



FEMALE CONSUMERS OF PACKAGED PROCESSED FOOD AND FACTORS MOTIVATING THEM: A CLUSTER ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present piece of research is to carryout cluster analysis on women consumers of packaged processed food on the basis of factors motivating them towards the purchase of packaged processed food. A total of 210 female respondents who were the consumers of packaged processed food were surveyed through a structured questionnaire. Simple statistical analysis such as frequency distribution, cross tabulation and cluster analysis were applied to assess the behaviour of consumers towards packaged processed food. The analysis of the data clearly indicates that the female consumers' are driven towards the purchase of packaged processed food by various motives like availability of certain ingredients, lack of knowledge about recipe, ease of availability, time saving in pre-preparation and cooking, availability of off-seasonal foods, health issues, emergency situations, choice of family members, some also considered consumption of packaged processed food as a modern trend.

Keywords: processed food, consumer behaviour, female consumers

INTRODUCTION

If we go by the very basic meaning of the word consumer, it may be defined as any individual or groups of individuals who pay money in exchange of goods and/or services in order to satisfy his wants. A consumer is an individual, who is considered as a decision maker, rather a rational decision maker. A consumer always seeks to gain maximum utility from his purchase.

Consumer behaviour has always been an area of the research, as it is diverse, dynamic and affected by a number of factors. India, in this situation, is no special case. It is being a country of assorted societies and conventions, understanding the consumer purchasing design turn into a hard task. This is a major reason for firms using various methods and instruments to scale the perception of consumers. This not only enables the marketers to understand the present perception of consumers for their products but also to design and predict future. This brings the challenge before the firms, consumer satisfaction without compromising their profits.

Indian market is characterised by two major features. First, India is the second most populated country in the world, which makes it a market having very high variation in tastes and preferences of the people. Secondly, India is an emerging economy, and with increasing income and increased urbanization coupled with the huge impact of western culture, Indian consumers are moving towards high valued products.

Traditionally in Indian society women had shown low involvement in the purchase activity. However, increasing urbanization, the impact of western culture, education, deep penetration of media, women have moved out of boundaries of the house and taken up both traditional and non-traditional jobs. This has not only strengthen the economic well-being of the family but has resulted in less time in the kitchen for the women. The working Indian home-maker has never compromised with the nutritional balance of the family. In this situation, there is a greater involvement of women in buying food themselves. This scene is strengthened by the supermarket and hypermarket culture along with the online mode of purchase has eased the buying.

This changing role of the women has always being a concern for the researchers especially in the field of consumer behaviour. The present piece of research tries to identify the various

factors that affect the buying behaviour of women consumers towards packaged processed food.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sanlier & Karakus, (2010), conducted a study to determine the food purchasing behaviour of consumers from a supermarket in Turkey. With a sample size of 430, the study was conducted to identify the criteria which is taken into consideration by consumers while purchasing food. The statistical analysis showed a significant relationship between education levels, expenditure on food/nutrition and nutrition & reliability. The study also inferred that women paid more attention to nutrition and reliability criteria than the man did. When consumers shop for food due consideration is given to nutrition, reliability, cost and convenience.

Carrillo, et. al., (2011), investigated consumers' factors underlying food choices and their attitude towards healthy eating. The data was collected from 200 respondents in Spain. The factors that were evaluated were health, mood, convenience, sensory appeal, natural content, price, weight control, familiarity and ethical concern. Out of this sensory appeal, price and convenience were the most concerned factors, whereas weight control, mood and familiarity were least concerned.

Sharma, Bhattacharya, & Sonwaney, (2012), investigated the relationship between traditional shops and modern organisations market. The main aim was to analyse consumer buying behaviour in various retail format. Authors argued that Indian retail is witnessing a paradigm shift towards theorganised market, coupled with economic growth, changing lifestyles, urbanisation, women's participation in economic activities and spread of IT are some for factors of theretail sector.

Kaur & Singh, (2014), made an attempt to find out the factor that leads to the purchase of processed foods in Punjab state of India. The major proportion of food in Punjab state of India. The major proposition that authors took was that changing lifestyles and growth in disposable income, rising double-income families and proportion of women in the workforce are the main fuel in rapid growth in demand for processed food. They also tried to find out the motive of the consumer for their choice of food. Also inferred that increased income, choice of family members specially children's and ease of storage, an increased health awareness was another factor that motivates the purchase of processed food, whereas ease of

availability, influenced advertisements, packaging designs, friend's recommendation, promotional offers, are the external factors that influence buyer's behaviour towards processed foods.

Siddiqui, (2014), made an effort to evaluate the buying behaviour of working women and housewives for packaged and non-packaged food. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire targeting 125 respondents from Maharashtra province of India. The findings of the study clearly indicated a strong relationship between packaged food and working women. Though in spite of these findings, the study had certain limitations and gap in research as demographic factors like age, education, and psychographic characteristics were not taken into consideration.

Madhvapaty & Dasgupta, (2015), conducted a study on changing food habit of Indian consumers. They pointed out there exist a considerable difference in consumer habits across various cities. The attention paid to food purchase differ between men and women significantly. The authors also inferred that consumers want more transparency from food companies especially in pricing and packaging approaches.

Fernandes & Londhe, (2015), compared the working women segment with thenon-working segment and analysed the influence of reference groups on their buying behaviour. The independent variables that were taken into account were age, marital status and income. These were tested against informational influence and utilitarian influence. The study involved the use of independent T-test and ANOVA. The reference groups that were taken into account were information from experts, family members, friends, peers etc. The outcome of the study clearly indicated a significant difference between the two groups.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

The present study makes an attempt to meet the following objectives:

- To create the socio-demographic profile of the respondents.
- To analyse the purchase profile of the respondents.
- To carry out cluster analysis on the basis of women consumers preferring packaged processed food and study each cluster individually.

DATA & METHODS

In the preliminary phase of the present research, an intensive literature review was carried out and various dimensions of consumer behaviour were identified that may impact the buying behaviour of women consumers of processed packaged food. Though very limited literature is available which caters to the behaviour of women consumers towards a particular food product category. Various researchers have opined that food consumption behaviour is broadly influenced by demographic, social, and psychographic factors (Ali, & Kapoor, 2008; Frewer, L., Scholderer, J., & Lambert, 2003; Goyal & Singh, 2007; Inderpreet Kaur & Singh, 2014; Jain, Sharma, & Khadke, 2015; Lanfranchi, Calabrò, De Pascale, Fazio, & Giannetto, 2016; Maehle, Iversen, Hem, & Otnes, 2015; Saifullah, Ahmad, Ahmed, & Khalid, 2014; Sanlier & Karakus, 2010; Suárez-vega & Rodríguez-díaz, 2015).

The data for the present study was collected through a structured questionnaire from 210 female respondents. The respondents were interviewed personally and online (through google forms) in an extended time period from November 2016 to January 2017. The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

- a) In the first sections, the questions were regarding the socio-demographic profile of the consumers. The questions asked about age, educational qualification, marital status, profession, family type, monthly income.
- b) The second section of the data analysis, the aim was to understand the purchase dynamics of the consumers. In this section, the questions were asked about expenditure on packaged processed food, mode of purchase, the source of information, decision making, and frequency of purchase.
- c) In the third section, the questions were aimed at scaling the importance of various motivating factors that plays a crucial role in moving the consumer towards making the purchase of packaged processed food, that were recorded on a five-point Likert Scale (1=Least Important, 2=Somewhat Less Important, 3=Important, 4=Somewhat More Important, 5=Most Important).

The reliability of the questionnaire was scaled through Cronbach's Alpha. The value of Cronbach's Alpha 0.780, which is above the minimum value of reliability (0.6).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographic Profiles of Consumers

Table-I shows the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. The age profile indicates that the majority of the respondents are between 20-40 years (71 percent). This is evident that the majority of the respondents are mature and seems responsible for responding to the questionnaire in a sensible way. Also, this is an indication of the existing demographic dividend of India, where the largest population of youth resides in the world. The figures of educational qualification of the respondent's, the majority of them are having an educational qualification at least graduation (76.1 percent), with these set of figures regarding the level of education, it can be inferred that the respondents are well educated to understand the depth and real meaning of the questionnaire answered. The family profile of the respondents that more than half of respondents (56.2 percent) are living in nuclear families whereas the impact of western culture is now evidently visible in Indian society also as 13.8 percent respondents are living independently which shows a sign of self-dependence and a higher share of women in decision-making. The income profile of the respondents shows a slighter different picture 62.4 percent of the respondents have an approximate monthly income of INR 20,000 to 40,000, this indicates a stronger purchasing power.

Socio-demographic characteristics		Frequency (N=210)	Percentage
<i>Age</i>	<20 Years	10	4.8
	20-30 Years	80	38.1
	30-40 Years	69	32.9
	40 Years <	51	24.1
<i>Education</i>	Higher Secondary or Below	50	23.8
	Graduate	124	59.0
	Post-Graduate and Above	36	17.1
<i>Profession</i>	House-wife	105	50.0
	Working	105	50.0
<i>Marital Status</i>	Unmarried	83	39.5
	Married	121	57.6
	Divorced/Widowed	6	2.9
<i>Family Type</i>	Nuclear Family	118	56.2
	Joint Family	63	30.0
	Living Independent	29	13.8
<i>Monthly Income (in Indian Rupees, from All Sources)</i>	<10,000	4	1.9
	10,000-20,000	31	14.8
	20,000-30,000	58	27.6
	30,000-40,000	73	34.8
	>40,000	44	21.0
TABLE-I: SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS			

Purchase Dynamics		Frequency (N=210)	Percentage
<i>Monthly Expenditure on Packaged Processed Food (In INR)</i>	Less than 1,000	22	10.5
	1,000-2,000	58	27.6
	2,000-3,000	54	25.7
	3,000-4,000	46	21.9
	More than 4,000	30	14.3
<i>Source of Information</i>	Family	96	45.7
	Friends/Relatives	29	13.8
	Retailer	18	8.6
	Advertisement	62	29.5
	Health Expert	05	2.4
<i>Decision Making</i>	Take Decision on Own	117	55.7
	Take Advice from others	93	44.3
<i>Mode of Purchase</i>	Grocery Shop	123	58.6
	Supermarket/Hypermarket	79	37.6

	Online	8	3.8
TABLE-II:Purchase PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS			

Table-II shows the purchase profile of the consumers. The thumb rule regarding income and expenditure is that an average Indian household spends around half of their income on food. Hence it was assumed that of the total food consumption 10 percent of the total expenditure goes towards packaged processed food. By comparing the income and expenditure data it can be inferred that most consumers spend less than 10 percent of their total income on packaged processed food. The results of the purchase dynamics of the respondents show that family and friends are the most important and reliable source of information followed by advertisement. When it comes to an actual purchase decision, mostly women take their decision on their own and prefer to purchase from neighbourhood grocery shop. Though, the shifting of Indian consumers towards supermarket and hypermarket is also reflected in the data when more than one-third of the respondents are purchasing the food products from supermarkets. The descriptive analysis of the data does not provide a clear picture of the women consumers of packaged processed food. Thus, in order to better understand the various motivators that drive the consumers towards the purchase of packaged processed food cluster analysis technique was used.

The main aim of cluster analysis is to identify the sub-groups having a scientifically and justifiable reason for existence among the women consumers of packaged processed food. Within each cluster identified the degree of similarity is highest among all individuals of that cluster. Cluster analysis is that class of statistical measure which is used to classify objects or cases or to segment respondents with similar characteristics into relatively homogeneous groups called a cluster. The resulting sub-groups in cluster analysis display a high inner homogeneity within the group and high heterogeneity between the groups (Hair et al., 1995).

In this part, the cluster analysis is being made on the basis of factors motivating towards the purchase of packaged processed food. The clustering technique adopted here is K-means cluster. After ignoring the outliers the total sample size in this cluster was 203. There were 5 different clusters identified having 39, 55, 22, 44, and 43 respondents in each cluster respectively. Before going on to study the characteristics of each cluster, the question was whether there exists any significant difference between the clusters or not. Hence the following hypothesis was put to test.

Ho: There exists no significant difference between the clusters regarding factors motivating them towards packaged processed food.

Table III Shows the analysis of variance carried out to test whether the groups are significantly heterogeneous. From the table it is visibly evident that the identified clusters are significantly different when tested across factors motivating them towards the purchase of packaged processed food, hereby rejecting the proposed null hypotheses.

S. No.	Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation	p-Value
1.	Due to the availability of certain ingredients	25.226	1.119	.000
2.	Lack of knowledge about recipe	27.711	.833	.000
3.	Ease of availability	22.471	.828	.000
4.	Time saving in pre-preparation	29.179	.602	.000
5.	Less time taken in cooking	21.000	.578	.000
6.	Variety of food is cooked quickly	22.342	.781	.000
7.	Availability of off-seasonal food	31.579	.770	.000
8.	Processed food is healthy	23.394	.988	.000
9.	To deal emergency situations	7.167	.672	.000
10.	Processed food is easy to cook	9.279	.810	.000
11.	Choice of family members	34.173	.719	.000
12.	Consuming processed food is a modern trend	23.906	.864	.000

Table III: Analysis of variance between clusters on the basis of factors motivating towards the purchase of packaged processed food

After inferring that the clusters are significantly different, the next step is to study the characteristics of each cluster. Table IV shows the final cluster centre and the mean value of each cluster. The respondents were asked to mark their preference on a 5 point Likert scale, where 1 is the least motivating and 5 being highly motivating. So, this means that in final cluster centres higher the mean value higher is the level of motivation received.

S. No.	Motivators	Cluster				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Due to the availability of certain ingredients	2.74	4.35	2.59	3.64	2.74
2.	Lack of knowledge about recipe	1.92	4.02	2.41	2.95	2.84
3.	Ease of availability	2.31	3.85	3.50	4.09	4.09
4.	Time saving in pre-preparation	2.54	3.89	4.64	4.43	4.60
5.	Less time is taken in cooking	2.90	4.04	4.82	4.50	4.56
6.	Variety of food is cooked quickly	2.72	4.13	4.73	3.68	4.49
7.	Availability of off-seasonal food	2.59	4.33	4.18	2.57	3.93
8.	Processed food is healthy	2.51	4.24	2.41	3.57	3.16
9.	To deal emergency situations	3.69	4.25	4.55	4.84	4.30
10	Processed food is easy to cook	3.49	3.95	4.05	4.59	4.60
11	Choice of family members	3.38	3.71	1.59	3.61	4.63
12	Consuming processed food is a modern trend	2.67	3.55	2.00	2.20	3.77

TableIV: Final Cluster Centres based on Factors motivating towards the purchase of packaged processed food

Table V shows the demographic profile of each cluster formed on the grounds of factors motivating towards the purchase of packaged processed food.

The visible characteristic of cluster -1 is that they are not much motivated by any of the factors. Thus on a larger view, they can be termed as the non-buyers. These are the consumers who purchase either they are moved by the choice of family members or to cater the emergency situations, as these factors have highest two means in the cluster. From the response, this can also be inferred that these are the consumers who can cook a variety of food at home and have a higher preference towards them. The individuals in this cluster also agree that they have a slighter bend towards processed packaged food as they are easy to cook. This cluster had 39 individuals i.e. approximately 19 percent of the total respondents. The cluster is not much interested in the consumption of packaged processed food and they incur the least expenditure amongst all the cluster on packaged processed food.

Demographic Character	Class	Cluster-1	Cluster-2	Cluster-3	Cluster-4	Cluster-5
		N=39	N=55	N=22	N=44	N=43
Age	Less than 20 years	2	2	2	4	0
	20-30 Years	13	19	14	10	19
	30-40 Years	15	23	4	14	12
	40-60 Years	7	11	2	12	10
	More than 60 years	2	0	0	4	2
Educational Qualification	Higher Secondary or below	16	12	5	10	7
	Graduation	18	32	13	28	27
	Post- Graduation and Above	05	11	4	6	9
Marital Status	Single	10	20	15	15	19
	Married	27	35	7	27	22
	Divorced/Widowed	2	0	0	2	2
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	28	34	06	22	23
	Joint Family	11	13	03	18	17
	Independent	0	8	13	4	3
Working Status	Working	16	28	17	18	20
	Non-working	23	27	5	26	23
Monthly family income	Less than 10,000	2	1	1	0	0
	10,000-20,000	12	8	2	5	4
	20,000-30,000	5	19	7	15	8
	30,000-40,000	13	17	7	17	18
	More than 40,000	7	10	5	7	13
Monthly expenditure on PPF	Less than 1000	12	4	1	4	0
	1000-2000	14	16	6	9	10
	2000-3000	5	18	4	15	12
	3000-4000	3	9	6	13	15
	More than 4000	5	8	5	3	6

Table V: Demographic Profile of Clusters identified on the ground of factors motivating the purchase of packaged processed food.

This does not mean that this cluster does not consume the packaged processed food at all. They rely on packaged processed food only to cater the emergency situations or on demand of family members.

The size of the second identified cluster is 55 which is around 27 percent of the total sample population. The final cluster centre of this cluster shows that the individuals in this cluster are the buyers who are motivated by a number of factors and have a tilt towards buying processed packaged food. If we observe the Cluster-2 thoroughly it was found that all the motivating factors had a mean score more than 3.5. From this mean score, it is evident that the respondents of this cluster have many reasons to purchase packaged processed food. Availability of certain ingredients, lack of knowledge about the recipe, availability of off-seasonal food are the factors which moved the consumer most. The Cluster-2 can be summarized as a young cluster which is well educated and has a high earning. This cluster spends a high proportion of their monthly expenditure on packaged processed food. This cluster is moved by time and health-related factors motivating them towards making a purchase of packaged processed food.

Cluster-3 based on factors motivating the consumers to buy packaged processed food is the one where the respondents consider the packaged processed food as the convenience food. As these consumers are moved heavily by those factors which are related to convenience aspect of packaged processed food. From Table-IV it is clearly evident that factors like time-saving in pre-preparation, less time is taken in cooking, a variety of food is cooked quickly, availability of off-seasonal food, to deal with emergency situations, and processed food is easy to cook have a mean ranking of above 4. This cluster is not much moved by the factors like choice of family members, modern trend and health experts. This cluster can be generally characterised as a young, educated independently living working population who earns good and spends a considerable amount of their income on packaged processed food as they find it convenient.

In cluster-4, the cluster populations had different motivations for purchasing packaged processed food. This cluster is highly motivated by factors like ease of availability, time-saving in pre-preparation, less time taken in cooking. Though these were the motivators in cluster-3 these factors have lower mean ranking than that of cluster-3. Whereas, factors like

dealing with emergency situations (4.84) and processed food are easy to cook (4.59) have a higher mean score than their cluster-3 counterparts. The respondents in this cluster care about the choice of family members (3.61). A present cluster can be summarized as the one who consumes packaged processed food for as convenient food to a certain extent only. This cluster mainly has married housewives who in spite of using packaged processed food has a tilt towards home-cooked food.

The last cluster with a population size of 43 had certain different characteristics than rest of the clusters. With 4.63 mean ranking score, this cluster is mostly motivated by the choice of the family members. Though they have given preference to other motivators like processed food is easy to cook (4.60), time-saving in pre-preparation (4.60), and less time is taken in cooking (4.56). This cluster also found time-saving and convenient but heavily driven by the choice of family members and also consider consumption of processed packaged food as a symbol of modernization with a mean value of 3.77 which is highest among all the 5 clusters. The characteristics of this cluster can be summarized as those having higher income and spends more on packaged processed food, giving preference to the choice of family members and considers consumption of packaged processed food as a symbol of modernization apart from convenience and time saver.

Conclusion & Marketing Implications

The inference that was drawn after analysing all the aspects was that Cluster-1 identified on the basis of motivators was that this cluster was found not much interested in the purchase of packaged processed food. This was a young cluster with mostly non-working status also this cluster is not incurring much on packaged processed food. This may be taken up as an opportunity for the marketing firms. As they may come with a marketing strategy which is focused on pricing and promotional schemes so as to encourage the consumers to step out and make some expenditure on packaged processed food. The motivators that moved the consumers most in this cluster were the choice of family members and use of processed food to counter emergency situations. To capture this situation, marketing firms may adopt a targeted advertising strategy which hits the latent demand of the consumer to purchase packaged processed food. Product information needs to be placed in not only female-oriented media sources but also the ones of interest to the husband and children too in for targeting those who purchase packaged processed food to fulfil the choices of family members.

Cluster-2 identified on the grounds of factors motivating the consumers towards the purchase of packaged processed food can be summarised as a young educated cluster having a higher earning. This cluster spends a higher proportion of their income in packaged processed food. This cluster finds packaged food as a convenience food and they are also moved by the health-related motivators of packaged processed food. The marketing firms who will be willing to target this cluster needs to work on product innovation and introducing new variants of the products. The food processing firms need to improve as the consumers in this cluster are the experienced one and possess a pre-set standards for the processed food. The marketing strategies aimed at increasing market penetration coupled with product development and new product launch may prove useful.

Cluster-3 and Cluster-4 emerged on the grounds of motivation were heavily motivated by the convenience aspect of the packaged processed food. Though the degree of motivation of cluster-3 is higher than that of cluster-4. As the cluster-3 identified is the smallest among all the cluster, when arrived at marketing strategies and implications one can combine the two clusters as one. The cluster-3 which is dominated by married women living mostly in a nuclear family. The marketers may target this group of consumers by adding more convenience elements to the existing product, thus resorting to product innovation and designing an advertising strategy which should not only focus on the female consumers but also should target the other members of the family.

Cluster-5 identified on the grounds of motivators have a different set of motivations, they are moved by the time-related aspects of the packaged processed food. Though, this cluster is heavily driven by choice of family members and consumes packaged food as a symbol of modernism. This is reflected in the income and expenditure pattern of the cluster. More than half of this cluster spends more than rupees 3,000 per month on packaged processed food. Marketing implications and strategies that can target these cluster may focus on introducing a premium product line for packaged processed food. Also, the advertising strategy targeting consumers of this cluster should depict the use of packaged processed food as a status symbol and a trend of modernization along with product innovation that focuses on less time consumption.

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