A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

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INTRODUCTION

The most dramatic change is the change in consumer demographics and demand preferences. Thus, to reduce the human efforts, instant food products has made the convenience of providing healthy and digestive food. Moreover, the demand potential and the buying behaviour of the consumers has changed which has increase the production of food products.

Convenient foods have become widely popular especially among working class people, teenage children, people living in hostels, bachelors, sharing rooms etc. Convenience foods are used to shorten the time of meal preparation at home. Some convenient foods can be eaten immediately or after adding some water, heating .Instant food products make them to cook any time with less labour, time and energy. *An* instant *food* is one that has been dehydrated, so the only preparation *needed* for consumption is to add that water back. Instant food consumption is increased due to increase in urbanization, breaking up of the traditional joint family system, time, and convenience, changing lifestyles and increasing level of income. The ready availability, and saving of the time are the reasons for consuming instant food products. Hence, an attempt has been made to analyse the consumer purchasing frequency for the instant food products.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The satisfaction of the consumer is very important for any industry to survive in the market. Many people do not prefer to buy instant food products as it is not healthy. Consumer's taste and preference were found to change rapidly, especially in a dynamic environment. Keeping in view the importance of consumer behavior and consumption pattern, the present study was undertaken. The industry is mainly made on the factors affecting optimum level of behaviour and satisfaction to the consumers such as artificial sweetness, preservation, pesticides, sugar content, coloring agents and ingredients for the betterment of processed food product. The present paper highlights the study of consumer behaviour regarding instant food products among the consumers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To study the awareness about instant food products in Coimbatore city.
- To analyze the buying behaviour of instant food products.
- To analyze the factors influencing on buying decision of instant food products.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The scope of the study highlights the customer's preferences towards instant food products. The study is conducted randomly with the users of instant food products. It is focused on the preferences, level of satisfaction, modes, benefits and problems faced by the customer's while using the instant food products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The researcher aims to measure the preferences of customers towards instant food products. Convenience sampling method is used to collect the data.The sample size of the study is 150 respondents.The data required for the study has been collected from the primary data source The questionnaire consists of closed ended questions and multiple choice questions. The following statistical tools have been used to analyze the primary data.

- ❖ Percentage Analysis
- ❖ Chi-square test
- ❖ T-Test
- ❖ Anova
- ❖ Friedman's Rank test

Review of literature

Binkey Srivastava (2019) has examined Consumer Buying Pattern of Processed Food Products in National Capital Region of India. The objective of the study are to examine the consumer buying behavior of processed food products, To find the determinant factors of the respondent for their purchasing decision and to examine customers' buying intention for their foods preferences and change in buying pattern. The sample size based on convenience sampling is of 300 consumers. The analysis tool used for this study is exploratory factor analysis, t-test, ANOVA, Chi-square test and Regression. Research uncovered that Changing Lifestyles, external influence, health and quality concern are the major factors affecting the processed food consumption.

Ramya and Gunaseelaprabhu (2019) have undertaken a Study On Consumer Satisfaction towards Instant Food Products. The main objective of the study is to know about the level of satisfaction of customers towards various fast food products used by the customers and to compare the demographic profile with various factors related to a level of acceptance. For this purpose a sample of 150 was collected from the respondents .The study has concluded that more distributors can be created for increasing the distribution channel so that the brand name can be reached easily with the customers. The important findings of the study are most of the respondents are owning restaurants, Maximum of the respondents are male and are graduates, Most of them are between the age group of 36-45years and are professionals.

Manivel (2019) has analysed the Buying Behaviour Of Consumers Towards Instant Food Products With Reference to Karur Town. The main objectives of the study are to analysis the demographic factors, awareness of Instant food products and factors influencing the buying behaviour of Instant food products. The data for the study has been collected in primary and secondary nature. The researcher took 150 respondents. The primary data collected through questionnaire were analyzed by using the simple percentage statistical techniques. The findings in the study is that awareness is through advertising and media, another major finding is that the respondents are influenced by the quality of the instant food product.

Chetan Bajaj etal (2019) have conducted a study on Consumer Perception on Branding: A study on Processed food. The objective of this paper is to evaluate the consumer perception of branded and non-branded processed food. More precisely, the purpose is to assess the consumer satisfaction level with branded process food. Findings in this study found that Customers prioritize freshness, quality and packaged products above all other variables, followed closely by Price and then Convenience. The time-saving factor is one of the undeniable factors for preferring processed foods, individuals or groups who do not possess ample time for cooking meals go for processed food. Majority of the consumers are satisfied with their branded processed food.

Mayakkannan (2018) has studied the Impact of Buying Behaviour of Consumers towards Instant Food Products in Chennai District. The main objectives of the study are to study the perception with reference to awareness and satisfaction. The research methodology was exploratory and descriptive. The tools used in this study was Chi-square analysis, Garrett ranking technique and Kmo and bartlett's test. For this study around 250 respondents have been collected. The study is based on random sampling.

Ashish etal (2018) have investigated Consumer Behaviour and Consumption Pattern Towards Ready to Eat Food Products in Jammu City. The objective of the study is to review the market of Ready to Eat food in Jammu city, To study the present consumer behavior towards Ready to Eat Food, To perceive the consumption pattern of Ready-To-Eat Food product. Number of respondents is 100. Some of their findings are Working employees and students are the major consumer of Ready-To-Eat food packs, In case of non-liking of RTE food due to high price, poor quality, taste etc., mostly agreed to purchase it, if these get solve. The study is based on Convenient Sampling method.

Rupa etal (2018) have studied the awareness of working women towards ready-to-eat food products, To know the buying preferences of working women towards ready-to-eat food products, To identify the factors determining the attitudes/buying behavior of working women towards ready-to-eat food products.

The study included 205 working women who were asked to give their preferences through a questionnaire. In this study, non-probability sampling i.e., convenience and judgmental sampling was used. The tool used in this study is factor analysis.

Ravichandran and Padmanaban (2018) have analysed Consumer Behavior On Processed Food In Fmcg Products: A Bird's Eye View. The main purpose of this study is to measure the relationship between socio- economic, demographic factor and buyer behaviour towards the consumer satisfaction on purchase of processed food products. In this study, data were collected by using questionnaires among the sample size of 160 consumer's in organised retail store in Kodungaiyur, Chennai region. Descriptive research design is adopted in this study where simple percentage analysis, Chi-Square test are the statistical tools used to analyse the consumer behaviour on processed foods. Findings from simple percentage analysis: A percentage frequency distribution is a display of data that specifies the percentage of observations that exist for each data point or grouping of data points. It is a particularly useful methods of expressing the relative frequency of survey responses and other data. The study is based on convenient sampling.

Kalidas and Mahendran (2017) have conducted study On Buying Behaviour Of consumers towards instant millet-based food products. The specific objectives of the study were, to study the consumers buying behaviour for selected instant millet-based food products in Pollachi city, to identify the factors influencing buying behaviour for selected instant millet based food products, to suggest strategies for increasing the sales of instant millet based food products of Millet. The finding in this study is the sample respondents were asked about their satisfaction level regarding their present brand.

Leena Kakkar & Anju B Nandrajog (2017) have analysed the Behaviour of Adolescents towards Ready-to-Eat Products. The Objectives of the Study are to determine the awareness of consumers towards branded ready-to-eat (RTE) food products, To evaluate factors influencing brand preference of the consumers. A total of 200 adolescents' consumers were recruited from schools and colleges of Malwa region in Punjab randomly selected during the month of July to September 2017. Tools used int the study are descriptive statistics, chi-square test and Garrett Ranking score. The study is based on convenient sampling.

Rajendran and Hema Mahesh Kapoor (2016) have conducted a study on Consumer Behaviour towards Instant Cooking Food Products In Mumbai City. The major objectives of present study are to analyze the opinion of the consumers about the Instant Cooking Food Products in Mumbai city, To make suitable suggestions for improving the buying behavior towards Instant Cooking Food Products based on the findings of the study. Number of respondents is 125. The analyses inferred that 37.6% respondents are having post graduate qualification and 11.2% of the respondents are at SSLC level, It is known that 20.8% of the respondents are government employee and 34.4% of the respondents are from joint family, Out of 125 respondents 46.4% (58) are earning between Rupees 15,000 to 20,000 per month.

Rajni Gupta and Raghbir Singh (2016) have conducted a study on Working Women's Attitudes towards Convenience Food Products: An Empirical Investigation. The objective of this research paper is to identify the factors determine the attitudes of working women towards convenience food products. For this purpose, the present study has been conducted with a sample of 242 working women from three different cities of Punjab (India) and their responses were gauged through a structured questionnaire, administered personally.

The findings of the study are useful for marketers of convenience food products as they can use these factors as an effective promotional tool to target consumers and to escalate the sale of these food items in the time to come.

Priya Garg etal (2016) have conducted a study on evaluation of consumer behaviour towards rtc products in district of u. s. nagar. The Objectives of the Study are to evaluate the awareness of customers towards RTC food products, To assess the buying behaviour of customers for RTC food products. Total of 68 respondents were formed as a sample belonging to Udham Singh Nagar district of Uttarakhand. Data was accumulated from various sampling units through well-structured questionnaire. The tools used are Chi-Square test, factor analysis and weightage average.The study is based on convenient sampling.

Dr. V. Selvarani and Prof. A. Zeenath Amman (2016) have conducted a Study on Consumer Behaviour of Instant Food Products with Special Reference to Tiruchirappalli City. Objectives of the study: To study the awareness about instant food products in Tiruchirappalli District, To analyze the consumer purchasing frequency of instant food products, To find out the influencing factors on instant food products, To give suitable suggestion to improve sales volume of the instant food products. The sample size is 85 and the samples selected based on the simple random sampling method. The tools used in the study are Analysis and Interpretations Customer Satisfaction.

Srinivasan and Nirmala (2013) have studied on Consumer Behavior towards Instant Food Products. The objective of the study is To study the awareness about instant food products in kanchipurm town, To analyze the consumer purchasing frequency of instant food products, To know the media for selecting the instant food products. 4. To find out the influencing factors on instant food products. As the sample size is 100 only and drawn from a single town the findings cannot be generalized. The study is based on random sampling. The tool used in the study is Chi-square test.

Bala Swamy etal (2012) have analysed Buying Behaviour Of Consumers Towards Instant Food Products. The objective of the study was to analyze factors influencing the buying behaviour of Instant Food Products and to study the extent of awareness towards Instant Food Products. The study is based on random sampling. The important findings of the study are summarized and suitable conclusions such as, The general characteristics of the 180 households revealed that majority, The awareness of consumers about Instant food products across different income groups in different areas of the Hyderabad city.

FACTORS INFLUENCING OF INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS USED BY THE CUSTOMER'S

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Easily available	150	1.00	4.00	1.9067	.72673
Convenience	150	1.00	5.00	2.2800	1.04348
Safety assurance	150	1.00	3.00	1.7733	.54523
Maintenance of Quality	150	1.00	3.00	1.4800	.60998
Brand Image of the products	150	1.00	5.00	1.6867	.93505
Packaging of the products	150	1.00	5.00	2.1533	.94646
Retailer influence	150	1.00	5.00	2.3200	1.22786
Taste of the products	150	1.00	5.00	2.2733	1.12862
Special dietary requirement	150	1.00	5.00	2.6133	1.10391
General health interest	150	1.00	5.00	2.0933	1.00567
Fitness interest	150	1.00	5.00	2.3733	1.05262
Organic concern	150	1.00	5.00	2.4400	1.14388
Price of the products	150	1.00	5.00	2.5333	1.12128
Valid N (listwise)	150				

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table predicts that, most of the respondents highly prefer Special dietary requirements with mean score of 2.61, followed by 2.53 for Price of the products and the mean score of 1.48 indicates that most of the respondents moderately prefer Maintenance of quality.

GENDER AND THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE OF INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

GENDER			
Source of Information for Brand Awareness?	**MALE**	**FEMALE**	**TOTAL**
Television	32	20	52
Newspaper	16	8	24
Magazines	17	9	26
Family and relatives	19	22	41
Shopkeepers / Retailers	3	4	7
TOTAL	87	63	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the gender and the source of knowledge of instant food products in a cross tab. The source of knowledge of the respondents is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the male group is using instant food products more (32) compared to the other gender and their source of knowledge for these respondents is more by television compared to the others.

AGE AND THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE RESPONDENTS USING INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

AGE					
SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE	**15-20 years**	**21-30 years**	**31-40 years**	**Above 40 years**	**Total**
Television	23	21	3	5	52
Newspaper	7	11	1	5	24
Magazines	3	15	5	3	26
Family and relatives	15	14	6	6	41
Shopkeepers / Retailers	0	3	3	1	7
Total	48	64	18	20	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the age of the respondents and their source of knowledge towards instant food products in a cross tab. The total count of the age group and the source knowledge of the respondents is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the age group 21-30 years uses instant food products more (23) compared to the others and their source knowledge is more by television compared to the others.

GENDER AND THE PLACE OF PURCHASE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Place of Purchase	GENDER		TOTAL
	MALE	**FEMALE**	
Local shop	37	30	67
Supermarket	22	21	43
Online	28	12	40
TOTAL	87	63	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association of the gender and the place of purchase of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the gender and the place of purchase is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the male gender use instant food products more (37) compared to other gender by the place of purchase that is local shop compared to the other gender.

AGE AND THE PLACE OF PURCHASE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Place of Purchase	AGE				Total
	15-20 years	**21-30 years**	**31-40 years**	**Above 40 years**	
Local shop	26	26	8	7	67
Supermarket	12	19	5	7	43
Online	10	19	5	6	40
Total	48	64	18	20	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association of the age and the place of purchase of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the age group and their place of purchase is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the age group less than 30 years uses instant food products through place of purchase that is local shops is more (54) compared to the other age groups.

OCCUPATION AND THE PLACE OF PURCHASE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Place of Purchase	OCCUPATION					Total
	student	**Employee**	**Homemaker**	**Professional**	**Businessman**	
Local shop	35	15	5	3	9	67
Supermarket	12	16	6	4	5	43
Online	8	13	2	9	8	40
Total	55	44	13	16	22	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the occupation and their place of purchase of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the status and their place of purchase is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the students and their place of purchase that is local shops is more (35) compared to the other groups of status.

MONTHLY INCOME AND THE PLACE OF PURCHASE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Place of Purchase	MONTHLY INCOME				Total
	Below Rs. 10000	Rs.10001-Rs.25000	Rs.25001-Rs.45000	Rs.45001 & Above	
Local shop	27	15	12	13	67
Supermarket	10	17	10	6	43
Online	6	11	13	10	40
Total	43	43	35	29	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the monthly income and their place of purchase of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the monthly income and the place of purchase is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the monthly income which is less than Rs.10000 and their place of purchase is local shops more compared to the other groups of monthly income.

AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THE USAGE OF INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

The age group of the respondents and the usage of the instant food products were calculated using the chi-square analysis by their selected option as 1 for Rare, 2 for Frequent, 3 for Very Frequent.

Usage Of Instant Food Products		AGE				TOTAL
		15-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	Above 40 years	
	Rare	22	20	4	9	55
	Frequent	20	41	12	10	83
	Very Frequent	6	3	2	1	12
TOTAL		48	64	18	20	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the age and how often do they use instant food products in a cross tab. The daily usage of the age groups is mentioned and analyzed in the table above.Hence the age group 21-30 years uses the instant food products more frequent (41) compared to the other age groups.

GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THE USAGE OF INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

The gender of the respondents and the usage of instant food products were calculated by using cross tab i.e., chi-square test by their selected options.

		GENDER		TOTAL
		MALE	FEMALE	
Usage Of Instant Food Products	Rare	33	22	55
	Frequent	44	39	83
	Very Frequent	10	2	12
TOTAL		87	63	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table   shows the association between the gender of the respondents and how often do you use instant food products in a cross tab. The frequent usage of instant food products is analyzed and given in the above table.

Hence the male uses the instant food products more frequent (44) compared to the other gender.

MONTHLY INCOME AND THE USAGE OF THE INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

MONTHLY INCOME					
Usage Of Instant Food Products	Below Rs. 10000	Rs.10001-Rs.25000	Rs.25001-Rs.45000	Rs.45001 & Above	Total
Rare	22	14	9	10	55
Frequent	16	27	25	15	83
Very Frequent	5	2	1	4	12
Total	43	43	35	29	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the monthly income of the respondents and how often do they use instant food products in a cross-tabs. The usage of instant food products and their total count is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the income groups were their incomes are 10001-25000 uses instant food products more frequent (27) compared to the other groups of monthly income.

OCCUPATION AND THE USAGE OF INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS

The occupation of the respondents and the usage of instant food products were calculated by using crosstabs i.e., chi-square test by the selected options.

OCCUPATION						
Usage Of Instant Food Products	student	Employee	Homemaker	Professional	Businessman	Total
Rare	22	18	3	3	9	55
Frequent	29	22	10	11	11	83
Very Frequent	4	4	0	2	2	12
Total	55	44	13	16	22	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the occupations of the respondents and how often do they use instant food products in a cross-tabs. The usage of the instant food products is analyzed and given in the above table.**Hence students use the instant food products more frequent (29) compared to the other status.**

GENDER AND THE INFLUENCE OF PURCHASE DECISION THE RESPONDENTS

Influence of Purchase Decision	GENDER		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	
Parents	34	21	55
Children	17	8	25
Friends	20	24	44
Neighbors	9	6	15
Shopkeeper	7	4	11
TOTAL	87	63	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

he table shows the association of the gender and the Influence of Purchase Decision of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the gender and the Influence of Purchase Decision is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the male gender use instant food products more (34) compared to other gender are influenced by their parents.

AGE AND THE INFLUENCE OF PURCHASE DECISION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Influence of Purchase Decision	AGE				Total
	15-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	Above 40 years	
Parents	26	26	3	0	55
Children	3	9	3	10	25
Friends	14	21	2	7	44
Neighbors	4	4	7	0	15
Shopkeeper	1	4	3	3	11
Total	48	64	18	20	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association of the age and the Influence of Purchase Decision of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the age group and their Influence of Purchase Decision is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the age group less than 30 years uses instant food products are influenced by their parents (34) more compared to the other age groups.

OCCUPATION AND THE INFLUENCE OF PURCHASE DECISION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Influence of Purchase Decision	OCCUPATION					Total
	student	Employee	Homemaker	Professional	Businessman	
Parents	33	12	2	4	4	55
Children	2	9	4	4	6	25
Friends	16	17	4	1	6	44
Neighbors	3	3	0	6	3	15
Shopkeeper	1	3	3	1	3	11
Total	55	44	13	16	22	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the status and their Influence of Purchase Decision of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the status and their Influence of Purchase Decision is analyzed and given in the above table.Hence the students and they are influenced by their parents is more (30) compared to the other groups of occupation.

MONTHLY INCOME AND THE INFLUENCE OF PURCHASE DECISION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Influence of Purchase Decision	MONTHLY INCOME				Total
	Below Rs. 10000	Rs.10001-Rs.25000	Rs.25001-Rs.45000	Rs.45001 & Above	
Parents	25	16	8	6	55
Children	3	10	6	6	25
Friends	10	12	11	11	44
Neighbors	4	4	4	3	15
Shopkeeper	1	1	6	3	11
Total	43	43	35	29	150

SOURCE OF DATA: COMPUTED DATA

The above table shows the association between the monthly income and their Influence of Purchase Decision of the respondents in a cross tab. The total count of the monthly income and the Influence of Purchase Decision is analyzed and given in the above table.

Hence the monthly income which is less than Rs.10000 and they are influenced by their parents is more (25) compared to the other groups of monthly income.

RANK OF THE FACTORS OF THE CONSUMER ACCORDING TO THEIR PREFERENCES

S. No	PREFERENCE	MEAN RANK	RANK
1	Brand	1.34	5
2	Quantity	1.87	4
3	Price	4.38	1
4	Quality	3.82	2
5	Packaging	3.59	3

From the above table it is observed that the respondents have given the rank according to their preferences by the customer's using instant food products and has given first rank to Price of the product, Second rank to Quality of the product, Third rank to Packaging of the product, Fourth rank to Quantity of the product and Fifth rank to Brand of the product.

Test Statistics	
N	150
Chi-square	469.537
Df	4
Aysmp. Sig	<.001
Friedman test	

Ranking as per the above table is valid as the chi-square table values are statistically significant. All respondents have equally responded equally for the entire preference list.

COMPARISON OF DESCRIPTIVES AND ANOVA FOR THE FACTORS INFLUENCING USED BY THE CUSTOMERS AMONG DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS:

FACTOR	CLASSIFICATION	N	MEAN	SD	F	Sig.	INFERENCE
AGE	15-20	48	1.9776	.57234	2.301	.080	NS
	21-30 years	64	2.1827	.67095			
	31-40 years	18	2.2350	.51261			
	Above 40 years	20	2.3692	.58402			
MONTHLY INCOME	Below 10,000	43	1.9517	.56850	2.766	.044	S
	10,001-25,000	43	2.3059	.65969			
	25,001-45,000	35	2.2374	.60032			
	45,001 & Above	29	2.0981	.60075			
OCCUPATION	Student	55	1.9678	.51976	2.563	.041	S
	Employee	44	2.2605	.70388			
	Homemaker	13	2.3314	.51829			
	Professional	16	2.3894	.69457			

		Businessman	22	2.0909	.58373			NS
NO. OF MEMBERS IN FAMILY		3	26	2.0059	.57602	1.515	.213	
		4	71	2.2210	.64633			
		5	33	2.0256	.62092			
		More than 5	20	2.2769	.48484			

Significance at 5 percent level of significance

The demographic factors of the respondents do not significantly differ among the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers.The above table predicts that the respondents in the age group of above 40 years highly prefer instant food products with a mean score of 2.3692, compared to the respondents belonging to the age group of 31-40 years with a mean score of 2.2350 and the mean score of indicates that the respondents in the age group of 15-20 years moderately prefer instant food products.One way ANOVA is applied to find whether the mean score on the factors influencing instant food products differ among the age group. It is inferred from the ANOVA table that the significant value is .213 and the p value is greater than the level of significance p>0.05. It is considered that the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers do not significantly differ among the age group of the respondents.**Hence the hypothesis is accepted.**

The above table predicts that the respondents who have the monthly income of Rs.10001 – Rs. 25000 highly prefer the instant food products with a mean of 2.3059, compared to the monthly income of Rs. 25001 – Rs. 45000 doing with a mean score of 2.2374 and the mean score of 1.9517 indicates that the monthly income below Rs.10000 moderately prefer various instant food products. . It is inferred from the ANOVA table that the significant value is .044 and the p value is lesser than the level of significance p<0.05. It is considered that the preferences towards the instant food products significantly differ among the monthly income of the respondents.**Hence the hypothesis is rejected.**

The above table predicts that the respondents who are professionals highly prefer the instant food products with a mean of 2.3894, compared to the people doing homemaker with a mean score of 2.3314 and the mean score of 1.9678 indicates that the students moderately prefer various kinds of instant food products. It is inferred from the ANOVA table that the significant value is .041 and the p value is lesser than the level of significance p<0.05. It is considered that the preferences towards the instant food products significantly differ among the status of the respondents.**Hence the hypothesis is rejected.**

The above table predicts that the respondents no. of family members group of more than 5 highly prefer instant food products with a mean score of 2.2769, compared to the respondents belonging to the member group of 4 with a mean score of 2.2210 and the mean score of indicates that the respondents in the member group of 3 moderately prefer instant food products.It is inferred from the ANOVA table that the significant value is .080 and the p value is greater than the level of significance p>0.05. It is considered that the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers do not significantly differ among the member group of the respondents.**Hence the hypothesis is accepted.**

Findings

- Age of the respondents does not significantly differ from the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers.
- Occupation of the respondents does significantly differ from the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers.
- Monthly Income of the respondents does significantly differ from the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers.
- No. of family members of the respondents does not significantly differ from the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers.
- Gender of the respondents does not significantly differ from the factors influencing instant food products used by the customers.
- The Friedman rank test reveals that Price is ranked first, Quality is ranked second and Packaging is ranked third according to the preferences of the customers.

CONCLUSION

Instant foods play an important role in everyone's day to day life. The food habits in India have changed due to western influence and usage of instant foods also rise. Consumption of increase of instant food products is due to increase in urbanization, breaking up of the traditional joint family system, time, convenience, changing lifestyles and increasing level of affluence in the middle-income group. The ready availability, and saving of the time are the reasons for consuming instant food products. Food zones and supermarkets are the major source of purchase of instant food products. The consumer's relationship with food and other everyday goods has changed dramatically, not only in the way products are purchased, but also in the way they are consumed. As a sales promotion activity the importance and awareness towards these products should be created through various media or literatures to target all group of people.

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