

A Study of Relationship between Consumer buying pattern & Features attracts Consumer to purchase Instant Food Products with special reference to demographic factors of customers from big malls in Pune City.

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Abstract: The present study has investigated relationship between Consumer buying pattern & Features attracts Consumer to purchase Instant Food Products, here perception of urban consumer who generally visit big malls like big bazaar, essay day etc. this consumers generally give preference to some features of IFS like taste, brand name, Price, Easy availability etc. because customer is well verse with the current happening in the market his/her feedback matters a lot for better understanding of relationship between Consumer buying pattern & Features that attracts Urban consumer when he/she goes for purchase of Any brand of IFP in big malls. This study in nut shell will help in understanding Consumer buying pattern, operational strategy useful for marketing strategy development in urban areas in Pune City.

Keywords: Consumer buying pattern, instant food products (IFP), Demographic factors.

Introduction-

Urban life in Indian Cities become more & more busy so time scarcity, busy professional life, less time stay at residential place, husband & wife both working together, nuclear families are some main reasons for more consumption of IFP (Instant food products) in urban areas.

Along with this in a era of Globalization created open economy to all new multinational players set a significant change in lifestyles ,food taste culture on Indian youth specially working youth starts accepting IFP as a regular diet because of its features like easily cooks, taste, branded products with powerful advertisement, busy life style etc.

Besides this latest studies conducted by A.C Nielsen on Oct 2004 through 28 countries across Asia-Pacific, Europe & the USA. Asian are emerging as a World's Greatest fast food fans & Indian being at the Seventh Place ,is among the top ten market for weekly fast food Consumption amongst the Countries of Asia-Pacific region.

The Young, working bachelor, husband & wife working no kids, nuclear families are major customer of the IFP. It's estimated that college students spends \$ 7 Billion for less essential purchase which include fast food. However almost

all National & International brands easily available in any million cities like Pune City at the doors steps of consumer. IFP are getting adapted to Indian food requirement & are growing in Indian.

After globalization food style & food taste of Indian changed so it gaining importance & Part of Day to day life of all Youngsters this study has focused on IFP selection criteria like brand name, price & Taste of IFP.

Objectives of the Study-

- 1) To evaluate the awareness of consumer towards Instant food products and evaluating its relationship with Consumer buying pattern along with demographic factors of urban consumers.
- 2) To study factors responsible for buying intention toward instant food products.

Instant food Industry in India-

Indian has very diversified culture in food also.it support food habits of Multi-diversity culture with influence of religion or Individual.it also prefer individual to take, make& eat food at home only- which will more follow taste, hygiene as assumed but over a period of time after globalization, taste, preference, changed due to increasing awareness & influence of western culture, there is a shift in food

consumption pattern among urban Indian families. It started eating out side & moved on to accepting a wide variety of delicious food from world over.

After the open economy policy of Government of India in 1991, many instant food companies entered in India for targeting segments for their products. Companies like Knorr, Nesle, Chings, Top Ramen, MTR, Tasty Bite, HUL etc. more or less these branded companies getting success in Indian market with Changing life style of Indian Consumer & Aggressive marketing by IFP Branded Companies. It is also popular in all age group Consumers Including college students in Pune City. In recent years, changing lifestyles, increase in nuclear, double income families, influence of the media, increase in foreign travel, integration of ethnic foods into local food habits, rising disposable income groups, branded food, health foods, convenient foods and desire for quality foods have resulted in increased demand for instant foods. Considering these facts, super markets have had the greater share of engaging in trading food, beverage and grocery for till last two decades.

Technological developments, particularly in the field of food processing equipment, Processes and packaging material have brought on a revolution in the development of instant foods as per the necessity, taste as well as nutritional requirements of the consumers.

Literature Review

Instant foods- Instant foods are the choice of the day (Manohar, 2005). Instant foods, especially the ready-to-eat (RTE) sector is growing at a very fast pace due to the above mentioned factors. However, according to analysts, the RTE industry in India has not quite experienced such a significant growth as Compared to western countries due to inadequate demand arising from low household incomes and consumer preference for fresh and home-cooked food.

This might be because this is a category that has a lot to do with taste, as in most cases it is a replacement for a whole meal. Unlike other foods, drawing acceptance for RTE packs as meals in them is a major challenge. The failure rate of specific

products is very high and hence getting a product to be acceptable to the tastes of a larger audience is the primary challenge of the manufacturer. Unless they get it right, Retailers will find it overwhelming to drive sales. In years to come, India will provide an attractive opportunity for both Indian and international players with a mix of demand and supply side changes. If consumer demands of affordability, availability and enhancing acceptability can be met, the RTE foods segment has a potential market size of Rs 2,900 crore by 2015 (Srivastava, 2009).

Presently, marketers require breaking through the inertia of the Indian consumers for acceptance of ready-to-eat foods. For this purpose, it becomes vital to understand the food related psyche of the consumers by going beyond surface characteristics and understanding the consumers' Motivations for purchase and use of ready-to-eat food products.

What was the consumer's orientation towards shopping with respect to selected instant food products (IFP)? What were the lifestyles of the consumers of selected packaged foods? What were their market beliefs and what attitudes did they hold towards selected packaged foods? Which was the most important evaluation criterion for them in selecting the product? Did the lifestyle, personality, beliefs, attitudes and perceived risks of the consumer play any Role in shaping their food shopping orientation? Can the target market be differentiated on the basis of consumers' consumption pattern of selected packaged foods? Was there a differentiation in the food-shopping orientation, psychographics, and demographics of the subsets of consumers on the basis of their consumption Pattern?

The present study aimed at obtaining answers to the above questions. Therefore, the study was designed to understand the disposition of the shoppers factoring in their demographic characteristics, pre-purchase aspects, and Psychographic attributes. An in-depth study was conducted to assess the relationships between the psychographic attributes such as lifestyle, personality, market beliefs, Attitude, and perceived risk; and shopping orientation of the consumers. Relationships were

observed that enabled to understand the consumer with a holistic perspective.

Moreover, the investigator in the present research studied consumers of selected Instant foods with the approach to segment the consumer market. For the purposes of designing target marketing strategies, market segmentation was carried out which involved artificial grouping of consumers into homogeneous groups. This type of segmentation divided the market into groups according to consumer's characteristics, which included demographics, food shopping orientation, and psychographics. The consumer market was segmented on the basis of the consumption pattern of IFP.

Thus, a complete profile of the consumers was developed on the basis of aspects, which mainly encompassed the demographics of the consumers, their food shopping-orientations, and their psychographics.

Understanding of the consumption pattern of selected packaged foods will not only form the basis of segmenting the consumers, but will also be useful in studying the market concentration for the product. Market segmentation will allow the marketers to understand the market of selected packaged foods, and the attitudes, beliefs, and common values of the consumers in the market. The data will be useful to the marketers, and facilitate them in product positioning, by fitting their product into the psychographic make up of the consumers of each segment. Different Communications and advertisements can be designed on the basis of different Lifestyles, personalities, beliefs and attitudes of the consumers of different profiles. The marketers can identify the right medium through which they can- market their product for the respective section of the consumers. It will also help, in developing sound overall marketing and media strategies. The findings of the present study justifies its utility since knowing the consumers precisely and reaching them in the most effective way-is the key to revealing profitability.

The data will also throw light on the problems encountered by the consumers With respect to the product and it's labeling / packaging. This information will be Useful to the manufacturers of

selected, packaged foods to bring about appropriate Modifications in the product and it is labeling, and thereby increases consumer satisfaction. The findings with regard to the preferences of the consumers in relation to the product, it's labeling and packaging, and concerns in the use of the product will direct the manufacturers to evolve their product, and provide value added Characteristics, which will help the consumers overcome their delay in using the product. The information will facilitate the manufacturers to broaden their market, and thus increase penetration amongst Indian consumers.

INSTANT FOOD AND ITS CONSUMPTION: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Instant foods can be broadly defined as 'Foods that have undergone major processing by the manufacturer such that they require little or no secondary processing and cooking before consumption. This means, apart from warming, thawing, cooking, frying, diluting and reconstitution, the Food is ready-to-eat. A food may be classified as instant food if it meets the criteria's like

1. The food must have undergone considerable amount of food preparation by the manufacturer before it reaches the retailer.
2. It must require minimal cooking or processing before consumption by the consumer.
3. The preparation time before consumption should be minimal (Manohar, 2005).

1.1 Classification of Instant Foods.

Instant foods can be classified into 3 major categories.

1. Ready-to-eat foods (RTE) the foods which can be directly consumed from the package with or without Warming/thawing and without preparations. Examples include

1. Dairy snacks like processed cheese, cheese spreads, butter spreads
- ii. Dairy sweets like gulab jamuns, rasgoolas, peda, burfi and other sweets like sohan papdi, sohan halwa etc.
- iii. Biscuits
- iv. Breads
- v. Snacks like chips, wafers.

vi. Retort processed foods like paneer curries, dal fries

vii. Frozen foods like ice cream, dosa etc.

2. Ready-to-use foods.

The foods which need some preparations like cooking, frying, reconstitution, Dilution etc. before consumption.

These include

i. Masalas like butter chicken mix, garam masalas, ginger/ garlic paste etc.

ii. Fresh cut vegetables like carrots, potato, cauliflower, radish, beans, cabbage etc. which are sorted, washed and cut into slices, cubes, shreds and modified atmospherically packed.

iii. Ready-to-cook like noodles, instant rava idli mix etc,

iv. Ready-to-fry like papads, color gold fingers, wafers, chicken samosa.

Current status and future prospects of instant food in India.

Analysis shows that India is currently witnessing greater change in lifestyle and buying habits of the Indian consumers (Sumathi, 2003). India being very vast geographically, consumers here are naturally scattered over a vast territory. As the country is also marked by great diversity in climate, religion, language, literacy level, customs and calendars, lifestyle and economic status, here consumers present a complex and bizarre group. Studies by the center for monitoring Indian economy reveal that structural shifts have been taking place in the consumption pattern of Indian consumers in the recent years and the shift have gained greater momentum since the launch of economic reforms.

Instant foods and ready-to-eat foods are now popular. With the nuclear family, there is also a shift in the women's attitude to cooking and the meals she serves. Teenagers are also becoming influences of change in their family's meal pattern (Ramaswamy, 2003) In recent years, the increase in the number of working women, changing lifestyle, increase in nuclear double income families, influence of media, increase in foreign travel and integration of ethnic foods into the local food habits

and desire for quality foods have resulted in increased need for instant foods (Manohar, 2005). RTE foods have now become one more option in the home-meal replacement segment along with the convectional options like restaurants, mess/ canteen and catering services (especially during travel) and not-so-conventional fast food joints and take-away/carry -home outlets (Rangarao, 2004). The changing lifestyles of the consumers and rising disposable income groups, branded food, health foods and convenient foods are gaining popularity and the market for these items are growing at 10 to 15% (Anonymous, 2004).

The middle class is now emerging as the 'consumption community' of the country. As the members of the class are better educated and better exposed to global lifestyles, their aspirations have been constantly growing (Ramaswamy, 2003), One significant point about the middle class consumers is that in spite of the regional, linguistic and cultural diversities of the country they generally fall into a common pattern of lifestyle and buying behavior (Sumathi, 2003).

The profile of the Indian middle class consumers reveals one vital point- they account for a lion's share of the demand base in the country in respect of most branded consumer products. Their needs are on the increase, as is their disposable income. Marketers of most products and services will be targeting this class. They have to naturally study the class in depth and properly assess the buying motives and buying behavior of each segment in the class to design marketing strategies (Ramaswamy, 2003).

Indian food buying behavior is changing gradually in response to the changes in social and economical patterns (Manohar, 2005). The four fundamental shifts which further emphasize growth in the instant foods are

1. Rapid growth in organized retail, a catalyst for the processed food development.
2. Instant and enjoying life driven by demographic trends in age, income levels and more women in workforce
3. Global shift to outsourcing from India across products/ services, including food.

4. De-regulation and liberalization of the Indian economy since from 1991. With the changing socio-economic factors, the demand for instant foods is increasing steadily. India being one of the largest food producers in the world is stated to become a global hub or production of instant food. Therefore in India the food processing is identified as sun-rise industry. The de-regularization and liberalization of Indian economy has boosted the food processing industry which is mainly engaged in production of instant foods (Manohar, 2005).

India is one of the world's top producers of food. It is first in milk and cereal production, and second in fruit and vegetables. The size of semi processed and RTE food industry is estimated to be US\$1 billion which is growing @20% per year. Food processing industry is identified as a sun-rising industry due to its enormous input Potential and its significance in the country's development as it promotes vital linkages and synergies between the two pillars of economy namely agriculture and industry (Manohar, 2005).

India's middle class segment will hold the key to success or failure of the processed food market in India. Of the country's total population of one billion, the middle class segments accounts for about 350-370 million. Though a majority of families in this segment have non-working housewives but can afford hired domestic help and thus prepare foods of their taste in their own kitchens, the profile of the middle class is changing steadily and hired domestic help is becoming costlier. This is conducive to an expansion in demand for ready-to-eat Indian style foods (<http://www.indiaonestop.com/middleclassesindia.htm>)

The big leap forward for packaged commodity foods, semi-cooked and precooked foods is expected in the next 5-10 years (Mathur, 2004). Technological developments particularly in the field of food processing equipment, processes and packaging material have brought revolution in the development of instant foods as per the necessity, taste as well as nutritional requirements of the consumers. Instant foods- the choice of the day can be designed to suit all segments of population.

The demand for instant foods is growing at a faster pace due to changes in social and economical patterns, as well as increases in urbanization, buying power and awareness about health foods, changes in meal pattern and existing food habit, desire to taste new products etc (Manohar, 2005).

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Today's consumers are bombarded with a massive selection of product offerings, accessible through a multiplicity of shopping channels, which has widened the scope of product availability. The study of consumer behavior in market situation has always been an area of research interest. However, with consumers being a part of the complexities of the global market forces, and dynamic socioeconomic environment, the study of consumer behavior has acquired a very intricate character. Consumer behavior is a complex and multi-dimensional process, where a consumer follows a predictable process in their purchases decisions. In case of some products, this process is very clear and is adopted at a conscious level; while in other cases, it is subtle and relatively understated and subliminal. It depends on the Consumer's level of involvement with the product. In cases of a high involvement product, the consumers put in a lot of efforts to evaluate all aspects of the product, before making a final decision; while for a low involvement product purchase, the consumer may not consider the product sufficiently important to invest his/her time and efforts and thereby skips the complex decision-making process and directly makes a choice.

.The increasing buying power, multiplying varieties in a store, increasing media exposure and reducing

Research Design- Primary data collected through self-Structured questionnaires.

time availability makes a consumer less involved. Such a behavior is directed by the conscious and subconscious motivations and opinions, and can be studied through the consumer's shopping-orientations.

On the other hand, such a complex consumer behavior in the multifaceted market scenario has laid numerous challenges to the marketers of consumer products. It has made it vital that the marketers be conscious of the consumers' psychological framework, and provides apt solutions to their wishes and requirements in creating Competitive business advantage to the firm.

To succeed in the market place, it is indispensable that the manufacturers adapt to the shifting tastes of their consumers, and persistently bring innovations and value-addition to their existing products, to realize and fulfill their customer's wants and desires. In order to attract or motivate a particular group of consumers, it is necessary to know how they think, what their values, attitudes and beliefs are, as well as who they are in terms of traditional demographic variables of age, income, etc and communicate to them in a way that matches with their lifestyles. Moreover, it becomes crucial that the manufacturers understand the concerns of the consumer while shopping for a product and how this shopping-orientation is related to his/her psychographics and demographics make up.

Research Methodology

Universe & Sample- Universe is strictly Pune City Area, Statistical population is Age group 18 to 50 Years Old, Sample size is 1000, Data Collected through Questionnaire.

Demographic profile of the Respondents:

GenderTable No: 1

No. of Consumers	Age of Consumer	Male	Female
1000	18 to 50 Years Old	804	196

Age Group Table No: 2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18 to 28	50	5.0	5.0	5.0
29 to 39	816	81.6	81.6	86.6
40 to 50	134	13.4	13.4	100.0
Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

MARITAL STATUS Table No: 3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Married	199	19.9	19.9	19.9
Bachelor	801	80.1	80.1	100.0
Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

QUALIFICATION Table No: 3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
SSC/HSC	290	29.0	29.0
Graduation	561	56.1	56.1
Post graduation	131	13.1	13.1
Post graduation and above	18	1.8	1.8
Total	1000	100.0	100.0

OCCUPATION Table No: 4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Salaried	210	21.0	21.0	21.0
Self employed	36	3.6	3.6	24.6
Student	733	73.3	73.3	97.9
Housewife	21	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

ANNUAL INCOME (IN LAKHS) Table No: 5

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No income	718	71.8	71.8	71.8
1 to 3 LAKHS	128	12.8	12.8	84.6
3 to 7 LAKHS	88	8.8	8.8	93.4
7 to 10 LAKHS	36	3.6	3.6	97.0
10 and above LAKHS	30	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	1000	100.0	100.0	

For the Purpose of this study following Hypothesis is Developed & Tested through SSPS.

Which features attracts you to purchase & eat IFP.

H0: Features influencing IFP do not differ in frequency.

H1: Features influencing IFP significantly differ in frequency.

level of significance = 0.05

Taste is the major reason for purchase of IFP.

Cochran's Test

Frequencies

Table 6. Frequency Distribution Table

	Value	
	0	1
Brand name	786	214
Taste	361	639
Price	876	124
Easy availability	793	207

Cochran's Q variables & measurement customers were asked to tell which features attracts them to purchase & eat IFP. They were given following four options- Brand name, Taste, Price, Easy availability. They were further asked to choose multiple options if applicable.

Table 7. Statistics

Test Statistics

N	1000
Cochran's Q	633.987a
Df	3
Asymp. Sig	0.000

Q(3) = 633.98, P = 0.000

Since 'P' value is less than 0.000 the null hypothesis is rejected hence it is concluded that features influencing purchase of IFP significantly differ in frequency to find out where difference lies, we refer to frequency table. From the frequency Table it can be seen that brand name has frequency 214, taste has frequency 639, Price has frequency 124, easy availability has frequency 207, hence taste is important factor in purchase of IFP.

Limitation of the Study-

- The study is confined to Pune City only.
- The Sample size is limited to 1000 Respondents.

Findings –

1. Consumer of urban areas more price conscious while purchase Instant food products.
2. Consumer of Same demographic pattern like age, gender, occupation & qualification give preference to Taste.
3. Awareness level of consumer of young age group is very high as per as brand selection, preference is concern.

4. Marketing segment of age group 18 to 28 which is bachelor, college going is most important targeted consumers of IFP in urban areas.
5. Instant food industry is one of the most fast growing industries in urban part due to technological development, growing population of young age group, busy urban life etc.

Suggestions-

1. Food processing industry should give priority to Taste & nutritional values also in IFP.

2. IFP more popular in young generation now a days so focus should be given to targeted consumer present in IT companies, Colleges in Pune City through promotional Marketing activities.

3. Targeted consumer should consciously study ingredients of IFP, try to avoid those IFP added more preservatives which are harmful for health.

Conclusion-In the study of relationship between Consumer buying pattern & Features attracts Consumer to purchase Instant Food Products. It is found that consumer buying pattern of Urban Consumer very specific, pinpoint in demand because awareness level of urban

Consumer is very high, demographic factors like age, gender, education level, profession & Income really matters for final decision of Purchase of IFP. Out of four features like Taste, Brand name, Price, Easy availability. Urban consumer very consciously buy IFP. With demographic factor analysis shown that urban consumer give importance to brand name, Price of IFP, Easy availability but give utmost importance to Taste of Instant food products. So for IFP companies also it is important lesson to focus more on taste of IFP for getting competitive advantage from the cut throat competition of IFP market in urban areas specially fast growing city like Pune in India.

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