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CONSUMER AWARENESS TOWARDS BRANDED INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS
(With Special Reference to Coimbatore District)

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Abstract

The present study is anticipated to find out the consumer awareness towards Branded Instant Food Products. The study aims to know the socio-economic profile of the consumers and measure the consumer's awareness on instant food product brands. Simple percentage and mean score has been analyze the used to primary data collected using questionnaire. The findings of the study exhibits the majority of the consumers are non-vegetarian and they prefer to have new tastes in their food products, so that they are purchasing instant food products relating to non vegetarian food item. Most of the consumers are buying their instant food products from both offline and online. Consumer awareness towards branded instant food products, maggi brand leads in the noodles category with highest score of 2.77 and followed by Aachi brands as leader in pickle awareness with a score of 2.68.

Key words:

Consumer awareness, Instant food products, offline, online

Introduction

Food is one of the basic needs for every human being. It gives energy for the total body. In ancient days man were eating the raw uncooked food before the invention of fire. Latter days they started cooking and invented range of dishes which varied from country to country, state to state, and even district to district. But during those days, all the required ingredients were freshly prepared by themselves at home which were thought as the healthy one. But now-days everything has changed. The word joint family has ruined out and all lead a nuclear family where both the husband and wife go for work. In such a situation the women they prefer to do their cooking work simple but also in an easy way to save their time and energy. This has led them to go for purchasing instant food products in the market. Focusing these working women and their preference towards instant food products, various companies have entered the market with range of instant food products.

Review of Literature

Nitya Khurana et.al (2021) in her study entitled "Consumer Perception towards Instant Food Products - A Study of Youngsters In India", found that consumer preferences, especially among youngsters, have undergone significant changes, driven by factors such as ready availability and time-saving features of instant food products. The study also highlights a positive perspective towards instant food products, indicating a widespread acceptance and reliance on these products. **Shubhendu Shekher Shukla, et.al (2020)** in the study captioned "Consumer's Awareness towards Instant Noodle brands: on The Basis of Taste and Preferences (Special Reference to Uttar Pradesh, India)". Revealed that consumer perceptions, encompassing purchase timing, consumption timing, brand loyalty, and brand awareness of instant noodles in rural areas. It highlights areas where company managers can identify opportunities and focus efforts to increase sales in rural regions. **Dr. Aarti Vyas Varma (2020)** "Working Women's Perception towards usage of Ready to Cook Food Products: a Study with Reference to Thane City" revealed that there is major association between age, education, marital status, family size, family type and income and working women perception towards usage of ready to cook food products of Thane city due to easy accessibility, time reduction, expediency flavor, cost and excellence. **Dr. Nazrul Islam et.al(2019)** "Factors Influencing the Consumers' Perceptions Towards Frozen and Ready-to-Cook Food Products in Bangladesh", examined that the factors which influence the perception of the consumers about frozen and ready-to-cook food products. The individual factor analysis revealed that attributes like time-saving, economic benefits, affordability, diverse product offerings, brand image, and quality, along with product availability, significantly impact consumer

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perceptions. **Farheen et.al(2019)** “Consumer Brand Awareness of GRB Spice Blends, Bengaluru” , revealed that GRB brand has reputable in the Indian market and the company is gradually rising their operations and introducing new taste and flavor to the consumers. The rate of development of the company in the instant food product kind is viewing on rising trend.

Statement of Problem

Nowadays people have a challenging way of life. They do not have time to step for a second and think their own. They want to be as well-organized as possible and want to save as much time as possible. They feel that time is not sufficient and that they do not have the necessary energy. All the altered choices buyers make when purchasing can be stressful and the possibility and demand on how to act and what to say can be extra burden. Sometimes, consumers want someone to give them an offer of a product, or just take a product with many, without even bringing the product into line with their needs. It can be difficult to make choices, especially at the first purchase in an unknown environment. Therefore, we wanted to know to what extent people are using brand awareness, when choosing brand. What is level of awareness on consumer towards branded instant food products?

Objectives of the Study

- To know the socio-economic profile of the consumers
- To determine the consumers awareness and utilisation of instant food product brands.

Research Methodology

The present study is mainly based on primary data which is collected through questionnaire. The questionnaire contains questions relating to socio-economic profile and purchasing pattern and awareness of branded instant food products. The data required for the study have been collected by issuing questionnaires to 310 consumers in Coimbatore district. The data collected are analyzed using simple percentage and mean score. Convenience sampling method has been adopted.

Result and Discussions:

This study intends to determine the consumer awareness and utilization of instant food product brands in Coimbatore district. The following paragraphs depict the socio- economic profile, purchasing Pattern and awareness of branded instant food products.

TABLE 1: SOCIO-ECONOMIC VARIABLES

FACTORS	PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGES
Area of Residence	Urban	143	46.00
	Rural	167	54.00
Age	Up to 20 years	30	9.65
	21 to 40 years	175	56.45
	41 to 60 years	96	31.00
	Above 60 years	9	2.90
Gender	Male	106	34.10
	Female	204	65.90
Educational Qualification	Up to School Level	41	13.30
	Diploma	28	9.00
	Undergraduate	83	26.80
	Postgraduate	78	25.10
	Professional	68	22.00
	Others	12	3.80
Occupation	Govt. Employee	75	24.20

	Pvt. Employee	88	28.20
	Self Employed	79	25.60
	Professional	68	22.00
Type of Family	Joint	127	40.80
	Nuclear	183	59.20
Earning Members of the Family	Two	231	74.51
	Three	54	17.41
	Four	22	7.09
	Five	3	0.99
Non-Earning Members in the Family	Zero	24	7.75
	One	117	37.75
	Two	127	40.96
	Three	33	10.64
	Four	09	2.90
Size of the Family	Up to three members	120	38.71
	Four and Five members	158	50.96
	Six and above members	32	10.33
Monthly Income (Self)	Up to Rs.20,000	108	34.85
	Rs.20001 to Rs.40000	100	32.25
	Rs.40001 to 60000	67	21.61
	Rs. Above 60000	35	11.29
Family income per month	Up to Rs. 30,000	60	19.36
	Rs. 30,001 to Rs 50,000	109	35.17
	Rs. 50,001 to Rs.1,00,000	107	34.51
	Above Rs.1,00,000	34	10.96
Food Habit (Self)	Vegetarian	87	28.06
	Non –Vegetarian	223	71.94

TABLE 2: INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS PURCHASE

FACTORS	PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGES
Source of Motivation	Self	91	29.35
	Family members	108	34.85
	Relatives	26	8.38
	Friends	28	9.03
	Dealers/agent	5	1.62
	Retail shop display	12	3.87
	Advertisement	40	12.90
Period of Using Instant Food Products	Less than a year	100	32.26
	1-3 years	93	30.00
	3-5 years	60	19.35

	More than five years	57	18.39
Frequency of Using Instant Food Products	Almost every day	58	18.70
	Once a week	144	46.45
	Once a month	108	34.84
Place of Preference for using Branded Instant Food Products	At Home	151	48.72
	At Work place	56	18.00
	During Journey time	68	22.00
	Function Time	35	11.29
Time to Prefer to Consume Branded Instant Food Products	Breakfast	32	10.32
	Lunch	74	23.88
	Evening	110	35.48
	Dinner	94	30.32
Amount spend on Branded Instant Food Products per month	Up to Rs.500	117	37.74
	Rs.501 – Rs.1000	127	41.00
	Rs.1001 – Rs.1500	35	11.26
	Above Rs.1500	31	10.00
Importance to the brand while Buy	Every time	88	28.38
	Mostly	121	39.03
	Rarely	101	32.59
Purchase Decision	Planned Purchase	150	48.38
	Unplanned Purchase	160	51.62
Mode of Purchase	Offline	120	38.70
	Online	19	6.12
	Both	171	55.18

TABLE 3: AWARENESS TOWARDS VARIOUS BRANDS OF INSTANT FOOD PRODUCT

S.No	Brand & its Instant Food Products	Mean Score
1	<u>Tiffin Items</u>	
	MTR	2.48
	Krishna	2.04
	Milky Mist	2.29
	Aachi	2.53
	Double Horse	1.75
	Elite	2.07
2	<u>Soup</u>	
	Maggi	2.45
	Knorr	2.19
	MTR	2.08
	Aachi	2.31
	Bambino	1.98
3	<u>Noodles</u>	
	Maggi	2.77

	SunfeastYippe	2.46
	Top Ramen	2.14
	Anil	2.31
4	<u>Rice Varities</u>	
	MTR	2.39
	Krishna	2.05
	Mother Receipe	2.00
	Aachi	2.40
	MambalamIyer's	1.86
	Annapoorna	2.34
	Sakthi	2.52
5	<u>Masala Powders</u>	
	MTR	2.36
	Aachi	2.60
	Sakthi	2.66
	Everest	2.08
	Annapoorna	2.12
6	<u>Gravy Powder /Paste</u>	
	MTR	2.35
	Krishna	2.03
	Mother Receipe	1.90
	Knoor	1.63
7	<u>Pickle</u>	
	Aachi	2.68
	Sakthi	2.57
	Double Horse	1.78

Finding of the Study

The findings of the study are divided into three sections namely, socio-economic profile of the sample consumers, purchasing pattern and their awareness on branded instant food products purchased.

(I) Socio Economic Profile of Sample of consumers :

The findings relating to awareness towards on branded instant food products socio-economic profile namely, Area of Residence, age, gender, educational qualification, occupation, type of family, number of earning members in the family, number of non-earning members in the family, size of family, monthly income, family income and food habit (self) are presented .

- Majority 167 (54%) of the consumers are residing in rural area.
- Most 175 (56.45%) of the consumers belong to the age group ranging between 21 to 40 years.
- Majority of the consumers 204 (65.90 %) are belonging to the category of female.
- Majority of the consumers 83 (26.80 %) educational qualification is up to Undergraduate level.
- Most of the consumers 88 (28.20 %) are employed in private sector.
- Majority of the consumers 183 (59.20 %) live in a nuclear family.
- Majority of the consumers 231(74.40%) have two earning members in their family.
- Majority of the consumers 127 (40.96 %) have one non- earning members in the family.
- Most of the consumers 158 (50.96%) family consist four to five members.
- Majority of the consumers 108 (34.85%) are earning up to Rs.20,000 in a month.
- Majority of the consumers 109 (35.17%) family income per month is between Rs.30,001 to Rs.50,000.
- Majority 223 (71.94%) of the consumers are non-vegetarian and they prefer to have new tastes in their food products.

(II) Purchasing pattern of branded instant food products:

The findings relating to branded instant food products in purchase details such as, source of motivation to purchase, period of using branded instant food products, frequency of using instant food products, place of preference for using branded instant food products, consumption pattern of branded instant food products, amount spend on branded instant food products per month, importance to the brand while buy, mode of purchase are presented.

- Majority 108 (34.85 %) of the consumers are purchasing branded instant food products by their self.
- Majority of the consumers 100 (32.26%) are using branded instant food products less than a year.
- Majority of the consumers 144 (46.45%) are buying branded instant food products once a week.
- Most of the consumers 151 (48.72%) place of preference for using branded instant food products is at home.
- Majority 110(35.48%) of the consumers preferring time to consume the branded instant food products between evening time.
- Most of the branded consumers 127 (41%) spend more amount between Rs.501 to Rs.1000 on instant food products.
- Majority of the consumers 121 (39.03 %) are giving importance to the brand at mostly they purchase the instant food Products.
- Majority of the consumers 160 (51.62%) opined that their nature of purchase decision is unplanned purchase.
- Most of the consumers 120 (38.70 %) are buying their instant food products from both offline and online.

(III) Awareness Towards Various Brands of Instant Food Product

The findings relating to awareness towards on branded instant food products shows that mean score level to used to such as Tiffin Items, Soup, Noodles, Rice varieties, Masala Power, Gravy Powder/Paste and Pickle among the consumers.

➤ Tiffin Items

Aachi leads in awareness score (2.53) for Tiffin items, demonstrating its strong brand recognition, especially in South India, where Tiffin items are a attach

➤ Soup

Aachi's high awareness score (2.45) shows its strong regional influence, particularly in South India, where the brand resonates well with consumers seeking traditional flavours.

➤ Noodles

Maggi leads in the noodle category, with a high score (2.77) suggesting it is a consumer favorite.

➤ Rice varieties

Sakthi is the top performer, with a higher score (2.52) indicating good consumer acceptance.

➤ Masala Power

Sakthi again performs well, leading in the masala powders the highest awareness score of 2.66, indicating it is the most recognized brand among consumers.

➤ Gravy Powder/Paste

The brand MTR has the highest mean score of 2.35, suggesting it is the most recognized or well-known brand among respondents. This could be due to factors like effective marketing, wide availability, or perceived quality.

➤ Pickle

Aachi emerges as the leader in pickle awareness, with a score of (2.68).

Suggestion

To enhance consumer awareness and utilization of branded instant food products, leading brands like Maggi, Aachi, and MTR should focus on expanding product ranges, digital campaigns, and cross-promotions to keep their dominance. Mid-tier brands like Knorr and Sakthi can boost visibility through regional advertising, health-focused products, and in-store promotions, while low-awareness brands like Double Horse and Bambino should prioritize sampling campaigns, influencer

collaborations, and entry-level pricing. Across all brands, emphasizing convenience, health benefits, eco-friendly packaging, and leveraging e-commerce and social media can effectively improve recognition and their respective market share.

Conclusion

In this context, the present study is under taken to analyses consumer awareness towards branded instant food products. Consumer awareness towards instant food products is crucial for making informed choices about their health and nutritional value. To enhance consumer awareness of instant food products, focus on clear and accurate nutritional labeling, educational campaigns highlighting risks of excessive consumption, and promoting basic cooking skills. Emphasize the nutritional benefits of whole foods and transparent marketing practices. Organize community workshops, support consumer advocacy groups, and encourage reading ingredient lists. Advocate for stricter labeling regulations while fostering peer recommendations for healthier alternatives. These efforts collectively empower consumers to make informed choices, ultimately promoting better dietary habits and overall well-being.

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