

A STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS “READY TO EAT FOOD INDUSTRY”

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to study about consumer buying behaviour towards ready to eat food industry in Northern India. The main aim was to perceive the consumption pattern of ready to eat food products. The final findings that we were able to withdraw were that consumers are aware about the industry but are unable to completely rely upon it. The research paper is further headed with problems and solutions faced by consumers.

Introduction

Indian cooking and lifestyle have undergone tremendous changes for the last 15 years as India becomes the hub of many multinationals and there is a rapid change in people lifestyles. The cooking style and eating habits in India varies drastically from southern part of India to northern part of India. Due to lifestyle pressure nowadays people prefer easy short way of cooking food rather spending too much time in cooking. Non-availability of raw materials to prepare masala and the tedious process involved in doing so, has influenced people too much to choose such products. There is no specific category and market potential for these products.

Most of the dual income (both husband and wife are office goers) families want to spend much less time on cooking because of less availability of time. During weekends they want to spend time with their kids and outing, whereas in weekdays the office duration is large and these factors forced them to go for buying such products.

Knowledgeable consumers, makes an impact on these products. Due to rise in literary levels, proliferation of communication technology, consumers are becoming more aware of the foods they intake and they take decision based on the wealth of resources available.

Indian Ready To Eat Food Market

According to a recently published report by TechSci Research “India Ready-to-eat Food Market Forecast and Opportunities, 2019”, the country’s ready-to-eat (RTE) food market is projected to grow at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of around 22% during 2014-19.

Top leaders of ready to eat food industry

Marketers are trying innovative ways to appeal the customers interested in convenience cooking. MTR, one of the key players, has consistently tried to bring in new flavours to match the customer’s need. It understands the regional differences in tastes in India.

They are trying to provide quality ready to eat food packages at a price lower than the price charged by the local restaurants.

Literature Review

Jackson and McDaniel (1985) in their research, titled “food shopping and preparation: psychographic differences of working wives and housewives” explores various psychographic characteristics exhibited by working wives as opposed to housewives in food shopping and food preparation by comparing responses of 246 working wives and 181 housewives to several food shopping and preparation related psychographic statements.

Schroder and McEachern(2005) in their research ,titled “Ready-to-eats and ethical consumer value: a focus on McDonald’s and KFC” aims to investigate the effect of communicating corporate social responsibility to young consumers .

Regmi and Dyck in their study titled, “Effects of Urbanization on Global Food Demand” have analyzed how urbanization accompanied by economic development and income growth has not just drastically impacted consumption patterns in developed countries but significantly impacting developing countries as well.

Research Methodology

The research design was used to gain knowledge and information through the primary data and secondary data.

Tools used for data analysis

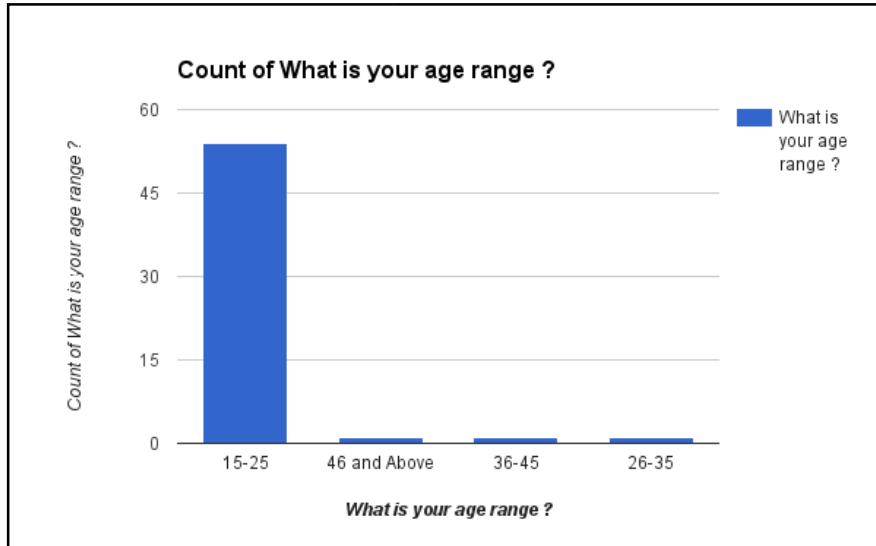
- 1) Sampling Method : Convenient Sampling method
- 2) Sampling Units : Customers
- 3) Sample Size: Number of respondents is 60. Percentages are used in making comparisons between two or more series of data

Objectives of The Study

1. To review the market of Ready to Eat food.
2. To study the perception of consumers towards Ready to Eat Food.
3. To perceive the consumption pattern of prepared -To-Eat Food product.
4. To analyse the competition among totally different brands.

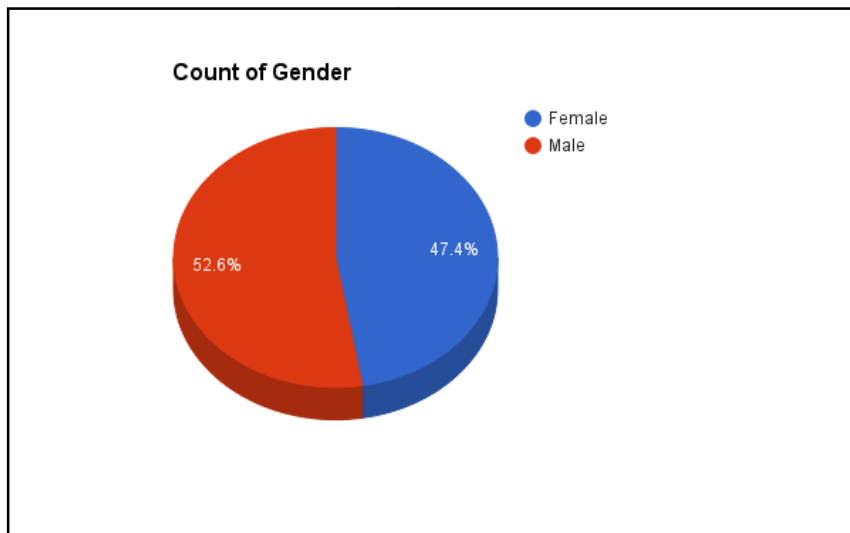
Data Analysis

Q) What is your age range?



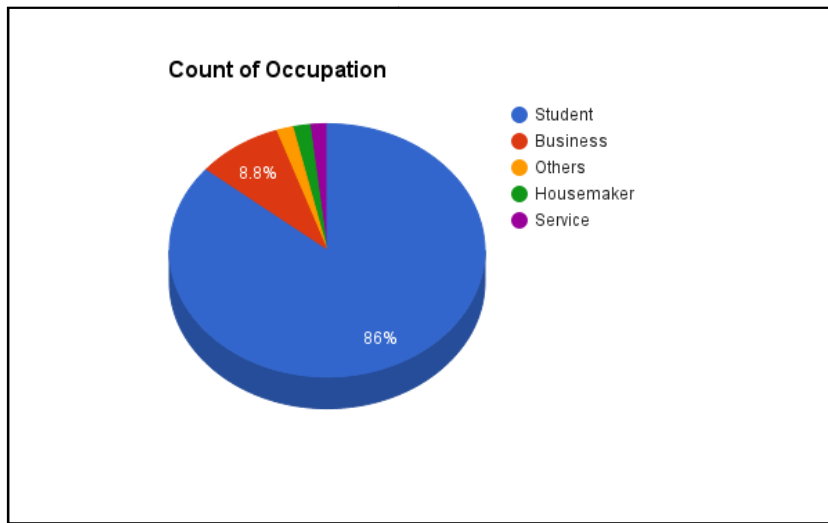
The survey was conducted for all the age group of respondents. Maximum response could be seen from the consumers aging 15-25 of age group.

Q) Gender



The survey was conducted keeping in mind the equality among males and females. 52.6% of the respondents were male while 47.4 % were the females. It was too done to ensure that whether both the genders were aware about the product or not.

Q) Occupation

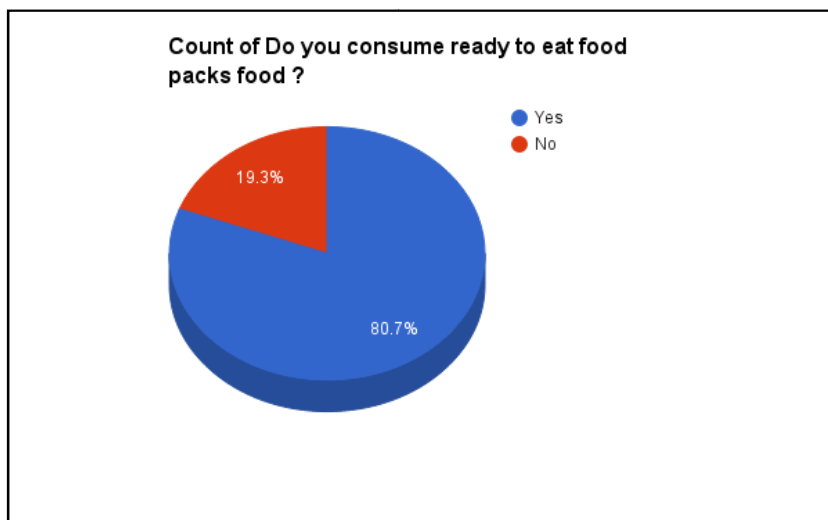


According to the primary data, 86% the responses were from students while 8.8% of responses were from businessmen.

Q) Name any brand in your knowledge selling ready to eat food packs

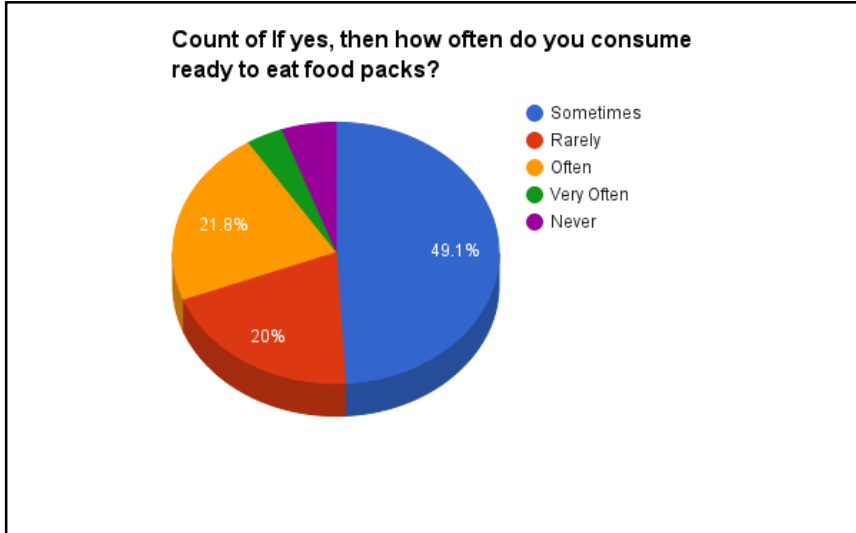
This question was included in the questionnaire to checkout consumers' awareness about the ready to eat food market. The respondents provided several responses like McCain was the maximum the answer secondly the ITC Company and Nestle maggi were having equal amount of responses.

Q) Do you consume ready to eat food packs food?



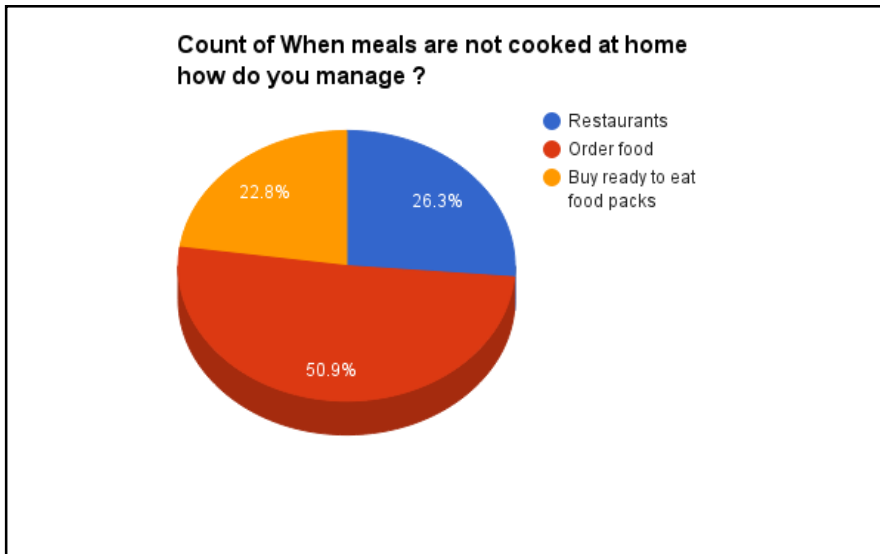
80.7% of the consumers are aware about the ready to eat food market. They are also on their of consuming them. While the rest are might aware about the product but still are not consuming them.

Q) If yes, then how often do you consume ready to eat food packs?



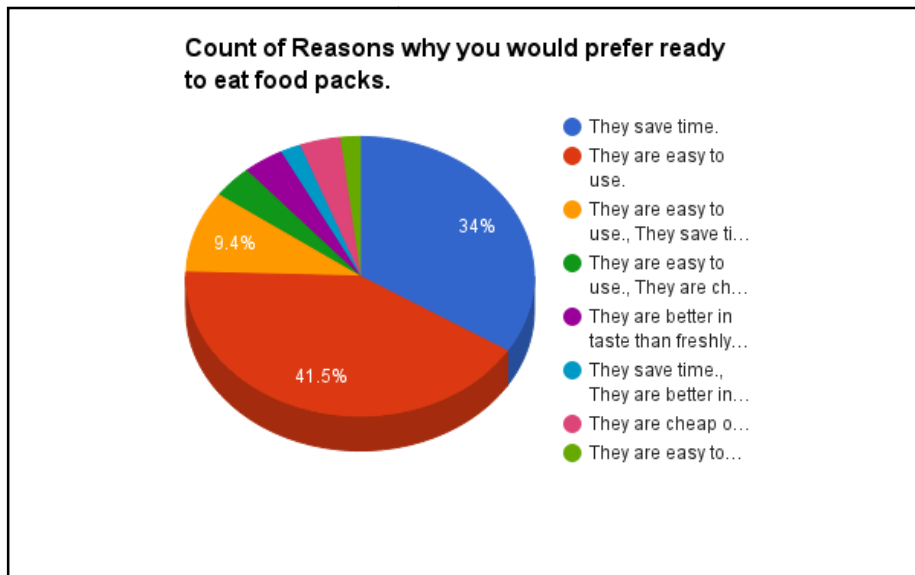
From above diagram its shows that 49% of the consumers sometimes consume the ready to eat food while 21.9% often consume while 20% consume the products rarely.

Q) When meals are not cooked at home how do you manage?



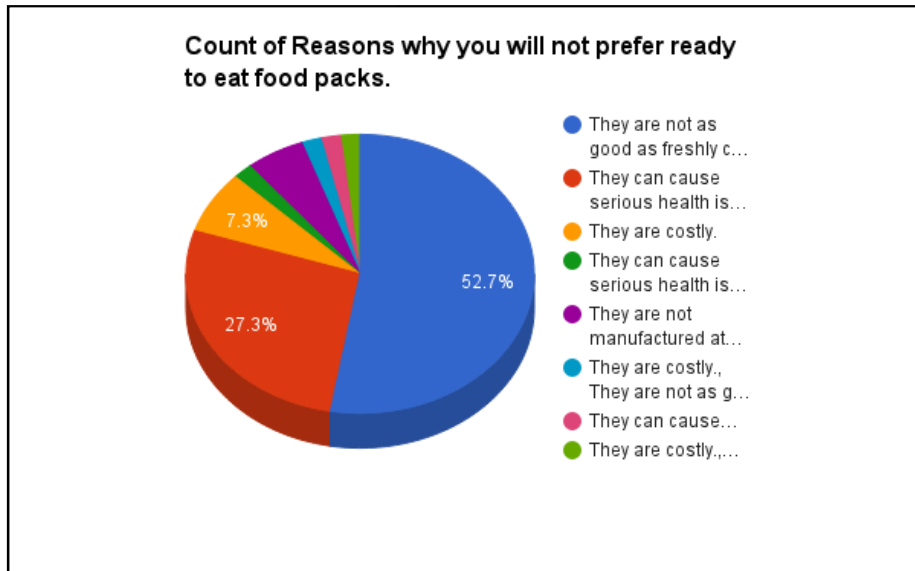
From the above diagram it shows when the meals are not cooked at home the most favourable option for 50.9% of the consumers is ordering food from the restaurant. Whereas 26.3% visit the restaurants and 22.8% buy ready to eat food packs.

Q) Reasons why you would prefer ready to eat food packs?



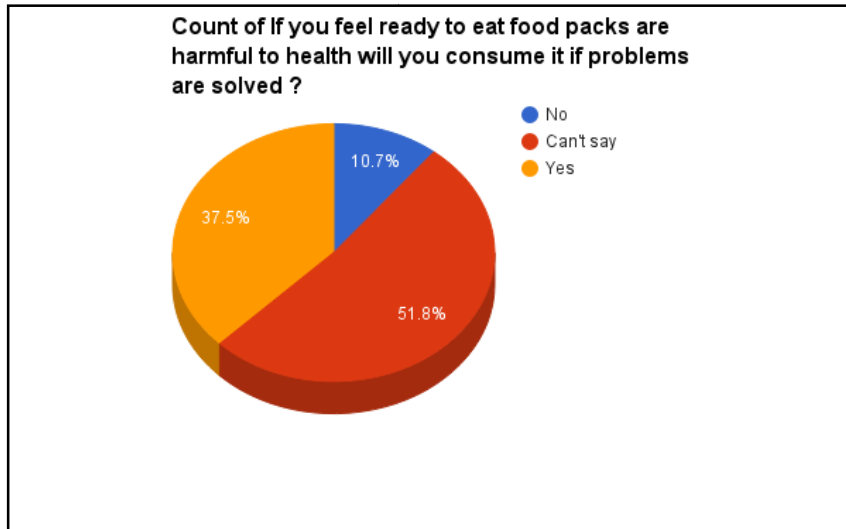
Consumers were surveyed to know the reason behind the purchasable quality of the ready to eat food. 41.5% of consumers believe that the product is easy to use while 34% of them think it saves time and rest believes that it is affordable.

Q) Reasons why you will not prefer ready to eat food packs?



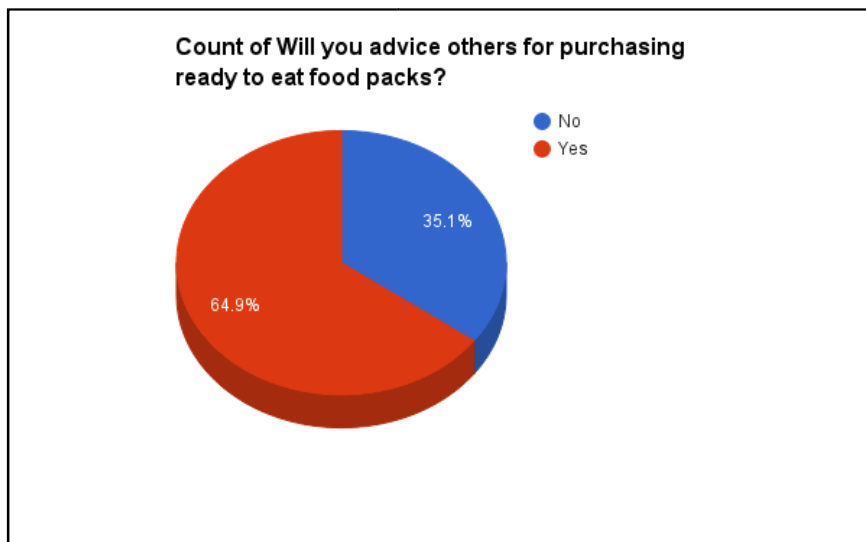
Since the consumers are aware about the ready to eat food market. They have some reasons for not consuming them. 52.7% of respondents feel that the product is not fresh. 27.3% of them believe that the ready to eat food can cause serious health issues. While only 7.3% believe that the product is costly .such reasons can be seen due to lack of awareness or the advertisements.

Q) If you feel ready to eat food packs are harmful to health will you consume it if problems are solved?



From primary data, 51.8% consumers are not sure that after improvement would they regain their trust on ready to eat food market .only 37.5% of consumers can rely again on the products while 10.7 % won't be able to rely. If the manufacturers can repose confidence by eliminating all doubts in the consumers' minds and assure them that these products are not a health hazard, then the consumption may increase.

Q) Will you advice others for purchasing ready to eat food packs?



From the above survey, only 64.9% would advice others for purchasing ready to eat food packs for the Unique Selling Price of the product, whereas 35.1% of consumers would not advice others due to their dissatisfaction level towards the product.

Findings

When we ask respondents that if your particular problems regarding RTE food like high price, poor quality, taste etc., has been solve than will you purchase it? And most of them were agreed to purchase it.

Finally it can be said from the above analysis that people who are unmarried, who live alone and the family in which both husband & wife do the job consume Ready to eat food. Still RTE food makers need to do lot of promotional activities to make people aware about their products and to penetrate the market they also have to reduce the price and maintain the quality of their product.

Conclusion

Ready to eat food market is the future food shortcut market. in India , people being workaholic they don't have time to cook time taking dishes , so they prefer to either go to restaurants or use ready to eat food market products. The industry hasn't set completely till yet, but it's very soon would be. People are aware about the product but due to one or another reason they are hesitant to use them. The reasons are as follow:

- Ready to eat packets are not readily available.
- They are not good as freshly cooked food.
- They might cause serious health issues.
- They are costly.
- Smaller packs are not available.

Suggestions

These drawbacks can be covered via

- More good quality promotions
- Introducing small quantity packs
- Easily available at retail shops
- Lowering down the prices

Good public relations can be attained with a trustworthy bond between consumers and manufacturers.