

An Assessment To Enumerate The Customer Perspicacity About Ready To Eat Food Products

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Abstract :

India is a nation where the cooking style and lifestyle has undergone tremendous changes in last decade. The factors like dual income, separate livings, innovative applications, and online facilities and media proliferations. There is a continuous change in peoples eating habit throughout the nations. The present lifestyle, work pressure has nowadays made the people to incline more on the easy and short way of cooking and consumption of readymade food available in markets. The study is about the consumer perception on ready to eat food products. The objective of the research study deals in finding of the consumption pattern, consumer behavior, brand preference towards the ready to eat products in Chennai. Descriptive Research is identified; Convenience sampling is used for the study. Structured Questionnaire was circulated to 184 respondents to elicit the information from the consumer. The data is analyzed using SPSS software. The records the perception opinion and expectation of the consumers.

Key words: Consumers, Food, Perception, Ready to Eat & Super Market

Introduction

Chennai is one among the metropolitan city of India, been a prime habitat of many people in search of higher education and professional career. It is hosting about 10.7 lakhs of native and transient population. Among the transients the bachelors and students numbers high migrating to Chennai for the improvisation of their esteemed life in education and good jobs. These people with high financial commitments entirely depend upon the Ready to eat food products than depending upon the restaurants.

Ready to eat food are packages foods, a variety of these food products are available in markets at any part of the city. Ready to eat food are processed food which can be consumed with a slight warming or cooling upon the consumers preference. Both vegetarian and non vegetarian food varieties are available being ready to eat with simple cooking processes.¹

These ready to eat food varieties are preferred by the people migrating to the Chennai and families in which both husband and wife goes for their work having less time to spend on cooking.² The busy schedule of these nuclear families³ has forced to depend upon these ready to eat food varieties and change in children attitude towards this junk food has also made the parents to depend upon these ready to eat food varieties.⁴ Beside these facts other factors like the availability of different varieties of dishes, preference for tasting different cuisines, flavors, taste, branding etc make the people to orient towards these ready to eat food varieties.⁵

The ready to eat food industry in India is growing rapidly as there is existing about 80% demand in the urban areas. India is the second largest consumer in Asia and ranks one among the five main market of ready to eat food varieties.⁶

An increase in working class people, projection in the economical background of the families and changing lifestyles of the upcoming generation of the nation are the major causes of these developments in the food patterns. These factors continuously and steadily affect the food pattern of urban peoples.⁷

Beside there are few limitations or disadvantages like consumption of these ready to eat foods are not so nutritious and causes health problems these foods varieties are also been considered the boom for the travelers and transient migrating peoples.⁸ These food have advantageous as the saves time, convenient to consume at any time, and relieves the stress of long time procedural cooking.⁹ The study was conducted among the transient migratory peoples staying in Chennai for their jobs and educations to enumerate their perception about the ready to eat food available in the market.

Objectives of the Study:

The study involves in exhibiting the perception of the people who temporarily stays in Chennai for their jobs or education. The study tries to identify their preferences towards the ready to eat food products and their reasons for the liking towards these ready to eat products in Chennai.

Materials and Methods:

The study involves investigating the determinants of the market potential of ready to eat food and the perception of its consumers. The study involves a dual mode of collection of data from the distributors and the consumers of ready to eat foods. Initially a survey was conducted among the supermarkets and departmental stores in Chennai with a simple set of questions, interviewing to enumerating the information about the sales statistics of these packaged foods.

The other set of primary data was collected from the consumers visiting these super markets and departmental stores. The questionnaire comprises question to bring out the perception of the consumers about the ready to eat food. They were questioned about their preference for ready to eat food,

periodicity of their consumption, reason behind to select these food varieties and awareness about the health effect of these food varieties.

The targeted populations were the people who visits the super markets, departmental or provisional stores to buys these food products. The questionnaire were distributed among 184 respondents and the information gathered were sorted and aligned and fed into SPSS (21.0) software for further statistical analysis.

Results and Discussion:

The study exhibits the view and perception of the consumers about ready to eat food varieties. It records detailed opinions of the distributors and consumers about ready to eat food varieties and the perception of the consumers about the ready to eat food varieties.

Opinion of distributors about ready to eat food varieties

The study was done with two phase of respondents the distributors and the customers of ready to eat food varieties. The distributors covering all areas of Chennai were interviewed with a set of questions and their opinion in handling the ready to eat food varieties is recorded. About 57 owners and 21 managers from established supermarkets and departmental stores are interviewed for the study. The opinions of the distributors are enlisted below:

Majority of distributors feels that the men including students and bachelors were the prime consumers for the ready to eat food varieties. The sales of these varieties are higher during the week days than the weekends. Among the food varieties bakery products are more preferred by the consumers than other products. The distributors also believes that the consumers either they have no awareness about these products they does not hesitate to buy these food products. The consumer does not stick to any brand or product mix, the consumers are interested in trying new varieties of food products.

Demographic features of the consumers

The second phase of the study includes the perception and opinion of the consumers of ready to eat food. The questionnaire is developed and circulated among the consumers at departmental stores, super markets and specialty stores among the three outlets the ready to eat food are more consumed at the super markets in Chennai. The study also shows that (Table 1) the ready to eat food are more either preferred or not are consumed by the consumers with the age group ranging from 21 to 30 years (55.9 per cent). Majority of respondent are on non vegetarian (58.2 per cent) has responded that the spending capacity for the ready to eat food is mostly less than five hundred rupees (79.8 per cent) and these food varieties are mainly consumed by the adolescents' students at colleges and young working adults staying single or with friends (74.5 per cent).

Table 1 Demographic features of the consumers

S.No	Demographic Factors		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	152	82.6
		Female	32	17.4
2	Age	Below 20 Years	38	20.6
		21 To 30 Years	103	55.9
		Above 30 Years	43	23.4
3	Marital status	Single	137	74.5
		Married	47	24.5
4	Family type	Staying single / Friends	107	58.1
		Married couple	25	13.5
		Couples with Children	52	28.3
5	Spending Capacity	Less than 500 Rupees	147	79.8
		501 to 1000 Rupees	31	16.8

		Above 1000 Rupees	6	3.4
6	Location of Purchase	Supermarket	96	52.1
		Departmental stores	37	20.1
		Specialty Stores	51	22.8
7	Food Habit of consumers	Vegetarian	76	41.8
		Non Vegetarian	108	58.2

Consumers Opinion and perception about ready to eat food varieties:

The consumers visiting the super markets and departmental stores were surveyed with a structured questionnaire and the responses from the respondents were fed in SPSS (21.0) software and analyzed the information from the data analyzed are enlisted.

According to Table 2, the study shows majority of the consumers prefer the ready to eat food for its time saving and convenience for consumption at any time and any place. The ready to eat food is more preferred as snacks in their daily food routine. 59.2 per cent of the consumers have responded that they consume these food varieties preferably when they were with friends than family. Ready to eat food is consumed mostly two to three days in a week (42.9 per cent) in their food routine. The (51.6 per cent) consumers expect their ready to eat food varieties to be more organic, healthy and nutritive in nature.

Table 2. Consumers Opinion and perception about ready to eat food varieties:

S. No	Particulars / Opinion about Ready to Eat Food		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Prefer eating ready to eat food	Convenient	51	27.7
		Price facts	43	23.3
		Time Saving	66	35.8

		Varieties	24	13.2
2	Ready to eat food is consumed as	Breakfast	21	11.4
		Lunch	39	21.1
		Dinner	51	27.7
		snacks	73	39.6
3	Ready to eat food is preferably consumed with	Alone	43	23.3
		Friends	109	59.2
		Family	32	17.4
4	Motivating sources for ready to eat food	Media	29	15.7
		Friends/ family –recommendation	43	23.3
		Initiation by sales people	41	22.2
		Own preference	71	38.6
5	Consumption frequency	Daily	53	28.9
		Two- Three days a week	79	42.9
		Once in a Week	40	21.7
		Occasionally in a month	12	6.5
6	Consumers expectation towards ready to eat food	Organic and natural products	21	11.4
		Hygienic and well packed	29	15.7
		Good Nutritive Value with low fat	40	21.7
		All the above	95	51.6

Chi – Square test:

The chi square analysis is conducted between the variable to identify the influence of promotions for the ready to eat products towards the buying behavior of the consumers. The analysis shows there exists

a positive and significant relationship between the variables with high chi square value (92.12) and significant at (0.00) level. Thus the analysis proves that the consumers are influenced by the promotional activities in Medias.

The analysis for the variables gender and preference for ready to eat food also show that the gender of the respondent has no impact on the preference for the ready to eat food varieties with the chi square value (61.03) and significant at (0.05) level.

Conclusion:

The economical status of the Indian society is bringing in a rapid change in the socio-economical lifestyle of the people; these changes raised the number of nuclear families and transient settlers travelling from their native places to other cities for education and job prospects. Thus these facts alters the opportunities, paves way for the emergence of ready to eat food consumption among the populace. The study concludes that there always exist a projection in demand for the ready to eat food varieties and also suggest the manufacturers to consider the basic health and hygienic facts while formulating the ready to eat products.

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