PREFERENCES ON PURCHASING READY-TO-EAT: A CHOICE OF CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

Modern day's people moving towards instant cultures and behaviour. It's more applicable towards the food habits of the people, who are buying and using instant food product items in recent days. Due to pressure from their way of life, individuals now choose quick and simple methods of cooking rather than taking their time. People frequently prefer instant food, particularly those who are busy at work, such as cup noodles, dal and curries, instant upma, instant idly mix ready curry powders, etc. The purpose of this study is to learn about the preferences of workers in the IT sector for instant food products, including the variables that impact their decision to buy such products and the difficulties they encounter when consuming them. 181 consumers from Bangalore city were selected to participate in the study. This descriptive study uses a simple random sampling technique to find consumers among all Bangalore residents. Secondary data is gathered through books and websites, whereas primary data is gathered from questionnaires. Statistical tools like ANOVA, frequency analysis, and independent sample t-tests were utilized to assess the primary data that had been gathered. And finally, the researcher offers suggestions for the numerous issues found.

KEYWORDS: *Instant food products, Preferences, IT sector.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Health is wealth; this proverb makes to understand that people get good health in terms of good quality food. In everyone's life, food is one of the necessities, It gives people the vitality and nutrients they need to live a healthy, active life and to move around, work, play, think, and learn. To stay healthy and productive, the human body needs certain elements from the food we eat, such as protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins, and minerals. The advancement of science and technology gave people new tools, equipment, and vessels for processing food, but people are still looking for creative ways to speed up the cooking process to keep up with mechanical life because they do not have enough time to prepare food according to traditional methods. Instant foods are prepared convenience foods that often just require the addition of water or milk. Some authors specify that "ultra-instant" food must be prepared in less than one minute and that "instant" food must be prepared in less than five minutes. Frequently, instant foods are condensed, freeze-dried, or dehydrated. With instant noodles, the Japanese invented instant food products. In India, instant meal products steadily began to spread in the 1980s. Every kitchen shelf in the modern world is usually filled with instant food products. Consumer behaviour is the study of how individuals, groups, or organizations choose, preserve, and discard goods, services, experiences, or ideas to meet wants, as wel andects these choices have on the consumer and society.

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

R. Keerthanan and Dr R. Amsaveni (2022) The research study attempts to determine the most popular instant food item and learn why consumers favour instant food products. From the city of Tirupur, 150 consumers were chosen to participate in the study. To find the consumers among everyone in the Tirupur District, judgemental or purposeful sampling techniques were applied. There were both primary and secondary uses. Both primary data from the questionnaire and secondary data from online journals, magazines, and websites are gathered. Tools like Simple Percentage, Chi-Square Analysis, and Anova were utilized to analyse the basic data that had been gathered. According to the report, the majority of respondents prefer vegetarian cuisine and check the expiration date before making a purchase. The majority of respondents fall into the salaried class, are from a nuclear household, and have a monthly budget of between Rs. 301 and Rs. 500. Advertisements draw in new clients by offering a selection of goods that meet their immediate needs, reducing cooking time, and enable home chefs to create restaurant-quality meals. According to the study's recommendations, quick food product sales are improved by providing complete information on the items' nutrients, quality, manner of preparation, and time required. Trial packs or lesser amount packs should be introduced first to draw in new customers. **J Saujanya and Yadigiri Nikitha (2022)** Due to pressure from their way of life, Indians prefer to prepare meals quickly and easily rather than take their time. The vast majority of individuals favour instant food products. To analyse consumer perception and satisfaction towards ready-to-eat food goods, this study discusses the elements that motivate consumers to buy and consume these products. To gather information for data analysis, the researcher has employed both primary data, such as a questionnaire, and secondary data, such as papers, internet books, and magazines. When meals are not ready, the majority of the respondents in this survey order food from restaurants, think about flavour and nutrition when buying ready-to-eat food goods, and rely heavily on TV advertising to learn about these products. Their satisfaction with these products is generally neutral. This study recommended that ready-to-eat items be made easily accessible at retail stores, that their quantities and prices be decreased, and that they should also be improved in terms of taste by using less salt and oil in many instant food products so that they resemble home-cooked cuisine. It is clear from this that ready-to-eat foods have a bright future and that the majority of people are drawn to them for their flavour, nutrition, convenience, and accessibility. **Nitya Khurana and Prachi Goyal (2021)** Food is a vital component of all living things. Food is the substance that is consumed to give all living things nutrition and support. The shopping habits and patterns of consumers have significantly changed in the current environment. Urbanization growth, the transition from blended to nuclear families, the nature of employment and enterprises altering, time constraints, convenience, and lifestyle changes have caused consumers' tastes to shift from fresh and healthful food to ready-to-use/instant food. Cooking instant food takes less effort and time. The instant meal products are made and packaged so that little to no preparation is required before consumption. As a result, it can be heated up slightly and utilized whenever. This is another factor contributing to the popularity young people's popularity of these rapid food itemsfers some insight into how Indian youth view products made of instant meals. It includes everything that affects young people in India's decision to purchase instant meal products. **Duraichamy (2021)** In developing nations like India, where both men and women must work for a living, packaged quick foods simplify and speed up the cooking procedure. Instant food that has been packaged makes cooking easier and goes faster. Nowadays, instant food items may be found on any store aisle. Customers are willing

to purchase more, thus it is crucial to examine what they think of packaged rapid meals. An analysis of the customer's level of opinion about packaged quick meals has been attempted in a study. The study's goal is to examine consumer attitudes about packaged instant meal products. In Madurai, a sample survey was carried out with a 45-person sample size. The respondents' primary data was gathered via the questionnaire. The statistics of the data are examined using SPSS software. According to this report, each person spends between 400 and 600 rupees per month on instant food products. No matter their gender, age, educational level, occupation, or level of income, people are interested in using packaged instant food as a new experience and prefer to use packaged instant food due to the influence of television advertisements. These types of packaged foods are available in departmental stores with the greatest number of alternatives. **Bhavya Saxena (2021)**, This study focuses on how customers behave when it comes to instant food products, and additional efforts are made to understand the media used to choose instant food products as well as the variables influencing instant food products. Data is gathered from 50 adult and millennial Bhopal customers. The random sampling technique is adopted in this study. Additionally, it offers insights into crucial elements that influence the popularity and regularity of purchases of instant food products. According to the study, rising urbanization, the dissolution of the traditional joint family structure, time constraints, ease of access, changing lifestyles, and rising levels of middle-class affluence are all contributing factors to rising food consumption. The women in the household are the target demographic for sales promotion. They play a larger role in the choice to purchase an instant meal product. Consumer impression indicates that instant food is more expensive than homemade food and that quality and flavour need also be improved to win back customers' trust. The researcher suggests that this media is a technique to promote sales of these products after discovering that TV advertisements persuade consumers to buy instant food products.

Karthik Kumar (2021) The food processing business underwent a significant transition as a result of people's changing lifestyles. People are more interested in consuming behaviours that require less time. The purpose of the proposed study is to determine consumer satisfaction with instant meal products. Additionally, the study focuses on consumer awareness of health issues related to quick food items as well as the frequency of instant food product purchases. Finding out "what is" is the fundamental goal of this descriptive investigation. The convenience sample method is applied. The data was analyzed using graphs and charts. According to the majority of the study's consumers, instant food products are unhealthy, noodles are the most popular and tastier than typical cooking fare, consumers prefer only branded food products, occasionally buy instant food items from bakeries, are happy with the quality of ready-made food items, and are aware of the health risks associated with instant food products. This study makes several recommendations, including lowering the cost of instant food products so that consumers will be very happy, manufacturers reducing the use of health-hazardous materials in instant food products, raising the standard of food products, and government enforcing strict regulations for the safety of these instant food products. **M Akila and K Ramesh (2021)**, Forecasting and understanding consumer behaviour is crucial for both product and brand preference. The research of customer behaviour concerning instant meal products is highlighted in this research. Analysing consumer purchasing patterns for instant food products has been attempted. Additional efforts have been undertaken to understand consumer product knowledge and analyzed factors affecting current food items. By adopting a convenient random sampling technique, the sample size is chosen. Simple percentage analysis, the chi-square test, and the Anova test are

the statistical techniques employed for the analysis. This study shows that proper precautions must be taken to ensure the hygienic standards of instant food products, that food quality must be preserved, that manufacturers must introduce new varieties of packaged food, and that the use of oil and chilli powder in packaged food must be significantly reduced. The above-mentioned modifications to packaged food items will significantly impact the lives of numerous customers. **Sandra D Souza (2019)**, The goal of this study is to examine the ready-to-eat food industry's consumer purchasing patterns in India's Palghar area. The goal was to determine how ready-to-eat food products are consumed. The conclusion that we could draw in the end was that although customers are aware of the business, they are unable to fully respond to it. The research article goes on to discuss customer issues and potential fixes. The purpose of this study is to ascertain how people feel and behave toward the ready-to-eat food industry. **Mayakkannan (2018),** the technique by which people look for, choose, buy, utilize, and dispose of things and services to fulfil their needs and desires views consumer decision-making as well. The goal of the current study is to completely understand how consumers choose to purchase instant food products. The study's primary goals are to examine perception concerning awareness and satisfaction. This study also assists in analysing the shift in consumer purchasing behaviour, evaluating the ability of shopping sites to draw in and keep customers, and determining why some consumers do not prefer online shopping. The study process used exploratory and descriptive methods. The study's sample was based on convenience, judgment, and purposeful sampling techniques. For this study, both primary and secondary data have been gathered. The study's findings lead to the conclusion that most of the time, people made their own purchasing decisions for instant foods and did not yet rely on others to do so. The importance of and awareness of these products should be spread through a variety of media or books as a sales promotion effort to reach a wide audience.

3.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

People's eating habits are changing; meals prepared at home were frequently supplanted with foods purchased from outside sources. People don't have time to prepare food in their homes, because they are working without feeling weary or occasionally lazy. However, in a nuclear household, the housewife's attitude toward preparing and serving food has changed. The expansion of instant food products is primarily due to these changes in mentality. In this context, the researcher intends to study what choices are available and how the consumers are preferring to consume ready-to-eat food products by the IT employees.

4.0 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

During the forecast period, which runs from 2022 to 2028, the global instant food market is anticipated to expand significantly. The market is estimated to increase throughout the anticipated horizon in 2022 because major companies are adopting strategies at an increasingly rapid rate. The goal of the current study is to identify the variables affecting instant food products and customer issues among Bangalore city's IT employees.

5.0 OBJECTIVES

- To identify the various choices of ready-to-eat food products
- To analyse the factors influencing the purchasing decision of instant food products.
- To identify the problems faced by consumers in using instant food products.

6.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The validity of a study is determined by the method used to gather information and analyse it in a systematic sequence. Both primary and secondary data were used extensively in this investigation. Research design is a strategy, a plan, and a framework for undertaking a

research report. The researcher has used a Descriptive research methodology and convenience sampling technique to conduct this study. Frequency analysis, ANOVA and independent sample t-tests are statistical tools used in this study.

7.0 SOURCES OF DATA

Primary Data

Data created by the researcher, such as surveys, interviews, and experiments, are specifically meant to help the researcher understand and solve the study topic at hand. The researcher has developed a structured questionnaire to collect the data from respondents.

Secondary Data

As part of organizational record keeping, using existing data created by huge government institutions, healthcare facilities, and so on. The information is then collected from a variety of data files. The secondary data has been gathered from articles and websites.

8.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 01: Table representing the Gender of the respondents

Particulars		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	93	51.4
	Female	88	48.6
	Total	181	100
Age	Up to 25 Years	45	24.9
	26-35 Years	44	24.3
	35-45 Years	60	33.1
	45-55 Years	30	16.6
	Above 55 Years	2	1.1
	Total	181	100
Marital Status	Unmarried	66	36.5
	Married	80	44.2
	Divorced	13	7.2
	Widow	22	12.2
	Total	181	100
Monthly Income	Up to Rs 25000	34	18.8
	Rs 25000-50000	73	40.3
	Rs 50000-75000	70	38.7
	Above Rs 75000	4	2.2
	Total	181	100
Per month Spending	Upto Rs 5000	82	45.3
	Rs 5000-10000	36	19.9
	Rs 10000-15000	41	22.7
	Above Rs 15000	22	12.2
	Total	181	100

Source: Primary Data

The above Results of the classification of instant food products by gender in the IT industry are shown in the above table. It is discovered that slightly more than half of the respondents 51.4% are male and slightly less than half 48.6% are women. According to this study,

males make up the majority of consumers. According to the study, 33.1% of respondents are between the ages of 35 and 45 years, 24.9% are between the ages of 25 and 25 years, 24.3% are between the ages of 26 and 35 years, and the remaining 16.6% and 1.1% are between the ages of 45 and 55 years and over 55 years. Thus, the survey determines that the majority of the study's respondents are between the ages of 35 and 45 years.

According to the above data, there were 181 respondents, 80 (44.2%) of them were married, 66 (36.5%) were single, 22 (12.2%) were widows, and 13 (7.2%) were divorced. The methodology mentioned above led the survey to conclude that most respondents were married. Since most people are busy managing their families and financial needs most married people use instant food products to speed up their cooking.

The distribution of respondents' monthly income is seen in the table above. The above table reveals that the majority of respondents 40.3% have monthly incomes between ₹25,000 and ₹50,000, followed by 38.7% who earn between ₹50,000 and ₹75,000, 18.8% who earn up to ₹25,000, and the final 2.2% who earn more than ₹75,000. The information above indicates that the majority of respondents in this research earn between ₹25,000 and ₹50,000.

The above table describes the frequency results of monthly spending of its employees towards instant food products. From the above table, it can be seen that the majority of respondents 45.3% spend up to ₹5,000 on instant food products. The next highest spending percentage 22.7% spends between ₹10,000 and ₹15,000 each month. 16.6% of respondents spend money on instant food goods between ₹5,000 and ₹10,000, and the remaining 12.2% spend more than ₹15,000 on instant food products. Thus, despite their high salaries, IT employees spend less money on the consumption of instant food products, according to the data.

Table 06: Table representing the frequency of purchasing instant food products

Frequency of Purchasing	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	2	1.1
Weekly Once	16	8.8
Weekly Twice	21	11.6
Fortnightly	18	9.9
Monthly	21	11.6
Once in two Months	26	14.4
Whenever Required	69	38.1
Occasionally	8	4.4
Total	**181**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The results of how frequently IT personnel buy instant food products are shown in the above table. The majority of customers buy quick food products anytime they are needed, followed by 14.4% of respondents who buy them once every two months, the same number of 11.6% of respondents who use them weekly twice as much as monthly, and 9.9% of respondents who use them fortnightly. As a result, we might infer from these findings that people prefer to buy instant food products when they're needed.

Table 03: Table representing the frequency of purchasing instant food products

Purchasing Decision	Frequency	Percent
Impulsive Buying	109	60.2

Planned Buying	72	39.8
Total	**181**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The decision of respondents to purchase instant food products is shown in the above table. It has been discovered that more than half of the respondents 60.2% purchase instant food products on impulse, while the remaining 39.8% do so on a planned basis. Thus, it can be said that the majority of consumers make impulsive purchases of instant food products.

Table 04: Table representing the most preferred instant food products of respondents

Instant Food Products	Frequency	Percentage
Ready-to-eat items	74	40.9
Readymade cooking materials	12	6.6
Readymade Rice Mix Materials	29	16.0
Readymade snacks Mix Materials	52	28.7
Readymade Flour Mix Materials	14	7.7
Total	181	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The above table demonstrates the respondents' preference for using instant meal items. Preference for ready-to-eat foods is highest among respondents (40.9%), followed by ready-made snack mix materials (28.7%), ready-made rice mix materials (16.0%), ready-made flour mix materials (7.7%), and ready-made cooking materials (6.6%). The findings indicate that the majority of respondents chose ready-to-eat foods over instant food products.

Table 09: Table representing the preferences of Instant noodle food brand

Noodle Brand	Frequency	Percentage
Maggie	71	39.2
Yippee	39	21.5
Top ramen	46	25.4
Knorr soupy noodles	25	13.8
Total	**181**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The above table shows respondents' brand preferences for Instant Food Noodles. It shows that roughly 39.2% of respondents choose the Maggie brand of instant noodles, 25.4% like Top ramen, 21.5% prefer Yippee, and the remaining 13.8% favour Knorr soupy noodles. Table data shows that the majority of respondents who consume instant noodles favour the Maggie brand.

H0: No significant mean difference between the instant-cooking food product and the brand of an instant-cooking food product.

H1: There is a significant mean difference between the instant cooking food product and the brand of an instant cooking food product.

Table 5: ANOVA

Instant Cooking Food Product		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Instant Sambar Mix	Between Groups	0.335	4	0.084	0.682	**0.605**
	Within Groups	21.642	176	0.123		
	Total	21.978	180			
Instant Rasam Mix	Between Groups	22.432	4	5.608	5.551	**0.000**
	Within Groups	177.811	176	1.01		
	Total	200.243	180			
Instant Biryani Masala	Between Groups	4.486	4	1.121	2.095	**0.083**
	Within Groups	94.211	176	0.535		
	Total	98.696	180			
Instant Chicken Masala	Between Groups	14.874	4	3.719	5.428	**0.000**
	Within Groups	120.562	176	0.685		
	Total	135.436	180			
Instant Mutton Masala	Between Groups	1.504	4	0.376	0.601	**0.662**
	Within Groups	110.11	176	0.626		
	Total	111.613	180			
Instant Fish Masala	Between Groups	21.976	4	5.494	7.129	**0.000**
	Within Groups	135.637	176	0.771		
	Total	157.613	180			
Instant Rava idly Mix	Between Groups	10.041	4	2.51	3.35	**0.011**
	Within Groups	131.882	176	0.749		
	Total	141.923	180			
Instant Dosa Mix	Between Groups	26.882	4	6.721	9.14	**0.000**
	Within Groups	129.405	176	0.735		
	Total	156.287	180			
Instant Vadai Mix	Between Groups	21.243	4	5.311	7.582	**0.000**
	Within Groups	123.276	176	0.7		
	Total	144.519	180			
Instant Gulab Jamun Mix	Between Groups	17.417	4	4.354	5.322	**0.000**
	Within Groups	143.997	176	0.818		
	Total	161.414	180			

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The one-way ANOVA test results are shown in the table above. In this table, the dependent variable is the brand of the instant food product, whereas the independent variable is the instant cooking food product. The significance level of the instant sambar mix brand of instant food brand is greater than 5%. Thus, it can be seen that 0.605 is greater than a 5% level and that there is no significant variation between brands of instant cooking food products.

It may be determined from the table that there is a significant difference between the brand of an instant Rasam mix product and that brand, as the significant value of 0.000 is less than the 5% (0.05) level of significance.

The significance level for instant biryani masala concerning the brand of instant cooking food is greater than 5% (0.083). Therefore, there is no significant difference between an instant-cooked food product and its brand.

Less than 5% (0.000) degree of significance distinguishes instant chicken masala from other brands of instant cooking food. The brand of an instant cooking food product and the actual instant cooking food product have a substantial difference.

The instant mutton masala brand's significant value is greater than a 5% (0.662) level of significance. As a result, there is no significant difference between brands of instant cooking food products.

The significance level of instant fish masala's significant value is less than (0.000) 5%. As a result, there is a mean difference between brands of instant cooking food products.

Less than 5% (0.011) of the instant Rava idly mix's significant value is attributable to its brand. Therefore, there is no significant difference between an instant-cooked food product and its brand.

The importance level for the instant dosa mix and its brand is less than 5% (0.000). Consequently, there is a mean difference between brands of instant cooking food products.

The significance level for the instant vadai mix is less than (0.000) 5%. As a result, there is a significant difference between brands of instant cooking food products.

Less than 5% of the instant gulab jamun mix's significant level (0.011) is associated with its brand. Because of this, there exists a difference between an instant-cooking food product and its brand.

Table 6: Group Statistics

Purchasing Decision		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Convenience	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.17**	1.735	0.166
	Planned Buying	72	1.97	1.703	0.201
Availability	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.64**	1.110	0.106
	Planned Buying	72	**2.93**	0.924	0.109
Variety seeking	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.06**	1.655	0.158
	Planned Buying	72	2.24	1.579	0.186
Influence of family members	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.33**	1.291	0.124
	Planned Buying	72	**2.58**	1.275	0.150
Packaging	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.39**	1.421	0.136
	Planned Buying	72	2.47	1.394	0.164
Societal Influence	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.11**	1.377	0.132
	Planned Buying	72	2.60	1.296	0.153
Taste	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.34**	1.547	0.148
	Planned Buying	72	**2.58**	1.275	0.150
Products Information	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.20**	1.502	0.144
	Planned Buying	72	2.32	1.265	0.149
No interest in Preparation	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.28**	1.368	0.131
	Planned Buying	72	2.28	1.345	0.159
Advertisement	Impulsive Buying	109	**3.43**	1.390	0.133
	Planned Buying	72	2.72	1.153	0.136

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The above table displays an examination of the descriptive nature of respondents' purchasing decisions for instant food products concerning the factors influencing those decisions. The average score for impulsive purchasing for the factor of easy access to instant food goods is 3.64, followed by advertisements (3.43), packaging (3.39), taste (3.34), family influence (3.33), lack of interest in preparation (3.28), product information (3.20), convenience (3.17), social impact (3.11), and variety seeking (3.06). Consumers' anticipated purchases, which take into account availability and other factors including family influence and preference, had a mean value of 2.93, 2.58, and 2.58 respectively.

Therefore, it is evident that regardless of how customers choose to make purchases, accessibility is the key factor that influences respondents to buy instant food products.

Table 7: Table representing independent sample test for the factors influencing purchasing decisions on instant food products

Factors influencing purchasing decision		Equity of Variances		t-test for equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.error Difference
Convenience	Equal	2.544	0.112	4.561	179	**0.000**	1.193	0.262
	Not Equal			4.578	154.088	**0.000**	1.193	0.261
Availability	Equal	7.915	0.005	4.505	179	**0.000**	0.712	0.158
	Not Equal			4.676	169.549	**0.000**	0.712	0.152
Variety seeking	Equal	0.563	0.454	3.319	179	**0.001**	0.819	0.247
	Not Equal			3.351	157.045	**0.001**	0.819	0.244
Influence of family members	Equal	1.158	0.283	3.827	179	**0.000**	0.747	0.195
	Not Equal			3.837	153.455	**0.000**	0.747	0.195
Packaging	Equal	0.002	0.984	4.306	179	**0.000**	0.922	0.214
	Not Equal			4.323	154.167	**0.000**	0.922	0.213
Societal Influence	Equal	0.265	0.607	2.51	179	**0.013**	0.513	0.204
	Not Equal			2.541	158.394	**0.012**	0.513	0.202
Taste	Equal	9.596	0.002	3.445	179	**0.001**	0.756	0.219
	Not Equal			3.582	170.305	**0.000**	0.756	0.211
Products Information	Equal	4.373	0.038	4.113	179	**0.000**	0.882	0.215
	Not Equal			4.259	168.628	**0.000**	0.882	0.207
No interest in Preparation	Equal	2.129	0.146	4.877	179	**0.000**	1.007	0.206
	Not Equal			4.894	153.95	**0.000**	1.007	0.206
Advertisement	Equal	9.998	0.002	3.587	179	**0.000**	0.709	0.198

Not Equal			3.726	169.838	**0.000**	0.709	0.19

Source: Primary Data

Table 8: Table representing problems using instant food products

S.No	Statements		SDA	DA	N	A	SA	Total
1.	Harmful Chemicals	No	30	4	15	78	54	181
		%	16.5	2.2	8.3	**43.09**	29.8	100.0
2.	Rich in fat, Sugar and Salt	No	10	22	42	39	68	181
		%	5.5	12.1	23.2	21.5	**37.5**	100.0
3.	Adulteration	No	25	15	20	63	58	181
		%	13.8	8.3	11.0	**34.8**	32.0	100.0
4.	High in preservatives and Artificial Ingredients	No	20	28	40	32	61	181
		%	11.0	15.4	22.1	17.6	**33.7**	100.0
5.	Manufacturer's Defects	No	55	26	28	40	32	181
		%	**30.3**	14.3	15.4	22.1	17.6	100.0
6.	High Price	No	42	51	34	23	31	181
		%	23.2	**28.2**	18.7	13.7	17.1	100.0
7.	Less in Quality	No	30	27	56	35	33	181
		%	16.5	14.9	**30.9**	19.3	18.2	100.0
8.	Different from the Traditional Taste	No	34	42	30	43	32	181
		%	18.7	23.2	16.6	**23.7**	17.6	100.0
9.	Environmental Problems	No	15	37	35	59	35	181
		%	8.2	20.4	19.3	**32.5**	19.3	100.0
10.	Cultural Devastation	No	33	36	34	48	30	181
		%	18.2	19.8	18.7	**26.5**	16.6	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The challenges respondents had to utilize instant meal products are shown in the above table. Out of 181 respondents, 68 and 61 strongly agree that instant food products include a lot of fat, sugar, and salt in addition to artificial additives and preservatives. The majority of respondents (43.09%, 34.8%, 32.5%, and 26.5%) agree that instant food products are contaminated, contain dangerous chemicals, hurt the environment, and destroy cultures. The majority of respondents (23,7%) also agree that the taste of fast foods and traditional dishes are not the same. In terms of their opinions on the quality of instant food products, the majority of respondents (30.9%) are neutral. 51 of the 181 respondents disagree that the prices of instant food products are high. That manmade defects are present in instant food products is strongly disagreed upon by the majority of respondents (30.3%).

10.0 FINDINGS

Male respondents make up the majority of this study's respondents, with a rate of 51.4%. Meanwhile, 48.6% of respondents, or almost half, are female. It implies that there is no distinction made between men and women who consume instant food. People in the age range of 35 to 45 consume the majority of instant food products. The majority of responders (44.2%) are married in this study. They prefer and consume instant foods due to their busy schedules taking care of their families and their financial demands. This study's findings show that the majority of the IT respondents make a monthly salary between ₹25,000 and ₹50,000. Although the survey notes that the majority of its employees receive higher salaries,

it is discovered that most of them only spend up to ₹ 5000 on instant food products. The results of this study show that the majority of respondents (38.1%) buy instant food products whenever they are needed since they are readily available in little quantities and come in extremely compact packaging even for lower amounts.

The vast majority of respondents, or 60.2%, in this study, chose to make impulsive purchases of instant food products as and when they require them instead of a planned purchase. Out of 181 respondents, the majority of respondents (40.9) prefer ready-to-eat items in instant food products over other categories of instant food because they are quicker to consume rather than spending time cooking. The availability and lack of interest in food preparation are the factors influencing consumers' decisions to buy instant food products as and also the neutral opinions on the packaging, societal influence, and advertising aspects that influence their purchasing decisions.

11.0 SUGGESTIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Due to numerous issues that salt and oil can cause, firms should take necessary steps to lower their amount of instant food products. Thus, it is advised to all manufacturers to create a line of low-fat goods in addition to that reduce the usage of harmful chemicals, adulterations, artificial ingredients preservatives etc. The study reveals that a significant portion of consumers relies on ready-to-eat items. There is a need to increase consumer knowledge of alternative products and available options. The respondents suggested increasing the amount of each food packet because different ready meals aren't enough for one person. Manufacturers should keep in mind that increasing supply will help to maximize profits. Maggie is the most preferred brand among the respondents. Hence, the brands like top ramen, yippee and not have to significantly increase their sales by executing unique sales campaigns in addition to opening their exclusive locations.

The manufacturers can convert non-users into users and occasional users into regular users by informing consumers that the flavour and quality of instant items are equivalent to those of dishes produced using the usual way of cooking. The manufacturers of instant food products must understand that, even though people in metropolitan cities have limited free time, which is one of the main reasons why people turn to instant food products, therefore they should come with nutritious and healthy food products. Regular consumption of instant food products(noodles) can lead to serious health issues like stroke, high blood pressure, stomach cancer etc. thus, there should be a balance between home-cooked foods and instant food products.

12.0 CONCLUSION

"Instant food products can provide a quick and convenient alternative to traditional cooking, but they are no substitute for a balanced, nutritious diet."
The study's main objective is to determine the variables affecting consumers' choices of instant food products and the issues IT workers in Bangalore encounter as a result of their usage. The most significant factors for the rapid expansion of the instant food sector are changes in people's lifestyles and technical advancements. The key factors contributing to the increased demand for instant food products include their better taste, easier accessibility, convenient usage, and ease of availability. If the necessary steps are done by the industry's

stakeholders, India is almost sitting on a gold mine of "Processed" and "Instant" cooking food that has the potential to generate significant amounts of foreign currency and create jobs. This study also offers suggested actions for consumers to limit their regular intake of instant food to avoid health problems and for instant food product manufacturers to increase sales.

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