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Consumer behavior towards ready-to-eat food products in selected cities of Gujarat

KEYWORDS: Ready-to-eat food, consumer behavior, changing food habits etc

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ABSTRACT Consumer behavior in the world of marketing is very necessary to judge for the success of the product. The aim of this study is to analyze the behavior of consumers towards selected ready to eat food products of selected cities in Gujarat. Total samples of 400 respondents from different 4 cities were selected for the study. Indian cooking and lifestyle has undergone tremendous changes in the last few years. Some of the factors contribute this change are Liberalization, Dual income, nuclear families, innovative kitchen applications, changing food habits, etc. Long working hours during the weekdays and weekends that are always spent with kids, preferably outside the house gives them very little time to cook. These factors are a major cause to make ready to eat food products an essential component in the daily lives of people. Greatly changing food habits and a greater demand for readymade food products have led to the growth of food processing industries. There is a greater demand for ready-to-eat food products and the major reasons for the same are convenient usage, easy availability, less time consumed and better taste. The present investigation made an attempt to analyze the consumer response towards ready-to-eat food products in different cities of Gujarat. Majority of the respondents were aware of Parle-G, Lays, Frooti and Amul brands in case of biscuits, chips fruit juice and ice creams accordingly. Television was the major source for getting information about various brands in all the four products.

Introduction

Indian cooking and lifestyle have undergone tremendous changes in the last 15 years. There are quite a few factors that contribute to this change. A few that have had some impact and added to this change include Liberalization, Dual income, nuclear families, innovative kitchen applications, media proliferation, etc. The cooking style and eating habits in India have changed very drastically over the last few decades. This is mainly due to extremely hectic lifestyles and pressures in various, almost all walks of life. People therefore; look for ways to shorten their time spent in the kitchen, cooking as there seem to be much more important things to do. Thus, in today's world ready to eat food products have become an essential component in the daily lives of people.

Greatly changing food habits and a greater demand for ready to eat food products have led to the growth of processed and packed food manufacturing industries. The consumption of these instant food products is seeing a very sharp rise because of changes in consumers' taste, lifestyle, their time constraint, easy availability, etc. To meet the unending demands of these new age consumers, many new companies have entered this field. Extremely hygienic preparation, convenient packing system, details mentioning ingredients used, packing and expirations dates are some of the factors that meet the consumers' taste and have greatly gained the acceptance of people to purchase ready to eat food products.

Objective of the study

- To ascertain the awareness of consumers towards branded ready-to-eat food products.
- To study the purchase behavior of customers towards ready-to-eat food products.
- To evaluate brand preference of the consumers towards ready to eat food products.
- To analyse the major factors influencing consumer behavior towards ready to eat food products.
- To evaluate alternative purchase plans of the customers

Methodology:

Collection of data

To study the objectives, required data will be collected from primary as well as secondary sources.

Primary data:

The data required for the study will be collected from the respondents by personal interview method with the help of pre-structured questionnaire. The respondents will be interviewed at retail outlets, departmental stores, bakeries and even at the homes.

Secondary data:

The secondary data will be collected from books, journals, magazines, internet and other relevant sources.

Sample Design

Table:1

Particulars		Consumer Survey
Population	1. Respondents at retail outlets 2. Respondents at departmental stores 3. Respondents at bakeries 4. Respondents at home	
Sampling Unit		Individual
Sample Size	1. 100 Respondents 2. 100 Respondents 3. 100 Respondents 4. 100 Respondents	400 Respondents
Sampling Method	1. Non -probability Convenience Sampling	

Table-2 General information:

General information	Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 20 years (AG1)	90	22.00
	21-40 years (AG2)	250	62.00
	41-60 years (AG3)	44	11.00
	>60 years (AG4)	16	4.00
Sex	Male	118	29.50
	Female	282	70.50
Education	Illiterate	-	-
	Primary school	10	2.00
	High school	66	16.50
	Degree	226	56.50
	PG	98	24.00
Monthly income (Rs)	Low (< Rs. 20000	66	16.50
	Middle (Rs.20001 – 60000)	230	57.50
	High (> Rs. 60001)	104	26.00
Family type	Joint	68	17.00
	Nuclear	332	83.00
Food habit	Vegetarian	312	78.00
	Non - vegetarian	88	22.00

Volume - 7 | Issue - 2 | February - 2017 | ISSN - 2249-555X | IF : 3.919 | IC Value : 79.96

AG1 – Age group 1 (Below 20 years) AG2 – Age group 2 (21-40 years)
AG3 – Age group 3 (41-60 years) AG4 – Age group 4 (>60 years)

Table-3 Brand awareness of consumers about biscuits among different age groups

Brands	Age group				
	AG1 (n=90)	AG2 (n =250)	AG3 (n = 44)	AG4 (n = 16)	Overall (N=400)
Parle – G	90 (100.00)	250 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	400 (100.00)
Tiger biscuits	87 (96.66)	248 (99.20)	40 (90.91)	16 (100.00)	391 (97.75)
Marie gold	87 (96.67)	246 (98.40)	42 (95.45)	14 (87.50)	389 (97.25)
Britannia50-50	75 (83.33)	250 (100.00)	36 (81.82)	8 (50.00)	369 (92.25)
Sunfeast snacky	75 (83.33)	235 (94.00)	30 (68.18)	-	340 (85.00)
Sunfeast glucose	65 (72.22)	230 (92.00)	24 (54.55)	-	319 (79.75)
Good day	88 (97.77)	250 (100.00)	43 (97.73)	14 (87.50)	395 (98.75)
Krack jack	90 (100.00)	250 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	12 (75.00)	396 (99.00)
Hide & seek	85 (94.44)	250 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	9 (56.25)	388 (97.00)
Glucose	45 (50.00)	222 (88.80)	17 (38.64)	16 (100.00)	300 (75.00)
Chocolate chip cookies	38 (42.22)	196 (78.4)	16 (36.36)	-	250 (62.50)
Britannia Time pass	46 (51.11)	165 (66.00)	10 (22.73)	-	221 (55.25)
Parle Monaco	84 (93.33)	244 (97.6)	43 (97.73)	6 (37.50)	377 (94.25)
Britannia little hearts	65 (72.22)	210 (84.00)	30 (68.18)	-	305 (76.25)

Table-4 Brand awareness of consumers about chips among different age groups

Brands	Age group				
	AG1 (n=90)	AG2 (n = 250)	AG3 (n = 44)	AG4 (n = 16)	Overall (N=400)
Uncle chips	90 (100.00)	247 (98.80)	43 (97.73)	15 (93.75)	395 (98.75)
Bingo	89 (98.89)	247 (98.80)	40 (90.91)	6 (37.5)	382 (95.50)
Lays	90 (100.00)	249 (99.60)	41 (93.18)	14 (87.5)	394 (98.5)
Haldiram chips	75 (83.33)	232 (92.80)	40 (90.91)	7 (43.75)	354 (88.50)
Balaji chips	90 (100.00)	250 (100.00)	43 (97.73)	12 (75.00)	395 (98.75)
Real chips	86 (95.56)	246 (98.40)	39 (88.64)	7 (43.75)	378 (94.50)
Lehar	82 (91.11)	241 (96.40)	39 (88.64)	13 (81.25)	375 (93.75)

Table-5 Brand awareness of consumers about fruit juice among different age groups

Brands	Age group				
	AG1 (n=90)	AG2 (n = 250)	AG3 (n = 44)	AG4 (n = 16)	Overall (N=400)
Real fresh	86 (95.56)	176 (70.4)	29 (65.91)	4 (25.00)	295 (73.75)
Frooti	90 (100.00)	250 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	400 (100.00)
Appy	90 (100.00)	248 (99.20)	38 (86.36)	4 (25.00)	380 (95.00)
Maaza	90 (100.00)	250 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	400 (100.00)
Tropicana twister	89 (98.89)	248 (99.20)	39 (88.64)	6 (37.50)	382 (95.50)
Pulpy orange	81 (90.00)	196 (78.40)	35 (79.55)	2 (12.50)	314 (78.50)
Slice	90 (100.00)	249 (99.60)	42 (95.45)	9 (56.25)	390 (97.50)

Table-6 Brand awareness of consumers about ice creams among different age groups

Brands	Age group				
	AG1 (n=90)	AG2 (n = 250)	AG3 (n = 44)	AG4 (n = 16)	Overall (N=400)
Amul	90 (100.00)	250 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	400 (100.00)
Vadilal	90 (100.00)	250 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	400 (100.00)
MTR	41 (45.55)	144 (57.60)	16 (36.36)	2 (12.5)	203 (50.75)
Nandini	30 (33.33)	95 (38.00)	10 (22.72)	6 (37.50)	141 (35.25)
Kwality walls	86 (95.55)	240 (96.00)	32 (72.72)	5 (31.25)	363 (90.75)

Table-7 Influence of media to create awareness about the brands

Source	Products				Overall
	Biscuits	Chips	Fruit juice	Ice creams	
Television	368 (92.00)	372 (93.00)	344 (86.00)	324 (81.00)	1408 (26.13)
Radio	80 (20.00)	40 (10.00)	52 (13.00)	48 (12.00)	220 (4.08)
Newspapers	264 (66.00)	228 (57.00)	224 (56.00)	248 (62.00)	964 (17.89)
Magazines	156 (39.00)	128 (32.00)	152 (38.00)	160 (40.00)	596 (11.06)
Friends/ relatives	204 (51.00)	248 (62.00)	236 (59.00)	256 (64.00)	944 (17.52)
Shopkeeper/ retailer	192 (48.00)	164 (41.00)	148 (37.00)	176 (44.00)	680 (12.62)
Window display	172 (43.00)	136 (34.00)	136 (34.00)	132 (33.00)	576 (10.69)
					Total = 5388(100.00)

Table-8 Buyers and non-buyers of ready-to-eat food products

Products	Age group	Buyers	Non-buyers
Biscuits	AG1(n=90)	90(100.00)	-
	AG2(n = 250)	250(100.00)	-
	AG3(n = 44)	44(100.00)	-
	AG4(n = 16)	16(100.00)	-
	Total (N = 400)	400(100.00)	-
Chips	AG1(n=90)	90(100.00)	-
	AG2(n = 250)	248(99.20)	2(0.08)
	AG3(n = 44)	32(72.72)	12(27.27)
	AG4(n = 16)	-	16(100.00)
	Total (N = 400)	370(92.50)	30(7.5)
Fruit juice	AG1(n=90)	90(100.00)	-
	AG2(n = 250)	242(96.80)	8(3.20)
	AG3(n = 44)	32(72.72)	12(27.27)
	AG4(n = 16)	-	16(100.00)
	Total (N = 400)	364(91.00)	36(9.00)

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Ice creams	AG1(n=90)	90(100.00)	-
	AG2(n = 250)	248(99.20)	2(0.08)
	AG3(n = 44)	44(100.00)	-
	AG4(n = 16)	7(43.75)	9(56.25)
	Total (N = 400)	389(97.25)	11(2.75)

Table-9 Reasons for not purchasing ready-to-eat food products by consumers

Reasons	Products			
	Biscuits (n=400)	Chips (n=370)	Fruit juice (n=364)	Ice creams (n=389)
Readily available	213 (53.25)	174 (47.02)	222 (60.98)	135 (34.70)
Taste	186 (46.50)	301 (81.35)	231 (63.46)	265 (68.12)
Liked by the family members	244 (61.00)	114 (30.81)	136 (37.36)	150 (38.56)
Influence of friends or relatives	60 (15.00)	136 (36.75)	168 (46.15)	174 (44.73)
Easily available in the shops	167 (41.75)	85 (22.97)	54 (14.83)	81 (20.82)
Convenient to use for snacks	284 (71.00)	246 (66.48)	100 (27.47)	52 (13.36)
Satisfaction	175 (43.75)	192 (51.89)	176 (48.35)	210 (53.98)
Save time of preparation	92 (23.00)	144 (38.91)	196 (53.84)	110 (28.27)
Any other	-	5 (1.35)	32 (8.79)	-

Table-10 Reasons for not purchasing ready-to-eat food products by consumers

Reasons	Products			
	Biscuits (n=0)	Chips (n=30)	Fruit juice (n=36)	Ice creams (n=11)
Lack of awareness of products available in the market	-	-	-	-
Dislike the product	-	16(53.33)	12(33.33)	10(90.90)
High price	-	4(13.33)	32(88.88)	2(18.18)
Low quality	-	6(2.00)	7(19.44)	1(9.09)
Not available in the shops	-	-	-	-
Health conscious	-	30(100.00)	-	4(36.36)
Any other	-	-	10(27.77)	8(72.72)

Table-11 Monthly expenditure of households on ready-to-eat food products

Items	Income Group			Average
	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	
Biscuits	60.70	82.94	128.38	272.02 (33.79)
Chips	28.87	46.02	55.96	130.85 (16.25)
Fruit juice	38.87	61.91	114.53	215.31 (26.75)
Ice creams	41.25	49.85	95.57	186.67 (23.19)
Total	169.69	240.72	394.44	804.85 (100.00)

Table-12 Frequency and place of purchase by the respondents

Biscuits (n=400)	Daily (n = 56)				Twice in a week (n = 136)				Once in a week (n = 132)				Fortnightly (n = 24)				Whenever needed (n = 52)			
	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I
	44	12	32	-	56	96	96	-	56	84	76	-	12	12	-	-	40	48	40	-
Chips (n=370)	Daily (n = 4)				Twice in a week (n = 40)				Once in a week (n = 48)				Fortnightly (n = 60)				Whenever needed (n = 218)			
	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I
	2	-	2	-	36	16	30	-	20	12	44	-	12	24	56	-	80	64	168	-
Fruit juice (n=364)	Daily (n = 08)				Twice in a week (n = 28)				Once in a week (n = 52)				Fortnightly (n = 48)				Whenever needed (n = 228)			
	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I
	-	4	4	-	8	4	24	-	16	12	32	-	20	24	24	-	56	122	72	-
Ice creams (n=389)	Daily (n = 8)				Twice in a week (n = 12)				Once in a week (n = 68)				Fortnightly (n = 44)				Whenever needed (n = 257)			
	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I	R	D	B	I
	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	12	12	8	16	64	4	4	16	40	12	8	32	242

R – Retail outlets D – Departmental stores B – Bakeries/mall I – Ice parlors.

Table-13 Nature of purchase decision among different age groups

Products	Nature of purchase decision	Ag1 (n=90)	Ag2 (n = 250)	Ag3 (n = 44)	Ag4 (n = 16)
Biscuits (n=400)	Impulsive buying	27	79	20	-
	Planned purchase	63	171	24	16 (100.00)
Chips (n=370)	Nature of purchase decision	Ag1 (n=90)	Ag2 (n = 248)	Ag3 (n = 32)	Ag4 (n = 00)
	Impulsive buying	64	184	32	-
	Planned purchase	26	64	00	-
Fruit juice (n=364)	Nature of purchase decision	Ag1 (n=90)	Ag2 (n = 242)	Ag3 (n = 32)	Ag4 (n = 00)
	Impulsive buying	28	119	16	-
	Planned purchase	62	123	16	-
Ice creams (n=389)	Nature of purchase decision	Ag1 (n=90)	Ag2 (n = 248)	Ag3 (n = 44)	Ag4 (n = 07)
	Impulsive buying	33	134	29	04
	Planned purchase	57	114	15	03

Table-14 Factors influencing brand preference

Factors	Biscuits	Chips	Fruit juice	Ice creams
	Ranking	Ranking	Ranking	Ranking
Reasonable price	3	3	3	3
Taste	2	1	1	1
Quality	1	2	2	2
Quantity	4	4	4	4
Brand image	6	5	5	5
Availability	5	6	6	6
Advertisements	7	9	7	7
Packaging design	10	10	10	10
Friends	12	11	12	12
Labeling	13	13	13	13
Offers	14	14	14	14
Freshness	8	7	8	8
Retailers influence	15	15	15	15
Long shelf-life of the products	9	8	9	11
Availability of range products	11	12	11	9

Table-15 Alternative purchase plans of ready-to-eat food products

Alternative purchase plans	Products			
	Biscuits (n=400)	Chips (n=370)	Fruit juice (n=364)	Ice creams (n=389)
Go to other shop	325	222	211	217
Post pone the purchase	108	133	123	155
Will buy other brand	88	148	138	124
Place order to get required brand	104	85	76	93

Managerial Implication:

The present investigation made an attempt to analyze the consumer response towards ready-to-eat food products in different cities of Gujarat. A total sample of 400 respondents was selected for the study.

Majority of the respondents were aware of Parle-G, Lays, Frooti and Amul brands in case of biscuits, chips fruit juice and ice creams accordingly. Television was the major source for getting information about various brands in all the four products.

Biscuits were consumed by all the respondents because of their convenience to use as snacks. About 92 per cent, 93 per cent and 94 per cent of the respondents consumed chips, fruit juice and ice creams respectively. Taste was the main driving force for purchase of chips, fruit juice and ice creams. Health consciousness was the main factor for not purchasing chips among the respondents. Majority of the respondents were not purchasing fruit juice because they preferred home made products. Health consciousness was the main reason for not purchasing ice creams. The average monthly expenditure on ready-to-eat food products was found to be highest in case of high income group. Planned purchase was common among majority of the respondents for biscuits and fruit juice. However, most of the respondents did impulsive buying for chips and ice creams.

Parle-G, Lays, Maaza and Amul brands were highly preferred brands of biscuits, chips, fruit juice and ice creams respectively. The main factors influencing brand preference for biscuits, chips, fruit juice and ice creams were quality, taste and reasonable price. Most of the respondents would go to other shops if preferred brand in all the four products was not available. Thus, the study revealed that the younger generation preferred more ready-to-eat food products than the other age groups. The consumer response also varies from product to product.

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