

# A Study on Buying Behaviour on Instant Food Products at Coimbatore

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**Abstract**— The goal of this research is to examine the consumers buying behavior with the help of consumer awareness towards the instant products, reason for purchasing, factors influencing to purchase. This study was carried out in Coimbatore. It proves that consumers buying behavior is influenced by the traditional way of manufacturing process, traditional ingredients and the availability of products next to their shops. Interestingly the study reveals that consumers are not ready to change over their brand.

**Keywords**— Consumer Buying Behavior, Instant food products, Traditional Ingredients,

## I. INTRODUCTION:

The word 'food' refers to the chemical substances taken into the body in order to keep the body in a healthy and active condition. The body requires food for growth, repair and replacement of its worn-out tissues. Hence, food has to provide the required raw material, energy and other regulating substances, like vitamins and minerals, for the smooth functioning of the body, besides meeting the calorific requirements like carbohydrates, proteins, fats, etc., India is the world's second largest producer of food next to China and has the potential of being biggest industry with food and agricultural sector contributing 26 per cent to Indian GDP. It has the capacity of producing over 600 million tons of food products every year; it is likely to be doubled in next ten years. Food accounts for the largest share of consumer spending. Food and food products account for about 53 per cent of the value of final private consumption.

Food is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for the body. It is usually of plant or animal origin, and contains essential nutrients, such as carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, or minerals. The substance is ingested by an organism and assimilated by the organism's cells in an effort to produce energy, maintain life, or stimulate growth. Historically, people secured food through two methods: hunting and gathering, and agriculture. Today, most of the food energy consumed by the world population is supplied by the food industry. Food safety and food security are monitored by agencies like the International Association for Food Protection, World Resources Institute, World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization, and International Food Information Council. They address issues such as sustainability, biological diversity, climate change, nutritional economics, population growth, water supply, and access to food.



## II. INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

The Instant food products, which originated in Japan with Instant noodles had its beginning in India in 80's, are found today in the kitchen shelves of every Indian household. The advancement of science and technology offered the people new foods processing vessels, equipment and tools but still people are in search of new techniques to speed up the cooking process in order to cope up with mechanical life, as they do not have sufficient time to cook food in the conventional methods. In the ever changing socio-domestic scenario, both men and women have to necessarily go for employment to augment the household income and cooking food in traditional methods is really an ordeal for women. Capitalizing this situation, business houses ranging from small time manufactures to multinational corporations have started innovating and commercializing "easy to cook food items" like noodles, vermicelli, gulab jamun, instant idli, vada, dosa mix, etc., that are otherwise called instant. The instant food products are not only easy to cook but also have a significant role and place in the celebration of the family functions and religious functions of the people. Instant foods Dried foods that reconstitute rapidly when water is added, e.g. tea, coffee, milk, soups, precooked cereal products, potatoes, etc. The dried powders may be agglomerated to control particle size and improve solubility. 'Instant puddings' are formulated with pregelatinized starch and disperse rapidly in cold milk.



Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. It blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology, marketing and economics. It attempts to understand the decision-making processes of buyers, both individually and in groups such as how emotions affect buying behaviour. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics and behavioural variables in an attempt to understand people's wants. It also tries to assess influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends, reference groups, and society in general.

Customer behaviour study is based on consumer buying behaviour, with the customer playing the three distinct roles of user, payer and buyer. Research has shown that consumer behaviour is difficult to predict, even for experts in the field. Relationship marketing is an influential asset for customer behaviour analysis as it has a keen interest in the re-discovery of the true meaning of marketing through the re-affirmation of the importance of the customer or buyer. A greater importance is also placed on consumer retention, customer relationship management, personalisation, customisation and one-to-one marketing. Social functions can be categorized into social choice and welfare functions. Each method for vote counting is assumed as social function but if Arrow's possibility theorem is used for a social function, social welfare function is achieved. Some specifications of the social functions are decisiveness, unanimity, homogeneity and weak and strong Pareto optimality. No social choice function meets these requirements in an ordinal scale simultaneously. The most important characteristic of a social function is identification of the interactive effect of alternatives and creating a logical relation with the ranks.

**Environmental factors**

**Buyer's black box**

Marketing Stimuli	Environmental Stimuli	Buyer Characteristics	Decision Process	Buyer's response
Product	Economic	Attitudes	Problemrecognition	Productchoice
Price	Technological	Motivation	Informationsearch	Brandchoice
Place	Political	Perceptions	Alternativeevaluation	Dealerchoice
Promotion	Cultural	Personality	Purchasedecision	Purchasetiming
	Demographic	Lifestyle	Post-purchasebehaviour	Purchase amount
	Natural	Knowledge		

**III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The specific objectives of the study were;

1. To study the of awareness towards Instant Food Products,
2. To analyze factors influencing the buying behaviour of Instant Food Products,
3. To analyze brand loyalty for Instant Food Products

#### IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

##### *A. Awareness of Consumers*

Brown et al. (2000) reported that the need for effective nutritional education for young consumers has become increasingly apparent, given their general food habits and behaviour, particularly during adolescence and analyzed that the interaction between young consumers' food preferences and their nutritional awareness behaviour, within three environments (home, school and social). The results indicated that the perceived dominance of home, school and social interaction appears to be somewhat overshadowed by the young consumers, while developing an 'independence' trait, particularly during the adolescent years. The authors suggested that food preferences are often of a 'fast food' type and consequently the food habits of many young consumers may fuel the consumption of poorly nutritionally balanced meals. While young consumers were aware of healthy eating, their food preference behavior did not always appear to reflect such knowledge, particularly within the school and social environments.

##### *B. Factors influencing consumption*

Balaji (1985) studied fish consumption behaviour of 526 consumers in Vishakapatnam city. The study revealed that 77 per cent of respondents consumed fish for dinner and 22 per cent for lunch. About 30 percent of the respondents did not consume fish on festival days, as those days were considered auspicious, while the rest had no notations and consumed fish, irrespective of festivals. Gluckman (1986) studied the factors influencing consumption and preference for wine. The explicit factors identified were, the familiarity with brand name, the price of wine, quality or the mouth feel of the liquid, taste with regards to its sweetness or dryness and the suitability for all tastes. Some of the implicit factors identified through extensive questioning were, colour and appearance. Most consumers seemed to prefer white wine to red. Packaging, appearance, colour, ornateness, use of foreign language and graphics were taken as important clues for quality and price. Jorin (1987) examined changes in spending power and buying habits of Swiss consumers since the beginning of the 20th century and in the more recent past. Current trends include greater emphasis on health and safety of foodstuffs and less attention to price, increased demand for low calorie light products and increased demand for organically grown foods. For young people, more concern with enjoyment and less for health, with more meals eaten away from home, and generally an increased demand for convenience foods. The prospects for high quality branded products are seen to be good.

##### *C. Brand loyalty*

Singh and Singh (1981) found that consumers had single or multi-brand loyalty based on the nature of product, like necessities or luxuries. Brand choice and store loyalty were found to affect the brand loyalty of the consumer. The factors that influence and strengthen loyalty to brand were quality of product, habit of use and ready and regular availability.

Shanmugasundaram (1990) studied about soft drink preference in Vellore town of north Arcot district in Tamil Nadu. The study revealed that, the most preferred soft drink among respondents as Gold Spot (26%), followed by Limca (24.80%). It was found that taste was the main factor for preference of particular brand and among the media; television played a vital role in influencing consumer to go for particular brand. Because of convenience in carrying, tetra pack was most preferred one.

Ali (1992) studied the brand loyalty and switching pattern of processed fruit and vegetable products in Bangalore city by using Markov Chain analysis. The result of study revealed that Kissan brand of jam and Maggi brand of ketchup had a maximum brand loyalty among consumers, and less amount of brand switching occurred for these brands. Frederick Reichheld (1994) pointed out in his book, "The Loyalty Effect", that, 'customers equity effectively explains success and failure in business'. The companies with the highest retention rates also earn the benefit profits. Relative retention explains profits better than market share, scale, cost position or any other variable associated with competitive advantage. Ranganatham and Shanthi (1995) conducted a study on brand image among refrigerators in Tamil Nadu. The study revealed that Kelvinator scored higher for working of its power saving compressor, cooling power and its price was considered, except for defrost and new features. Voltas brand clearly outperformed others with respect to working of defrost system and always caused satisfaction with the models available under its brand name. The potential buyers felt that Godrej and Voltas had got a well known corporate identity.

##### *D. Brand composition*

Sabeson (1992), in his study stated that high quality, price and taste of the product were the major criteria based on which the consumers selected a brand of processed fruits and vegetable products. Low and Lamb Jr. (2000) came out with an interesting conclusion that well-known brands tend to exhibit multi-dimensional brand associations, consistent with the idea that consumers have more developed memory structures for more familiar brands. Consumers might be willing to expend more energy in processing information regarding familiar brands compared to unfamiliar brands. Bristow et al. (2002) mentioned brand name as a node to which the linkages or the brand associations might be linked. A node was activated initially by an external cue, would also activate associated nodes through a set of linkages in place and the final

set of information recalled would be based on the particular path of nodes and linkages activated in the given situation. Thus, brand name might be part of several different sequences, depending upon the activated path.

### *E. Methodology*

This chapter presents a comprehensive view of the methodology adopted for the present investigation undertaken to know the awareness of consumers about instant food products, factors influencing consumption of instant food products, brand loyalty, brand composition in choosing the particular brands in the study area and to predict the demand for instant food products. A structure questionnaire was used to know the buying behavior of this people of Coimbatore. retrieved 180 filled questionnaires.

## V. Sampling design and data collection

### *A. Selection of instant food products*

Based on less cost and frequent use of instant food products, the products such as dosa/idli mix, pickles and sambar masala were selected after discussion with the local consumers of the study area about the consumption of instant food products, which are either homemade or purchased from the market and the marketers as well as about the brands available and preferred in the study area. The particular products were selected in such a way as to represent one product from each group like cereals, fruits and vegetable and spice based categories.

## VI. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study are presented under the following headings.

- Awareness of consumers towards Instant Food Products
- Factors influencing the consumption of Instant Food Products
- Brand loyalty of consumers of Instant Food Products
- Brand composition of Instant Food Products
- Demand potential for Instant Food Products

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