A STUDY ON BRAND LOYALITY OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS IN PATIALA DISTRICT

Pushpinder Jit
Research Scholar
Singhania University
Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan (India)

ABSTRACT

The present study made an attempt to analyze the brand loyalty of Instant Food Products by individual households and to understand the demand for Instant Food Products in Patiala district. All the respondents were aware of pickles and Noodles. Maggie brand of noodles, Kissan and Tops brands of pickles and Everest were aware among the users of Instant Food Products. Ready availability and save time of preparation were the reasons for consuming Instant Food Products. Retail shops are the major source of information and source of purchase of Instant Food Products. The average monthly expenditure on Instant Food Products was found to be highest in higher income groups. The average per capita purchase and per capita expenditure on Instant food Products had positive relationships with income of households. Housewives were the major decision makers on consumption of Instant Food Products. Most of the Pickle consumers found to be medium loyal and majority of noodles consumers belonged to higher loyalty group. Best quality, retailers influence and ready availability were considered for preferring particular brand of products by the consumers.

Among branded products, Maggie brand of noodles, Kissan brand of pickles were highly preferred by the consumers.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The food processing industry in India is one of the largest in terms of production, consumption, export and growth prospects. Important sub sectors in food processing industries are fruit and vegetable processing, fish-processing, milk processing, meat and poultry processing, packaged/convenience foods, alcoholic beverages and soft drinks and grain processing.
According to Ministry of Food Processing Industries, the size of the food processing industry was about Rs.315,000 crores and included Rs.99,000 crore of value added products. About 300 million upper and middle class people consume processed food; 200 million more consumers are expected to shift to processed food by 2010. The food processing Industry accounts for 13.5% of the country’s industrial output. It generates 18% of gross domestic product and employs about 19% of the industrial labour at national level. Products like papad, pickle and spice mixes have been hugely successful in recent years. The size of this particular segment alone is estimated at about Rs 100 crore. Rabo India Finance had projected that the Indian food processing industry would increase to Rs 11,500 billion by 2014-15. Processed products like ‘chapaties’, ‘subzies’ and portion packs of concentrated curries are fast becoming regular diets, especially for young couples. The product range includes foods like ‘puri-bhaji’ and ‘dosa-vada’. Processed food products like pickles, chutneys, juices and curry powders had made their entry into the kitchens of most middleclass households a long time back. There are a whopping 15 crore middle class individuals, of which 60% are below 35 years — a segment that is increasingly depending on processed foods. This throws open an ideal opportunity for small entrepreneurs who are eyeing this segment for making a fortune.

Over the past five decades, India has taken giant steps in producing food grains, milk, fruits and vegetables. The production of raw food materials is estimated to worth over Rs 60,000 crore. After primary, secondary and tertiary processing, the total size of the industry is estimated to be as high as Rs 1, 10,000 crore. This cost overrun reflects the opportunities that food-processing industry offers to the economy as a whole and entrepreneurs in individual. Big opportunities lie in up gradation from commodities to packaged and branded products and convenient foods, which offer value for money. Products focused towards children and young adults and products catering to those who lead a fast modern-day life. Realizing the potential and in order to provide further boost, the government has exempted from excise duty for condensed milk, ice cream, preparations of meat, fish and poultry, pectins, pasta and yeast. Further, excise duty on certain ready-to-eat packaged foods is reduced to 8% from 16%. The food processing industry will also be benefited from the reduction in excise duty on paper, a cut in customs duty on major bulk plastics and a reduction of customs duty on packaging machines, which would reduce packaging costs (Budget 2007).

The Instant food products, which originated in Japan with Instant noodles had its beginning in India in 80’s, are found today in the kitchen shelves of every Indian household. The advancement of science and technology offered the people new foods processing vessels, equipment and tools but still people are in search of new techniques to speed up the Cooking process in order to cope up with mechanical life, as they do not have sufficient time to cook food in the conventional methods. In the ever changing socio-domestic scenario, both men and women have to necessarily go for employment to augment the household income and cooking food in traditional methods is really an ordeal for women. Capitalizing this situation, business houses ranging from small time manufactures to multinational corporations have started innovating and commercializing “easy to cook food items” like noodles, vermicelli, gulab jamun, instant idli, vada, dosa mix, etc., that are otherwise called instant. The instant food products are not only easy to cook but also...
have a significant role and place in the celebration of the family functions and religious functions of the people.

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defined instant food products as “Instant food products which are prepared and packaged often in powered form are required only the addition of a liquid as water or milk for final preparation”. In the modern days, where the life is at fast pace with the time very valuable to every person, "Instant Foods" play an important role in everyone's day-to-day life. The very term 'instant food' means simple, fast and convenient food, which is easy and fast to prepare besides being hygienic, free from microbial contamination and also convenient to eat. Unlike olden days where man used to have his food lavishly and slowly, the present trend changed the habits to foods, which are simple and easy to digest. Hence, the existence of these foods fulfilled all the needs of modern human being. Preparing food with instant mixes has become a way life and no doubt they are going to be an integral part of food habit in future. Canned foods, convenience foods, fast foods, frozen foods, instant products, dried foods, preserved foods, etc. all come under instant foods or ready-to-eat foods. The food habits in India have changed due to the Western influence and the usage of these foods is also on the rise. These foods are widely used in catering industries as well as at homes. There are varieties of instant/ready-to-eat foods available in the market to choose from and they have become a part of everyday life. It is a food revolution that’s been a long time coming. As double-income nuclear families become the norm in urban India, everyone who is anyone in the food business has been eyeing the ready-to-eat food sector with considerable hunger.

Among the processed food segment, instant food products occupied a considerable shelf space in stores and super markets in India. Food companies through instant food products had provided high quality food choices, which would have been inconceivable to ancestors. Instant food mixes formed a range of convenience food for households, being easy to use without terminal processing and women found it very convenient to use. It helped them to save time and effort and relieved them of the tedious jobs of collecting various ingredients, cleaning and sorting them and preparing food. Modern homes also do not offer the facilities necessary for traditional processing and hence these products gained instant acceptance. These instant mixes can be used for preparations of various snack foods, sweets and preparations with rice. The sweet preparation included Gulab jamoon mix, Payasam mix, Badham mix, Purfi mix; the snack mixes included bajji mix, vada mix, bonda mix and the preparations with rice includes puliogare mix, tomato rice mix, lemon rice mix and coconut rice mix, Bisibele bath mix, etc., The instant mix market in India was approximately Rs.150 crore during the year 2003 and at the end of 2004, it was around Rs.350 crore. And by March 2007 the size of the Indian Ready to eat market was approximately Rs.600-700million (Indiantelevision.com. March 10, 2007). Generally, food is prepared depending on the habits, tastes, social status, economic factor, availability, traditions, habitats, etc., of the people of that region. The most sought after in the present age are the instant/ready-to-eat foods. They are very popular in the Western region of the world. Even India is being influenced by these instant foods. Main reasons for popularity of Instant Food Products
1. Emergence of Industrial society (i.e., metropolitan cities) – Development of the metropolitan cities due to increase in population, emergence of industries, evolution of various new factors, time factor, etc., created the need for instant foods in the market.

2. Reduced domestic servants – Due to industrialization, the labour category is getting attracted to it because of better emoluments and hence there is a shortage of home maids-servants. Due to this, the housewives in order to save time started using instant foods.

3. Womenfolk taking to job- As the literacy rate is increasing among women, a large number of them in our country are taking up jobs to setup their own status in the society and to use the extra income generated. These are creating the need for ready-to-eat foods.

4. Emergence of nuclear families- Earlier times, a single family consisted of many people i.e., a group of several nuclear families were living in a single place. Hence larger quantities of the food were used to be prepared. But as these joint families started disappearing due to various reasons, each single family started using these instant foods in order to save time and energy.

5. Prices of raw materials- This forms one of the major factors for the use of instant foods in the present world. As the prices of some of the raw materials are continuously increasing, the purchases of these foods formed more economical.

6. New products- As there are different new products coming up in the markets daily that are very cheap and easy for using and preparing, the popularity of instant foods is increasing.

7. Drudgery of work- In order to award the heavy laborious work like grinding manually and other drudging works, people opt for instant foods, which are easy to prepare and eat.

8. Convenience- Instant foods are convenient to prepare and are economical. This increased its usage by the people as it saves the time, energy and money.

9. Increasing income- Due to establishments of multi-national companies in India, the lady of the house also started working, because of which there is no time to prepare food at home. Hence this created the need to opt for instant foods.

10. Standard of living- The standard of living is also changing due to raise in income level, influence of western countries, more global trade, travelling etc., Hence, people are changing their taste to instant foods more compared to the old traditionally prepared foods.

11. Media- In the modern era, the media, particularly electronic and print media, are playing an important role in creating awareness of the products manufactured and released in the market.
The above factors are responsible for the popularity of instant food products in the Indian market. The marketer should see to it that the instant food is available to the consumers without any difficulty at competitive rates. The products should be provided to consumers by keeping in mind as when they want, where they want and the manner in which they want.

These methods help in increasing the sales of the product with good feedback from the customers and creating a niche for instant foods in the market. Though there are so many instant foods available in the market, their popularity is increasing in a slow pace, especially in the rural markets, due to lack of awareness compared to larger cities where they are widely available and also more popular.

1.2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

BRAND LOYALTY

Singh and Singh (1981) found that consumers had single or multi-brand loyalty based on the nature of product, like necessities or luxuries. Brand choice and store loyalty were found to affect the brand loyalty of the consumer. The factors that influence and strengthen loyalty to brand were quality of product, habit of use and ready and regular availability.

Shanmugasundaram (1990) studied about soft drink preference in Vellore town of north Arcot district in Tamil Nadu. The study revealed that, the most preferred soft drink among respondents as Gold Spot (26%), followed by Limca (24.80%). It was found that taste was the main factor for preference of particular brand and among the media; television played a vital role in influencing consumer to go for particular brand. Because of convenience in carrying, tetra pack was most preferred one.

Ali (1992) studied the brand loyalty and switching pattern of processed fruit and vegetable products in Bangalore city by using Markov Chain analysis. The result of study revealed that Kissan brand of jam and Maggi brand of ketchup had a maximum brand loyalty among consumers, and less amount of brand switching occurred for these brands.

Frederick Reichheld (1994) pointed out in his book, “The Loyalty Effect”, that, ‘customers equity effectively explains success and failure in business’. The companies with the highest retention rates also earn the benefit profits. Relative retention explains profits better than market share, scale, cost position or any other variable associated with competitive advantage.

Ranganatham and Shanthi (1995) conducted a study on brand image among refrigerators in Tamil Nadu. The study revealed that Kelvinator scored higher for working of its power saving compressor, cooling power and its price was considered, except for defrost and new features. Voltas brand clearly outperformed others with respect to working of defrost system and always caused satisfaction with the models available under its brand name. The potential buyers felt that Godrej and Voltas had got a well known corporate identity.
Hans et al. (1996) revealed that the brand switching of consumer was based on variety seeking behaviour, motivations, curiosity and price motive. Veena (1996) studied brand switching and brand loyalty of processed fruit and vegetable products in Karnataka state by using Markov Chain Analysis. The result of the study revealed that Maggi, Sil and Kissan were having market retention of 74.20, 55.78 and 48.74 per cent, respectively for jam products. The equilibrium shares determined in order to predict future market position among the different brand showed that in long run, shares of Kissan, Rex. Other brands were likely to decline, mainly on account of increased market shares of Gala.

Singh et al. (1993) made an attempt to estimate demand for and supply of milk in Haryana by considering factors like growth in population, growth in per capita income and urbanization. The study revealed that current and future milk production in Haryana would meet the minimum nutritional requirement during the period (1987-88 to 2004-05). There was about 11.63 lakh tonnes surplus milk in the year 1987-88 and there would be about 24.52 lakh tonnes of surplus milk after meeting nutritional requirement of milk by the end of 2004-05. However, the demand for milk was to be met up to 1995-96. After that Haryana state would be marginally deficit in milk production.

Durga and Murthy (1995) attempted to estimate demand for food in urban and rural areas using NSS data. The popular “Almost Ideal Demand System” was used for this purpose. Demand projections were made under two alternative income growth scenarios for the period from 1988-89 to 1992-93. The two-model variant was found to forecast the demand differently. It was concluded that the cereal consumption declined over the years in urban India, signaling shift in consumers taste and preference away from cereals.

Pagire and Shinde (1999) conducted a study on the demand for and supply of grapes in Maharashtra, considering recommendation of 120 gms of fruits per capita per day by the ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research). The demand (requirement) for grapes in the state was estimated for the year 2001 AD for the projected population of the state (8.68crores). The estimated requirement was 93.72 thousand metric tonnes at the rate of 20 gms per capita per day and it was 140.62 thousand metric tonnes at the rate of 30 gms per capita per day for the state.

Sabeson (1992), in his study stated that high quality, price and taste of the product were the major criteria based on which the consumers selected a brand of processed fruits and vegetable products.

Low and Lamb Jr. (2000) came out with an interesting conclusion that well-known brands tend to exhibit multi-dimensional brand associations, consistent with the idea that consumers have more developed memory structures for more familiar brands. Consumers might be willing to expend more energy in processing information regarding familiar brands compared to unfamiliar brands.

Bristow et al. (2002) mentioned brand name as a node to which the linkages or the brand associations might be linked. A node was activated initially by an external cue, would also activate associated nodes.
through a set of linkages in place and the final set of information recalled would be based on the particular path of nodes and linkages activated in the given situation. Thus, brand name might be part of several different sequences, depending upon the activated path.

Sanjaya et al. (2002) reported that, the decision for purchasing branded fine rice was mostly made by the wives of the family. The retailers were ranked as the prime source of information about branded fine rice. The monthly purchase is the most preferred frequency of purchase, which might be due to the fact that most of the respondents were of monthly salaried class and they would have planned their purchase accordingly along with other provision items. The quality and the image of the brand were ranked as the major factors for brand preference in the purchase of branded fine rice.

In a study conducted by Sarwade (2002), it has been observed that the price is the factor, which influences the purchasing decision as against the quality of the product. It is very interesting to find out that the company image and brand image were not totally considered by the households.

Sampath kumar (2003) studied about brand preference in soft drinks in Telangana region of Andra Pradesh. He found that in rural market about 37.5 per cent of consumers preferred Thumbs-up (urban 30%), followed by Coco cola (28.5%) (urban 37.5%), Pepsi 12.5 per cent (urban 9%), Limca (4 per cent) (urban 8.5%). Most of the urban consumers (67 per cent) purchased soft drinks in nearest Kirani stores (rural 73%), followed by super bazaar (27 per cent) (rural 26%) and others (6 per cent) (rural 1%). The method of physical distribution played very vital role in company’s success and failure in the market. Transportation is among the major functions of physical distribution. Transport adds time and place utility for the product.

Kubendran and Vanniarajan (2005) founded that, the change in consumption pattern is due to changes in food habits. If income and urbanization increase among consumers, the percentage of income spent on consumption increases. The urban consumers prefer mostly branded products compared to rural consumers. The most significant factors influencing buying decisions were accessibility, quality, regular supply, door delivery and the mode of payment.

Ramaswamy et al. (2005) studied consumer behaviour towards instant food products in Madurai, the second largest city in Tamil Nadu and observed that consumers do build opinion about a brand on the basis of which various product features play an important role in decision making process. A large number of respondents (78%) laid emphasis on quality and 76% on price which is an important factor, while 64% of respondents attached importance to the image of the manufacturer and 50% considered packaging as an important factor and an equal percentage (50%) felt longer shelf life influenced them.

Banumathy and Hemameena (2006), while studying consumer brand preference with respect to soft drinks, found that after globalization most of the consumers like the international brands such as Pepsi and coco-cola. Consumers preferred a certain brand or a particular drink mainly because of its taste and refreshing ability.
Vincent (2006) studied brand consciousness among children. The study showed that children start to recognize product brands at an early age, which influence family buying behaviour. It is helpful for plants in making purchase decision of durable goods for the family.

1.3: OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Several firms had been engaging in production and marketing of instant food products. Hence, the consumers had greater options to choose from. In this context, a study on consumer behaviour was deemed to be important to understand the buying behaviour and preferences of different consumers. Understanding the consumer behaviour would help the firms in formulating strategies to cater to the needs of the consumer and thereby increase their market share. Consumer’s taste and preference were found to change rapidly, especially in a dynamic environment. Keeping in view the importance of consumer behaviour and consumption pattern, the present study was undertaken with the following objectives

The specific objectives of the study were;
1. To analyze brand loyalty for Instant Food Products,
2. To study brand composition of Instant Food Products

1.4: METHODOLOGY

The study is based on a survey of 150 respondents [Consumer Male (88) and Female (62)] . The details regarding product category, choice of cities and sample size is as follows:

- **Product Category Coverage**
  The present study covered the following categories of Instant Food Products:

  ✓ Fruit and Vegetable based products. e.g. Pickles.
  ✓ Noodles.

  it was decided that the study should only cover all parts of Patiala City. As Patiala has been witnessing the burgeoning population for the past couple of decades.

- **Sampling Technique**
  Stratified random sampling has been used to collect the data of 150 respondents. age group ranging from 18 to 60. survey was conducted during the period of Jan 2013 to APR 2013. in sample size of 150, male 88 and female 62 were surveyed. The close ended questionnaire was developed to collect the data. It includes close ended choice questions and the partial responses were measured. Analysis of the data was carried out by using multiple regression analysis analysis. The method is based on Likert scaling technique using 5-point scale
TABLE 1: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

1.5: 1 Income-Wise Distribution Of Sample Households

Income-wise distribution of sample households is presented in Table 2. Respondents with monthly income of less than Rs. 5000 were considered to belong to Income Group 1 (IG1), those with income group between Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 10,000 were classified into Income Group 2 (IG2), those with income of Rs. 10,000 to Rs.15, 000 were grouped as Income Group 3 (IG3) and finally those with income of more than Rs. 15,000 were categorized as Income Group (IG4). Accordingly, the proportion of household respondents in IG1, IG2, IG3 and IG4 was 22.73 per cent, 39.77 per cent, 15.90 per cent and 21.59 per cent respectively, in male respondents. In female respondents, this proportion was 16.12 per cent, 27.41 per cent, 40.32 per cent and 16.12 per cent in IG1, IG2 and IG3 and IG4 respectively. However, at an overall the proportion of respondents in IG1, IG2, IG3 and IG4 was 20 per cent (30 in number), 34.66 per cent (52 in number), 26 per cent (39 in number) and 19.33 per cent (29 in number), respectively.

TABLE 2: INCOME WISE DISTRIBUTIONS OF HOUSEHOLDS OF PATIALA DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households Income/Month</th>
<th>Income Groups</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male (88)</td>
<td>Female (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Rs.5000</td>
<td>IG1</td>
<td>20(22.73)</td>
<td>10(16.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.5000 to 10,000</td>
<td>IG2</td>
<td>35(39.77)</td>
<td>17(27.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.10,000 to 15,000</td>
<td>IG3</td>
<td>14(15.90)</td>
<td>25(40.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 15,000</td>
<td>IG4</td>
<td>19(21.59)</td>
<td>10(16.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td></td>
<td>88(100)</td>
<td>62(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.5: 2 Brand Awareness of Consumers about Instant Food Products

Table 3 presents the brand awareness of different products in Patiala district. In case of male respondents 50.00 per cent were aware of Kissan brand of pickle and in case of female respondents overall 48.38 were aware of the same brand. Classification on the basis of income group shows that 4,10,20,10 numbers of male respondents were aware of kissan pickle in case of IG1, IG2, IG3 and IG4 respectively. Whereas 8, 12, 7, 3 number of respondents were aware of the same brand in case of IG1, IG2, IG3 and IG4 respectively.

In case of other two brands of pickle i.e Tops and Local overall 39.77 percent and 10.22 percent of male respondents showed awareness as compare to 35.48 percent and 16.12 percent of female respondents respectively for the same brands. in case of other instant food product category(Noodles) Maggie is the brand which tops the tally with 52.27 percent male and 50.00 percent female respondents were aware about. Classification on the basis of different income groups show that 12,9,14,11 respondents in numbers for IG1,IG2,IG3,IG4 respectively were aware. Whereas 2, 10,14,5 female respondents in numbers for IG1, IG2, IG3, IG4 respectively were aware for the same brands.

The other two brands in this category (Yippee and Foodles) have also got awareness in male 32 and 10 in number respectively. in female 23 and 8 in number respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Products</th>
<th>Brands</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male(88)</th>
<th>Female(62)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>IG1</td>
<td>IG2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickles</td>
<td>Kissan</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tops</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maggie</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yippee</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foodles</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The other two brands in this category (Yippee and Foodles) have also got awareness in male 32 and 10 in number respectively. in female 23 and 8 in number respectively.
1.5: 3 Brand Loyalty of Consumers Towards Instant Food Products in Patiala

The brand loyalty of purchasers towards instant food products in Patiala is presented in Table 4. It could be inferred from the table that cent per cent users of Pickle in IG3 and 33.33 per cent in IG4 were found to be medium brand loyal but 66.67 per cent of IG4 were also noticed as low brand loyal. On the whole, it represents 50 per cent each as medium and low brand loyalty consumers Pickle. In the case of Noodles, 27.27 per cent each in IG1 belonged to high and medium brand loyal but about 45.45 per cent belonged to low loyalty categories. Whereas in case of IG2, 37.50 per cent each of the users fall under high and medium loyalty group and only 25 per cent of them belonged to low loyalty category. About 50 per cent each of the users of IG3 belonged to high and medium brand loyalty group. However, in IG4, most of them (71.42 %) belonged to high brand loyalty group and 28.57 per cent were categorized as medium brand loyal for pickles. At an overall, it constituted 43.75 per cent as high brand loyal, 34.37 per cent as medium brand loyal and 21.87 per cent as low brand loyal households.

TABLE 4: BRAND LOYALTY OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS INSTANT FOOD PRODUCTS IN PATIALA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Products</th>
<th>Income groups</th>
<th>Loyalty status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High (9-12)</td>
<td>Medium (5-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG1 (n=0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG2 (n=0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG3 (n=1)</td>
<td>1 (100.00)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG4 (n=3)</td>
<td>1 (33.33)</td>
<td>2 (66.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall (n=4)</td>
<td>2 (50.00)</td>
<td>2 (50.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noodles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG1 (n=11)</td>
<td>3 (27.27)</td>
<td>3 (27.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG2 (n=8)</td>
<td>3 (37.50)</td>
<td>3 (37.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG3 (n=6)</td>
<td>3 (50.00)</td>
<td>3 (50.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IG4 (n=7)</td>
<td>5 (71.42)</td>
<td>2 (28.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall (n=32)</td>
<td>14 (43.75)</td>
<td>11 (34.37)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.5: 4 Reasons for Not Preferring Particular Brand Of Product

Table 5 presents the reasons for not preferring a particular brand by the respondents of Patiala district using Liker scaling technique and the scores given by the respondents are analyzed and presented in the table. In Patiala, the male respondents attached highest mean score (4.66) to high price followed by poor taste (3.94), poor quality (3.88), less keeping quality (3.78), inconvenient packaging (3.34), poor brand image (2.97), not good colour (2.66) and poor flavour (2.41) as the reasons based on their importance, for not preferring a particular brand in the purchase of Instant food products. Similarly, female respondents affixed highest mean score based on their importance to high price (4.79); subsequently poor taste (4.16), poor quality (4.11), less keeping quality (3.79), inconvenient packaging (3.05), poor brand image (2.74), not good color (2.47) and poor flavour (2.00) were the reasons for not preferring a particular brand during their purchases of Instant food products. In the same way,

**TABLE 5: REASONS FOR NOT PREFERING PARTICULAR BRAND OF PRODUCT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Male (88)</th>
<th>Female (62)</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor Quality</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Taste</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High price</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor brand image</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenient package</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor flavour</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not good colour</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less keeping quality</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6: Findings of the study

The important findings of the study are summarized and suitable conclusions are drawn and presented below.

1. The general characteristics of the 150 respondents revealed that majority (34.66 per cent) of respondents belonged to income groups IG2, while IG3 comprised of 26 per cent households followed by IG1 (20 per cent) and IG4 (19.33 per cent) in the study area.
2. The average monthly family income of IG1, IG2, IG3 and IG4 was Rs. 5,552, Rs. 7075, Rs. 16,000 and Rs 21000 respectively in Patiala.
3. The awareness of consumers about Instant food products across different income groups in of the Patiala district showed that respondents in IG3 (10 per cent) in case of male and (16.12 per cent) in case of female were aware of local brand in pickle category. In the same category followed by 39 per cent in IG2, 50 per cent in IG1 male and 35.48 per cent in IG2 and 48.38 per cent in IG1 in female category respectively.
4. The user categories of noodles in the study area presented that, majority (52.27 per cent) of male and (50 per cent) of female respondents were aware about Maggie. the other two brands in the same category followed by Yippee (36.36 per cent) of male and (37.07 per cent) of female, oodles had (11.63 per cent) of male and (12.90 per cent) of female following respectively.

5. The factors considered by the respondents for consumption of Pickles and noodles were ready availability and save time of preparation by Cent per cent consumers of Patiala. In addition other factors were also considered such as availability of quality products, habit of using, and necessary ingredient for preparations so on by most of the consumers.

6. As the study was conducted in Patiala it was observed that, most of the consumers of Pickles found to be medium loyal and no respondents were found in high loyalty group but in case of Noodles most of them belonged to higher loyalty group followed by medium and low loyalty category.

7. Reasons for not preferring particular brand of the product by respondents was due to the factors such as high price followed by poor taste, poor quality and less keeping quality.

8. The purchased behaviour of different brands of instant food products revealed that, in case of Pickle mix the consumers used Kissan brand compared to Tops and local brand. Most of the Noodles buyers preferred Maggie brand followed by Yippee brand Foodles that are available in the area.

9. The factors that influenced brand preference of the selected instant food products were best quality followed by retailer’s influence, ready availability and convenience.

1.7: CONCLUSIONS AND RESULTS

1. Most of the respondents in the study area are not purchasing the Pickles even though they are readily available in the market, instead like to prepare their own. Hence, importance and awareness towards these products should be created through various media or literatures especially in rural areas.

2. The study revealed that in majority of the household’s women made the buying decisions of instant food products. Sales promotion should target this group.

3. High price was an important reason for non-consumption of Pickles by significant proportion of households. Thus, efforts may be made to reduce the price of this product so as to increase its sale.

4. The retailers influence plays very important role in the purchasing of instant food products and retail shops are the important source for purchase of these products by consumers, retailers should be given training and incentives to promote sales.

5. There is a general perception among the consumers that Instant Food Products are expensive than home made products, efforts must be made to overcome this perception by propaganda and publicity.

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