

# Exploring the Culinary Traditions of India - An Investigation in Cultural Geography

**Dr. Rukshana Billimoria**

Principal

Anjuman-I-Islam's Institute of Hospitality Management, Mumbai, India

**Abstract:** *India is a varied country with a rich cultural heritage. A proverb states, "East or west, my country is the best." We have a large choice of scrumptious cuisine in addition to many events. Every nook and cranny of the country has its own cuisine. The main aims of this research work are to identify the various Indian cuisines by state and to uncover the core causes of regional variances in Indian food in general. The entire study is built on secondary data sources.*

*The study's findings show that the cuisines of North and South India are quite different in terms of good flavour and cooking method. The study also demonstrates that religious taboos and the geographical index (G.I.) have a significant influence on various Indian cuisines. The idea that "every two kilometers the language and eating habits change" happens in India is actually true.*

**Keywords:** Cuisines, Taste, Geographical Index, Diversification, Religious Taboos and Health.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Following India's green revolution (1960s), the country achieved self-sufficiency in cereals and food grains production. There is a high need for food to feed the world's 121.01 billion people. There is an adage that says, "Health is wealth." Each of the Indian cuisines is high in nutritional content and energy. Food is one of the most basic needs of humans for optimal growth, development of the body, and energy for work. The human body functions similarly to a machine. Like an engine burning fuel to generate essential energy, the human body uses the nutrients taken to provide the driving force to maintain the heart breathing, the lungs breathing, the limbs functioning, and the body healthy. Apart from celebrating different festivals, we also produce a variety of delectable foods. Indian cuisine encompasses a vast range of regional and traditional cuisines indigenous to the Indian subcontinent. The Indian cooking procedure also varies from region to region. Indian cuisines are primarily affected by locally available spices, herbs, vegetables, and fruits, as well as the diversity of soil types, climate and culture, ethnic groupings, socioeconomic status, and geographical position (proximity to the sea, desert, or mountain). Religion, cultural choices, and customs all have an impact on Indian cuisine. Cuisines reflect the culture of a particular society. Every culinary item has a distinct flavour, from the royal Tundee Kabab of Lucknow to the spicy Biryani of Hydrabadi. In India, individuals eat a healthy breakfast in the morning. The North Indians enjoy Roti, Parathas, and Puris with pickles, curd, and tea or coffee, but the South Indians prefer Idli and Dosa with Sambhar. The lunch is also different in North India; it consists of Roti and vegetables, whereas South Indians prefer rice and veggies. For digestion, the Paan (betel leaves, spices) and Raita are preferred after meal and dinner. Indian families frequently gather in the evenings to drink tea with snacks. Dinner is considered the important meal of the day because the head of the family is busy with their own profession and supper time brings the entire family together. Different religions have also followed food taboos, such as- Hindu religious beliefs peoples are not take the beef (cow red meat), they believed that cow slaughter is a great sin, while Muslim are not take the pork (pig red meat) because it is strictly forbidden in their religions, Vaishnavism peoples are not eat the garlic and onions because they are advised against it in the Bhagvad Gita, On the other hand Jains followers do not prefer to eat potatoes. Foreign invasions, economic links with other countries, and colonialism have all played pivotal roles in the introduction of mouth-watering diverse cuisine products in India.

Kumar (2012), emphasized the importance of coarse grains, pulses, and oilseeds as a primary source of nutrition and a staple meal for a large portion of rural India. They are easily grown in rain-fed and even drought-prone locations. However, they are currently regarded as poor man's cuisine. Green evolution has completely ignored coarse grains and

pulses, impacting food security and, in particular, nutritional security in the country. The study also demonstrates that food security does not simply entail providing rice and wheat to satisfy people's hunger, but also providing a balanced diet rich in calcium, protein, vitamins, and other critical components. This balanced diet can be achieved by focusing on farmers of coarse cereals and pulses.

Mohammad (1995), defined food security as a scenario in which no child, woman, or man goes to bed hungry and no human being's physical and mental potential is impaired by malnutrition. He also believes that the notion of food security should be addressed at the worldwide level rather than at the national level because no country can become self-sufficient in basic and non-basic food items on its own.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Research

The Principle objectives are-

1. To learn about India's delicious traditional cuisines by state.
2. To identify the main reasons behind Indian cuisines' areal differences.

## II. DATABASE AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The entire methodology of the study is based on Secondary sources of information. The data have been sourced from the ministries of tourism and culture, the government of India, state tourism ministry, various research papers, articles, books, newspaper reports, various government and non-governmental organizations reports, etc. After collecting the data, the geographic approach of cause and effect analysis was used.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### State various delectable and conventional foods of India

India's cuisines vary greatly from one state to the next, and there is a wide range of traditional cuisines across the nation.

#### Jammu and Kashmir:

Jammu and Kashmir is situated in a region with a cool climate, and its traditional cuisine is highly adaptable to the conditions of the region. Popular dishes from the state include dum aloo, yakhni, rista, gustaba, aabgosht, rogan josh, seekh kabab, and Kashmiri pulao. The cuisine of the state is renowned for its Rogan Josh, which is widely consumed by people living in the region due to its cold climate.

#### Himachal Pradesh:

Dham, Aktori, Sidu, Madra, Rajma Chawal, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. Himachal Pradesh is a mountainous region, and rice is grown on the foothills of the mountains. This state's cuisine is well-known for its dish Rajma-rice.

#### Punjab:

Sarson Da Saag-Makki di Roti, CholeBhatuerey, Lassi, Channa Masala, Amritsari Naan, Butter Chicken, Palak Paneer, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. The Punjab is a predominantly agricultural state, and its inhabitants are fit, vibrant, and active. They consume milk-related goods in their diet.

#### Haryana:

This state's primary traditional foods are kadhichawal, GazarMethikiSabzi, Dahi-Vada, Matar Paneer, MitheChawal, and Lassi, Haryana's population is involved in the agriculture industry; they have taken Dahi-Roti and Dahi-Vada because this region has a mild temperature with dry winters.

#### Uttarakhand:

This state's primary traditional cuisines include KaafuliBaadi, Sabzi-Roti Arsa, Bhaangki Chutney, Singhal, Rajma Chawal, AlsiDaal, and others. This state is located in the polar climate zone. Because this state is mountainous, agricultural sectors are poorly developed.

#### Uttar Pradesh:

The main traditional cuisines of that state are Arharki Dal and Roti, Mutton Kofta, Teheri, Moradabadi Biryani, Sahi-Paneer, Chicken Qorma, Shami Kabab, Nihari, Vaouri-Chokha, GajarkaHalwa, Tundee Kabab, KhastaKachori, Son Papdi, Raabdi, Petha, Cham-Cham, Peda, Ghewar, Sahi-Tukda, Haleem, Shermaal, Sikanji, Maakarkhoni, etc. This

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state is subject to a warm climate and dry winters. Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state. This state is the largest producer of wheat. This is how most people are taken to Roti during lunch and dinner.

**Rajasthan:**

BajrakiRotli, Leleshunki Chutney, PanchmeelkiSabzi, Kichdi, DaalBatiChurma, BikanerBhujia, Lal Mass, Sahi gate, HaldikiSabzi, Dal waliKachouri, Imarti, and other traditional dishes are popular in this state. The state is located in a desert climate (Western half), and its primary crops are jowar and bajra. As a result, the residents of this state have embraced these eating habits.

**Gujarat:**

Dhokhla, Fafda, Kakhra, Pani-Puri, Khandvi, Handva, Basundi, Gujrati Thali, GujratiKadhi, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. Gujrat is the only state with a wide range of climatic conditions, including semi-arid, steppe climate, warm temperatures with dry winters, and tropical savanna climate. As a result, consumers have accepted certain culinary products.

**Madhya Pradesh:**

Bhuttekakees, Poha, Jalebi, Dal Bafla, Palakpuri, BhoplaiGoshtQourma, MawaBatiSoyabeankisabzi, Rajma Chawal, and other traditional cuisines are popular in this state. This state is distinguished by a mild temperature and a dry winter. This state is mostly known for producing soyabean and maize. As a result, these ingredients are used in the majority of the state's cuisines.

**Andhra Pradesh:**

This state's primary traditional cuisines include KhandiPoudi, GonguraPachadi, Ullava, Charu, Pasarattu, Royyala, Veppudu, GultiVankayaKoorra, Idli-Sambhar, and others. This state is located in the tropical savanna climate zone. This state's principal crop is rice. As a result, the residents of this state are served Idli-Dosa and Sambhar.

**Jharkhand:**

Pittha, Handia, Rugra, MitthaKhaja, Til Barfi, Aloo Chokha, Bamboo shot, Chilka Roti, Mutton Ghost, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. The Tropical Savana climatic condition (winter dry) applies to this state. The majority of this state is covered with forest. As a result, people are taking forest goods such as bamboo shoots and so on.

**Chhattisgarh:**

Khurma, Bafauri, Sabudanaki khichdi, Bara, Dubkikadi, Bhajja, Tilguur, Kusli, Muthiakhaja, Mal pua, Chila, Aaamat, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. This state has a tropical savanna climate with dry winters. This state's cuisines are influenced by cultural traditions and climate conditions.

**Bihar:**

Liitichokha, Daalpeetha, Bhelpuri, Sattu, Dahi-Jalebi, Malpua, Kadhai chicken, Dahi-chuda, Vakka, Aloo Bhujia, Morii, Saag, and more dishes are popular in this state. Rice is the principal crop in this state. This state's climate is warm in the summer and dry in the winter. People consume Litti-Chokha, DaalPetha, and DahiChuda as part of their traditional customs.

**West Bengal:**

The main traditional cuisines of this state are- LuchiBundiya, ShorshebataIlish, Pulaomurgirmangsoo, Aalur Doom, Maach-Vaat, BaigunVajja, Macherjhool, MacherrGhontoo, Kathal mete chingri, DaabChingri, DatharChorchori, PatharManngsoo, MistiDoi, Sondesh, Rosogolla, Chomchom, Suktoo, Tomato toak etc. Bengali folks are passionate about cooking. This state has a warm and tropical savanna environment. Because of the huge volume of production and the climatic conditions, rice is the major staple food of this state. The Bengali Rosogolla is well-known throughout the country.

**Odisha:**

Kichede, Dalma, Chhenapoda, Gupchup, Polao, Ghee Rice, Saag, Dhaniyaki chutney, Upma, Abadha, PhalaRasgulla, and other traditional dishes are popular in this state. Odisha is located on the seashore. This state's climate is Tropical Savana. Climate has a significant impact on the traditional cuisines of this state. Uppma is the state's most renowned dish.

**Maharashtra:**

Pav-Bhaji, BhelPuri, Vada Pav, Pohe, PuranPoli, Paasta, Maharashtra Thali, SabudanaKhichdi, and other traditional dishes are popular in this state. The climate of this state is tropical savanna with a dry winter. The people of Maharashtra are big fans of fast food.

**Goa:**

Prawn curry, Pomfret, Fried Fish, Mushroom Tondak, Dodol, Feni, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. Goa is one of India's smallest states. This state's climate is classified as tropical rainforest. Feni is one of the most popular beverages among the Goans.

**Karnataka:**

Masala Dosa, Ragi-Roti, Curd Rice, Kotte Kadabu, Coconut Chutney, Idli-Vada-Sambhar, Mixed sabzi, Mushroom curry, Karnataka Thali, and other dishes are popular in this state. This state's cuisines are heavily impacted by climatic conditions, cultural and traditional practices, locally accessible resources, and so on.

**Kerala:**

Sadya, Tangy Rasam, Avial, Appam, Puttu, Banana chips, Jack-fruit chips, Idiyappam, Payasam, Tapioca, and fish curry are some of the primary traditional cuisines of this state. The climate of this state is tropical rainforest in nature. Kerala is the world's leading producer of coconut. Coconut oil is used in the kitchen. The most noteworthy goods of this state are banana chips.

**Tamilnadu:**

This state's signature cuisines include Idli-Dosa-Sambhar, Rasam, Tamilnadu Thali, Ven Pongal, Coconut Chutney, Dal Payasam, Fish Veppudi, and others. Tamilnadu is a state in the Indian Ocean. This state has a Tropical Savana climate (dry summers). Climate, cultural heritage, and locally accessible resources all have a significant impact on the cuisines of this state.

**Assam:**

This state's primary traditional foods include Egg Potato, Curry Fish, Fried Rice, TilPitha, Coconut laddoo, Assamese Thali, Bamboo shoot fried, Tomato ki chutney, Jackfruit vegetable with Daal, Duck-meat curry, and so on. The Indian state of Assam is located in the country's northeast. This state's climate is defined by a warm temperature with dry winters. This state's noteworthy cuisine, such as Till Pitha and Bamboo Shoot Fry, are influenced by cultural tradition.

**Sikkim:**

Momo, Thukpa, Phagshpa, Sha Phaley, Gundruk, Sinki, Kineapakku, MohiRakshi, churpi, and other traditional cuisines are popular in this state. Sikkim is distinguished by chilly humid winters, the shortest summers in the north, and a mild climate with dry winters in the south. The most prominent foods in this state are momo and thukpa.

**Meghalaya:**

Jadoh, Doh-khiliakhNakham, Bitchi, Pumaloi, Doh-Neiiong, Pudoh, MinilSonga, Pukhleini, SakinGata, Ki Kpu, Tunh-Rymbai, Bamboo Shoots, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. This state's climate is defined by a warm temperature with dry winters. The cuisines of this state are heavily affected by the state's climatic conditions, locally accessible herbs and spices, and culture and tradition.

**Tripura:**

This state's prominent cuisines include Chakhwi, Muitru, Rice Tomato Ombal, KothalerChakoi, PanchPhoronTorkari, Awan Babgai, Mui Borok, Mosdengserma, WahanMosdeng, and others. Tripura has a language and culture that is comparable to Bengali. This state's climate is defined by a tropical savanna climate (dry winter) and a warm climate with dry winter. This state's cuisines are heavily influenced by cultural traditions.

**Manipur:**

Chamthong or Kangshoi, Eromba, SoibumSoidon (Bamboo Shoots), Nga-Thongba, AluKangmet, Chhahao Kheer Singju, Bora, Kanhau, ChagemPomba, and other traditional foods are popular in this state. This state's climate is defined by a warm temperature with dry winters. The main meals of this state are distinguished by climatic conditions, locally accessible resources, and cultural and traditional elements.

**Mizoram:**

This state's signature cuisine includes Bai, KoatPitha, Vawksa Rep, Bamboo Shoot Fry, PanchPhoranTarka, Misa MaachPoora, Mizo vawksa, Chhum Han, and others. This state is covered in mountains and forests, and the temperature

is mild with dry winters. This state's cuisines are heavily influenced by cultural traditions as well as locally accessible herbs and plants.

#### **Arunachal Pradesh**

Rice, bamboo ki shot, pika pila, lukter, pehak, apong (Rice beer), Marua, Chura-sabji, Momo, Thukpa, and other traditional states are essential. Arunachal Pradesh is India's least populous state. This state's climate is characterized by chilly, humid winters and the shortest summers. This state's cuisines are heavily impacted by climate conditions, locally accessible ingredients, and so on.

#### **IV. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. According to the study's findings, traditional cuisines of North India differ significantly from those of South India in terms of cooking style, usage of various spices, and excellent flavour.
2. The geographical variance of Indian cuisines is strongly impacted by climatic factors, soil and locally accessible resources, culture, and tradition.
3. Many Indian foods have Geographical Index (G.I.) recognized for their delightful, marvelous taste.
4. The survey also revealed that dinner is the primary meal of the Indian family structure throughout the day since the head of the family is always working.
5. Religion taboos (Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian) have a strong impact on Indian food.

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

Due to varying climatic conditions and dietary practices, each state in India has a unique range of cuisines. The region's socioeconomic situation, cultural and traditional themes, and significant primary agricultural products are all reflected in the food. The natural spices of India have a significant impact on its cuisines. Every Indian dish can be nutritious and keep people healthy. The globalization has altered the way people eat in India's major cities. The idea that "every two kilometers the language and eating habits are changed" is allowed in India is true.

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