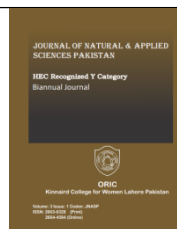




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## PREFERENTIAL MAPPING OF TRADITIONAL PAKISTANI DISHES LOCALLY CONSUMED BY PEOPLE OF LAHORE

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### Abstract

Pakistani cuisine has fashioned over centuries. Its rich heritage features a diverse range of dishes, incorporating ingredients adopted from neighbors and multiple invasions. The primary purpose of this research was to identify and understand the variations in most commonly consumed dishes among the households of Lahore. Multistage random sampling was used for recruiting a representative sample of households from each of the chosen union councils across the region. Focus group discussions with individuals who can cook were conducted following strict protocols across a period of three months. Analysis was done through classical content analysis and constant comparison analysis. Most commonly consumed dishes were Kari Pakora, Daal Mash, Alu Methi, Palak, Daal Chawal, Alu Gosht, Biryani, Pulao, Bhindi, Channa Chawal, and Alu Bengun with a similar pattern of using high levels of oil. The factors responsible for frequent consumption of certain traditional foods were also unmasked such as time, convenience, money, food availability, likes and dislikes of the family, socioeconomic status, health issues within the household, and family traditions etc. The findings of this study will help in the assessment of usual dietary intake and nutritional status of individuals in Lahore, identify the sources of rapidly developing non-communicable diseases and can ultimately be used as a framework in the development of a local food exchange list.

### Keywords

Health, Traditional Foods, Food Exchange List



## 1. Introduction

Food satisfies a man's appetite, but it is also representative of the lifestyle, culture, environment, agricultural productivity, and the likes/dislikes of a certain community. Every locality has its own specialty foods and cuisines. With technological advancement and globalization, people have adapted to a few fragments of other cultures. Similarly, people have also appreciated food practices from around the world. Individuals enjoy regional cuisines, and such foods remain in an exceptionally high demand throughout the year (Usman, Bostani, Anwar, Imlaq, & Javid, 2020). As food consumption practices are highly variable from one region to another, the inhabitants living in unique environmental and geographical conditions prefer different types of foods (Bakhsh & Khan, 2020). Food is not only necessary for survival, but it is also integral to cultural history and is linked to comfort, contentment, security, and celebration (Lamory & Laporte, 2016). An average Pakistani consumes three meals per day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Most often consumed breakfast is Halva Puri. Halva (semolina) is made up of egg whites and sugar syrup whilst Puri is a fried flatbread. Lunch and dinner generally consist of carbohydrates (rice or chapatti), protein rich foods, and cooked vegetables etc. Basic Pakistani diets are economical and consist generous amounts of staple ingredients such as milk, seasonal vegetables, lentils, rice, flour, and wheat products. Conventionally, meat and fruits are enjoyed by higher- income families in Pakistan. Commonly consumed vegetables include onions, potatoes, cabbage, okra, eggplant, chickpeas and peas

(Dickenson, 2015). The two main things for a basic Pakistani meal are roti/chappati (flat bread) and Salin (curry). Occasionally roti is replaced or joined by some kind of rice dish. Both roti and rice are eaten with some type of curry which is made of vegetables, lentils, or meat. The roti is made of largely wheat flour and occasionally with maize flour as well and baked (Shaw & Hussein, 2013). Predominantly, lentils are a part of the nation's diet as a lentil stew called 'Daal'. The most prevalent dishes are pulao (rice cooked in meat broth), chicken or lamb curry (Dickenson, 2015). Biryani is another rice dish cooked with meat and vegetables and is usually served on festive occasions. Recipe of biryani involves cooking of the components separately to a semi-done state. Rice is par-boiled, meat is sautéed, and vegetables are steamed. Later the cooked components are layered in a vessel and steamed until the rice completely absorbs the flavor. Frequently consumed desserts are Sewiyan (vermicelli), Falooda (cold dessert made using vermicelli and dairy), Gulab jamun (deep fried dessert made by using milk solids or dried milk that is dipped in sugar syrup) and Kheer (slow cooked rice pudding). Food choices and dietary patterns are the blueprint on which any culture places its traditional food intake, which is influenced by a myriad of factors. Consequently, cultural diversity of cookery may involve the use of ingredients not ordinarily used elsewhere. Understanding dietary patterns relative to health outcome and nutrient adequacy thus becomes an essential task. Qualitative data obtained from focus groups can be used effectively as a means of exploring factors and dietary habits affecting food choices (Khan,

Khalid, & Kausar, 2019). This research is aimed to identify the most commonly consumed dishes and the factors contributing to their frequent intake.

## 2. Methodology

The study design of this research was exploratory which aimed at identifying different factors influencing food choices among households in Lahore. To identify the most commonly consumed Traditional Pakistani Dishes (TPD) at home; Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was used for collection of qualitative data as it has been used widely for exploring eating patterns (Hargreaves, Schlundt & Buchowski, 2002).

### 2.1 Sample Size

According to statistics from the Population Housing Census 2017, the population of Lahore is 11,12,6285 million, each person with different cultural and ethnic background. The average household size is identified as 6.23 persons per household (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Lahore is further divided into 274 union councils, which are dispersed in 9 towns. Three union councils were selected from each town as the primary sampling unit for the current study. The study duration was 2 - 3 months. Focus Group discussions were carried out from September 2022 to November 2022. Through the total number of households, the sample size for the current study was calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Sample Size (n)} = \frac{NZ^2(1 - p)}{e^2N + Z^2P(1 - P)}$$

Where, N = Total Households in Lahore City  
P = Prevalence = 50% or 0.5  
Z = Confidence Interval = 95% or 1.96  
e = Margin of error = 0.05  
Therefore,  
n = 385 households

With a 10% non-response rate, the sample size becomes 442 households. Selection of a

representative sample was done through multistage random sampling design. Later, households were selected randomly from each union council to conduct focus group discussions. The number of the household representing each union council was obtained by: Number of households = Total number of sample size Selected number of UC = 442 households / 27 Union Councils = 16 households per UC. In Pakistan, local governments in a particular area are further divided into smaller administrative units referred to as union councils. The city has been divided into 274 union councils (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Selection of households for the focus group discussions was done from the identified union councils through fish-bowl random sampling method (Almeida, 2018). For the purpose of this study, females were selected for the focus group discussions who were responsible for cooking food for their family on a daily basis.

### 2.2 Focus Group Discussion

Over the span of about three months, 27 focus groups were conducted. A consent form was signed before each focus group meeting by the housewives who were invited. The focus groups were held in the union council's offices. In order to identify the most frequently used TPDs in Pakistan, 27 organized focus group conversations were undertaken for 16 women (in one focus group). The moderator and the co-moderator, who assisted the researcher in recording responses Questions of the FGD were formulated to derive the required information from the participants. In the current study, 442 housewives were asked to participate in 27 focus groups; this number was 10% greater than the necessary sample size of 385

participants in order to compensate for any participant absences on the day of FGD. Many themes and patterns were discovered by emphasizing the differences and similarities among the data collected during each session. Sub-themes were also distinguished by looking into the most repeated terms.

### **3. Results and Discussions**

#### *3.1 Dietary perception and preferences*

Culture is a linked system of images, texts, and artefacts that are rich in practices', meanings and identities (Lamory & Laporte, 2016). It was noted that when the participants were asked about their perspective on TPDs, many dishes came to their mind. They could relate these dishes to Pakistani culture and their recipes were passed down to them by their ancestors. It was emphasized by the participants that they preferred cooked the food at home from scratch. Homemade foods are believed to be more hygienic, clean, and economical. A difference between the TPDs cooked during the weekend and the weekday was seen. Homes that do not rely on commercially prepared foods, purchasing and preparing a nutritious diet can be a time-consuming task. Planning, travelling to and from the grocery store or other food source, purchasing, buying, preparing, and cleaning up are just a few of the tasks, and resources needed to provide nutritious meals (Caswell, Yaktine, & National Research Council. 2013). After Ramadan, the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr takes place. Following the Eid prayer, friends and family members visit one another, share a meal, and exchange presents. In the months of Dhu-al-Hijja, Eid-ul-Adha is observed. Muslims who can afford to do so make the sacrifice, buy a sheep or a goat.

On Eid-ul-Adha, goats, sheep, lambs, cows, buffalos, or camels are sacrificed to complete its purpose. The meat is enjoyed by the family and distributed among the poor Muslims. TPDs constituting mutton or beef are usually cooked. Eid-ul-Fitr is also celebrated with special TPDs and a traditional sweet dish. One of the most important principles contributing to the righteousness and welfare of the Muslim society is honoring the visitor. Pakistani culture and custom obligate the people to give them the best food and treatment. Often expensive items like mutton are prepared for the guests. It is also common that Pakistanis prepare one rice dish such as pulao or biryani, one gravy dish such as karahi or korma (meat curry) and one traditional dessert such as kheer, sheer khorma (vermicelli pudding) for them. A similar pattern highlighted during the FGD was the preference for certain meat type and it was observed that out of the four kinds of meat available in Pakistan namely beef, mutton, chicken, and fish; only mutton and chicken are more commonly used in the Pakistani cuisine, whilst mutton is considered an elite form of meat. Use of excessive oil is thought to make the foods look more presentable (Shaw & Hussein, 2013). Oil is a nutritious food item, but it becomes a problem if it is consumed in high levels over the years. A high oil concentration in TPDs was also considered elite and enhanced the taste and appearance of the food. Awareness of the use of excessive salt and its repercussions on health had allowed the participants to use it in less quantity. Many also did not add to the flour to make chapatti. 75% of the total wheat of Pakistan is produced in Punjab, the country's second- largest province and

largest in terms of agricultural output (Qayyum, & Pervaiz, 2013). Pakistan is an agro-based country. Suitable weather and land conditions allow the farmers to locally grow crops. Flour is one of the major crops which is sold locally and exported. Flour is a staple in the diet of the Pakistanis. It has

been passed on from our ancestors and amid acculturation it is still the most widely and frequently consumed food item. Fine ground wheat flour was the most popular type of flour used to make Chapatti.

**Table 1: (A):** Dietary perceptions and preferences of people regarding TPDs.

Major Themes	Sub-Themes	Focus Group Interpretations
List of traditional Pakistani dishes	Commonly consumed traditional dishes	During the FGDs, participants defined TPDs by naming most commonly consumed dishes which were Lentils, Vegetables, Daal Chawal (rice and lentil stew), Alu Bengun (potato and eggplant), Chicken Karahi, Kari Pakora (fritters of gram flour dunked in a tangy yogurt based curry) with rice, Saag (mustard greens and spinach curry), Biryani, Pulao, Paye (soup based dish comprising of trotters of sheep, goat, or cow), Karelay Keema (bitter gourd and minced meat curry), Koftay (meatballs), Korma, Alu Palak (potatoes and spinach curry), Palak (spinach), Palak Gosht (spinach and meat curry), Nihari (slow cooked meat stew), Alu Gosht (potatoes and meat curry), Alu Gobi (cauliflower and potatoes), Kari Pakora, various types lentils such as Daal Masar, Daal Moong, Daal Channa, Daal Maash, Paratha (flatbread with oil or butter), Sada Roti (flatbread without any oil or butter), Makai Roti (flat bread made from flour of corn), Fried Fish, Fresh Yogurt, Lassi (beverage containing yogurt, water, milk, and sugar), Chai (beverage comprising of blended tea leaves, milk, water and sugar), Gajer Halwa (carrot based sweet dessert pudding), Firni (sweetened rice pudding), Sheer Khorma (vermicelli pudding), and Kheer (slow cooked rice pudding).
	Cultural relevance	
	Regional relevance/ Provincial specialties	The participants argued that these dishes represent Pakistani cuisine, our family values, and legacy. These recipes were passed down to us by our ancestors. These are simple, healthy, nutritious, and typical foods that have been cooked daily in our households forever. We have developed taste for them, and these dishes are also economical. Traditional Pakistani foods are only cooked in suburbs; in cities people usually buy them. Others added that simple dishes like Saag and Makai Roti represent rural areas. The rural areas in Pakistan have agricultural lands which allow the inhabitants to grow crops and utilize them for sustenance. As a result, they get fresh produce and grains from farming. Punjab specialty dishes are Saag, chicken dishes and Kari Pakora
Relevance of Pakistani dishes	Common Recipes	

Socioeconomic  
relevance

meanwhile dishes like Nihari and Biryani represent Karachi, Sindh. Although most TDPs are consumed all over Pakistan but their cooking styles vary in terms of ingredients specific to provinces. Traditional Pakistani dishes have common ingredients like garlic, ginger, tomato and yogurt. These ingredients have been a part of traditional recipes from the beginning and have been passed down from one generation to another. Also, these are easily found in the market as Pakistan is an agricultural country. The respondents stated that these foods are cooked in every household of Pakistan whether rich or poor. The recipes of traditional dishes have been in our families since pre-partition in the Subcontinent. They have become a part of our culture and heritage. Hence, irrespective of the income status of the individual the recipes have remained consistent.

(B)

Major Themes	Sub-Themes	Focus Group Interpretations
Weekend	Dishes	Most respondents repeated Paye, Nihari, Saag, Kari, Pulao, Channe Chawal, Daal Chawal, Koftay, Spaghetti, Biryani, Korma, Mutton curry, Karahi Gosht, Achar Gosht (meat curry with pickles), Alu Gosht, Shami Kebab (minced meat patties), Alu Tikki, Roasted Chicken, Fried Fish, Dahi Baray (lentil and gram flour dumplings minced in yogurt), Naan Channe (flatbread and chickpea curry), Alu Paratha (flatbread with potatoes), Meetha Paratha (sweetened flatbread),
	Cultural factors	Namkeen Sewiyan (savory vermicelli), Doodh Sewiyan (sweetened vermicelli cooked in milk), Zarda (boiled sweet rice), and Lassi as popular weekend dishes. Some special dishes were made as everyone was home around that time. There is a high chance of receiving visitors at weekends. Hospitality of guests is given high priority in Pakistani households. Usual weekday dishes constituted vegetables and lentils and Daal Chawal. These dishes are relatively easier to make and take less time. On Eid-ul-Adha, goats, sheep, lambs, cows, buffalos, camels are sacrificed to complete its purpose. The meat is enjoyed by the family and distributed among the poor Muslims. Eid-ul-Fitr is also celebrated with special TDPs and a traditional sweet dish. Respondents stated the names of traditional dishes such as Alu Channe, Chicken Korma, Karahi, Bare Karele (stuffed bittergourd), Koftay, Paye, Kaleji (organ meat), Chaampein (lamb or mutton chops), Bhuna Gosht (stir-fried meat), Mutton, Pulao, Biryani, Nihari, Palak Gosht, Shami Kebab, Roasted Chicken, Chicken Tikka (marinated chicken cooked on coal), Fried Chicken, Keema Paratha (minced meat stuffed flatbread), Khameeri Roti (traditional flat bread made using milk, yeast and whole wheat flour), Naan
Weekend		
Festivities Eid	Dishes	
	Dishes	

Family Tradition (flatbread made using yeast and flour), Alu ChanaChaat (potato and chickpea salad), and Dahi Baray. Sweet dishes such as Kheer, and Sewiyan, Firmi, Fruit Chaat (fruit salad), Doodh Sewiyan, Zarda, Suji Halwa, Gajer Halwa, Ras Malayi Winters (small flat cakes dipped in sweetenedmilk), and Sheer Khorma were a must on Eid day. A few people stated that eating out on Eid as a family was tradition. Some added that only kids like eating out on Eid. Participants said that Eid is a special gift and joyous Islamic day that they celebrate and expect guests and gathering, so they make special dishes in its honor. The delicacies consumed during winters were mostly Fried Fish, Saag, Saag Gosht, Palak, Palak Gosht, Shaljam Gosht (Turnip and meat curry), Matar Keema (minced meat and peas curry), Gajrella (slow cooked sweetenedcarrot pudding), Grilled Fish, Fried Fish, Pakoray, Moongray (radish pods), Alu Gosht (potato and meat curry), Alu Methi (potato and fenugreek curry), Alu Bengun, Gobi (cauliflower), Gobi Gosht (cauliflower and meat curry), Alu Matar potato and pea curry), Matar Chawal (rice cooked with peas), Channe Chawal, Ghiya Gosht (bottle gourd and meat curry), and Mooli Paratha (radish stuffed flatbread)

(C)

Major Themes	Sub-Themes	Focus Group Interpretations
Summers		A variety of TPDs were consumed in summers as mentioned by participants during the discussion. These were Karelay, Daal, Masar Chawal, Kaalay Channe (black chickpea), Chawal, Daal Moong Chawal, Daal Moong, Daal Channa, Daal Chawal, Channe Chawal, Ghiya, Kaddu (bottle gourd and pumpkin squash curry), Tinday (apple gourd curry), Tori (Ridge gourd curry), Alu Gosht, Kari Pakora, Bhindi (okra), and Arvi (Taro corm). Every house has a special dish which is prepared for the guests. Sometimes dishes that the guest likes specifically are cooked. A sweet dish is compulsory. It was reported that Mutton was usually cooked as a special dish as lentils are considered an ordinary dish. Moreover, one responded stated that it is upsetting for the guests if some special dishes are not presented before them. Generally, one gravy dish is prepared and one rice dish and one sweet dish.
Seekh Kebab		Usually, Seekh Kebab (minced meet on skewer) are made at home on occasions like Eid. These are also sometimes eaten as a dish during mealtimewith or without Salad as it significantly reduces the amount of work.
Alu Tikki		During the Focus Group participants stated that they make Alu Tikki (potato cutlet) at home and eat it with the food that they have cooked e.g., Biryani.
Shami Kebab		Sometimes when there is no food at home, they eat Tikki with Chapatti. It was not very commonly consumed as the respondents did not talk about it much. The respondents said that we make Shami Kebab on Eid or whenever

Food groups	Dahi	they expect guests. Shami Kebabs with Pulao or Biryani. The respondents said
	Baray	that they often make them in Ramadan and on Eid. Many respondents said that
	Mint Yogurt	it is always eaten with meals. Others said that it is specially made for the
	salad	guests. Many respondents said that it is always eaten with meals. Others said
	Vegetables	that it is specially made for the guests.
	Meat	Alu (potato) was the most common answer among vegetables consumed as Alu Bhujiya, Alu Gosht, Alu Gobi, Alu Bengun etc. Other Vegetables often made in households include Bhindi, Karelay, Kaddu and Tinday. Meat dishes were preferred over vegetables dishes, and chicken was more frequently eaten because it is cheaper than Mutton. Fish are eaten more frequently in winters. Mutton and Beef were eaten occasionally e.g., on Eid. Although a few people stated that Mutton and Beef is normally consumed and liked in the households.

(D)

Major Themes	Sub-Themes	Focus Group Interpretations
	Lentils	Lentils with pickle and rice were a frequent combination as observed during discussion.
Common Dishes		The combination of vegetables and meat became popular as the likes and dislikes of family members differed with time. Many dishes were repeated while discussing this question such as Shaljam Gosht, Palak Gosht, Gobi Gosht, Ghiya Gosht, Gajar Gosht, Alu Matar Gosht, Bhindi Gosht, Gobi Keema, Alu Matar Keema, Karele Gosht, Shimla Mirch Alu Gosht, Tinday Gosht, Kaddu Gosht, Alu Gobi Gosht, Karelay Gosht, Matar Gosht, Matar Gobi Shaljam Gosht, Alu Matar and Matar Keema.
Lentils	Namely	Dal was liked by most respondents, either in combination with Chapatti or Rice. Daal was preferred consuming in the form of Masar, Daal Mash (white lentil sautéed in a typical onion and tomatoes gravy but is served dry), Daal Channa, Daal Moong, Daal Moong Masar, Kalay Channe, Safaid Channe, Daal Gosht..
Preference		The respondents agreed that they liked mixed vegetables and stressed the addition of ‘Alu’ in almost all dishes.
Common Vegetable Dishes		The respondents stated Saag, Gobi Gosht, Mix Sabzi, Alu Gobi, Alu Moongray, Alu Matar, Alu Methi, Alu Gajar, Alu Matar Gajar, Alu Palak, Methi, Karelay, Tori, and Tinday as the most common dishes.
Mix Vegetable Dishes		The names of many mix Vegetable dishes were taken during the discussion. It was also added that ‘Alu’ was used in almost all of them. These dishes included Alu Gobi, Alu Methi, Palak Methi Saag, Alu Matar Gajar Methi Moongray, Alu Gajar Matar Moongray, Alu Matar Gobi, Alu Gajar Mooli, Alu Gajar, Alu Matar Moongray, Alu Gajar Methi, Alu Matar Gajar, Alu Gobi Gajar, Alu Gobi Gajar Mater Methi, Alu Methi Palak (stir fry dish made from potatoes and Fenugreek leaves) Moongray, Alu Matar, Alu Gajar, Alu Bengun, Alu Ghiya, Alu Arvi, Alu Palak, Alu Moongray, Gajar Matar, Alu Bengun



*3.2 Factors influencing the food choices.*

In the FGD, the housewives did not consider time an issue and prepared meals at home irrespective of the amount of work, energy, and the time it will consume. In Pakistani society, convenience foods have not become a culture and are not preferred either due to high prices or their connection with cases of food related illnesses. Participants stressed that they cook whatever they can afford. With rising inflation and food costs, people have become conscious of what they eat. Increase in the food price have an excessively higher influence on the consumption of food in low- income nations (Green et. al., 2013). Majority of Pakistan’s economy depends on agriculture as it is blessed with four seasons and leveled fertile land suitable for farming. Agricultural output is not only sold locally but also exported to other countries. This allows Pakistanis to enjoy seasonal fruits and vegetables at low cost. Fresh produce was preferred by participants because it was more economical, easily available, and high in quality (Vabø & Hansen, 2014). The likes and dislikes of the children and husband influenced the menu decision at home. Wastage of food is highly

discouraged in Islam and in Pakistani culture. Hence, foods that can be eaten by all the members of the family are cooked. Mothers generally believe that if the family members will not eat a certain dish there is no point of cooking it (Khan, Khalid & Kausar, 2019). Further stressed that the likes and dislikes of the family members were considered by the females who cooked meals in Pakistani households. A difference between the TPDs cooked during the weekend and the weekday was seen. Special dishes like Paye, Nihari, Saag, Kari, Pulao, Channe Chawal, Daal Chawal, Koftay, Biryani, Korma, Mutton Shorba, Karahi Gosht, Achar Gosht, Alu Gosht, Shami Kebab, Alu Tikki, Roasted Chicken, Fried Fish, Chargha, Dahi Baray, Naan Channe, Alu Paratha, Meetha Paratha, Namkeen Sewiyan, Doodh Sewiyan, Zarda, Lassi were consumed during the weekends. The respondents claimed that they have more time on weekends than they do on the weekdays. They cook time- consuming and laborious dishes on weekends because it is the time of the week that the entire family is together during the meals.

**Table 2:** Factors influencing the food choices.

Major Themes	Sub-Themes	Focus Group Interpretations
Menu decision	Self-decision	The majority of participants agreed that they decide the menu themselves as they are the ones who cook too. Other family members are approached, and a unanimous decision is taken.
	Decision by otherfamily members	Many participants said that the children decide the menu meanwhile a few others agreed that the husband does. Some days the husband has special requests for the menu. It was also noted that some participants allow one person in the family to

	<p>decide the menu for one day and if other family members do not like the food cooked, they eat Shami Kebab. Some said that the daughter-in law decides. One participant revealed that her brother-in-law decides who refuses to eat any vegetables. It is paramount to ask the opinion of other members of the household as the food will be eaten by all, otherwise it will be a waste of energy and food.</p>
Time	<p>It was noted during the discussion that women in the working class voiced that they have less time to cook and try new things. Housewives added that it is important to consider time, but some foods take longer to cook, e.g., Saag, Palak, Kari and Biryani takes longer than pulao. Tasty food requires more effort so usually dishes are cooked that take less time e.g., Daal Chawal, Alu Gosht, Alu Anday, Sabzi or Chicken. Activities that are time consuming e.g., peeling, and grinding garlic are done in bulk once a month. Moreover, participants preferred to cook special dishes on weekends as they require more labor and time.</p>
Convenience	<p>Foods that are easier to cook and take minimal effort are considered convenient. Some participants agreed that they accounted for the cost of the dish. Sometimes food is cooked on weekends and eaten on weekdays for working people. Moreover, many added that their food preparation timing depends on the availability of gas. Participants agreed that frozen Saag can be reheated with Tarka anytime.</p>
Money	<p>Participants expressed that their objective is to cook good food within budget and also contribute to savings. For most of the participants this was the most important factor. A few of them said that they need specific ingredients for each dish, and they cannot compromise on the ingredients especially if the kids want to eat the dish. Others reported that onion, tomatoes, and potatoes; the basic ingredients have become very expensive and hence they sometimes are not used and these days the prices are similar for meat, lentils, and vegetables. Some added that they consider price over quality.</p>
Food Availability	<p>The majority of the participants stated during the discussion that they preferred buying fresh and seasonal fruits and vegetables from the market, e.g., Saag in winter. Food is cooked according to the type of spices that are available at home. The choice of family members was the most significant factor. Participants stated that it depends on the dominant member of the family.</p>
Likes and Dislikes	<p>Likes and dislikes are not considered in larger households. Children influence the decision and usually it is something that is liked by all in small families. Other people who influenced the decision of what will be cooked were mother-in-law and husband. Households with patients cook different meals for them e.g., with less/no spices. Sometimes two dishes are cooked if the children do not agree on one and other times each family member gets a day to decide</p>

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#### 4. Conclusion

Findings of current study suggest that identification of TPDs and complex factors affecting food choices in a typical Pakistani household was done successfully through FGD. The FGDs were conducted in different zones of Lahore, covering a variety of people with different socioeconomic status, beliefs, cultures, traditions, family customs, religions, lifestyles and working status. Major factors that helped formulate and shape the food preferences of individuals were time, convenience,

money, food availability, likes and dislikes of the family, personal preference, income, health issues within the household, and family traditions and legacy. On the contrary, things that were similar throughout different zones of Lahore were dishes that were considered easy to cook, dishes made on the weekends, on festivals like Eid or in the presence of guests, preference for Chicken as meat, and Potato as vegetable. Food preferences affect the food choices of individuals and provide a framework for the development of the culture of a certain area.

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