanced options, and ready-to-eat formats (Veeramani et al., 2024). Entrepreneurial Process Theory (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991) illustrates how restaurateurs identify opportunities, mobilise local resources, and innovate within heritage frameworks, using flexible menu design, sourcing strategies, and personalised service to reinforce authenticity (Shah et al., 2006; Tak, Shankar & Kadiyala, 2019).

Coordinating multiple operational channels dine-in, cloud kitchens, and digital delivery while preserving quality and authenticity remains central to business model execution (RO4) (IJRPR, 2022; Jadhav, 2018). Sustainability-driven practices, particularly the use of traditional grains, create tensions between ecological responsibility and cost pressures (Mohanani et al., 2025; Sasirekha, Kowsalya & Rao, 2025). Value Proposition Design helps transform consumer challenges into compelling, health-focused propositions that support long-term viability (Osterwalder et al., 2014).

Operational excellence also influences loyalty and retention (RO5). Coimbatore diners increasingly expect high-quality, hygienic meals with culturally aligned, personalised service (Chopra, Seth & Lamba, 2025; Shunmuga Jothi & Revathi, 2025). Practices such as transparent sourcing, ethical labour management, and short, well-managed supply chains strengthen relationships among consumers, restaurateurs, and local producers (Pandey & Kumar, 2021; VLB Janakiammal College, 2024). Digital delivery platforms (e.g., Swiggy, Zomato) expand

reach but introduce cost and quality pressures, requiring strategies that balance operational efficiency with cultural storytelling (Divya Prabha & Mathipurani, 2022; RestoLabs, 2023).

Together, these operational dynamics reflect the tension and opportunity inherent in aligning health, culture, and entrepreneurial strategy. Entrepreneurs who integrate local sourcing, ethical practices, digital responsiveness, and customer-centric service can achieve sustainable competitive advantage while reinforcing community identity (Rathore & Misra, 2020; Mohanan et al., 2025).

2.8 INTEGRATED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The literature review establishes a robust, multi-dimensional foundation for analysing the interplay between entrepreneurship, culture, consumer behaviour, and business innovation in Coimbatore's health-traditional food sector. Entrepreneurial Process Theory (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991) frames entrepreneurship as a culturally embedded and socially mediated practice, highlighting how restaurateurs identify opportunities, mobilise resources, and create value in markets where heritage and wellness intersect. This theory reframes opportunity recognition as both economic and socio-cultural, recognising that alignment with local culinary traditions and consumer health priorities is central to entrepreneurial success.

Customer-Centricity Theory (Shah et al., 2006) emphasises relational strategies, suggesting that empathy, trust, and co-creative engagement drive loyalty and sustained consumer relationships. Restaurateurs who decode health priorities, cultural expectations, and lifestyle constraints can design offerings that resonate emotionally and culturally, enhancing retention beyond functional satisfaction.

Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) positions food consumption as a medium for identity expression, cultural attachment, and social belonging. In Coimbatore, traditional meals particularly millet-based and regionally authentic dishes carry symbolic significance, making cultural alignment essential for entrepreneurial legitimacy and differentiation.

Value Proposition Design (Osterwalder et al., 2014) translates these consumer motivations into offerings that address both health and cultural expectations, while the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) provides a practical blueprint for operationalising strategic intent into market-aligned business structures. These frameworks operate interactively:

Entrepreneurial Process Theory structures opportunity and resource pathways; Customer-Centricity and Consumer Culture clarify emotional and cultural resonance; and Value Proposition Design with the Business Model Canvas turn these insights into viable products and services.

Together, this integrated framework highlights feedback loops among consumer preferences, cultural heritage, entrepreneurial strategy, and operational execution. It positions culture and health consciousness as foundational to value creation, framing entrepreneurial success as dependent on harmonising health-oriented innovation with cultural fidelity and commercial viability (Mohanani et al., 2025; Pandey & Kumar, 2021; Shah et al., 2006).

2.8.1 ALIGNMENT OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES WITH LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL THEMES

The theoretical discussion above establishes a strong foundation connecting entrepreneurship, culture, and consumer behaviour in Coimbatore’s health-oriented restaurant sector. Each research objective aligns closely with relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, demonstrating coherence between the review, the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, and the study’s aims.

Table 2.1 Alignment of Research Objectives with Relevant Literature and Thematic Coverage

Research Objective (RO)	Relevant Literature/Themes in Chapter 2	Alignment & Notes
RO1: To critically analyse the preferences, behaviours, and expectations of consumers in Coimbatore regarding health-conscious and traditional South Indian culinary offerings.	Kavipriya et al. (2024); Pavithra et al. (2024); Vasanth Kumar & Jayaprakasam (2025); Bharathi & Elango (2024); NRAI (2024); Vijay et al. (2023); Kavya & Renugadevi (2023); Ramesh & Divya (2023); Ray & Ray (2022); Subhalakshmi et al. (2024).	Fully aligned. Supported by sections on consumer preferences and health awareness, underpinned by Entrepreneurial Process Theory and Customer-Centricity Theory.

Research Objective (RO)	Relevant Literature/Themes in Chapter 2	Alignment & Notes
RO2: To examine the local market landscape in Coimbatore, focusing on understanding the competitive environment, evolving consumer behaviours, and socio-cultural factors influencing the development of the health-oriented restaurant industry.	Mahapatra (2022); Tamil Nadu Tourism (2024); Ranjana & Umabharathi (2025); PSG College of Arts & Science (2017); Kothari (2016); Kalimuthu (2018); Alae-Carew et al. (2019); Saravanakumar (2025); Mushthari (1992).	Strong alignment. Local market and cultural influences integrated with Consumer Culture Theory, showing how regional identity and urbanisation impact choice and competition.
RO3: To identify and critically evaluate entrepreneurial strategies that facilitate the successful launch of a customer-centric restaurant specialising in health-conscious traditional cuisine.	Dhan Mahotsav (2023); Santos et al. (2023); Kotler et al. (2013); Tak et al. (2019); Mohanan et al. (2025); Bygrave & Hofer (1991); Shah et al. (2006).	Fully aligned. Entrepreneurial Strategy section operationalises Entrepreneurial Process Theory, linking strategy to health-traditional business success.
RO4: To develop a strategic business model that effectively incorporates consumer insights, current health trends, and regional culinary traditions to create a sustainable and innovative restaurant concept.	Guiné et al. (2021); Chuk (2023); Balaji (2021); SNR & SJCT (2021–2024); Jadhav (2018); IJRPR (2022); Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010); Osterwalder et al. (2014); Mohanan et al. (2025); Sasirekha, Kowsalya & Rao (2025).	Fully aligned. Business Model Design uses Value Proposition Design and Business Model Canvas to integrate cultural, health, and operational concerns into a coherent structure.

Research Objective (RO)	Relevant Literature/Themes in Chapter 2	Alignment & Notes
RO5: To formulate evidence-based recommendations designed to enhance customer engagement, establish distinct brand differentiation, and foster sustainable growth within the Coimbatore food service industry.	Chopra et al. (2025); Shunmuga Jothi & Revathi (2025); Saleth Mary (2019); Ladhari (2009); Ilavarasi, Vyashini & Abarna (2024); RestoLabs (2023); Vijay et al. (2023); Saravanakumar (2025); Pandey & Kumar (2021); Divya Prabha & Mathipurani (2022).	Fully aligned. Customer Engagement & Retention and Operational Challenges sections leverage Customer-Centricity and Consumer Culture Theory to inform long-term engagement and sustainable growth.

2.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ILLUSTRATION

The conceptual framework integrates theoretical foundations into a coherent model to guide the study of health-traditional food entrepreneurship in Coimbatore. It positions innovation at the nexus of health consciousness, cultural identity, and strategic adaptability, illustrating how restaurateurs respond to evolving consumer expectations while preserving culinary heritage. The framework conceptualises entrepreneurial activity as an iterative process, where market feedback, cultural trends, and operational realities continuously inform menu design, service delivery, and engagement strategies.

Practically, the model depicts a circular flow connecting opportunity recognition, value creation, and strategic implementation. Entrepreneurial Process Theory drives the identification and mobilisation of opportunities and resources, while Customer-Centricity and Consumer Culture Theory elucidate how offerings resonate traditionally and passionately with consumers. Value Proposition Design and the Business Model Canvas operationalise these insights, ensuring that restaurant products and services are not only health-conscious and authentic but also operationally efficient and commercially sustainable.

By emphasising feedback loops, the framework recognises that consumer preferences, local market dynamics, and cultural heritage co-advance with entrepreneurial tactic. Restaurateurs are encouraged to adopt adaptive, context-sensitive approaches for example, integrating indigenous grains, festival-based menus, digital ordering systems, and hybrid delivery models

without compromising cultural authenticity or nutritional quality (Ranjana & Umabharathi, 2025; Osterwalder et al., 2014; Tak, Shankar & Kadiyala, 2019). Thus, the conceptual framework functions as both an logical lens and a real-world roadmap for entrepreneurial action, supporting the alignment of health, heritage, operational resilience, and commercial viability in Coimbatore's food sector.

2.10 LITERATURE GAP

Despite a widespread body of research on customer behaviour, nutrition, and entrepreneurship in India's food sector, several critical gaps emerge. First, the integrated influence of health consciousness and cultural identity on consumer choice and business strategy remains underexplored. While many studies address health preferences or cultural heritage independently, there is a shortage of holistic examinations that reveal how these dimensions interact to shape eating and business practices (Gupta & Sharma, 2019; Bharathi & Elango, 2024).

Second, empirical research on the operationalisation of health-conscious and culturally authentic practices in mid-sized cities such as Coimbatore is limited. Research in metropolitan contexts has grown, but smaller urban centres possess unique socio-cultural dynamics, supply chain structures, and entrepreneurial strategies that require context-specific investigation (Mushthari, 1992; Vasanth Kumar & Jayaprakasam, 2025). This gap highlights the need for detailed, locale-sensitive studies that capture the lived experiences of restaurateurs and consumers in emerging urban markets.

Third, existing literature provides limited insights into relational and experiential strategies for customer engagement in culturally sensitive contexts. Few studies systematically explore how restaurants co-create value with consumers, leverage heritage narratives to foster emotional resonance, and develop service models that integrate health, tradition, and long-term loyalty. Addressing these gaps necessitates a mixed-methods approach that captures both quantitative consumer patterns and qualitative entrepreneurial perspectives, resulting in a holistic understanding of health-conscious, culturally grounded dining in Coimbatore and similar urban settings (Shah et al., 2006; Chopra, Seth & Lamba, 2025; Saravanakumar, 2025).

2.11 SUMMARY AND TRANSITION

This chapter has critically reviewed literature on consumer preferences, health awareness, local cultural influences, entrepreneurial strategy, business model design, customer engagement, and operational dynamics in India's food sector. An integrated theoretical framework highlights culture and health consciousness as central to value creation, demonstrating how entrepreneurial strategies mediate between market demand and operational feasibility.

The review confirms that Coimbatore's health-conscious restaurant sector operates within a complex matrix of opportunity recognition, cultural alignment, operational challenges, and consumer engagement imperatives. The gaps identified in integrating health and tradition, contextualising entrepreneurial practice in mid-sized cities, and developing relational engagement strategies justify the mixed-approaches outlined in Chapter 3. By retaining both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, this study aims to generate actionable insights into sustaining culturally authentic and nutritionally informed dining experiences in evolving urban markets. This approach bridges theoretical discourse and practical strategy, offering a roadmap for culturally grounded, commercially viable, and socially resonant health-traditional food entrepreneurship (Rathore & Misra, 2020; Osterwalder et al., 2014; Mohanan et al., 2025).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the study's philosophical foundation, the overall research design, the methods of data collection and analysis, the ethical considerations, resource planning, and the projected budget for the study. Collectively, these components provide a clear and organized framework for executing the research, guaranteeing that every stage stays tightly connected to the study's main goals. By articulating these components in detail, the section underscores not only the academic rigour of the proposed inquiry but also its practical feasibility, thereby demonstrating a well-grounded and carefully planned research process.

3.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A pragmatic research philosophy is employed, promoting the flexible merging of qualitative and quantitative strategies to create actionable insights. This approach is centred on achieving practical results, emphasizing the importance of applying knowledge and solutions in practical ways rather than being tied to just one method. Pragmatism is particularly suitable for applied research contexts where the primary goal is to generate actionable insights while maintaining theoretical rigor (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This model is particularly well matched to the present investigation, which explores consumer behaviour and entrepreneurial strategies within the context of traditional dining practices. By maintaining a focus on outcomes, relevance, and real-world applicability, the pragmatic stance supports a balanced and purposeful fusion of empirical evidence with contextual understanding, thereby enriching the overall depth and utility of the research.

3.1.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY AND RATIONALE

This study adopts a mixed-methods strategy to address its research objectives comprehensively. The approach combines quantitative precision with qualitative depth, enabling a fuller understanding of consumer preferences, health awareness and entrepreneurial strategy (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Within Coimbatore's food sector, this design captures measurable behavioural trends while revealing the cultural and motivational factors that shape them. These provide statistically generalisable insights and identify correlations between demographic factors and dining habits (Bryman, 2016).

Simultaneously, qualitative semi-structured interviews with restaurateurs capture the nuances of entrepreneurial decision-making, operational strategies, and cultural interpretation, offering rich, context-sensitive insights (Patton, 2015).

As Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2019) explain, methodological triangulation enhances reliability and validity by allowing findings from one method to confirm those of another. The blend of survey and interview figures aligns with the pragmatic philosophy underpinning the study, prioritising practical and contextually grounded insights over rigid observance to a only method. This rationale ensures that the research remains both empirically robust and relevant to local entrepreneurial realities.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A mixed-methods strategy is utilized to enable a comprehensive and multifaceted grasp of the research issue. Quantitative numbers are collected through a designed questionnaire, providing measurable patterns and trends, while qualitative insights are generated via semi-structured interviews, offering richer and more nuanced perspectives. Integrating these complementary approaches allows for a deeper analysis of consumer behaviour and entrepreneurial strategies than either method alone. This combination enhances reliability, validity, and interpretive depth, effectively capturing both observable behavioural trends and the underlying motivations shaping participants' actions.

3.2.1 POPULATION DEFINITION

The study focuses on two primary groups in Coimbatore's urban food ecosystem: consumers who engage with traditional or health-oriented cuisine, and restaurant entrepreneurs involved in this sector. These groups represent the demand and supply dimensions essential to examining customer-centric, health-based entrepreneurship.

Coimbatore's mix of heritage and urban modernity makes it a relevant setting for exploring how health consciousness and cultural authenticity interact. Clearly defining these populations ensured that participants had expressive exposure to the research themes, thereby strengthening

the internal validity and contextual accuracy of the results (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

3.3 SAMPLING STRATEGY

Convenience sampling employed in this study due to its practical advantages, particularly its efficiency and cost-effectiveness when working within constrained timeframes and limited resources. The participant pool consisted primarily of residents of Coimbatore, as well as individuals with specialised knowledge of, or familiarity with, the city's indigenous and traditional culinary practices. The quantitative phase incorporated responses from 162 participants, whereas the qualitative phase engaged 12 individuals selected for their expertise in local culinary traditions. This sampling strategy facilitated the timely and accessible collection of relevant insights without necessitating complex or resource-intensive recruitment procedures.

Nonetheless, it is crucial to acknowledge the fundamental constraints of this method. The convenience sampling's non-random characteristics limit the generalisability of the results, and the likelihood of sampling bias could constrain how well the findings represent the wider population. Despite these constraints, the method offered a pragmatic and contextually appropriate means of gathering rich and meaningful data for the study's purposes.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data were collected through two complementary instruments: a well-structured online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire, circulated via Google Forms, comprised Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions adapted from established models of food choice and health orientation (Steptoe, Pollard and Wardle, 1995; Ajzen, 1991). This ensured construct validity and consistency with previous studies.

Semi-structured interviews explored deeper perspectives on how consumers and entrepreneurs interpret health, tradition and customer value. The guide was informed by literature themes such as authenticity, sustainability and innovation. Conducting both methods concurrently allowed triangulation, linking statistical patterns with lived experience and reinforcing the study's integrity (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018; Braun and Clarke, 2006).

A pilot study was conducted with 10 participants to test the precision, relevance, and dependability of the questionnaire and interview guide. Feedback from the pilot informed minor revisions, ensuring that the instruments were well-understood and effectively captured the intended constructs.

3.5 METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative data collected for this study were analysed through descriptive statistical techniques, primarily frequencies and percentages, with Microsoft Excel as the analytical tool. This approach enabled the systematic identification of key trends and behavioural patterns, producing a clear overview of consumer preferences within both traditional and health-oriented dining contexts.

The qualitative data, gathered through semi-structured interviews, were examined using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to uncover recurring motifs and underlying patterns within participants' narratives. This method facilitated the exploration of customer expectations, perceived barriers, and attitudes toward health-focused adaptations of traditional cuisine, revealing the contextual and emotional factors that shape dining behaviour.

Integrating quantitative and qualitative analyses fostered methodological triangulation, thereby enhancing the robustness, depth, and credibility of the study's findings. While the quantitative results offered a broad, data-driven overview of observable consumer trends, the qualitative insights contributed a richer, contextually grounded interpretation of behaviours, motivations, and perceptions. This complementary and integrative approach proved particularly valuable in unpacking the complex interplay of consumer dynamics and entrepreneurial challenges characteristic of Coimbatore's geographically expansive and culturally diverse culinary landscape.

3.6 METHODOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Research Philosophy: Pragmatism

The study adopted a pragmatic research philosophy, allowing the incorporation of quantitative and qualitative methods to address the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial and consumer behaviour. Pragmatism emphasises flexibility, contextual understanding, and practical

outcomes over rigid theoretical positions (Creswell, 2014). This orientation was well suited to exploring both measurable consumer preferences and the underlying motivations that influence health-oriented dining choices in Coimbatore.

Combining methods enhanced validity through methodological triangulation, enabling findings to be cross-verified across data sources (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This integration strengthened the credibility and depth of results, generating actionable insights relevant to business practice (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). However, mixed-methods research also demands careful balance to avoid dominance of one dataset and requires significant time and analytical expertise (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010).

Sampling: Convenience Sampling

Convenience sampling was selected for this study due to its ease, pragmatism, and ease of implementation particularly in the context of an online data collection process. This method facilitated efficient access to participants, enabling timely responses without the logistical constraints of probability-based sampling.

Convenience sampling is recognised as an effective and cost-efficient approach for gathering data from readily available participants, making it especially suitable for studies operating within limited timeframes or resource constraints (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). It assists as a valuable tool during the exploratory stages of research, where the primary objective is to gain preliminary insights, detect emerging behavioural patterns, and identify trends that may inform subsequent, more rigorous investigations. Rapid data collection supports the generation of empirical insights that provide a foundation for future research and hypothesis refinement.

Nevertheless, convenience sampling is not without its limitations. The reliance on easily accessible participants introduces potential sampling bias, as the group may not reflect the broader Coimbatore population's demographic or behavioural diversity. Consequently, the sample's representativeness is constrained, and findings' generalisability is limited. Therefore, while the method offers notable advantages in terms of practicality and feasibility, the interpretation of outcomes must be approached with thoughtfulness, admitting that the insights derived are context-specific and may not fully capture the spectrum of consumer preferences across the wider population.

Data Collection: Structured Online Questionnaire

A structured online questionnaire provided a practical and reliable means of systematically collecting quantitative data on consumer preferences and behaviours. This approach facilitated standardised responses, suitable for detailed statistical analyses and the identification of measurable patterns. The structured design ensured consistency, reduced researcher bias, and enhanced the reliability of findings.

Survey-based data collection is cost-effective and allows coverage of a relatively large sample, improving representativeness within research constraints (Evans & Mathur, 2005). The structured format enables efficient data management, straightforward coding, and comparative analysis, supporting the identification of quantifiable trends and correlations in consumer behaviour. Furthermore, the online format enhances accessibility and convenience, enabling participants to respond at their own pace while extending the study's reach across diverse demographic segments.

However, surveys can provide limited depth. Reliance on mainly closed-ended questions may restrict respondents' ability to express the nuances of motivations, perceptions, or cultural influences shaping behaviour. While surveys are valuable for broad statistical insights, complementary qualitative methods are needed to capture richer, contextual dimensions of consumer experience.

Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews provided in-depth insights into how consumers make choices, perceive value, and how business owners navigate challenges in a changing restaurant environment. Allowing participants to express experiences in their own words offered a rich understanding of contextual, emotional, and social factors shaping consumer behaviour and entrepreneurial decisions. The conversational yet guided format encouraged openness, enabling reflection on motivations, expectations, and constraints.

These interviews are particularly valuable for qualitative inquiry due to their flexibility, allowing researchers to probe deeper and adapt questions based on emerging responses (Kallio et al., 2016). This adaptability uncovers nuanced insights often missed in structured methods and contextualises quantitative findings, linking statistical patterns with personal narratives to capture the complexity of consumer attitudes and market dynamics.

However, semi-structured interviews are time-consuming to conduct, transcribe, and analyse, limiting sample size and perspective breadth. Interviewer bias may also influence responses through cues, tone, or phrasing, affecting consistency. Careful training, reflexive note-taking, and transparent coding are essential to maintain rigour. Despite these challenges, their depth and contextual sensitivity make semi-structured interviews invaluable in mixed-method research, illuminating motivations and meanings behind quantitative data and enhancing explanatory power.

Data Analysis: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics provide a straightforward yet powerful means of summarising and interpreting quantitative data, allowing researchers to identify distinct patterns and emerging trends in consumer preferences. By converting unprocessed data into a structured and interpretable form, this analytical approach enables a clearer understanding of how responses are distributed across variables and categories.

Descriptive statistical analysis plays a crucial role in supporting the interpretation of data in ways that can inform sound and evidence-based business decisions. It is particularly effective in identifying measures of central tendency, variability, and frequency distributions, thereby revealing underlying patterns that characterise consumer behaviour. Through these insights, businesses and researchers can obtain a concise yet comprehensive overview of the dataset, facilitating the recognition of dominant preferences, behavioural tendencies, and areas of potential market opportunity.

However, despite its value in providing clarity and structure, descriptive statistics are inherently limited in analytical depth. They do not permit causal inference or the examination of relationships between variables, restricting the ability to uncover underlying drivers or complex interactions within the data. As such, while descriptive statistics are indispensable for summarising and presenting information clearly, they are most effective when used in conjunction with inferential or qualitative methods that can probe deeper into the causes and contextual meanings behind the observed patterns.

Data Analysis: Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis guided the exploration of interview data, offering a structured yet flexible method for uncovering participants' narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process began with immersion in transcripts, fostering meaningful engagement with entrepreneurs' and consumers' perspectives. Initial impressions and interpretive notes provided a foundation for systematically identifying recurrent ideas and salient expressions.

Initial coding captured significant fragments of meaning, from strategic decisions and operational challenges to subtle cues about consumer expectations and emotional responses. As coding progressed, recurring patterns were grouped into overarching themes, highlighting entrepreneurial strategy, consumer needs, and the interplay between traditional and health-oriented dining experiences.

While thematic analysis enables rich interpretation, it is influenced by the researcher's positionality. Reflexivity was maintained to minimise bias, with careful attention to transparency and consistency: codes were reviewed, compared, and refined, and themes were repeatedly cross-checked against raw data to ensure representational accuracy.

By treating thematic analysis as iterative and reflective, the study mapped patterns in the dataset while capturing the lived experiences, perceptions, and behaviours of those central to the entrepreneurial landscape. This approach generated contextually grounded insights that extend beyond surface trends, offering a deeper understanding of the human and strategic dimensions shaping contemporary consumer and entrepreneurial realities.

3.7 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

Despite thorough planning, the study encountered several obstacles that influenced both the execution of the research and the interpretation of the results. Among these, sampling bias emerged as a significant limitation. By relying primarily on online data collection, the study tended to engage participants who were digitally literate and already somewhat health-conscious, while inadvertently excluding those with limited internet access or different lifestyle habits. As a result, the data may reflect a narrower range of consumer perspectives, shaped not only by behaviour but also by the context in which participants were able to engage with the study.

The reliance on self-reported data introduced additional complexities. Participants may have unintentionally presented themselves in a more socially desirable manner, particularly when discussing health behaviours, diet, or lifestyle choices. While these responses provide meaningful insight, they also highlight the interpretive nature of the data, reflecting both actual behaviours and perceived norms.

Generalisability also emerged as a notable consideration. Since the research focused specifically on Coimbatore, the findings may not fully represent consumer experiences in other cities or regions with differing cultural, social, or environmental contexts. Time constraints further shaped the study, limiting opportunities for extensive pilot testing and iterative refinement of the survey instruments, which could have enhanced the reliability and precision of the collected data.

By acknowledging these limitations, the study aims to present its findings with transparency and contextual sensitivity. Recognising the boundaries of the research not only clarifies the scope of its contributions but also situates the insights within a broader interpretive framework, highlighting areas for future exploration and comparative studies in diverse consumer and entrepreneurial contexts.

3.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In the course of conducting this research, the study confronted several challenges that are typical in empirical work, especially concerning the reliability and validity of the findings. The use of self-administered questionnaires, for example, introduced the possibility that participants might interpret certain questions differently, leading to variation in responses. In the absence of extensive pilot testing, there was a risk that some survey items might not consistently capture the intended information, potentially disturbing the overall trustworthiness of the data.

Validity is another area requiring careful consideration. Given that the study drew on convenience sampling, the results are context-specific and cannot be assumed to reflect the experiences or behaviours of the broader population, which limits their external validity and applicability. Similarly, while the qualitative findings provided valuable depth and context regarding consumer behaviour, they may not have encompassed the full range of underlying motivations, leaving certain nuanced behaviours and intricate patterns unexamined. Internal

validity also warranted attention, as participants may have provided socially desirable responses, particularly when discussing lifestyle or health-related behaviours, which could slightly skew the overall picture of attitudes and practices.

To mitigate these challenges, the study implemented several proactive measures. Survey questions were carefully constructed to ensure clarity, participants were assured of anonymity to encourage honest responses, and the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods enabled triangulation of findings. Collectively, these strategies strengthened both the credibility and richness of the results, allowing the study to provide a more comprehensive and contextually grounded understanding of consumer preferences and behaviours.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The protection of respondents' rights, welfare, and self-respect was upheld as a central principle throughout the study. Before participation, each individual received clear and comprehensive information on the study's objectives, methodology, procedures, and potential implications. This transparency ensured that consent was fully informed and voluntary, enabling participants to make considered decisions about their involvement. They were guided that they could decline to answer any question or pull out from the study at any stage without consequence, reaffirming the research team's commitment to autonomy and respect for individual choice.

Significant care was taken to minimise any potential discomfort or emotional strain. All survey and interview questions were designed to be sensitive, non-intrusive, and respectful of participants' lived experiences. Participants were never required to answer to items that triggered hesitation or unease. To preserve confidentiality, personal identifiers were removed, and all data were securely stored and reported only in aggregate form. The statistics were used exclusively for academic purposes, with no dissemination beyond the research context.

Embedding ethical safeguards throughout ensured rigorous adherence to values and fostered participant belief. This environment encouraged candid sharing, enriching the authenticity and interpretive depth of the findings. Ultimately, the study's ethical framework ensured that the knowledge generated was both meaningful and responsible, grounded in integrity, respect, and thoughtful consideration for all participants.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter analyses primary survey data, focusing on key factors influencing the establishment of a customer-oriented health and traditional cuisine restaurant in Coimbatore. The analysis is structured around four themes: Consumer Preferences and Health-Conscious Behaviour, Local Market Awareness and Cultural Influences, Business Model Expectations, and Customer Engagement, Loyalty, and Branding. Demographic data are also examined to contextualise consumer trends and business insights.

Understanding participants' demographics is essential for accurate interpretation. The survey collected age, education, occupation, gender, residential status, dietary preferences, interest in healthy eating, and weekly dining habits. Analysing these variables identified behavioural patterns defining the target market, ensuring findings and recommendations align with Coimbatore's urban consumers' characteristics, motivations, and lifestyles.

The quantitative survey included 20 questions across five thematic sections: consumer decisions and health behaviour, local market and cultural influences, business model expectations, and customer engagement, loyalty, and branding. Responses were analysed using Excel and descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, providing a clear view of trends, averages, and differences to support further analysis.

Qualitative insights were gathered through structured interviews and discussions with stakeholders, including traditional restaurant owners, family-run outlets, catering services, and modern restaurateurs. These data provided deeper understanding of customer expectations, perceptions, and motivations beyond the survey. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) identified recurring patterns: Consumer Preferences and Health Awareness, Local Market and Cultural Influences, Entrepreneurial Strategy and Expectations, Business Model Design, Branding, Loyalty and Differentiation, and Overall Strategic Input.

By merging quantitative and qualitative data, the study offers a well-rounded view of Coimbatore's market, supporting informed and actionable recommendations for establishing a customer-focused health and traditional cuisine restaurant.

4.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

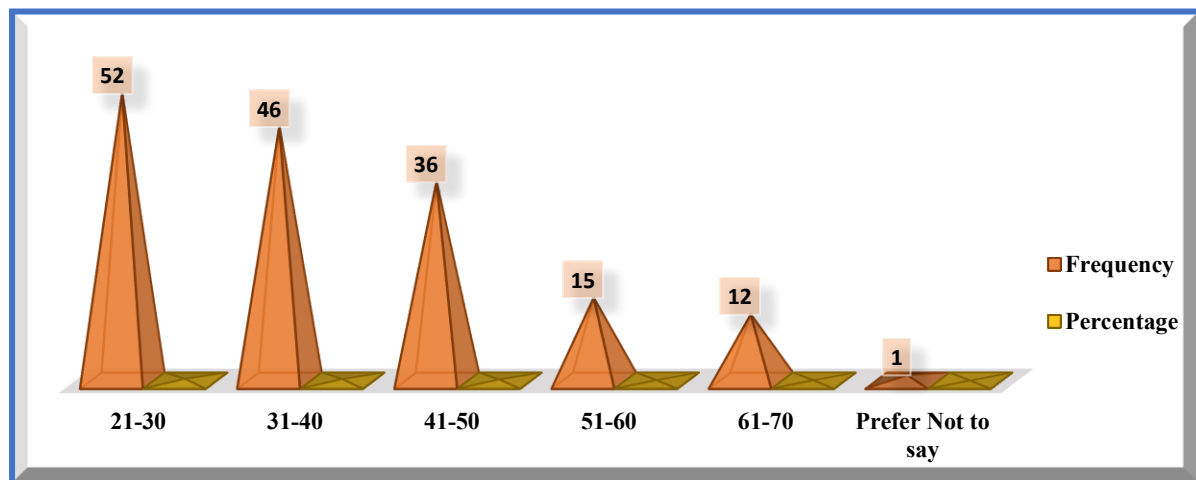
This chapter presents the quantitative analysis undertaken to examine the patterns and relationships suggested by the research questions. It outlines the data preparation process, introduces the key variables, and explains the statistical techniques used. Descriptive and inferential results are then reported to assess the strength and significance of these relationships. Together, these analyses provide a structured, empirical foundation for interpreting the study's findings and linking them back to the broader theoretical framework.

Prior to the main survey, a pilot study with 10 participants was conducted to refine the questionnaire. The insights gained helped strengthen the clarity, relevance, and reliability of the data collection tools.

4.1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

AGE

Figure 4.1 Respondents' Age



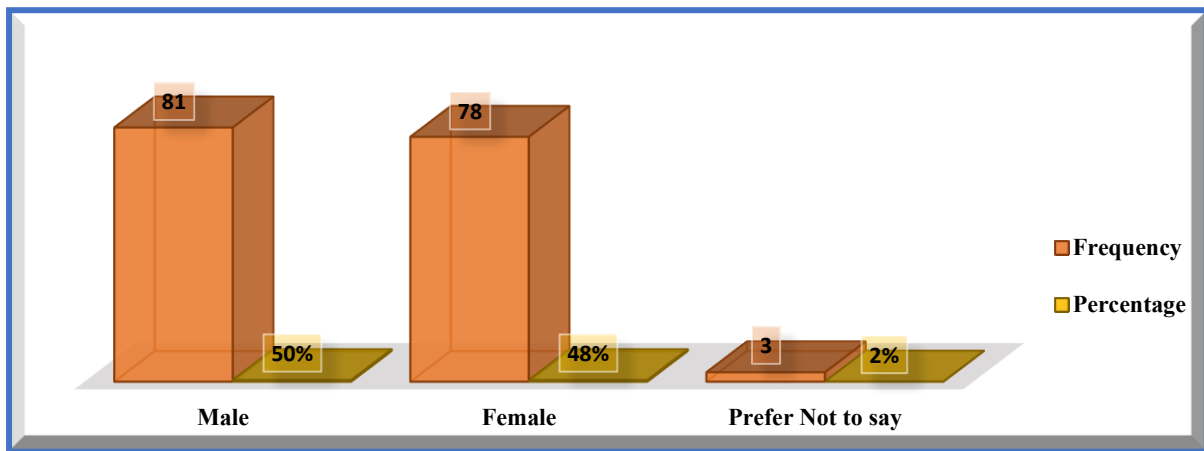
Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.1 indicates, the largest share of respondents (32%) were aged 21–30 years, followed by 31–40 years (28%) and 41–50 years (22%). Smaller proportions belonged to the 51–60 years (9%) and 61–70 years (7%) groups, while 1% preferred not to disclose their age.

Overall, the sample was primarily composed of young and middle-aged adults, reflecting the demographic most actively engaged in dining-out and evolving food preferences.

GENDER

Figure 4.2 Respondents' Gender



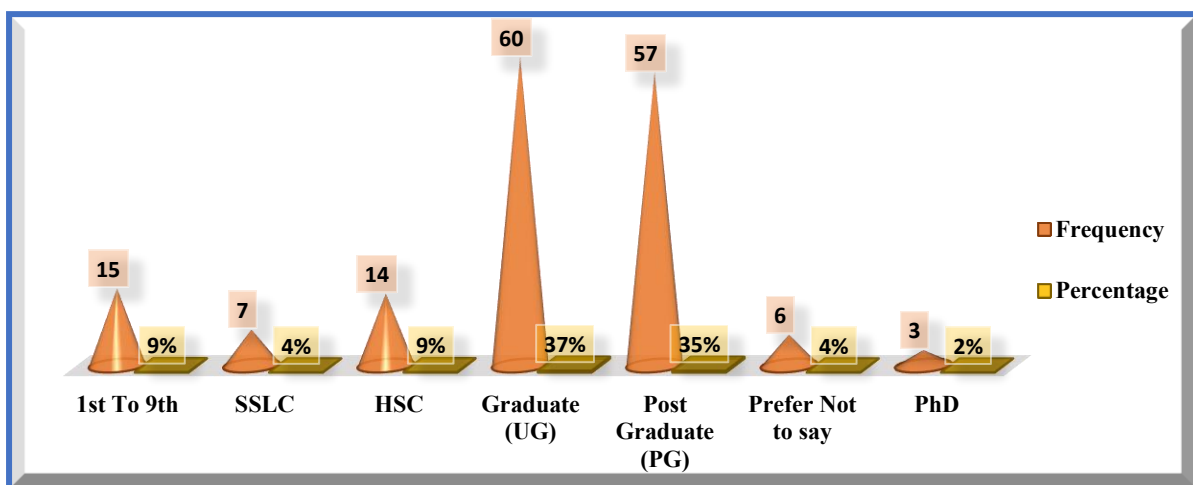
Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.2 indicates, male respondents comprised 50% of the sample, while female respondents accounted for 48%. A small proportion (2%) preferred not to disclose their gender.

This near-equal representation of male and female participants indicates a balanced gender distribution, enhancing the inclusivity and reliability of perspectives reflected in the survey findings.

EDUCATION

Figure 4.3 Respondents' Education



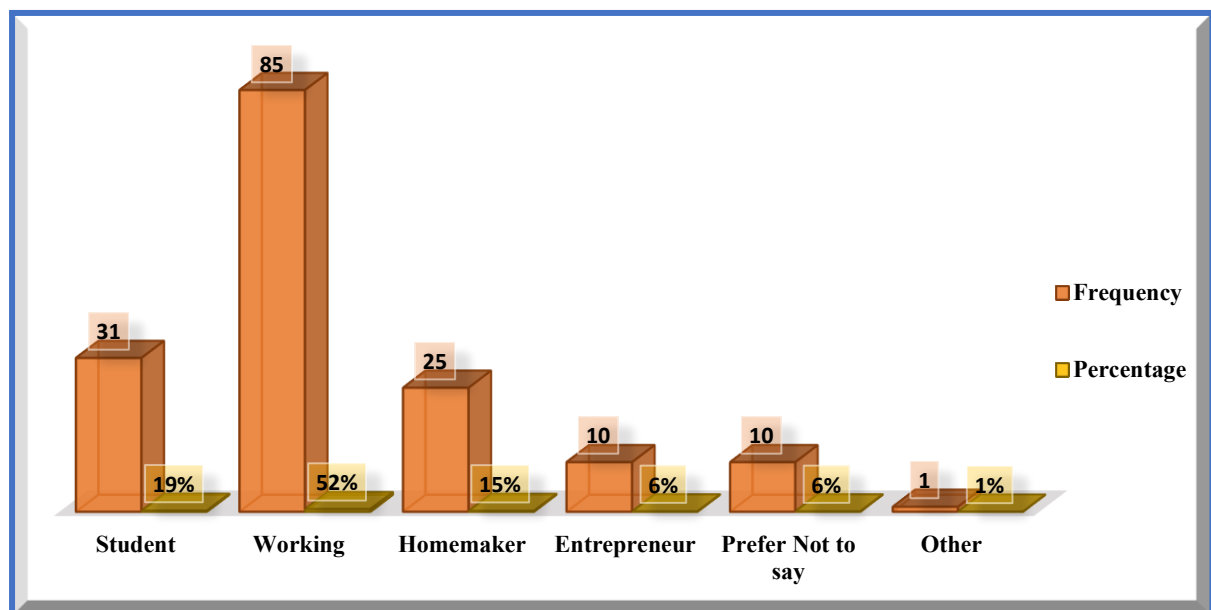
Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.3 shows that the majority of respondents were graduates (37%) and postgraduates (35%), followed by those with education up to HSC (9%) and 1st to 9th grade (9%). Smaller proportions had completed SSLC (4%), held a PhD (2%), or preferred not to disclose their qualification (4%).

Overall, the sample reflects a well-educated respondent base, suggesting that participants possessed the awareness and discernment necessary to provide informed responses to the survey.

OCCUPATION

Figure 4.4 Respondents' Occupation



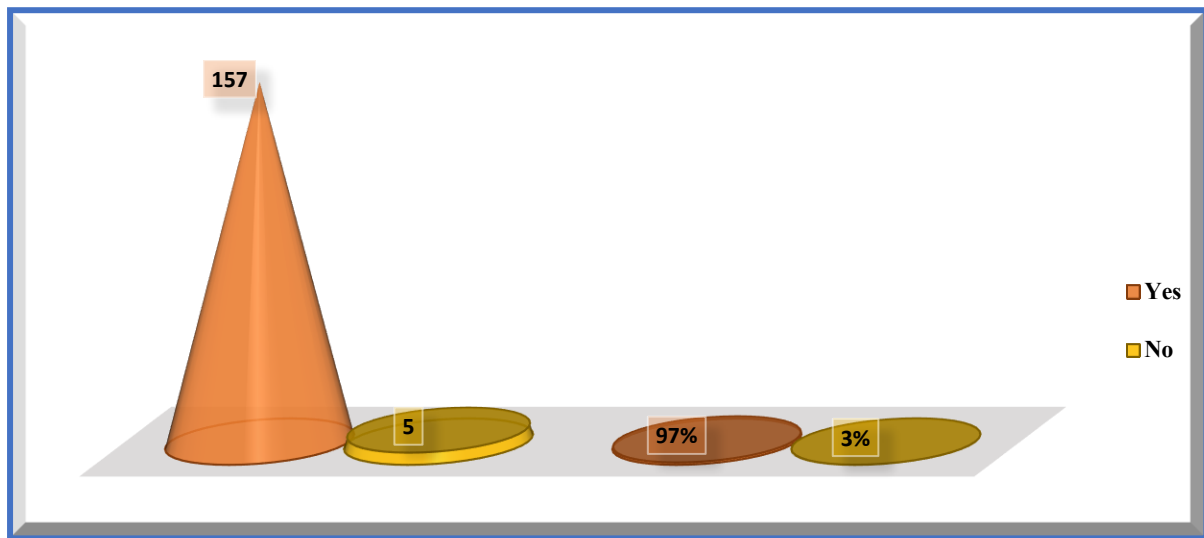
Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.4 indicates, over half of the respondents were working professionals (52%), followed by students (19%) and homemakers (15%). Smaller proportions identified as entrepreneurs (6%), preferred not to disclose their occupation (6%), or selected other (1%).

This distribution indicates that the survey primarily captured the views of employed individuals, reflecting perspectives shaped by active workforce participation and regular engagement in consumer activities.

RESIDENT OF COIMBATORE

Figure 4.5 Respondents' Resident Status

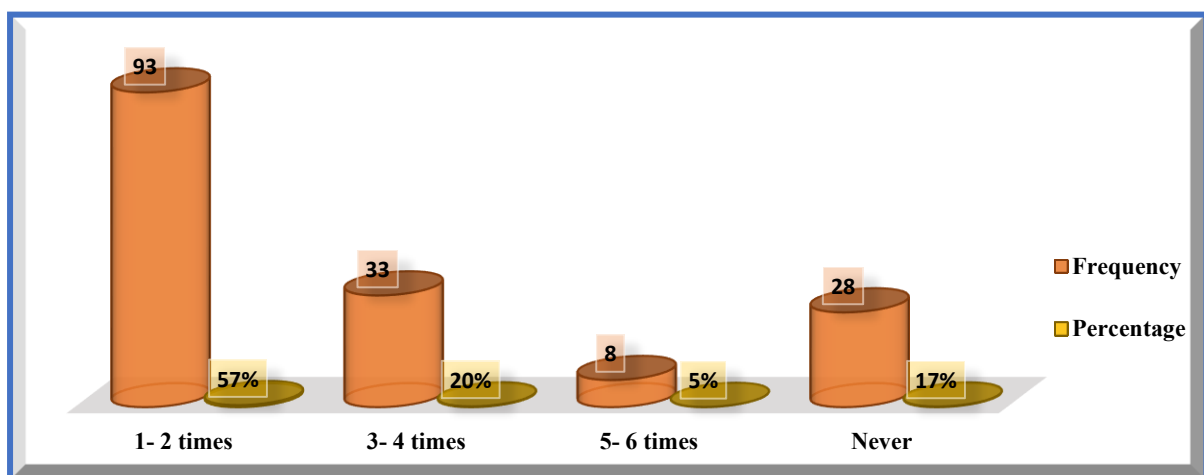


Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.5 indicates that the vast majority of respondents (97%) were residents, while only 3% were non-residents. This strong representation of residents suggests that the findings predominantly reflect the perspectives of individuals who are locally based and therefore more familiar with the community's dining habits and preferences.

EATING OUT PER WEEK

Figure 4.6 Respondents' Eating Out Per Week



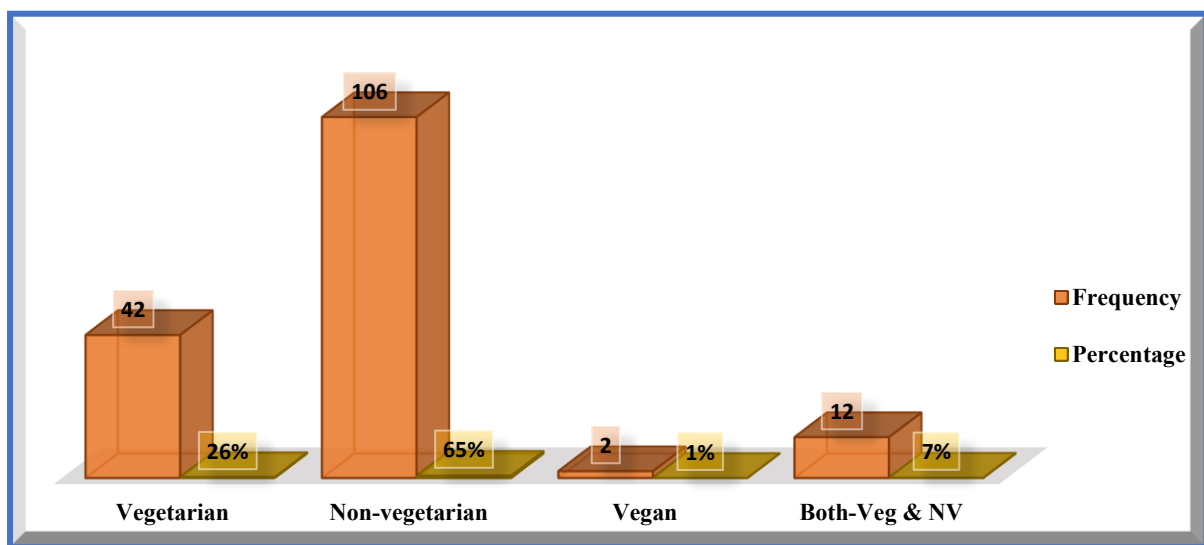
Source: Author's own work

Figure 4.6 indicates, the majority of respondents (57%) reported eating outside one to two times per week, followed by 20% who dined out three to four times per week. A smaller share (5%) ate out five to six times per week, while 17% indicated that they never ate outside.

These findings suggest that occasional dining-out habits are most common among respondents, reflecting a preference for moderate engagement with food services rather than frequent or habitual dining-out behaviour.

DIETARY PREFERENCE

Figure 4.7 Respondents' Dietary Preference



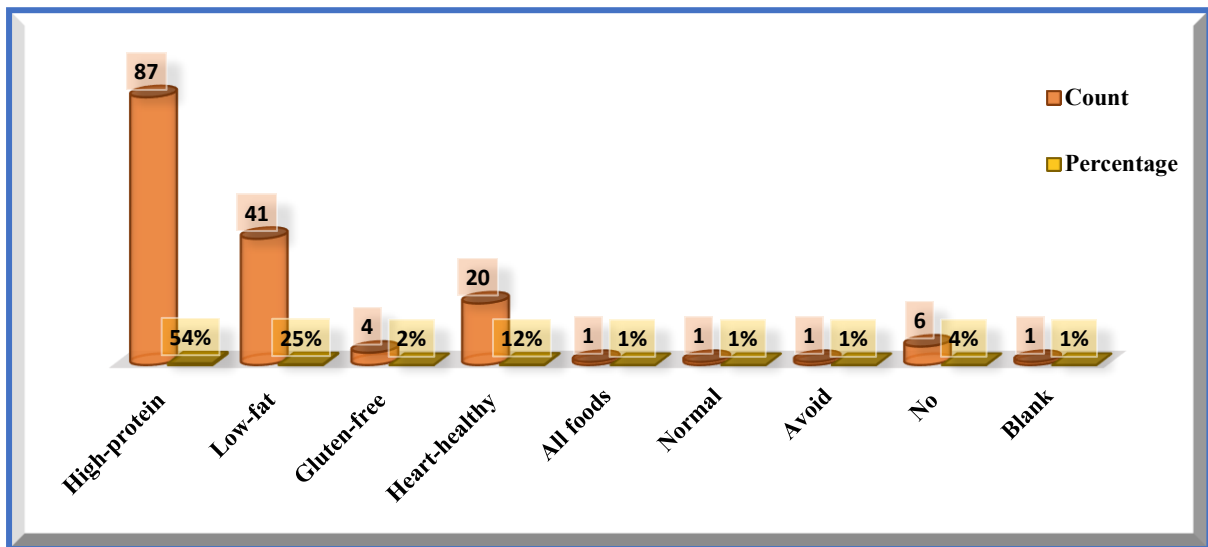
Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.7 indicates that the majority of respondents (65%) identified as non-vegetarian, while 26% followed a vegetarian diet. A smaller proportion (7%) reported consuming both vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods, and only 1% identified as vegan.

This distribution indicates that non-vegetarian dietary habits predominate among respondents, suggesting a general inclination toward mixed or meat-based diets within the sample population.

SPECIFIC DIET PLAN

Figure 4.8 Respondents' Diet Plan

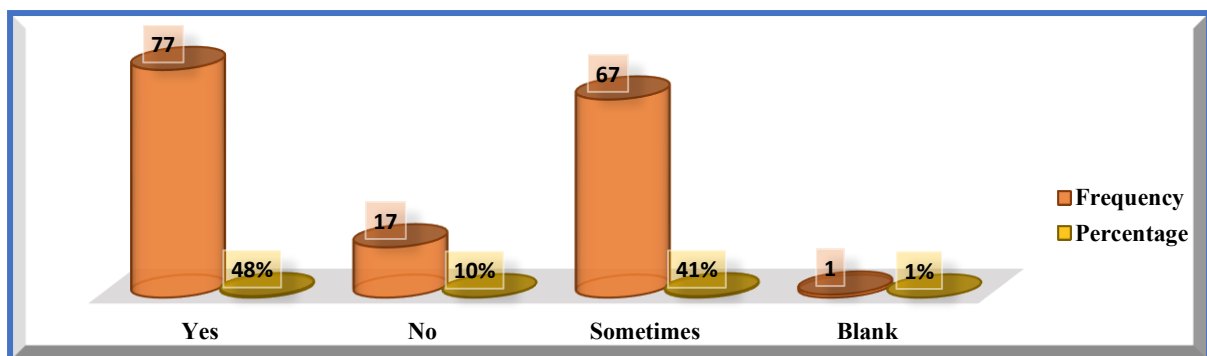


Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.8 indicates, more than half of the respondents (54%) reported following a high-protein diet, while 25% adhered to a low-fat diet. Smaller proportions followed heart-healthy (12%) and gluten-free (2%) diets. A few respondents selected all foods, normal, avoid, or no specific diet, each representing 1–4% of the total. These results indicate that a high-protein and low-fat dietary focus predominates among participants, reflecting growing awareness of health-conscious eating habits within the sample group.

HEALTHY FOOD OPTIONS WHEN DINING OUT

Figure 4.9 Respondents' Healthy Food Options When Dining Out



Source: Author's own work (2025).

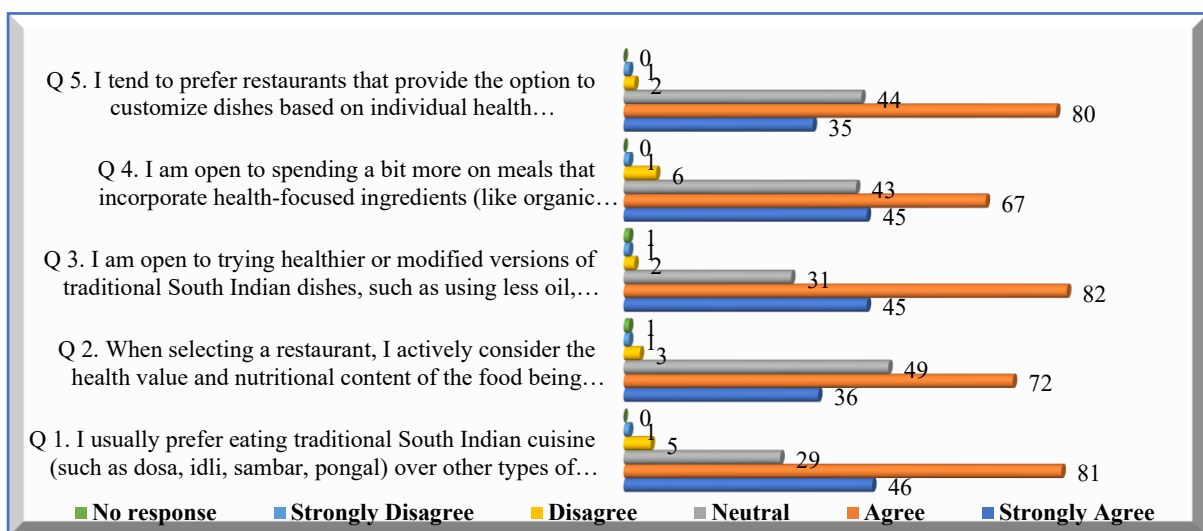
Figure 4.9 indicates that nearly half of the respondents (48%) reported actively choosing healthy food options when dining out, while 41% stated they do so sometimes. A smaller portion (10%) indicated that they do not opt for healthy choices, and 1% did not provide a response. These findings suggest that a majority of respondents demonstrate health-conscious behaviour when eating out, although a considerable number adopt such choices only occasionally, reflecting moderate but growing awareness of healthy dining practices.

These demographic insights align with the consumer behaviour patterns discussed in Chapter 2, particularly the concentration of young, educated, and professionally active respondents who represent India's emerging urban middle class. This group's growing health awareness and cultural adaptability reflect trends identified by (Bharathi & Elango, 2024; Subhalakshmi et al. (2024), confirming that Coimbatore's evolving food culture is shaped by lifestyle transitions and wellness-oriented urbanisation.

4.1.2 QUANTITATIVE INSIGHTS ON CONSUMER CHOICES AND HEALTH-CONSCIOUS HABITS

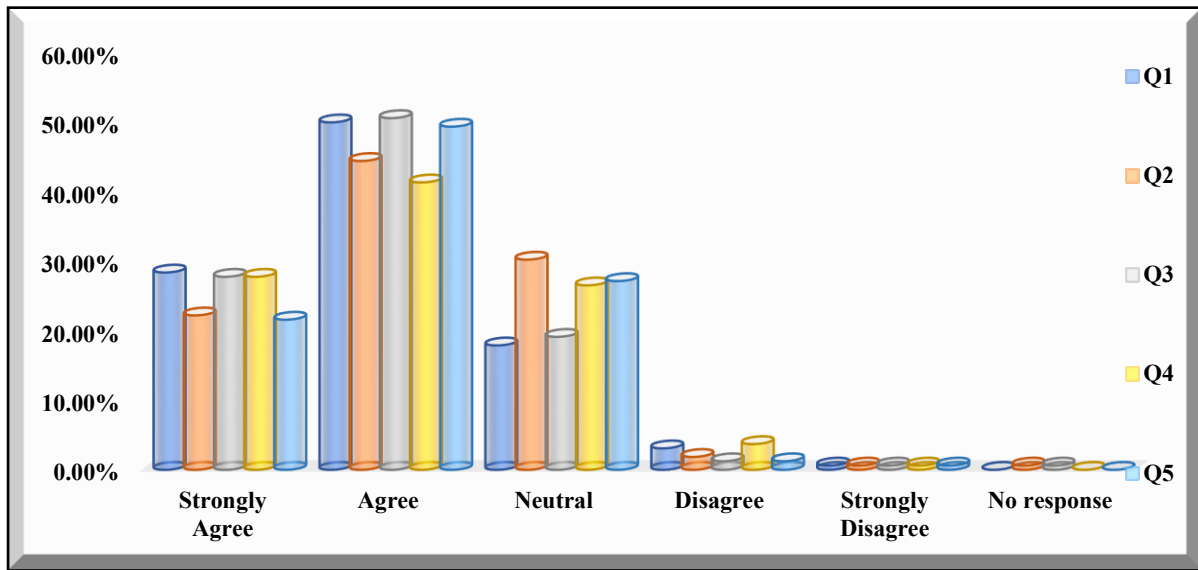
This section explored how individuals' awareness of health and wellness influences their food choices and dining habits. It helped identify consumer interest in nutritious and balanced meals that align with traditional tastes. The insights guided the study in understanding the potential demand for a restaurant that promotes healthy yet culturally rooted cuisine.

Figure 4.10 Frequency of Respondents



Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.11 Percentage of Respondents



Source: Author's own work (2025).

Table 4.1 Mean And Standard Deviation for Q1 to Q5

Statement	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Mean	4.02	3.86	4.04	3.92	3.90
Standard Deviation	0.80	0.80	0.76	0.86	0.76

Source: Author's own work (2025).

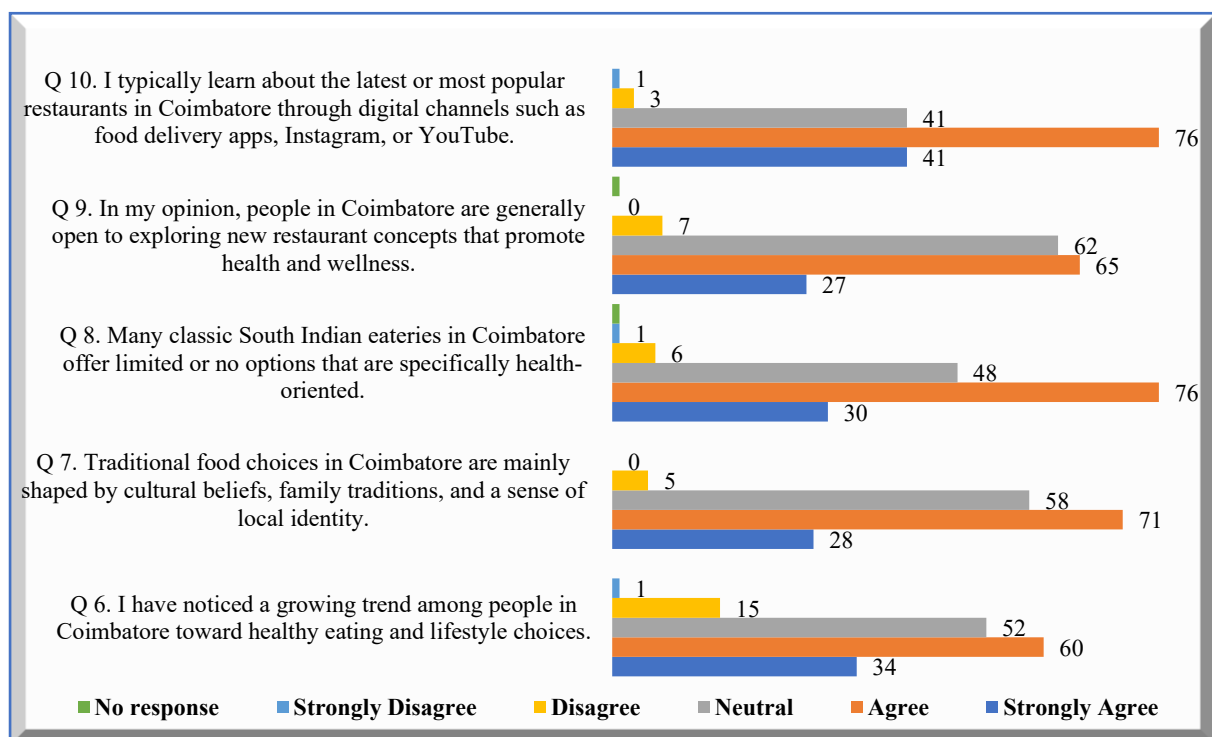
The respondents' attitudes toward health-conscious eating and their preferences for traditional cuisine have been examined. Five statements (Q1–Q5) were evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The results, as shown in figures and table, indicate a predominantly positive outlook among respondents. The mean values for all items ranged between 3.86 and 4.04, suggesting general agreement with the statements, while the standard deviation values (0.76–0.86) indicate consistent opinions across participants. When responses were grouped into Positive (Agree + Strongly Agree), Neutral, and Negative (Disagree + Strongly Disagree) categories, between 66% and 78% of respondents displayed a positive inclination, with only a small fraction (below 5%) expressing disagreement. Overall, the findings reflect that most consumers in Coimbatore demonstrate a favourable attitude toward health-conscious and traditional food choices, signifying an encouraging market for a restaurant concept built on these principles. A smaller but notable portion of neutral responses (18–30%) implies an opportunity to further educate or engage customers who are still undecided about health-focused dining.

These findings reinforce the literature’s emphasis on the convergence of wellness and tradition in modern Indian dining. As discussed in Chapter 2, Value Proposition Design (Osterwalder et al., 2014) frames this balance as a key entrepreneurial opportunity, where businesses address consumer “pains” through wholesome, familiar offerings. The positive attitudes observed here support the view that health-oriented dining in Coimbatore represents both a revival of indigenous wisdom and a response to contemporary lifestyle demands (Ray & Ray, 2022; Mohanan et al., 2025).

4.1.3 QUANTITATIVE INSIGHTS ON LOCAL MARKET AWARENESS AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

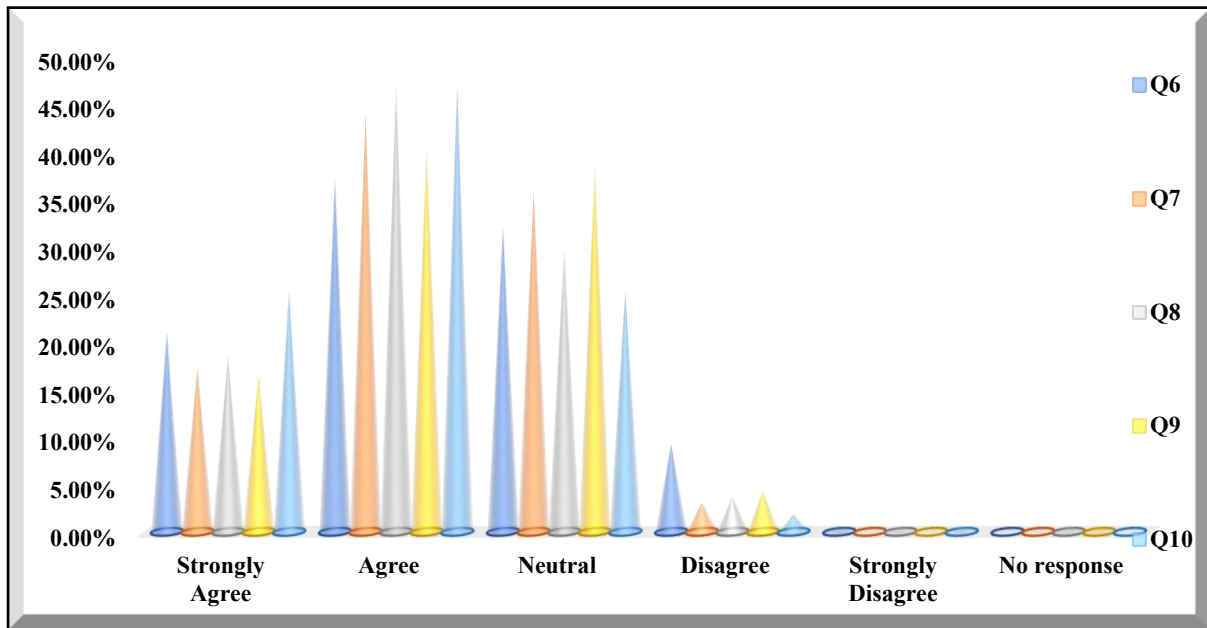
This theme explored how cultural customs, regional preferences, and community beliefs influence consumer perceptions of dining. It offered a clearer perspective on how local tastes influence menu selections and the attractiveness of restaurants. Recognizing these influences guaranteed that the suggested concept aligns with the cultural identity of the Coimbatore market.

Figure 4.12 Frequency of Respondents



Source: Author’s own work (2025).

Figure 4.13 Percentage of Respondents



Source: Author's own work (2025).

Table 4.2 Mean And Standard Deviation for Q6 to Q10

Statement	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Mean	3.69	3.75	3.80	3.70	3.94
Standard Deviation	0.93	0.77	0.80	0.80	0.80

Source: Author's own work (2025).

The respondents' awareness of the local market and the influence of cultural factors on their dining choices, particularly in the context of health and traditional cuisine were analysed. The analysis is based on five statements (Q6–Q10) rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The mean values range between 3.69 and 3.94, reflecting a generally positive perception of cultural and local market aspects. However, the slightly lower mean scores compared to the previous dimension suggest that while consumers recognize the importance of cultural influences, their awareness or engagement with local market factors may still be developing. The standard deviation values (0.77–0.93) indicate moderate consistency among respondents, with Q6 showing slightly higher variation (SD = 0.93), implying mixed views on certain culture-related elements.

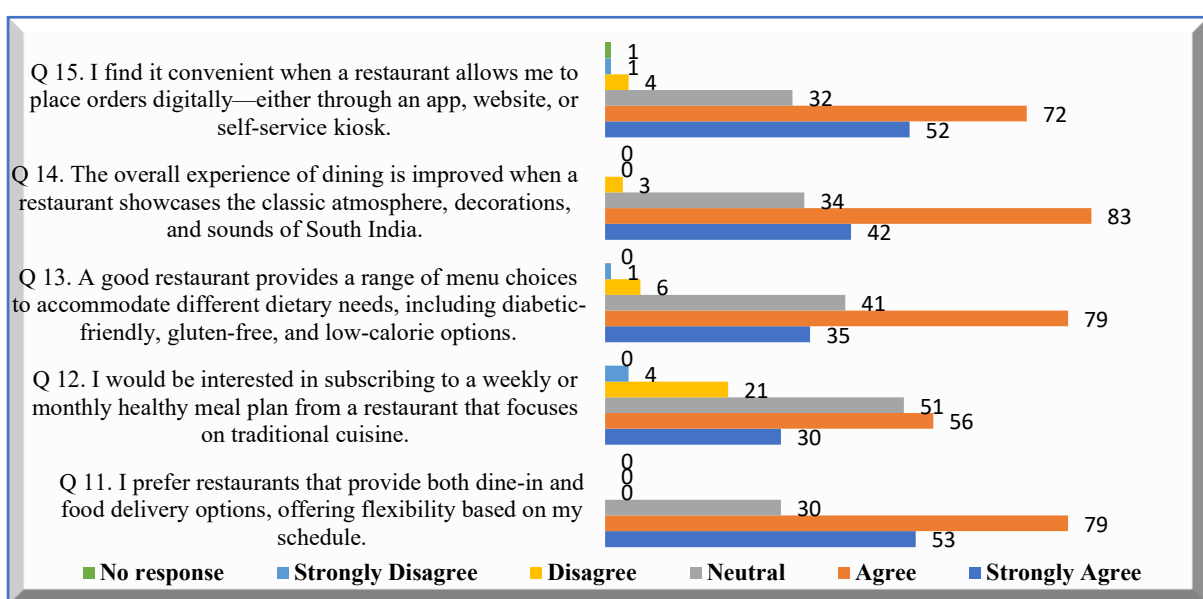
The responses were categorized as Positive (Agree + Strongly Agree), Neutral, and Negative (Disagree + Strongly Disagree), it was observed that between 58% and 72% of respondents expressed positive agreement, whereas 25% to 38% remained neutral. Only a small segment, below 5%, reflected disagreement. These results, illustrated in above figures and table, highlight a favourable perception of cultural authenticity and the significance of local elements in food choices.

The findings substantiate Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), which highlights how food consumption expresses identity and belonging. As indicated in Chapter 2, local cuisines like Kongunadu and Chettinad play an important role in sustaining cultural heritage and regional pride (Saravanakumar, 2025). The continuing value placed on authentic Tamil flavours and local ingredients confirms that cultural resonance remains a powerful determinant of customer loyalty and restaurant differentiation in Coimbatore.

4.1.4 QUANTITATIVE INSIGHTS ON BUSINESS MODEL EXPECTATIONS

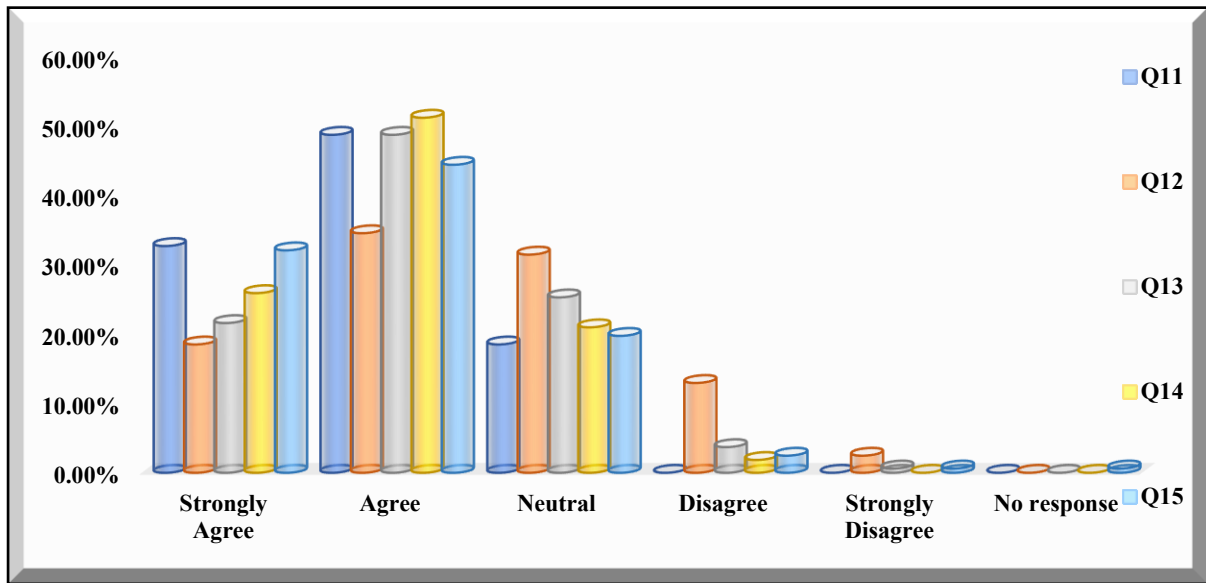
This section focused on understanding what customers expect in terms of pricing, quality, service, and value. Analysing these expectations helped identify the elements that are vital for creating a sustainable and customer-oriented business model. The findings also informed strategies for achieving a balance between operational effectiveness and customer contentment.

Figure 4.14 Frequency of Respondents



Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.15 Percentage of Respondents



Source: Author's own work (2025).

Table 4.3 Mean And Standard Deviation for Q11 to Q15

Statement	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15
Mean	4.14	3.54	3.87	4.01	4.06
Standard Deviation	0.70	1.01	0.81	0.74	0.82

Source: Author's own work (2025).

The respondents' expectations regarding the business model focusing on pricing, menu diversity, value propositions, and overall service delivery were evaluated. The analysis covers five statements (Q11–Q15) measured on a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The mean values range between 3.54 and 4.14, indicating a generally positive perception of the proposed business model. The standard deviation values (0.70–1.01) reflect a moderate level of variation, with Q12 (SD = 1.01) showing slightly higher divergence, suggesting that certain elements of the business model, such as pricing or perceived value, may elicit more diverse opinions among respondents.

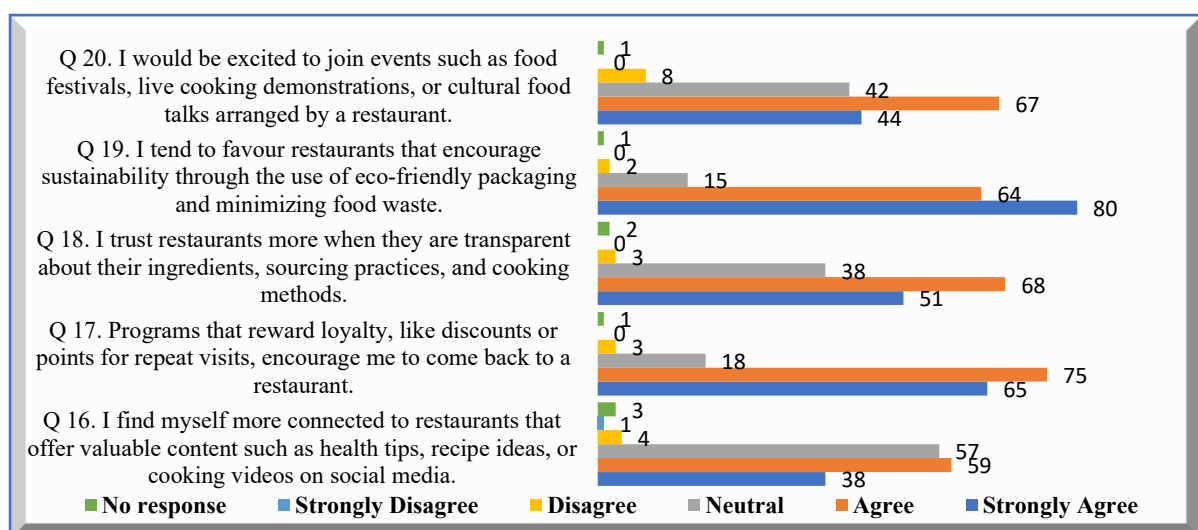
The responses are grouped into Positive (Agree + Strongly Agree), Neutral, and Negative (Disagree + Strongly Disagree) categories have tabled above, it is observed that between 53% and 81% of respondents hold positive expectations of the restaurant's business model. Neutral responses range from 19% to 31%, indicating a portion of the target market is yet to form a

definite opinion, while only a small fraction (below 13%) expressed negative perceptions. These findings, which can be visualized in figures and table, suggest that the proposed business model resonates well with the majority of consumers. However, the noticeable neutral and slightly higher negative responses in areas such as Q12 highlight an opportunity for entrepreneurs to refine pricing strategies, value communication, and promotional approaches to enhance customer confidence and engagement. The positive consumer expectations for quality, hygiene, and authenticity reflect the principles outlined in the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) and Entrepreneurial Process Theory (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991). As highlighted in Chapter 2, effective business models in the Indian food sector integrate operational efficiency with cultural authenticity. The current findings validate this by demonstrating that customers reward ventures that balance value, transparency, and traditional integrity in their offerings.

4.1.5 QUANTITATIVE INSIGHTS ON CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT, LOYALTY AND BRANDING

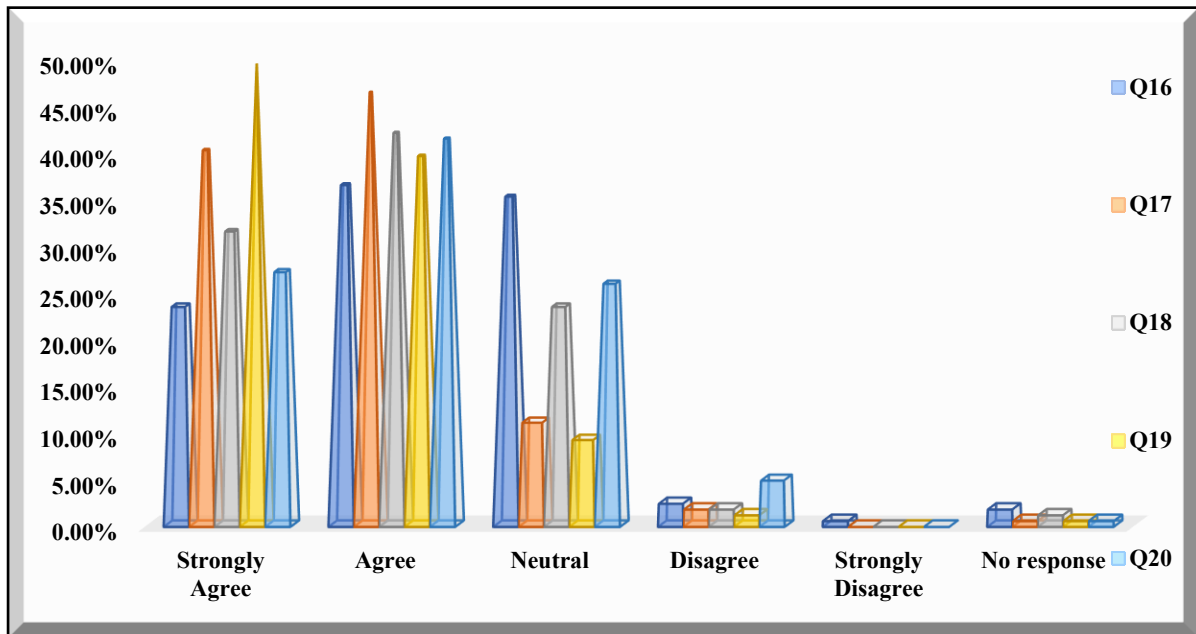
This part explored how customers connect with brands and what drives repeat patronage and trust. It highlighted the role of positive experiences and consistent communication in building long-term loyalty. These insights were vital for developing effective branding and engagement strategies within the competitive restaurant market.

Figure 4.16 Frequency of Respondents



Source: Author's own work (2025).

Figure 4.17 Percentage of Respondents



Source: Author's own work (2025).

Table 4.4 Mean And Standard Deviation for Q16 to Q20

Statement	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
Mean	3.81	4.25	4.04	4.38	3.91
Standard Deviation	0.85	0.72	0.79	0.70	0.85

Source: Author's own work (2025).

The respondents' perceptions regarding customer engagement, loyalty, and branding strategies for a health-focused traditional cuisine restaurant were explored. The analysis is based on five statements (Q16–Q20) measured on a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The mean values, ranging from 3.81 to 4.38, indicate a generally strong positive sentiment toward engagement initiatives and brand positioning. Standard deviation values (0.70–0.85) suggest moderate consistency in responses, with slightly higher variation in Q16 and Q20, indicating differing opinions about certain aspects of loyalty programs or branding efforts. Overall, these results suggest that respondents place substantial importance on relationship-building, brand image, and repeat engagement when considering a new dining experience.

The responses are grouped into Positive (Strongly Agree + Agree), Neutral, and Negative (Disagree + Strongly Disagree) categories and have indicated in table, it is observed that

between 59.9% and 88.9% of respondents express positive views, reflecting strong overall acceptance of engagement and branding measures. Neutral responses range from 9.3% to 35.2%, indicating that a segment of the market is still undecided, while negative perceptions are minimal (below 6%). The data, visualized in figures and table, highlights that strategic branding and loyalty initiatives are likely to resonate with the majority of consumers. However, the relatively higher neutral response for Q16 and Q20 suggests that there is scope to educate and communicate the value of engagement programs to build stronger connections with the target audience.

These results closely align with Customer-Centricity Theory (Shah et al., 2006), which emphasises empathy, trust, and relationship-building as the basis of sustained customer engagement. Echoing Chapter 2, where emotional resonance and authenticity were identified as drivers of loyalty, this study's findings confirm that in Coimbatore's restaurant market, enduring patronage arises not merely from satisfaction but from meaningful cultural connection and consistent brand reliability.

4.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

While the quantitative results revealed measurable patterns of consumer behaviour, the qualitative findings add depth by uncovering the motivations and cultural meanings behind them. This section analyses data from semi-structured interviews with restaurant owners, caterers, and consumers, guided by frameworks discussed in Chapter 2 such as Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), Customer-Centricity Theory (Shah et al., 2006), and Entrepreneurial Process Theory (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991). These perspectives help explain how personal experience, cultural identity, and business strategy interact within Coimbatore's evolving food sector. Together, the qualitative insights complement the survey findings, providing a more holistic understanding of how health-focused traditional food ventures balance authenticity, innovation, and customer value.

A pilot study involving two participants was conducted prior to refine the interview guide. Insights from this pilot helped ensure the clarity, relevance, and reliability of the data collection instrument.

4.2.1 QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS ON CONSUMER CHOICES AND HEALTH-CONSCIOUS HABITS

Section A explores consumer preferences and health-conscious behaviours within the realm of traditional South Indian cuisine. Question 1 seeks to understand which health-conscious traditional dishes consumers would most like to see featured on restaurant menus in Coimbatore, while Question 2 delves into the ingredients and cooking methods they associate with both health and culinary tradition.

Table 4.5 Thematic Analysis of Consumer Choices And Health- Conscious Habits

Main Theme	Subthemes	Key Insights	Illustrative Quotes
Section A: Consumer Preferences & Health-Conscious Behaviour	Millet-based diets- Low-oil, steamed food preferences- Awareness of balanced nutrition	Consumers increasingly demonstrate a preference for traditional dishes that are both nutritious and familiar. Health-conscious choices, such as ragi idli, varagu pongal, and kambu koozh, are viewed as complementary to cultural taste preferences rather than replacements.	“We include ragi and upma- healthy, filling, and traditional (R3).” “People now ask for millets and sesame oil (R5).”

Source: Author’s own work (2025).

The qualitative interviews reveal a clear shift toward health-oriented eating habits among consumers. Participants consistently noted growing demand for traditional dishes prepared with millets, minimal oil, and native ingredients reflecting a balance between nutritional awareness and cultural familiarity.

A catering service owner (Respondent 3) remarked, “Include kanji (maize and ragi) and upma these are healthy, familiar, and suit everyone’s digestion.” Similarly, a street-food operator

(Respondent 5) observed, “People now ask for millets and cold-pressed oils. They want food that feels both homely and healthy.”

These insights suggest that health consciousness complements rather than replaces traditional taste preferences. Consumers increasingly view health as an added value within familiar food experiences, aligning with research that positions health as both a functional and symbolic attribute in consumer choice (Raghunathan, 2022).

4.2.2 QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS ON LOCAL MARKET AWARENESS AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Section B focuses on understanding local market awareness and the role of cultural influences in shaping food choices in Coimbatore. Question 3 investigates how receptive people are to healthier versions of traditional dishes, while Question 4 invites participants to highlight restaurants or trends that effectively blend cultural authenticity with health-conscious practices.

Table 4.6 Thematic Analysis of Local Market Awareness & Cultural Influences

Main Theme	Subthemes	Key Insights	Illustrative Quotes
Section B: Local Market Awareness & Cultural Influences	Authentic Tamil flavours- Local ingredients as identity- Cultural pride in cuisine	The local food culture of Coimbatore strongly shapes consumer expectations. Authentic Tamil flavours and regionally sourced ingredients reinforce cultural identity, influencing both customer choices and brand positioning.	“Our Tamil cooking itself is healthy (R4).” “Customers love authentic village-style taste (R2).”

Source: Author’s own work (2025).

The food market in Coimbatore is deeply rooted in cultural authenticity, with stakeholders expressing pride in preserving traditional Tamil culinary heritage. This commitment is seen not only as an ethical responsibility but also as a key differentiator in a competitive market. As one traditional restaurant owner (Respondent 4) remarked: "Our Tamil cooking is inherently

healthy. We incorporate indigenous ingredients such as sesame oil and moringa leaves. Why alter a system that has proven effective over time?". Another participant highlighted the emotional resonance of traditional flavours: "Customers are drawn to that genuine village-style flavour it fosters an emotional bond with their cultural roots." (Respondent 2)

These perspectives emphasize that cultural authenticity forms the foundation of trust among local consumers. In an era of globalized fast-food options, adherence to traditional practices is a strategic strength, reinforcing local identity through menu design, linguistic cues, and aesthetic presentation, while fostering meaningful connections within the Coimbatore community.

4.2.3 QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS ON BUSINESS MODEL EXPECTATIONS

Section C explores business model expectations and entrepreneurial strategies in the context of health-focused traditional cuisine. Questions 5 to 7 aim to understand what qualities and services encourage customer loyalty, the challenges new restaurants may face in offering healthy traditional dishes in Coimbatore, and participants' visions of an ideal restaurant model that balances health-consciousness with cultural authenticity.

Table 4.7 Thematic Analysis of Business Model Expectations

Main Theme	Subthemes	Key Insights	Illustrative Quotes
Section C: Business Model Expectations & Entrepreneurial Strategy	Health branding as differentiation- Blending tradition and innovation- Menu design, pricing, and sourcing	Entrepreneurs aim to position their ventures as "healthy traditional" brands by integrating local sourcing, hygienic preparation, and balanced pricing. Strategies emphasize innovation within the framework of tradition to meet consumer expectations.	"We must highlight native ingredients (R6)". "Pricing is key- millets cost more but customers expect value (R10)."

Source: Author's own work (2025).

Entrepreneurs consistently described a strategic approach of positioning their ventures as “healthy traditional” brands. This strategy integrates traditional culinary practices with thoughtful innovation, focusing on menu design, pricing, local sourcing, and adherence to hygiene and quality standards. As one respondent noted, “We must highlight native ingredients” (R6), while another emphasized, “Pricing is key millets cost more but customers expect value” (R10). Together, these insights illustrate a model in which innovation is carefully balanced within a traditional framework, ensuring that health, taste, and cultural authenticity remain central to business strategy.

4.2.4 QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS ON CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT, LOYALTY AND BRANDING

Section D examines customer engagement, loyalty, and the strategic integration of branding in health-focused traditional restaurants. Questions 8 to 10 explore the brand values that foster trust and connection, the types of content that encourage online engagement, and participants’ recommendations for aspiring restaurateurs in Coimbatore.

Table 4.8 Thematic Analysis of Customer Engagement, Loyalty & Branding

Main Theme	Subthemes	Key Insights	Illustrative Quotes
Section D: Customer Engagement, Loyalty, Branding & Strategic Integration	Consistency, hygiene, and trust- Authenticity- driven loyalty- Word-of-mouth branding and customer retention	Customer loyalty is nurtured through consistent quality, hygiene, and a strong connection to traditional authenticity. Repeat patronage is driven not only by satisfaction but also by the emotional resonance of culturally familiar experiences.	“Good service and reliability keep people coming back (R9).” “Authentic village flavours make them loyal (R4).”

Source: Author’s own work (2025).

Participants emphasized that customer retention and brand loyalty are strongly linked to consistency, authenticity, and the cultivation of emotional connections. Ensuring reliable quality and culturally meaningful experiences fosters trust and encourages repeat patronage. As one respondent noted, “Good service and reliability keep people coming back” (R9), while another observed, “Authentic village flavours make them loyal” (R4). These insights indicate that effective customer engagement in traditional, health-oriented restaurants extends beyond transactional satisfaction, highlighting the relational and cultural dimensions of loyalty.

4.3 ANALYTICAL INTERPRETATION

The findings indicate that consumer preferences in Coimbatore are strongly shaped by the intersection of cultural authenticity and health consciousness. Participants expressed a clear inclination toward traditional dishes prepared with indigenous, health-promoting ingredients, suggesting that culinary choices are guided not only by nutrition but also by emotional and cultural connections. Openness to healthier adaptations of traditional foods was generally positive, particularly when innovations respected familiar flavours and traditions, highlighting the importance of trust and cultural resonance in consumer acceptance.

Entrepreneurs reflected this understanding in their business strategies, emphasizing “healthy traditional” positioning through menu design, pricing, local sourcing, and consistent quality. Customer loyalty and engagement were closely tied to authenticity, reliability, and culturally meaningful experiences, indicating that relational and emotional factors are as important as functional satisfaction. Overall, success in Coimbatore’s health-focused traditional food segment appears to rely on integrating cultural heritage, health-conscious innovation, and relational branding to foster trust, repeat patronage, and sustainable competitive advantage.

4.4 ANALYTICAL DEPTH AND CRITICAL COMMENTARY

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings shows that Coimbatore’s restaurant consumers and entrepreneurs operate within a complex ecosystem shaped by health consciousness, cultural identity, and experiential value. The results support the theoretical foundations of Chapter 2 while highlighting key tensions. Quantitative analysis confirms strong interest in healthy traditional cuisine, whereas qualitative insights reveal this enthusiasm is

moderated by price sensitivity, convenience, and awareness gaps, underscoring the need for market positioning that balances aspiration with affordability.

The findings extend Entrepreneurial Process Theory by showing that opportunity recognition in food entrepreneurship is increasingly shaped by socio-cultural legitimacy, not just market efficiency.

Similarly, Customer-Centricity Theory is reframed locally, where empathy and authenticity, rather than digital convenience alone, drive engagement. Consumer Culture Theory is also dynamic cultural symbolism and health orientation intersect to create hybrid consumption identities that are neither wholly traditional nor fully modern.

The study highlights an entrepreneurial paradox: consumers desire authenticity while expecting innovation, efficiency, and global service quality. This demands adaptive strategies reconciling emotional loyalty with operational scalability. Success in Coimbatore's food sector depends on interpreting culture as strategy, transforming heritage into a sustainable competitive advantage.

In conclusion, Coimbatore's dining scene is shaped by cultural authenticity, health awareness, and entrepreneurial innovation. The results reaffirm the theoretical perspectives from Chapter 2, showing how consumer behaviour and value creation converge in a culturally rooted market. Building on these insights, the next chapter translates empirical outcomes into practical strategies for developing a customer-focused, health-oriented traditional restaurant.

Table 4.9 Alignment of Research Objectives, Key Findings, and Theoretical Frameworks

Theme	Research Objective Addressed	Supporting Theories (from Chapter.2)	Key Insights
Consumer Preferences & Health-Conscious Behaviour	To assess how health awareness shapes dining choices	Value Proposition Design; Consumer Culture Theory	Strong preference for health-traditional fusion; moderate education gap

Local Market & Cultural Influences	To explore cultural identity's role in food selection	Consumer Culture Theory; Regional Consumer Behaviour	Authenticity and Tamil identity drive loyalty
Business Model Expectations	To identify consumer-driven business model expectations	Business Model Canvas; Entrepreneurial Process Theory	Demand for balanced pricing, hygiene, and native ingredients
Customer Engagement & Branding	To evaluate loyalty and branding strategies	Customer-Centricity Theory	Emotional resonance and authenticity reinforce repeat patronage.

Source: Author's own work (2025).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a comprehensive synthesis and interpretation of the findings drawn from both the quantitative survey and the qualitative interviews conducted in Coimbatore. Its central aim is to contextualize these results within established theoretical frameworks, thereby revealing their broader implications for management practice, academic theory, and real-world application.

By integrating quantitative and qualitative perspectives, this chapter reveals how health consciousness, cultural authenticity, and strategic business approaches intersect to shape Coimbatore's rapidly evolving restaurant landscape. Beyond mere numbers or isolated narratives, the findings capture the lived experiences of local consumers and entrepreneurs, highlighting how regional identity, lifestyle trends, and entrepreneurial vision converge to redefine dining culture. This synthesis not only enhances understanding of consumer behaviour in a regional context but also offers actionable insights for restaurateurs seeking to navigate and innovate within this dynamic market, while contributing meaningfully to the broader theoretical discourse on entrepreneurship and consumer culture.

Building on the empirical findings presented in Chapter 4, this section interprets the results through the theoretic lenses delineated in Chapter 2. Each framework is applied to explain how consumer preferences, entrepreneurial behaviour, and cultural dynamics interact within Coimbatore's evolving food ecosystem. By aligning data-driven insights with established theories such as Entrepreneurial Process Theory, Customer-Centricity, Value Proposition Design, Consumer Culture Theory, and the Business Model Canvas, the discussion translates observed patterns into broader conceptual understanding, reinforcing both the theoretical and practical significance of the study.

5.1 ENTREPRENEURIAL PROCESS THEORY: FROM OPPORTUNITY TO VALUE CREATION

Entrepreneurial Process Theory frames entrepreneurship as a process of opportunity recognition, resource mobilisation, and value creation (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991). In Coimbatore, this occurs within a cultural landscape increasingly attuned to health consciousness and traditional cuisine. The study shows 78% of respondents preferred traditional foods adapted to modern health needs, reflecting a shift from convenience-focused

fast food to nutritionally meaningful alternatives. Interview data corroborate this, with restaurateurs noting frequent customer inquiries about healthier preparation methods, local ingredients, and home-style dishes.

Restaurateurs mobilised both cultural and culinary expertise as strategic resources. Heritage knowledge was treated strategically: cooks trained in traditional recipes were employed, and grains and oils were sourced from regional farms. Investments extended to Tamil-themed interiors and supply chain relationships ensuring consistent access to fresh local produce. These examples demonstrate that resource mobilisation incorporates cultural and social capital alongside financial and operational assets.

Value creation occurred where cultural resources met contemporary health expectations. Millet-based dishes, cold-pressed oils, and regionally significant greens aligned tradition with modern well-being, satisfying both nostalgia and nutritional needs. Coimbatore's restaurateurs exemplify culturally grounded entrepreneurship, showing that opportunity recognition and value creation are embedded in local contexts rather than abstract economic processes.

These findings reaffirm and extend Bygrave and Hofer's (1991) model while extending it, highlighting cultural and social capital as strategic resources. Heritage knowledge and regional networks actively enable value creation, illustrating entrepreneurship in emerging markets as both economic process and cultural.

5.2 CUSTOMER-CENTRICITY: UNDERSTANDING THE HUMAN BEHIND THE CUSTOMER

Customer-Centricity Theory posits that relationships should be grounded in empathy and understanding of needs and emotions (Shah et al., 2006). The study supports this: 86% of respondents identified consistent service, hygiene, and personal interaction as key loyalty drivers. Coimbatore diners value connection, care, and familiarity, not just food.

Interviews illustrated this in practice. Owners tracked regular customers' preferred dishes, spice levels, or nutritional limits. Some remembered families by name, inquired about well-being, or prepared customised meals for children or older adults. These small, repeated interactions build long-term trust.

From the consumer perspective, relational engagement shapes dining choices. Patrons frequented restaurants where staff recognised them and created comfort. For many, such interactions were crucial when selecting traditional restaurants, which often evoke home-like memories. Dining emerges as a social and emotional experience rather than a purely transactional act.

Culturally, restaurateurs balanced modern dietary adaptations with traditional flavours. This blend of empathy and cultural sensitivity aligns with Shah et al.'s (2006) assertion that emotional alignment, not transactional efficiency, underpins durable customer relationships. In Coimbatore, customer-centricity manifests as cultural respect, personal connection, and attentive service.

5.3 VALUE PROPOSITION DESIGN: BALANCING HEALTH AND HERITAGE

Value Proposition Design (Osterwalder et al., 2014) focuses on creating offerings that bridge customer desires and unmet needs. In Coimbatore, diners seek dishes that preserve cultural identity while meeting contemporary health standards, with over 70% preferring meals combining nutrition and reliable taste.

Restaurateurs responded by adapting traditional recipes without disrupting heritage. Interviewees reported substituting refined grains with millets, using cold-pressed oils, and sourcing regional greens and spices. These modifications were embedded in the Tamil culinary narrative, often accompanied by explanations of ingredient origins and benefits, reconnecting consumers with fading traditions.

Consumers valued this approach as it enabled responsible yet comforting food choices. Dining merged past and present: dishes evoked family meals while fitting modern lifestyles. This dual resonance culinary and emotional forms the core of the region's value proposition.

Value creation here is multidimensional, addressing health, cultural memory, and taste integrity. This aligns with Osterwalder et al. (2014), who argue that strong value propositions meet emotional and social aspirations alongside functional needs. Coimbatore restaurateurs succeed by offering food that nurtures both body and social identity.

This interpretation broadens Osterwalder et al.'s framework, demonstrating that innovation can arise through cultural continuity. Restaurateurs differentiate not by abandoning tradition but by

reinterpreting it, transforming heritage dishes into contemporary expressions of health and authenticity.

5.4 CONSUMER CULTURE THEORY: FOOD AS CULTURAL EXPRESSION

Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) frames consumption as a site for negotiating and expressing identity. In Coimbatore, 72% of respondents indicated that cultural familiarity influenced their dining choices, a finding reinforced by interviews. Restaurateurs noted customers sought dishes “like home” or reminiscent of village cooking, highlighting dining as a medium for cultural reaffirmation.

Restaurateurs often act as heritage custodians, preserving traditional methods, spices, and flavours that connect patrons to Tamil identity. While adapting presentation for urban contexts—for example, modern plating of millet-based dishes preparation remained faithful to regional norms. This demonstrates that culture is actively reshaped rather than static.

The interplay of tradition and modernity shows that identity in Coimbatore is continuously performed. Food allows individuals to navigate heritage, wellness trends, and regional pride, aligning with Arnould and Thompson’s (2005) view of consumption as cultural expression rather than mere utility.

These findings extend the theory by showing that, in collectivist contexts like Tamil Nadu, consumption supports both individual identity and collective cultural preservation. Traditional eating thus becomes a shared performance of belonging, reinforcing community ties while accommodating contemporary wellness values.

5.5 THE BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS: FROM VISION TO STRUCTURE

Mapping the findings onto the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) provides a structured view of how Coimbatore’s restaurateurs translate cultural values into operational models. Core customer segments include families, working professionals, and younger consumers seeking dining experiences that blend health, convenience, and authenticity. These groups reflect Coimbatore’s evolving demographic: health-conscious, culturally rooted, and digitally connected.

The value proposition revolves around traditional dishes thoughtfully revised for current health requirements. Entrepreneurs emphasised local ingredients, transparent preparation, and flavours evoking cultural memory. Offerings were delivered via dine-in, catering, takeaway, and online platforms. Festival menus, seasonal specials, and social media content further enhanced engagement and access.

Customer relationships relied on personalised service and consistent quality. Restaurateurs described forming familial bonds with regulars, extending interactions beyond transactions. This relational approach supported loyalty and reinforced cultural sensibilities tied to traditional dining.

Key resources included skilled cooks trained in traditional techniques, trusted relationships with local farmers, and inherited culinary knowledge. These underpinned operational consistency and authenticity. Revenue streams were diversified across dine-in, catering, digital orders, and festive offerings, allowing stability amid fluctuating demand.

The Business Model Canvas demonstrates how cultural authenticity can be systematically organised into a sustainable and adaptable urban business structure.

5.6 INTEGRATIVE INSIGHTS: CULTURE AS A LIVING FRAMEWORK

Bringing together all six frameworks reveals that entrepreneurship in Coimbatore's traditional food sector operates through an overarching logic rooted in culture. Opportunity recognition is shaped by cultural trends and health transitions; resource mobilisation is grounded in traditional knowledge and regional relationships; and value creation blends emotional, nutritional and sensory dimensions. Customer loyalty emerges not from marketing alone but from empathy, memory and shared identity. Practical business structures reinforce these cultural values, creating models that are resilient and meaningful.

Culture therefore functions not as a backdrop but as an organising principle that shapes entrepreneurial behaviour. Restaurateurs in Coimbatore do not merely serve food; they curate cultural experiences that speak to identity, belonging and well-being.

This integrative understanding reaffirms the conceptual framework introduced in Chapter 2, demonstrating that successful entrepreneurship in Coimbatore's traditional food sector depends on the dynamic intersection of cultural authenticity, health consciousness, and adaptive

business strategy each functioning as mutually reinforcing drivers of sustainable value creation.

Together, these insights bridge cultural theory and entrepreneurial application, setting the stage for practical implications on how restaurateurs and policymakers can operationalise these findings within Coimbatore's food ecosystem.

5.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICE

Building on the theoretical synthesis, this section translates insights into actionable strategies for entrepreneurs, managers, and policymakers in Coimbatore's food sector. Cultural authenticity, customer empathy, and health-oriented innovation emerge as levers for competitive advantage, enhancing brand credibility, loyalty, and sustainable business models that reflect community identity and evolving lifestyles.

Authenticity underpins trust and differentiation, as modern consumers value experiences that are genuine and emotionally resonant (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Entrepreneurs can reinforce this through transparent sourcing, preparation, and explanation of cultural meaning. Using local ingredients and sharing heritage narratives nurtures emotional linking and concern.

Engagement is strengthened by co-creating value with diners through participatory experiences such as tasting events, cultural storytelling, cuisine demonstrations, menus for festival time, or culinary events, which encourage repeat visits and loyalty (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Personalised service, remembering preferences, greeting families, or adapting dishes for dietary needs reinforces relational dining.

Innovation should balance health focus with accessibility. While sourcing traditional health-based ingredients may be costly, inclusive pricing attracts broader segments. Digital storytelling on social media highlighting farmers, health benefits, or cultural narratives extends reach and differentiates brands.

Policymakers play an empowering role. Supporting farmer–restaurant partnerships strengthen local supply chains, while training on indigenous nutrition, sustainable culinary practices, and business management fosters culturally conscious entrepreneurship. Public initiatives such as food festivals and awareness campaigns can promote regional cuisine and healthier eating patterns.

These implications demonstrate how business strategy intertwined with cultural sensitivity allows restaurants to operate as both commercial ventures and community anchors.

While these managerial implications highlight real-world strategies for sustaining culturally rooted entrepreneurship, the discussion also carries broader academic significance, contributing new dimensions to existing theoretical frameworks.

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5.8 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The preceding discussion established the managerial significance of aligning cultural authenticity, health consciousness, and customer engagement in Coimbatore's restaurant sector. This section examines how the study extends and refines theoretical frameworks from Chapter 2. By integrating insights from Entrepreneurial Process Theory, Customer-Centricity Theory, Consumer Culture Theory, Value Proposition Design, and the Business Model Canvas, the research offers a context-sensitive understanding of entrepreneurship. It shows how cultural heritage functions as both a strategic resource and a lens for conceptualising value creation, customer relationships, and innovation in emerging urban markets.

The study contributes theoretically in several ways. First, it expands Entrepreneurial Process Theory by showing cultural heritage as both a resource and an opportunity. Entrepreneurs in Coimbatore mobilise cultural knowledge, memories, and regional identity alongside physical resources, illustrating a holistic view of opportunity recognition.

Second, it enriches Customer-Centricity Theory by revealing how emotional and cultural alignment shapes loyalty. Beyond empathy and service, familiarity with taste, preparation, and ingredient origin emerges as a key dimension of customer-centricity.

Third, it extends Consumer Culture Theory by showing traditional cuisine as a means of identity negotiation, not merely consumption. Food choices express belonging, cultural continuity, and social connection, demonstrating how heritage is reinterpreted in urban contexts. Together, these contributions broaden understanding of entrepreneurship in emerging markets where cultural identity actively shapes economic behaviour.

Collectively, these insights bridge conceptual and empirical dimensions, reaffirming that Coimbatore's food entrepreneurship ecosystem is a living model of culturally informed innovation. The conclusion synthesises these contributions, summarising key findings and outlining directions for future practice and research.

Building on these theoretical contributions, the following conclusion synthesises the study's overall findings, reaffirms its original research objectives, and identifies how Coimbatore's restaurant entrepreneurs exemplify a model of human-centred, culturally embedded innovation.

5.9 CONCLUSION

Drawing from the theoretical and practical insights explored previously, this final section summarizes the main findings of the research and considers their wider implications. It revisits the original research aim and objectives, linking them directly to the empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks explored throughout the dissertation. By integrating these dimensions, the conclusion highlights how Coimbatore's restaurant entrepreneurs demonstrate a distinct form of culturally grounded, health-conscious entrepreneurship that bridges heritage and innovation. The following synthesis summarises the central insights, distils their implications, and outlines potential directions for future research and practice.

This research began with a meaningful question: Can a restaurant celebrate Tamil culinary tradition while meeting the health expectations of a modern city? Exploring Coimbatore's food landscape shows the answer lies in harmonising past and present crafting cuisine that is familiar yet responsible, traditional yet thoughtful, and comforting yet conscientious.

Across Coimbatore, this balance is visible. In a small eatery, a family shares pongal made with millets and cold-pressed sesame oil. The parent tells their child, "This is how our ancestors ate healthy and full of flavour." Elsewhere, a young professional orders a moringa dosa online, drawn by its nutritional and cultural significance. Survey data reinforce this pattern: over three-quarters of respondents prefer meals that sustain both cultural memory and bodily well-being, blending innovation with authenticity.

Entrepreneurs are aware of this expectation. One restaurateur said, "When a regular asks for the cold-pressed oil of sundal, we're keeping memories alive." Another recounted a Pongal festival menu where families came not just for food, but to connect with home and heritage.

Across these narratives, trust, hygiene, and emotional connection emerge as core loyalty pillars, often outweighing price or marketing. For Coimbatore diners, food is a language of identity, preserved by restaurateurs through menus, service, and storytelling.

Theoretically, this study shows entrepreneurship in this domain is economic, cultural, and human. Frameworks like Customer-Centricity (Shah et al., 2006) and Value Proposition Design (Osterwalder et al., 2014) highlight how empathy and authenticity underpin sustainable success. Restaurateurs treating customers as collaborators in preserving culinary heritage create experiences that are nourishing and meaningful. One chef described a tasting event where patrons contributed family recipes for millet-based snacks, exemplifying value co-creation.

Three key insights emerge: health and heritage can coexist modern dining can be nutritious while retaining Tamil cuisine's warmth and identity; authenticity builds trust through transparency, local sourcing, and consistent practices; and entrepreneurship can be empathetic, honouring people as well as profit.

Coimbatore's food entrepreneurs are storytellers and custodians of care, balancing heritage and modernity to offer food that is familiar yet responsible. Restaurants become spaces where culture, care, and continuity converge, connecting generations, celebrating Tamil identity, and nurturing collective well-being. By aligning authenticity with adaptability, they redefine eating as mindful, culturally grounded, and socially resonant a model for sustainable, human-centred entrepreneurship in emerging urban markets.

5.10 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented below derive directly from the study's findings and are framed to address the original research objectives. They aim to support entrepreneurs, policymakers, and researchers in fostering culturally grounded, health-oriented food entrepreneurship in Coimbatore.

For entrepreneurs, the opportunity lies in blending traditional health foods—such as millet, sesame oil, and herbal spice blends into contemporary menu offerings. One restaurateur described introducing a millet-based pongal for breakfast, noting, “Customers loved that it reminded them of home, but they also appreciated that it was more nutritious and less heavy than the typical version.” Narrating the cultural and nutritional significance of each dish further

deepens engagement; menus that explain the heritage behind recipes, or highlight the benefits of local spices, allow diners to connect emotionally with the meal. Loyalty programmes can be made more meaningful by personalising interactions recognising regular customers' favourite dishes, celebrating birthdays with traditional treats, or offering curated tasting experiences rather than generic discounts turning each visit into a shared cultural moment.

Policymakers and industry bodies can amplify these practices through tangible support. Facilitating partnerships between farmers and restaurants not only strengthens local sourcing but also reinforces trust in authenticity. One cooperative initiative in Coimbatore enabled restaurateurs to source fresh moringa leaves and gingelly oil directly from local farmers, creating a narrative of transparency that customers valued deeply. Training programmes focused on sustainable food entrepreneurship and indigenous nutrition can equip stakeholders to combine business acumen with cultural sensitivity. Public awareness campaigns, such as city-wide festivals celebrating regional foods or workshops on traditional healthful cooking, can further foster informed dietary choices and community well-being.

For future research, comparative studies across South Indian cities could reveal how local culture shapes consumer behaviour and culinary preferences, offering insights for context-sensitive strategies. Longitudinal investigations could track how culturally embedded, health-focused dining influences customer loyalty and community health over time, capturing both social and nutritional impacts. Incorporating environmental sustainability metrics would provide a holistic view, ensuring that initiatives honour ecological responsibility alongside cultural and economic objectives.

Taken together, these recommendations illustrate that Coimbatore's health-oriented traditional restaurant movement is a form of empathetic entrepreneurship, rooted in culture, care, and innovation. Restaurateurs are not simply selling meals they are creating experiences that preserve heritage, support community, and promote well-being. By balancing progress with preservation, these businesses demonstrate that entrepreneurship can be simultaneously economically viable, culturally resonant, and socially meaningful, offering a blueprint for the future of Indian dining that nurtures both body and identity.

Implementing these measures can ensure that Coimbatore's food enterprises evolve as inclusive, sustainable, and culturally expressive models of modern Indian cuisine.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A- Quantitative Questionnaire

Section A: Consumer Preferences & Health-Conscious Behaviour

1. I usually prefer eating traditional South Indian cuisine (such as dosa, idli, sambar, pongal) over other types of food like North Indian, Chinese, or continental when dining out.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
2. When selecting a restaurant, I actively consider the health value and nutritional content of the food being offered, rather than only focusing on taste or quantity.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
3. I am open to trying healthier or modified versions of traditional South Indian dishes, such as using less oil, steamed preparations, or millets instead of rice.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree

4. I am open to spending a bit more on meals that incorporate health-focused ingredients (like organic vegetables, cold-pressed oils, and whole grains) in their cooking.
- a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
5. I tend to prefer restaurants that provide the option to customize dishes based on individual health requirements, such as those that offer choices with lower oil, salt, or spice content.
- a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree

Section B: Local Market Awareness & Cultural Influences

6. I have noticed a growing trend among people in Coimbatore toward healthy eating and lifestyle choices.
- a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
7. Traditional food choices in Coimbatore are mainly shaped by cultural beliefs, family traditions, and a sense of local identity.
- a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
8. Many classic South Indian eateries in Coimbatore offer limited or no options that are specifically health-oriented.
- a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
9. In my opinion, people in Coimbatore are generally open to exploring new restaurant concepts that promote health and wellness.
- a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
10. I typically learn about the latest or most popular restaurants in Coimbatore through digital channels such as food delivery apps, Instagram, or YouTube.
- a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree

Section C: Business Model Expectations

11. I prefer restaurants that provide both dine-in and food delivery options, offering flexibility based on my schedule.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
12. I would be interested in subscribing to a weekly or monthly healthy meal plan from a restaurant that focuses on traditional cuisine.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
13. A good restaurant provides a range of menu choices to accommodate different dietary needs, including diabetic-friendly, gluten-free, and low-calorie options.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
14. The overall experience of dining is improved when a restaurant showcases the classic atmosphere, decorations, and sounds of South India.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
15. I find it convenient when a restaurant allows me to place orders digitally—either through an app, website, or self-service kiosk.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree

Section D: Customer Engagement, Loyalty & Branding

16. I find myself more connected to restaurants that offer valuable content such as health tips, recipe ideas, or cooking videos on social media.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
17. Programs that reward loyalty, like discounts or points for repeat visits, encourage me to come back to a restaurant.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree
18. I trust restaurants more when they are transparent about their ingredients, sourcing practices, and cooking methods.
a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree

19. I tend to favour restaurants that encourage sustainability through the use of eco-friendly packaging and minimizing food waste.

a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree

20. I would be excited to join events such as food festivals, live cooking demonstrations, or cultural food talks arranged by a restaurant.

a) Strongly Agree b) Agree c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagree

Appendix B- Qualitative survey

Section A: Consumer Preferences & Health Awareness

1. What health-conscious traditional dishes would you most like to see on a restaurant menu in Coimbatore?
2. What kind of ingredients or cooking styles do you associate with both health and tradition in South Indian food?

Section B: Local Market & Cultural Influences

3. In your view, how open are people in Coimbatore to trying healthy versions of traditional foods? Why?
4. Can you share any example of a restaurant or food trend in Coimbatore that successfully blends tradition and health?

Section C: Business Model Expectations & Entrepreneurial Strategy

5. Which qualities or services would motivate you to go back to a health-focused classic restaurant?
6. What specific challenges do you think a new restaurant might face while offering healthy traditional cuisine in Coimbatore?
7. What would an ideal restaurant model (menu, pricing, service style) look like to you, if it combined both health-conscious and traditional South Indian elements?

Section D: Customer Engagement, Loyalty, Branding & Strategic Integration

8. What brand image or values would encourage you to trust and feel a sense of connection to a traditional, health-oriented dining establishment?
9. What kind of content (e.g., social media posts, videos, blogs) would make you follow or engage with such a restaurant online?
10. What recommendations would you offer to an individual considering the launch of a restaurant similar to this one in Coimbatore?

Appendix C- Ethical approval form

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: “creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications”. As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the “principal researcher”.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Samuel Dhinakaran Arumugaraj
2	Student Number:	2416236
3	Email address:	2416236@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
4	Programme of Study:	MBA
5	Supervisor:	Daniela Hellyer

SECTION B: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.	
1	<u>UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice</u>	☒
2	<u>UWTSD Research Data Management Policy</u>	☒

SECTION C: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Entrepreneurial Strategies for Launching a Customer-Centric Health and Traditional Cuisine Restaurant in India (Coimbatore).		
2	Proposed start date:	15- Aug- 2025	Proposed end date:	12- Dec- 2025
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words in each section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: • <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> • <i>Proposed Research Question</i> • <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> • <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> has informed the proposed activity and explain • <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> • <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>			
3	Purpose of Research Activity This research aligns closely with the researcher’s broader entrepreneurial vision—specifically, the goal of opening a health-oriented, traditional restaurant after completing an MBA.			
4	Research Question How do consumer preferences and local market conditions contribute to the development of an effective entrepreneurial strategy for launching a customer-centric, health-oriented traditional South Indian restaurant in Coimbatore?			
5	Aims of Research Activity To explore and formulate entrepreneurial strategies grounded in consumer preferences and local market dynamics for launching a customer-centric restaurant in Coimbatore that integrates health-conscious practices with traditional South Indian cuisine.			

6	Objectives of Research Activity 1. To critically analyse the preferences, behaviours, and expectations of consumers in Coimbatore regarding health-conscious and traditional South Indian culinary offerings. 2. To examine the local market landscape in Coimbatore, with a focus on understanding the competitive environment, evolving consumer behaviours, and socio-cultural factors that influence the development of the health-oriented restaurant industry. 3. To identify and critically evaluate entrepreneurial strategies that facilitate the development and successful launch of a customer-centric restaurant specializing in health-conscious traditional cuisine. 4. To develop a strategic business model that effectively incorporates consumer insights, current health trends, and regional culinary traditions to create a sustainable and innovative restaurant concept. 5. To formulate evidence-based recommendations designed to enhance customer engagement, establish distinct brand differentiation, and foster sustainable growth within the Coimbatore food service industry.
	Proposed data collection methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity to collect data, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	1) Quantitative: Structured online questionnaire administered through Google Forms 2) Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews This should describe how you intend to collect data. It should not include a discussion of the theoretical basis for your data collection methods. Please note, that if you intend to collect any audio/video recordings of interviews with participants then these will be classified as Personal Data under GDPR/DPA2018. If you intend to use these then note this in section H.

	(this box should expand as you type)
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SECTION D: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☒	☐
	Details of any other primary data collection method: 1) Quantitative: Structured online questionnaire administered through Google Forms 2) Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews		

If you have ticked NO to every question then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and you may skip section E and continue to section F.

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION E: Intended Participants

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☐
	Details of any other participant groups: Complete this only if your participants cannot give consent. This includes animals. If students choose individuals under the age of 18 and or vulnerable individuals, a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check is essential. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	Sample Size (Quantitative): 150 to 200 respondents Sample Size (Qualitative): 10 to 12 respondents
11	Who will the participants be?	Quantitative: Residents of Coimbatore Qualitative: Individuals with specialized knowledge or familiarity with the city's indigenous and traditional culinary practices mainly business owners, chef and waiters. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
12	How will you identify the participants?	Social media: Facebook and WhatsApp <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☐	☒	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	Due to time constraints, the debriefing process could not be conducted.			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
	You should be able to tick NO for most of these questions. For any cases that you have ticked YES then provide details in this box. If you are using cameras/voice recorders to record interviews then please state that in this box. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

SECTION F: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.	
1	Risks to participants Participation in the survey may have caused some tension, as respondents could perceive it as an additional burden on their daily operations.	
	Risk to participants: Stress, Time constraints <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to participants:</i> Participation is voluntary, with respondents free to skip any questions they prefer not to answer, withdraw from the survey at any time, and complete it without time pressure. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities	
	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
3	Risks to the investigator Contacting participants and securing responses within time constraints was challenging and bit of stress environment.	
	Risk to the investigator: May create stress in providing feedback and monitoring the progress of work.	<i>How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:</i> Focusing step by step, giving enough time to review and working on the feedback as guided.

	(this box should expand as you type)	(this box should expand as you type)
4	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: Reviewing the whole process of dissertation of the student. (this box should expand as you type)	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: This research entails minimal risk to the university. No sensitive institutional information will be employed, and all participants will be external members of the public, taking part voluntarily and anonymously, thereby ensuring alignment with ethical protocols. (this box should expand as you type)
5	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: N/A (this box should expand as you type)	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: N/A (this box should expand as you type)

SECTION G: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

If you have identified in section D that there are no participants then enter skip this section and continue to section H.

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	I will not be emailing the final report to participants. (this box should expand as you type)
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to

	provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	The online questionnaire will have consent form before beginning the survey. (this box should expand as you type)
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	I will not collect the participants name and organisations name in any of my research publications. (this box should expand as you type)

SECTION H: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
1	“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☒	☐
	1.Participants’ email addresses and contact numbers may be used solely for the purpose of administering surveys and conducting interviews as part of the data collection process.		
2	2.For qualitative data collection, audio recordings will be made to capture responses accurately. These recordings will be deleted within 3 hours after the questionnaire is completed to ensure data privacy and confidentiality. 3.Recordings of regular voice calls and WhatsApp audio messages will be used. (this box should expand as you type)		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO

3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	☒
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	What counts as ‘sensitive’ will differ between cultures. Any information on behaviour that is not in accordance with cultural norms would count as sensitive personal data. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
10	“Cloud” storage or websites?	☐	☒
11	Other – specify: I will not use CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks.	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation: If possible, save your data on computers that are secure and regularly backed up. Many cloud services only provide GDPR-compliant storage for business customers. An example of suitable text is given below. <i>All data will be kept in password protected cloud storage on the University Office 365 system which will not be shared. Audio/visual data will be transcribed and would be shown to participants to check accuracy of reporting. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password protected folder.</i>		

	(this box should expand as you type)
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Data Protection			
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☒	☐
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☒	☐
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and/or any international equivalent): 1.The electronic data transfer via google form as a quantitative data, audio recording for qualitative data. Both will be protected securely for maintaining confidentiality and privacy. 2.The respondents are located in India. 3.Emails will be used for sharing the survey and contact numbers for interview. <i>All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected cloud storage on the University Office 365 system which will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected. All data transfers will be encrypted and password protected. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password protected folder. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted. In accordance with the DPA2018, participants will have the right to ask to see what data is held relating to them, and this data will be deleted immediately if the participant requests this, in which case the data will not be used in the project.</i> (this box should expand as you type)		
20	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	1. Samuel Dhinakaran Arumugaraj (this box should expand as you type)		
21	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	1. Samuel Dhinakaran Arumugaraj (this box should expand as you type)		
22	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form.		
	The data will be stored in my laptop with password protected. Once the dissertation submitted then data will be deleted. <i>All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected cloud storage on the University Office 365 system which will not be shared. Any USB sticks used to store or transfer data will be password protected, and will be reformatted at the end of the</i>		

	<i>project in order to destroy the data. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted.</i> <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
22	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtSD.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	☒
23	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	☒

SECTION I: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtSD.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:		Date: 22-Aug-25
2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Supervisor: Daniela Hellyer	Date: 22 nd August 2025
3	Signature:	D Hellyer	

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY:

	Ethical approval given	
1	Signature of assessor:	Date:
2	Name:	
3	Role:	

Appendix D- Data Analysis Tables

Demographic Details

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21-30	52	32%
31-40	46	28%
41-50	36	22%
51-60	15	9%
61-70	12	7%
Prefer Not to say	1	1%
Total	162	100%

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	81	50%
Female	78	48%
Prefer Not to say	3	2%
Total	162	100%

Education	Frequency	Percentage
1 st To 9 th	15	9%
SSLC	7	4%
HSC	14	9%
Graduate (UG)	60	37%
Post Graduate (PG)	57	35%
Prefer Not to say	6	4%
PhD	3	2%
Total	162	100%

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	31	19%
Working	85	52%
Homemaker	25	15%
Entrepreneur	10	6%
Prefer Not to say	10	6%
Other	1	1%
Total	162	100%

Resident	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	157	97%
No	5	3%
Total	162	100%

Eat Outside	Frequency	Percentage
1- 2 times	93	57%
3- 4 times	33	20%
5- 6 times	8	5%
Never	28	17%
Total	162	100%

Dietary	Frequency	Percentage
Vegetarian	42	26%
Non-vegetarian	106	65%
Vegan	2	1%
Both-Veg & NV	12	7%
Total	162	100%

Specific Diet plan	Count	Percentage
High-protein	87	54%
Low-fat	41	25%
Gluten-free	4	2%
Heart-healthy	20	12%
All foods	1	1%
Normal	1	1%
Avoid	1	1%
No	6	4%
Blank	1	1%
Total	162	100%

Healthy Food Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	77	48%
No	17	10%
Sometimes	67	41%
Blank	1	1%
Total	162	100%

Frequency- Quantitative

Frequency	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
5	46	36	45	45	35	34	28	30	27	41
4	81	72	82	67	80	60	71	76	65	76
3	29	49	31	43	44	52	58	48	62	41
2	5	3	2	6	2	15	5	6	7	3
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
Blank	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162

Frequency	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
5	53	30	35	42	52	38	65	51	80	44
4	79	56	79	83	72	59	75	68	64	67
3	30	51	41	34	32	57	18	38	15	42
2	0	21	6	3	4	4	3	3	2	8
1	0	4	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Blank	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	2	1	1
Total	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162

Percentage

Respondents Statement	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Strongly Agree	28.40 %	22.22 %	27.78 %	27.78 %	21.60 %	20.99 %	17.28 %	18.52 %	16.67 %	25.31 %
Agree	50.00 %	44.44 %	50.62 %	41.36 %	49.38 %	37.04 %	43.83 %	46.91 %	40.12 %	46.91 %
Neutral	17.90 %	30.25 %	19.14 %	26.54 %	27.16 %	32.10 %	35.80 %	29.63 %	38.27 %	25.31 %
Disagree	3.09 %	1.85 %	1.23 %	3.70 %	1.23 %	9.26 %	3.09 %	3.70 %	4.32 %	1.85 %
Strongly Disagree	0.62 %	0.62 %	0.62 %	0.62 %	0.62 %	0.62 %	0.00 %	0.62 %	0.00 %	0.62 %
No response	0.00 %	0.62 %	0.62 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.62 %	0.62 %	0.00 %
Total Percentage	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%	100.0 0%

Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
32.72%	18.52%	21.60%	25.93%	32.10%	23.46%	40.12%	31.48%	49.38%	27.16%
48.77%	34.57%	48.77%	51.23%	44.44%	36.42%	46.30%	41.98%	39.51%	41.36%
18.52%	31.48%	25.31%	20.99%	19.75%	35.19%	11.11%	23.46%	9.26%	25.93%
0.00%	12.96%	3.70%	1.85%	2.47%	2.47%	1.85%	1.85%	1.23%	4.94%
0.00%	2.47%	0.62%	0.00%	0.62%	0.62%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.62%	1.85%	0.62%	1.23%	0.62%	0.62%
100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
