

DSP851: DESIGN RESEARCH METHODS COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENT 1

Design Research Methods Report

Nikitha Suresh | B615088 | 1,467 words

MA in User Experience Design

Loughborough University

2 December 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Section 1: Introduction	01
1.1 Research Context	01
1.2 Research Focus	01
1.3 Hunt Statement	01
2. Section 2: Sampling	02
3. Section 3: Methodology	02
3.1 Data Collection	02
3.1.1 Shopping Behavior and Routine	02
3.1.2 Cooking	02
3.1.3 Eating out (at restaurants, etc)	03
3.1.3 Emotional Disposition	03
3.2 Data Analysis	04
3.2.1 Change of Cuisine & availability of Raw Ingredients	04
3.2.2 Method of Cooking	04
3.2.3 Nutritional Content & Serving Portions	04
3.2.4 Nostalgia, Boredom and Stress	04
5. Reference List	
6. Appendices	

List of Figures

1. Figure 1: Candidate shopping for raw ingredients & spices	02
2. Figure 2: Candidate's cooked meal individually and in group	02
3. Figure 3: Candidates attempt in making a Dosa	03
4. Figure 4: Affinity Mapping	03

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Context

In the UK, over half the food waste occurs in the food industry. WRAP estimates that 8.3 million tonnes of food waste comes from consumers, 1.6 million tones from retailers, 4.1 million tonnes from food manufacturers, 3 million tones from restaurants, and 3 million tones from other groups.

1.2 Research Focus

The trend towards healthier eating can have unforeseen impacts on food waste. There is evidence that the focus on the health advantages of fruit and vegetable consumption is encouraging us all to buy an increasing amount of fresh produce, a significant proportion of which is wasted. There was a time when we ate when we were hungry. Today we eat when we are sad, happy, or semi-conscious on the sofa watching TV.

The core cause of the problem stems from an emotional level that leads to one's Lifestyle choices and therefore, I believe these two are closely interconnected, as in one leads to the other. For example, the mood of a person could determine the nature of food consumed.

Subsequently, Indian International students experience a major shift in terms of culture, lifestyle and cuisine and the impact of this shift on Food Wastage is even more evident within Generation Edge. This shift usually happens during the experimentation phase of settling in a new place which could last anywhere from a week to a couple of months. This collectively accounts to a lot of food wastage.

Therefore my research focus is to further understand this shift that Indian International students experience during their 'settling in' phase in the hope of uncovering valuable insights and opportunities to contain food wastage.

1.2 Hunt Statement

"A study of emotions and lifestyle choices that contribute to Food Wastage amongst International Indian Students between the ages 18 to 23."

Section 2: Sampling

To begin, my approach involved ‘Modal Instance Sampling’ which is used to investigate thoughts and actions of typical people. I set out by approaching students who have just moved to the UK and are still adjusting to the new environment. Focusing on first year undergraduates and postgraduates was the ideal thing to do since they were going through the ‘settling in’ phase although the rate of settling in varied from person to person. I finalised on six candidates, three undergraduates and three postgrads.

Section 3: Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

To understand the impact of lifestyle and emotions on wastage of food, I focused my study around four main aspects and below are a few important observations and responses that have a direct impact on Food Wastage:

3.1.1 Shopping Behavior and Routine

Observation

The participant lingers a lot around the Indian sections that include pre-cooked food, raw ingredients and grounded spices (masalas, etc). He usually prefers to buy raw ingredients and spices instead of pre-cooked food because he feels it won't meet his expectations and has had a few bad experiences in the past. He usually doesn't find what he's looking for in the pre-cooked section. Although he rarely spends time looking at other cuisine within the pre-cooked section because of his common assumption that most food styles of the UK or elsewhere are comparatively bland.

Response

Are you concerned about the nutrition of the food products you buy?

“I am concerned about the nutrition. But I can hardly make sense of the nutritional info provided on the cover and most often the serving suggestions mentioned on the cover exceeds my estimation and I end up wasting food.”



Figure 1: Participant shopping for raw ingredients & spices

3.1.2 Cooking

Observation (Cooking Individually)

The participant usually cooks food that she craves and has the urge to start from scratch and also follow the exact steps her mom followed. This perfectionist drive to replicate her mom's recipe to the last garnish was pretty evident in most participants.

Observation (Cooking in Group)

When the same participant cooks with other students, her demeanor takes a positive turn making her more open to food experimentation. She is also persuaded to try new tastes and is at utmost ease while cooking with other Indian friends of hers and rarely wastes food from those meals. Although this group meet happens only over the weekend.

Response

Are there times when you get frustrated with cooking?

“Yes. Sometimes when I try something Indian, I don't always get all the ingredients and will therefore have to make do with what I have that could make or break a certain dish. And sometimes the monotony of cooking the same food over and over again during the week frustrates me to the point of eating out even though I can't afford it. Sometimes, I do wish I could share my meals with other Indians with similar tastes so that we could share our meals and laughter.”

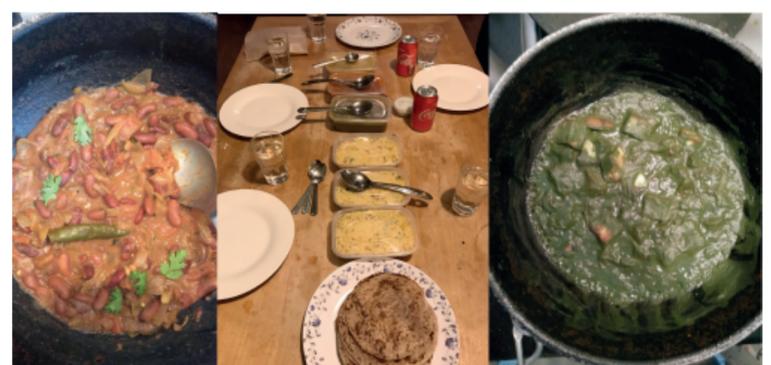


Figure 2: Participant's cooked meal Individually and in Group

3.1.3 Eating Out

Observation

The serving of meat dishes usually exceeds the normal capacity of most Indian students. Indians are used to having a myriad of dishes in small quantities for a single meal -> dal, vegetable sides, meat, payasam, roti, curd, etc. Comparatively, British cuisine has lesser variety within a meal and is therefore accompanied with large serving portions which could be overwhelming for an Indian and also lead to food wastage.

Response

How often do you find yourself with leftovers at the restaurant?

“Quite often because most of the times, I’m unsure of what’s going to be in the dish I ordered. I don’t eat beef and have often wasted burgers and sandwiches because it had beef that I didn’t know of. If only I could have a taster before I actually ordered something or better if there was a way to identify the dishes that were compatible with my palate.”

3.1.4 Emotional Disposition

Observation

There is not a day that goes by without the participant remembering his mother’s cooking. Every meal consumed seems like an effort to fill the void of his mom’s cooking. A pattern clearly evident in all my participants.

Response

What makes you look forward to a meal?

“I have a busy schedule on weekdays and sometimes food is the only sources of happiness and amusement. Because of my busy schedule, I try to keep my cooking to a minimum with a routine diet. This state of knowing what my diet is for the entire week sometimes takes away my zeal to cook during the week. But the weekend is different though.”



Figure 3: Participant’s attempt in making a Dosa

3.2 Data Analysis

To make sense of all the data collected, I adopted affinity diagramming to organise and categorise useful responses and observations under strong overarching themes that could open up design opportunities. Below is a short summary of each of the four themes that arose after collating all the data.

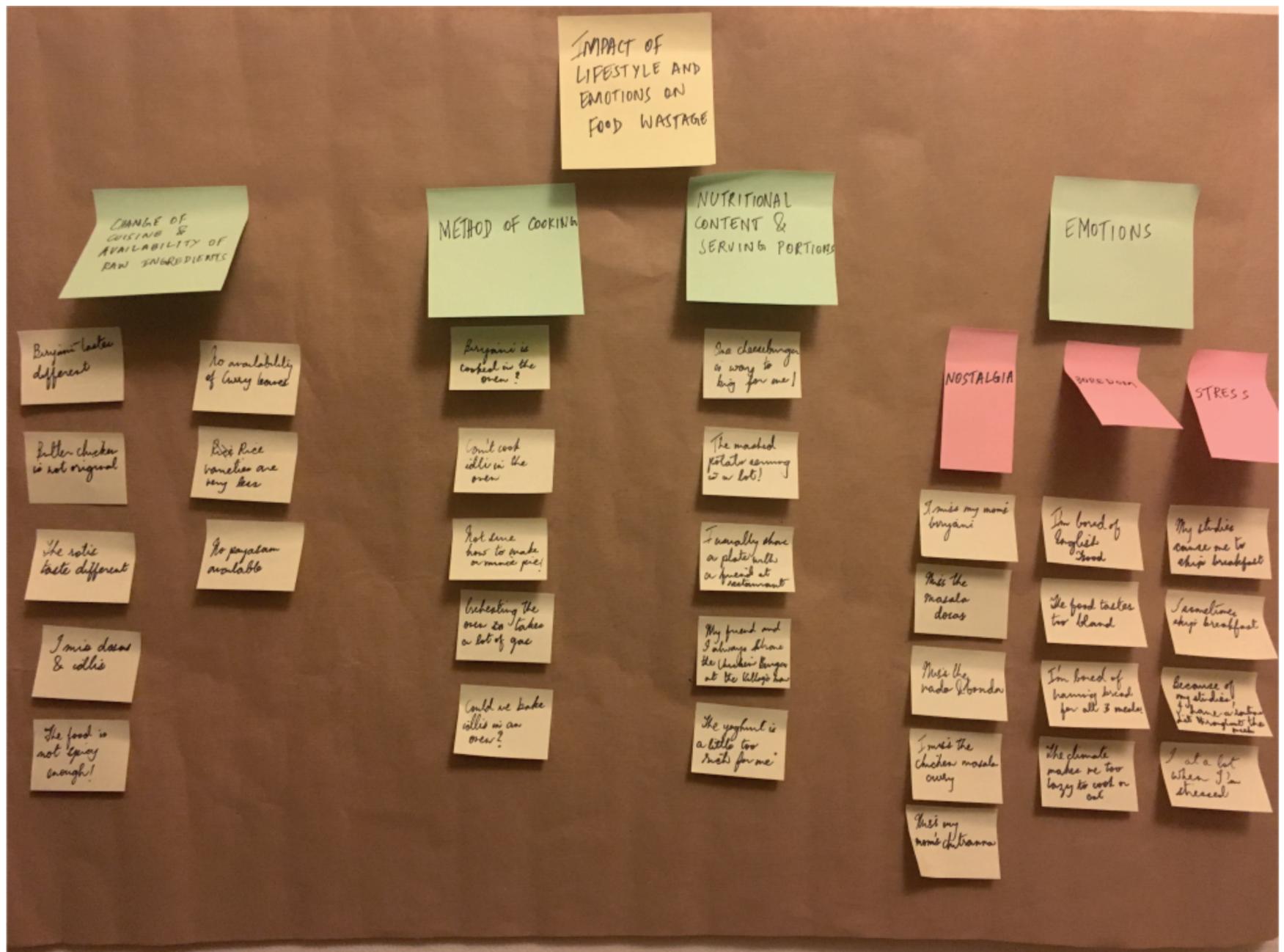


Figure 4: Affinity mapping

3.2.1 Change of Cuisine & availability of Raw Ingredients

Change of cuisine seems to be a prominent factor that triggers food wastage at various stages. For example, it could happen at a restaurant or while cooking salmon. This factor is even more prominent amongst individuals with a conservative palate and could push an individual to isolate to a certain style of food in a foreign country.

3.2.2 Method of Cooking

This theme arose from a single prominent method of cooking amongst Indian students -> **Steam Cooker**. Indians use a steam cooker to cook a lot of main course dishes (Eg. Biryani, Dal, curry, etc) mainly because it saves time and gas and also because it cooks evenly and tenderly, especially meat. It is almost indispensable to Indian cooking and most Indians carry this to the UK. And although most dishes come with cooking guidelines for an oven, Indians still prefer a steam cooker over an oven and with it comes trial and error and food wastage. But the steam cooker is not the only contributor, most meat dishes in the UK are cooked to different consistencies that amount to different acquired tastes and to find the right consistency requires a few trials and with it comes 'Food Wastage'

3.2.3 Nutritional Content & Serving Portions

There is a huge difference in the nutritional content and serving portions between India and the UK. The 'Indian' way of eating a meal is to eat small quantities of a variety of dishes whereas in the UK, variety within a meal is less and the serving proportions is comparatively more. So a beef steak is definitely overwhelming for an Indian who has just moved into the UK. And the nutritional content of Britain food is comparatively richer (For example, the yoghurt is much richer than the curd you get in India)

3.2.4 Nostalgia, Boredom and Stress

After observing the emotional patterns of Indian Gen Edgers, these three emotions - **Nostalgia, Boredom and Stress** seem to surface frequently, sometimes they take turns and sometimes come in combinations. These three emotions shape subsequent behavioral patterns respect to food consumption. And all of these in a way contribute directly or indirectly to food wastage.

Please refer the Electronic Boards for insights and opportunities derived from this report.

5. References

Internet

- 1. This is rubbish http://www.thisisrubbish.org.uk/resources/-10flooding-food-waste-facts/Accessed 15th November 2016. [online]
2. The Guardian, Our connection with food must shift from emotional to sustainable Solitaire Townsend. https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/connection-food-emotional-sustainable Accessed 15th November 2016. [online]
3. Modal Stance Sampling- http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/samplnng.php

6. Appendices

Appendix A

Emotions

- 1. Morning Routine?
2. What determines your morning mood?
3. How does that affect your morning breakfast?
4. How does your disposition in the mornings affect the rest of the day?
5. What factors affect your mood or disposition in the mornings?
6. Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner eating patterns with respect to an emotion/mood?
7. What time of the day are you most cheerful/low in spirit?
8. What is your favorite dish? What is the emotion associated with that dish?
9. How often do you cook your favorite dish?
10. What is your least favorite dish and the emotion associated with it?
11. What makes you look forward to a meal?
12. Do you cook? If yes, how often do you cook in a week?
13. When do you usually decide to cook? (Eg. Well in advance or just impromptu?)
14. Are there times when you get frustrated while cooking?
15. How does this impact the outcome of the dish?
16. How does eating healthy impact your state of mind?
17. How often do you skip a meal? Does this impact your diet for the next meal?

Lifestyle

- 1. How many times a week do you shop?
2. How do you plan your shopping?
3. How much money do you spend on an average each time you shop?
4. Where do you prefer to shop from? Why?
5. Does your mood impact your shopping behavior?
6. Are you brand conscious when it comes to shopping groceries?
7. What lifestyle habits urge you to eat healthy?
8. What lifestyle habits urge you to eat unhealthy?
9. Are you concerned about the nutrition of your daily diet?
10. Do you make sure you have a balanced diet on a regular basis?
11. How do you make sure you stick to a healthy lifestyle?
12. How often do you eat out? Any favorite places?
13. How often do you find yourself with leftovers from a meal at home/restaurant?
14. What factors result in you eating out at a restaurant or cafe?
15. Are you aware that your Lifestyle habits affect your eating patterns and routine?

Online pattern

- 1. Which smartphone do you use?
2. Do you refer any online resources for information pertaining to Food, Lifestyle, Nutrition and so on?
3. Any apps on your phone pertaining to Lifestyle and Food?
4. Do you socialise on any platform? Do you socialise over a mutual love for Food or anything related to it?
5. How often do you refer recipes online?
6. Sources?
7. Pieces of info you look for in a recipe?
8. Time you are online?
9. Do you believe in the phrase 'Food is the way to the Heart'?

Appendix B- Ethical Checklist

Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee Loughborough University Ethical Clearance Checklist. Includes sections for Project Details, Applicants' Details, Researcher Safety, Methodology and Procedures, Observation/Recording, Consent and Deception, and Declaration.

Appendix C- Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet form. Includes sections for Project Title, Purpose of the study, What you will be asked to do, What will happen to the results of the study, and What do I get for participating.

Appendix D- Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form form. Includes sections for Observe behavioural patterns pertaining to consumption of Food, INFORMED CONSENT FORM, and signature lines for participants and investigators.

Research Hunt Statement

A study of lifestyle choices and emotions that contribute to Food Wastage amongst International Indian Students between the ages 18 to 23.

Context

Most Indian students experience a major shift in terms of food consumption. This shift that largely contributes to food wastage includes:

1. Change of cuisine
2. Method of cooking
3. Nutritional content
4. Serving Portions
5. Availability of raw ingredients (Masala powder, etc)

Research Methodology

Data Collection (observation, shadowing & diary study)

1. Shopping behavior & routine
2. Cooking (individually and in groups)
3. Eating out (at restaurants, etc)
4. Emotional Disposition

Data Analysis

1. Affinity Diagramming
2. Emotional mapping onto food patterns
3. Key Insights
4. Design Opportunities

1

INSIGHT

A sudden change of cuisine could be a little overwhelming at times leading to prejudice around a certain style or variety of cuisine.

OPPORTUNITY

Gradually shifting one's food preferences to a new style of cuisine without overwhelming the palate.

2

INSIGHT

Change of method of cooking (Eg. steam cooker to oven) -> A lot of experimentation which usually lasts a month. That's one whole month of food wastage on a regular basis.

OPPORTUNITY

Cooking directions that lead to different states of the same delicacy (steak -> rare, medium, marination)

3

INSIGHT

Raw meat in supermarkets is meant for single person/serving.

OPPORTUNITY

A way to share raw meat and cook for a bunch of people with similar palates instead of reserving meat over a period of time.

4

INSIGHT

Craving for some home cooked food and being continually nostalgic about it could gradually lead to a 'Food Void' that could trigger unhealthy eating patterns.

OPPORTUNITY

Cooked original 'Mom Recipes' cooked every now and then, just enough to quench the 'Food Void' and also channel the craving to other cuisines.

5

INSIGHT

Getting bored of a foreign cuisine is natural for any outsider and this boredom eventually leads to saturation point that triggers food wastage.

OPPORTUNITY

Nullifying boredom with excitement towards a certain style of food. Keeping the redundancy (of food types) to a minimum and constantly changing one's diet could gradually change one's perception towards a certain cuisine.