

SOCIAL HISTORY OF FOOD IN UTTAR PRADESH, 1950-2010

SUMMARY of THESIS

Submitted to
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SUMMARY

Introduction

Food is a very essential need of any creature. It is said that if there is no food there is no life. But the food habits vary from genus to genus and species to species like some are autotrophic and some are heterotrophic. This variation was made by nature but after coming on earth choices were developed. In Humans, in primitive age, they used to eat raw meat then after the invention of fire they started roasting there after they learned farming then gardening, started using spices, salt, milk and milk products. Later it food became a part of denoting status in the society. Good financial strata people ate good food, so many dishes in their platter, some specific dishes for Gods and festivals, some for greeting their guests and on the other hand low income groups were only capable to earn hardly breads for two time but they also invented some interesting recipes in their limited resources.

There are several ways in which the relationship of food habits to problems of food and nutrition may be attacked. We may interpret the term “food habits” merely as the restatement in individual term of the dietary pattern characteristic of a group in the population. In such case talk of the food habits of the Uttar Pradesh, the food habits, cooking methods and even use of ingredients are different for different caste ,regions and communities. For example-some households may temper their lentils and veggies and red chilies while others may use onions, garlic and green chilies. The methods of preparation and their food habits vary between castes and regions.

We may also consider the question in terms of attitudes implicit in the dietary pattern and particularly attitudes which become explicit with the change of the dietary

pattern, attitudes that are characteristics of different groups in our population or different regions. We then shift our emphasis from the actual content of the food habits, whether there be expressed in terms of food values or specific food content or in terms of the whole complex of food selection, preparation and food consumption to the problem of existing attitudes towards food and cultural expectation of ways in which changes in food habits may occur.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Yogendra Singh in his book "*Modernization of Indian Tradition*" under the chapter "*The Western Impact and Cultural Modernization*" has discussed about the several dimensions of cultural modernization. It consists the changes in dress, food habits, rituals, vocabulary, material culture, mode of travel and type of conveyance and customs. About food the author has discussed about the visual changes seen and felt like use of vegetable oils, soft drinks, increased number of tea stalls. The author further talks about a notable change i.e, meat eating in higher class. In older times high class people did not eat eggs and chicken but as the time passed they started eating chicken and eggs too. People from upper caste also did not eat in public restaurants but nowadays eating outside has become a status symbol.

"*Cooking Cultures: Convergent Histories of Food and Feelings*" edited book by Ishita Banerjee Dubey is a book in which an attempt is made to unravel such associations that made with food. This book introduces with cuisines, ingredients and flavors from India, South Africa, West Asia, Mexico, China, Mozambique, Japan, Australia, France, USA, Vietnam, Senegal, Morocco and Malaysia. This book

presents a lip-smacking smorgasbord. Over a hearty meal, it asks important questions about culture, power, hierarchy, gender relations, ecology and nutrition.

In the book *“Hungry Nation to Agro Power”* edited by Anil Shinde, the contribution of Annasaheb Shinde, member of third and fourth Lok Sabha from the state of Maharashtra, in green revolution has been discussed. This book also talks about the journey of India achieving self sufficiency in food from a hungry status, the conditions and needs of green revolution because of which India is the largest milk and pulse producer and is one among those countries who are self sufficient for food.

“Curried Culture: Indian Food in the Age of Globalization” edited by Krishnendu Ray and Tulasi Srinivas contains essays and explore the relationship between globalization and South Asia through food. Udipi restaurants, dum-pukht, Indian food in colonial times, staples of the prepared food industry like Bangalore’s MTR foods, Britain’s curry culture, Indian fast food in California there and other distinctive aspects of South Asia’s food and culture are examined to gain new insights into sub-continental food and ways in which it has influenced the world around us.

Benjamin Robert Siegel in his book *“Hungry Nation: Food Famine, and the Making of Modern India”* has given a detailed account of the sovereign India’s struggle to conquer the food crisis, malnutrition and famine and traced the India’s nation-building through the voice of policy makers, government and citizens. Siegel has explained the history and the origin of Hunger and malnutrition in India and how food became the centre of the Nationalists thoughts by the few final years of the British rule. This book interrogates how the government and the people of India contested the senses of nation-building and nationality through food and how these contestations moved away in the wake of Green Revolution.

Colleen Taylor Sen in her book “Feasts and Fasts: A History of Food in India” has thoroughly described the culinary and gastronomic heritage of the country since Harappa Civilization to post colonial time and the impact of globalization on food. This book has detailed account of historic images, some poetry on food and some ancient recipes.

Sadaf Hussain in his book “*Daastan-e-Dastarkhan: Stories and Recipes from Muslim Kitchens*” have given an illustrated account of the traditional Muslim kitchen of Lucknow and other parts of India. He has unknotted the history and traditional cooking techniques of many dishes from the Muslim kitchens across the country along with stories behind them which helps to find out the social aspects of the Indian Muslim family food habits, about their feast and belief about food.

AREA OF THE STUDY

The study is based upon the food habits of Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh is a state situated in north India with 19.98 Crores people, the most populous state of India with 18 subdivisions and 75 districts and it is also the most populous subdivision in the world. Formerly it was known as United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during the colonial rule and it was created in April,1937, but after Independence it was renamed as Uttar Pradesh in 1950.

The natives of the state are generally called Awadhi, Bhojpuri, Brajwasi, Bundeli, Rohelkhandi and Bagheli, depending upon the region of their origin. Those regions have their different culture and geographical conditions. Hinduism is the largest religion practiced by people and then after Islam is the second largest religious

group followed by Sikhs, Christians, Jains and Buddhists. Food culture is also very diverse and changes with region, religion and economic and social status. Till 2000 the Uttarakhand was also part of the Uttar Pradesh. Apart from that globalization also played very important role in changing the food habits of individuals through many International food chains as McDonalds, Pizza Huts etc.

The study will be focused upon the cultural, regional, economic aspects of present Uttar Pradesh excluding Uttarakhand and it will cover the new trends in food habits as food imperialism and impact of globalization and the status of hunger in the state.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This is a chronological study of food habits of people of India and then focused on its most populous state; Uttar Pradesh and this study is limited on the historical and social aspects of determining food habits. It explores the various social aspects of food which affected the cuisine in history at one place, beginning from ancient times, their food habits, and the factors affected the food habits, the invasions and their impact on food, the colonials and the great Columbian exchange in the perspective of food and its impact of culinary culture then the food crisis India had to face just after freedom and its struggle for attaining food sufficient status and meanwhile the bloom in the cuisine of Uttar Pradesh and development of so many specific local cuisines, the agricultural production and its role in determining the staple food of Uttar Pradesh, which would be beneficial to the further historical and sociological studies about food habit of Uttar Pradesh

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the origin of different cuisines, different cooking methods as well as ingredients.
- To understand the impact of foreign invasion, transfer of powers, coming of European traders and the colonial rule on the food habits.
- To study about the impact of partition of the country and its struggle to attain the food sufficient status and its impact on the platters.
- To study the history and impact of Public Distribution System of food on poor.
- To assess the diversity of food habits in the different districts of Uttar Pradesh and some of their unique eats.
- To examine about the impact of globalization on food and how the food is one of the most important factors which affect the food habits.

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

Methodology used in this study is Historical and Qualitative. The study is based on both Primary and Secondary sources which include Government Annual reports and Gazetteers. Besides, Data were also obtained by using interview method as one of the research tool. Review of literature is done in order to contextualize the study and identify the importance of various dimensions of food in the society of Uttar Pradesh. For primary sources, matter was collected from State Archives and reports from Information and Public Relation Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh were consulted. Structured and non-structured interviews were also taken from different districts of Uttar Pradesh.

The collection of secondary data consisted of the reviews of the relevant literature, books, journals and magazines, newspapers, research papers and survey conducted by various organizations and government records through internet.

Since the study was conducted to explore, examine and analyze the various dimensions of food in Uttar Pradesh and the changes occurred from just after the colonial age to the age of globalization and modernization, the approach throughout the study was analytical and evaluative.

ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

- The major factors that affect food habit are availability and accessibility of ingredients.
- The transfer of power also played a very big role in the birth of some very new and unique fusion cuisines like Mughlai, Lakhnawi, Anglo-Indian Cuisines.
- European influence on food was two sided as not only Indian got influenced with European cuisine but also influenced the European cuisines.
- Uttar Pradesh has played a very important role in gaining food sufficient status of the country.
- The Food Security Programs have supported the poor and prevented them from starvation in Uttar Pradesh.
- The crop production determines the staple food of people in Uttar Pradesh.
- The migration of people has also played a very important role in the development of culinary habits.
- The economic status also affects the food habit.

- The globalizations of cuisine have brought a drastic change in the lifestyles of people.

CHAPTERISATION

The work has been organized into six chapters which are Introduction, Culture and Food, European Influence on the Food, The Struggle with Hunger, The Culinary History of Uttar Pradesh followed by the Conclusion chapter.

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the basic introduction of the topic, the reviews of previous works related with the topic and the relevance of this work, area of the study, the objectives, the research methods used and the sources used in this work, assumption of the study.

2. CULTURE AND FOOD

This chapter deals with the historical background of the Indian cuisine and its chronological development and the internal as well as external factors affected the culinary culture and also the birth of some very famous national and local cuisines.

3. EUROPEAN INFLUENCE ON FOOD

This chapter deals with the impact of various European travelers and traders and later the British rule on the culinary culture of the country. This chapter

also deals with the give and take relationships of India with the other cuisines of the globe.

4. FOOD SECURITY ISSUES

This chapter describes the situation of agricultural lands left in India after partition and the food crisis occurred in the country then the efforts made by the government to cope up with. This chapter critically analyses the efforts, the foreign food aid, and various food security programs to make food availability to the poor.

5. CULINARY PRACTICES IN UTTAR PRADESH

This chapter describes the food similarities and differences and the development of some unique eats in the various districts of Uttar Pradesh on the basis of its division into Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Western Uttar Pradesh. This chapter also describes the impacts of various social and economic factors that affect the food habit of Uttar Pradesh.

6. CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses about the summary of all the chapters and the findings of the study which states that food habits are generally dependent on two major factors i.e., availability and accessibility. Food habits never change suddenly. It's a long term process to notice the change in the food habits of any place. The transfer of power in medieval time influenced food a lot. In Sultanate period the Muslim influence was introduced to India and soon they adapted some specialties of local cuisine and the invented their specific fusion cuisine. The Mughalai cuisine was also born in the same way but was very

rich and as the reign of the Mughal rulers was very long so they got enough time to pay attention towards the cultural and culinary development. The coming of Europeans introduced various global ingredients and cooking methods, dishes and cutleries to India. They used it not for the betterment of the society but their own commercial benefits and show off the Western superiority. But the colonials spared themselves by getting influenced with Indian culture, cuisine and ingredients which gave birth to a new community i.e. Anglo Indian community and also some specific dishes like curry, stew, country chicken etc. The country had to suffer a severe food crisis just after Independence because of the partition and the government took a US food aid during that time to cope up. Government ran so many programs to get a food sufficient status and to ensure that everybody is getting food. For that purpose governments established a specific department, FCI for procure the grains and established a proper structure to provide it to the poor. The government also started some food security programs like Work for Food program, Antyodaya Ann Yojana, Ration cards, Mid-day Meal Schemes etc. The Western Uttar Pradesh played an important role in producing wheat during Green Revolution to get India food secured. The food habit of Uttar Pradesh varies from district to district but the major difference is based upon the agricultural production. The Eastern Uttar Pradesh is a big producer of rice so the eastern UP people are mostly rice eater and in the West UP the wheat production is high so they are mainly roti (wheat flat bread) eaters. The recipes and cooking methods of the same dish varies from place to place and district to district in Uttar Pradesh. The migration affects the food habits of both, the migrants and the local. People carry their own food habits with them and later they influence

the locals with their food habits but they also get influenced with the local cuisine which produces an *Indigenized Foreign Cuisine*. Uttar Pradesh has a rich street food culture including local street foods, Chinese, South Indian etc. The globalization has changed the concept of eating out and drinking out. Now dining in a restaurant has become very popular among every age group. And because of this one can find continental dishes in the small towns too.