A Study on Impact of Consumption Patterns and Satisfaction towards Instant Food Products in Erode District

Dr. V. Thilagavathi[1], Avanthika.R[2]

[1]Associate Professor, [2]II-M.Com (CA), PG Department of Commerce (CA), Vellalar College for Women (Autonomous), Erode-12, India

Abstract-- **The rapid growth of instant food products has significantly changed the food consumption habits of consumers, especially in urban and semi-urban regions. This study aims to analyse the consumption patterns and satisfaction levels of consumers towards instant food products in Erode District. The research focuses on identifying the factors influencing the preference for instant foods, such as convenience, taste, price, availability, and time-saving nature.**

A descriptive research design was adopted for the study, and primary data were collected from consumers in Erode District using a structured questionnaire. The collected data were analysed using percentage analysis, mean score analysis, and satisfaction level assessment. The findings of the study reveal that a majority of consumers prefer instant food products due to busy lifestyles, ease of preparation, and affordability. Taste and brand reputation were identified as key factors influencing consumer satisfaction. The study also highlights that while consumers are largely satisfied with instant food products, concerns related to health, nutritional value, and preservatives still exist. The results suggest that manufacturers should focus on improving nutritional quality while maintaining taste and convenience to enhance consumer satisfaction.

Keywords-- **Consumption patterns, Consumer Satisfaction, Instant food products, Health and Nutritional concerns.**

I. Introduction

In the modern era, rapid urbanization, increased work pressure, and a fast-paced lifestyle have significantly transformed people's eating habits. Convenience and time-saving have become top priorities, leading to a growing dependency on instant foods. These foods, which require minimal preparation time and are readily available in stores, have become particularly popular among students, working professionals, and even families. Products such as instant noodles, ready-to-eat meals, packaged snacks, and frozen foods are now an integral part of daily diets for many individuals. However, while instant foods offer convenience, they often lack essential nutrients and are typically high in sodium, sugar, unhealthy fats, and artificial preservatives. Prolonged and regular consumption of such foods has been linked to several health issues, including obesity, cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure, diabetes, and digestive disorders.

Moreover, excessive intake of processed ingredients may impact mental health, immune strength, and overall well-being.

This study aims to develop the health impacts of regularly consuming instant foods. It seeks to identify patterns of consumption, analyse the level of awareness among individuals regarding the nutritional aspects of these foods, and highlight the potential short- and long-term effects on physical and mental health. Understanding these aspects is crucial, especially among younger populations who are more likely to rely on such foods due to busy schedules and limited cooking knowledge.

II. Statement Of The Problem

Despite the growing popularity of instant foods due to their convenience, affordability, and accessibility, there is increasing concern about their negative effects on health. Many individuals, especially students and working individuals, consume these products regularly without being fully aware of their nutritional drawbacks. This rising dependency poses a public health concern as it may lead to an increase in lifestyle-related diseases and a decline in overall well-being.

There is a lack of comprehensive understanding among the general public about the short-term and long-term health risks associated with regular consumption of instant foods. Moreover, educational interventions and awareness programs focusing on this issue are still limited. This study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the consumption patterns, health impacts, and awareness levels of instant food consumers, thereby providing meaningful insights for individuals, health professionals, and policymakers.

III. Objectives Of The Study

- To analyse the frequency and reasons for the consumption of instant food products among different age groups
- To assess the level of nutritional awareness among consumers of instant food products.
- To examine the common health issues faced by individuals who regularly consume instant foods.

- To suggest practical recommendations for promoting healthier eating habits and reducing reliance on processed instant foods.

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses primarily on the health impacts of regularly consuming instant foods among students, working professionals, and homemakers across various age groups. It covers both male and female respondents from urban and semi-urban areas. The research will explore the types and frequency of instant food consumption, health-related consequences, nutritional knowledge, and the influence of lifestyle factors such as stress, academic or work pressure, and social trends. The scope also includes understanding consumer behavior and the role of marketing strategies used by instant food brands. However, the study does not cover the production process, manufacturing regulations, or corporate policies of instant food companies. It is limited to the health and behavioural aspects related to consumption patterns from a consumer-centric perspective.

V. METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

Research methodology is way to systematically solve the research problem. The research methodology includes the various methods and techniques for conducting research. It may be understand as a science of studying how research is done successfully.

VI. FINDINGS

Percentage Analysis

- Maximum 31% of the respondents age group are 18-25 years.
- Majority 63% of the respondents are Female.
- Maximum 38% of the respondents are under graduate.
- Maximum 38% of the respondents are in the category of Students.
- Maximum 35% of the respondents are belongs to the Monthly income was between Rs.20000-Rs.30000.
- Majority 79% of the respondents are Nuclear family.
- Majority 57% of the respondents are living in Urban.
- Majority of 35% of the respondents prefer Instant foods
- Majority of 36% of the respondents choose instant foods primarily for saving time
- Majority of 35% of the respondents purchase instant foods through online platforms
- Majority of 40% of the respondents Sometimes read nutritional labels before purchasing instant foods

- Majority of 36% of the respondents have experienced skin problems after consuming instant foods regularly
- Majority of 32% of the respondents Never substitute home cooked with instant foods
- Majority of 30% of the respondents consider Taste Preference as the biggest challenge in avoiding instant foods
- Majority of 38% of the respondents consuming instant foods as a late night snack.

Chi-Square Analysis

From the Chi-square analysis, it is identified that there is no significant relationship between Age, Gender, Family Type, Location, and the consumption patterns of instant food products in Erode District.

- There is a significant relationship between consumption frequency and the level of satisfaction toward instant food products.
- There is no significant relationship between Age and the level of satisfaction toward instant food products.
- There is no significant relationship between Gender and the level of satisfaction toward instant food products.
- There is no significant relationship between Educational Qualification and the level of satisfaction toward instant food products.
- There is no significant relationship between Occupation and the level of satisfaction toward instant food products.
- There is no significant relationship between Monthly Income and the level of satisfaction toward instant food products.

These results indicate that demographic factors do not significantly influence consumer satisfaction, suggesting that consumers across different age groups, genders, education levels, occupations, and income categories exhibit similar satisfaction patterns toward instant food products in Erode District.

VII. WEIGHTED AVERAGE ANALYSIS

The weighted average analysis reveals that the respondents are most satisfied with the factor "Taste," which received the highest weighted score (26.93). This indicates that taste is the most important factor influencing consumer satisfaction toward instant food products in Erode District.

Other major factors contributing to consumer satisfaction include:

- Variety of flavor
- Availability

The least influencing factor is:

♣ Price / Value, which received the lowest weighted score (20.40).

This analysis shows that taste and product variety are the strongest drivers of consumer satisfaction, while price/value plays a comparatively lesser role in influencing satisfaction toward instant food products in Erode District.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

1. Instant food manufacturers should focus on improving taste and introducing more innovative flavors to enhance consumer satisfaction.
2. Quality and attractive packaging should be improved to increase product appeal and ensure freshness.
3. Companies should ensure easy availability of instant food products in both urban and rural areas of Erode District.
4. Pricing strategies should be reviewed to offer better value for money and attract price-sensitive consumers.
5. Nutritional value and ingredient information should be clearly displayed to build consumer trust and awareness.
6. Regular feedback from consumers should be collected to understand changing consumption patterns and preferences.

IX. CONCLUSION

The present study has examined the impact of consumption patterns and satisfaction levels toward instant food products in Erode District.

The findings of the study reveal that instant food products are widely consumed due to factors such as convenience, taste, and easy availability. Consumers show varying consumption patterns based on their lifestyle and preferences, but overall satisfaction levels remain relatively consistent across different demographic groups.

The study further concludes that taste, variety of flavors, and availability are the major factors influencing consumer satisfaction, while price and packaging play a comparatively lesser role. The results indicate that demographic variables do not significantly affect satisfaction levels, suggesting a uniform perception of instant food products among consumers. Overall, the study highlights the growing importance of instant food products in modern consumption habits and provides useful insights for manufacturers and marketers to enhance consumer satisfaction and meet evolving consumer expectations.

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