

EVALUATION OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS RTC PRODUCTS IN DISTRICT OF U. S. NAGAR

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Abstract

Food has always been an integral part of the society. Over the period, India has been witnessed to be influenced by the Western Culture and so does creeps in ready to cook (RTC). Changing style of food consumption and the benefits availed through the use of RTC products have resulted in a subsequent increase in RTC market. Present research broadly focuses on three aspects viz. satisfaction of consumer, convenient usage, usefulness. 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. Convenienced sampling was adopted to arrive at ultimate respondents. In order to analyze and interpret the data various quantitative techniques viz. Chi-Square test, factor analysis and weightage average were applied. Study elicited that among all attributes easy to cook and times saving have greater influence on consumers to but RTC products. Study has also revealed that price has relatively lower impact while brand name, packaging, availability and advertisement as extrinsic factor and health as a intrinsic factor have greater impact on purchase intention of consumers.

Problem statement

It was found through different researches that non-preference for ready to cook food was due to various reasons viz. low cost of home preparation, differences in taste, non-preference of ready to cook food by all family members, higher prices, lack of awareness and non-availability of RTC products. It was also found that difference between the taste of home-made and RTC products prevent consumers from buying RTC products because most of family members disliked packed foods. It was also experienced that consumer were perceiving RTC products as cheaper sources of nutrition.

Research Objectives

- To evaluate the awareness of customers towards RTC food products.
- To assess the buying behaviour of customers for RTC food products.

Methodology

The present research was confined to Udham Singh Nagar District of Uttarakhand state. Total 68 sampled consumers were selected by employing convenience sampling. Thus 16 housewives, 30 working professional, 12 self employed person and 10 students having near about same age within each category were selected and surveyed. Only those respondents were considered who visited Malls during survey hours. On the basis of full range of RTC product portfolio, survey was done at Big Bazaar and Easy day at Rudrapur city. The collected data was analyzed with the help of SPSS. Factor Analysis were conducted and also the Chi-square test was used. Awareness was evaluated by including brand names and different media vehicles while buying behaviour of consumers for RTC food products were assessed by including purchase and personality factors which were rated on 5-point Likert's scale.

Results and Discussions

Findings have been made for each of the objectives under different heads of results and discussions. Broadly the entire analysis was scattered in two components 1) **Awareness of consumers towards Ready to Cook Food Products** and 2) **Buying Behaviour of Consumers**. However various sub heads have also been used under concerned heads and discussion were made simultaneously.

Awareness of consumers towards Ready to Cook Food Products:

Awareness of consumers towards RTC was evaluated by employing percentage method. It was found that among all, brand awareness is the highest in the case of Haldiram. Table 1.1 reveals that 94% of the consumers were aware of Haldiram brand followed by Knorr (79%), MTR (78 %), Chings (59), and Gits (19 %). Table also depicts the percentages of respondents not aware of brands. It is clear from table that maximum respondents 81% were not aware about Gits brand followed by Chings (41 %), MTR (22 %), Knorr (21 %) and Haldiram (6%). During survey efforts were made to get insights and found that there had a great impact of advertisement and promotional activities on respondents and these efforts of marketers keep the brands alive in the mind of respondents. It was noticed that brands like Haldiram and MTR are known by product type and have always been their preferences while go to purchase snacks items.

1.1 Brand awareness of consumers about Ready to Cook Food Products

S.No.	Brands	Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Haldiram	94	6
2.	MTR	78	22
3.	Chings	59	41
4.	Knorr	79	21
5.	Gits	19	81

2. Buying Behaviour of Consumers towards RTC products

Buying behavior of consumers towards RTC products was analysed by taking into consideration following important factors.

2.1 Frequency of purchase

Among all, frequency of purchase is the most important factor which sufficiently enough to reveal the necessity of RTC products in daily life of human being. Table 2.1 shows the frequency of purchase of respondents for RTC products. Table elicits that maximum respondents (96%) purchase RTC products when they need it. They were not found to be bounded for particular time intervals. Table further elicits that 51 % respondents go for market twice in a month followed by once in a week (28 %) and respondents who go market twice in week were qualified to 21 % only. However if they find proper effective distribution channel of products then the frequency of purchasing RTC products depends on the mood of customer.

Table 2.1: Frequency of purchase of respondents for RTC products

S.No.	Frequency of purchase	Percentage
1.	Once in week	28
2.	Twice in week	21
3.	Once in month	51
4.	Whenever needed	96

2.2 Purchasing of RTC products at different Market Formats

Purchasing of any product from any market format clearly shows the ease and preferences of respondents which ultimately leads to make decision and leave memorable experience if they have been treated well by marketers. During survey it was experienced that respondents prefer to go to shops nearby their residence or where they have trust irrespective of distance from door step. Table 2.3 depicts that mostly respondents (74 %) purchase RTC products from retail outlets following by Malls (41 %), departmental store (34 %) while few of them (4%) purchase RTC products through online. It was observed that habituality of purchasing confinds them with particular format. Respondents who prefer to go to Mall or purchase via online were mostly youth.

2.3 Purchasing at different Market Formats

S. No.	Place of purchase	Yes (%)
1.	Retail outlets	74
2.	Departmental stores	34
3.	Malls	41
4.	Online	4

2.4 Age group wise composition of demand for RTC products

Three age groups viz. children, adults and elders were formed and efforts were made to know age group wise composition of demand for RTC products. Table 2.4 shows that adults were having demand for RTC products comparatively more (80 %) than rest of two groups viz. children (13 %) and elders (7 %). However in first groups the users are children of RTC products category, but the decision-makers are their parents. The size of all age groups was dependent on random selection of respondents. Results could also have been different if more no. of age groups were formed which obviously change frequency in all groups.

Table 2.4: Age group wise composition of demand for RTC products

S. No.	Segment	No. of Consumers	Percentage
1.	Children (up to 17 year)	9	13
2.	Adults (above 17 to 40 years)	54	80
3.	Elders (above 40 years)	5	7

Chi Square (Goodness of Fit) calculation for age group of consumers demanding RTC food

Age group	O	E	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
Children	9	22.66	-13.66	982.19	43.34
Adults	54	22.66	31.34	186.59	8.23
Elderly	5	22.66	-17.66	311.87	13.76
	68				65.33

Ho:- There is no significant relation between age group and demand of RTC products.

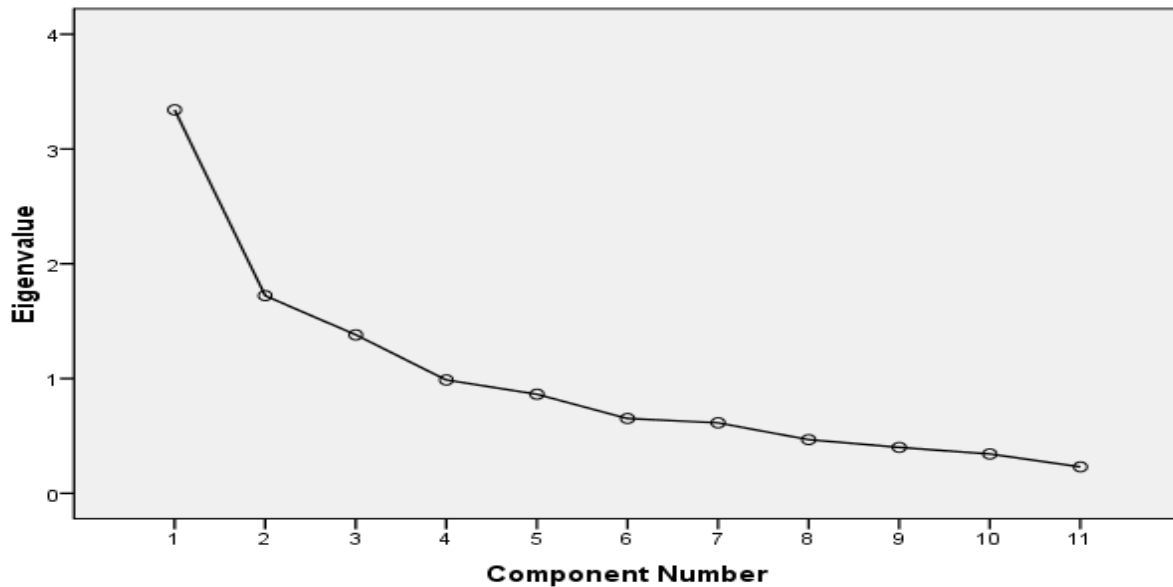
Ha:- There is significant relation between age group and demand of RTC products.

The **table value** of Chi Square at 5% level of significance is **1.386**. The calculated value of Chi Square is **2.88**. Calculated value is much higher than this tabulated value, null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is significant relationship between age group and demand of RTC products.

2.5 Analysis of factors affecting purchase decision of respondents (Factor analysis)

The factor analysis is a method for reducing large number of variables to a small number of components or factors.

Scree Plot



The inferences drawn from this plot is that three components 1, 2 and 3 i.e. easy to cook, safe to consume and easily availability are extracted and all others lie on the steeper side of the curve.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
Satisfaction	.751		
High nutrition value	.747		
Safe to consume	.686		
Prevent nutritional loss	.667		
Usefulness	.608		
Save time	.545		
Easy to cook		.851	
Easily availability		.846	
Save money			-.758
Different taste			.659
Buy it as last option			.657

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

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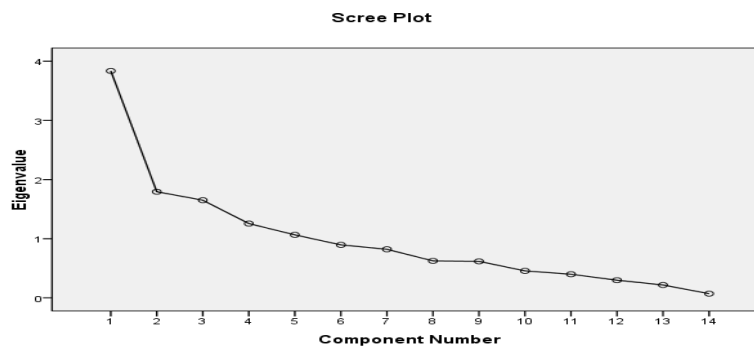
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

It was found that factor 1 contains items which viz. satisfaction, usefulness and save time showing that consumers gave importance to these items, factor 2 contains viz. easy to cook and easily availability, factor 3 contains viz. different taste and buy it as last option.. So, we rename these three factors as, factor 1 as satisfaction, factor 2 as convenient and factor 3 as usefulness. These three factors are extracted from factor analysis and are important from consumer's point of view.

2.6 Factor Analysis of Personality Factors

The factor analysis is a method for reducing large number of variables to a small number of components or factors.



The inferences drawn from this plot is that five components 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 i.e. always relies on others, consumer innovation, like to watch TV, newspaper and magazines, experimental and always ready to change and early adopters are extracted and all other lie on the steeper side of the curve.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
I am normally dominant while dealing with others	.864				
I consider myself as a live person	.831				
I like to watch TV, newspaper & magazines	.674				
I always look towards others for advice	.639				
Social directedness	.602				
I am careful	.566				
I am experimental & always ready to change	.524				
Consumer innovation		.862			
I always relies on others		.830			
I am self sufficient				.504	
I am a Self-confident person			.702		
Early adopters			-.622		
I am a risk taker				.797	
I am a Agreeable person					.848

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

It was found that factor 1 contains items viz. normally dominant while dealing with others, social directedness, experimental & always ready to change shows that these are the important personality traits of consumers, factor 2 contains items viz. consumer innovation and relies on others, factor 3 contains items self-confident person, factor 4 contains viz. self sufficient and risk taker, factor 5 contains agreeable person. So, we rename these five factors, factor 1 as personality, factor 2 as innovation, factor 3 as self-confidence, factor 4 as self-sufficient and factor 5 as agreeable. These five factors are extracted from factor analysis and are important personality traits of consumers buying ready to cook food products.

Recommendation

1. The result of the study shows that children and youngsters (80%) prefer these foods more than adults and elderly consumers, so different brands should target adults and elderly people also and promote their products in a way that attracts more adults and people.
2. The consumers (68%) of ready to Cook food products are impulsive buyers. Consumer buys such products only if it catches his eye at the outlet. So, manufacturers need to stress on attractive packaging and sales promotion.
3. The consumers go for recognized brands, while making purchase decision for ready to cook food products.
4. The most of the consumers (74%) buy ready to cook food products from the retail outlets and very few of the consumers (4%) purchase online, so online purchases can be increased.

Conclusion

Consumer behaviour is a stimulating sphere consisting of the consumers themselves. Most of the consumers were aware of brand Haldiram, MTR and very few of them were knowing about GITS brand. It was found that children and youngsters prefer these foods more than adults and they can promote their products in a way that it attracts more adults. The easy to cook, convenience, satisfaction, usefulness and saving of time are the reasons for purchasing RTC products. Due to the increasing number of nuclear and double income families, long working hours are the major reason for purchasing these products. The Retail outlets are the major source of purchase of ready to cook food products.

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