

# FACTORS INFLUENCING TOWARDS THE PRUCHASE INTENTIONS OF READY-TO-EAT FOOD PRODUCTS AMONG THE CONSUMERS IN CHENNAI CITY



Dr. R. Suresh Babu <sup>1</sup>  , Dr. V. Balaji <sup>2</sup>  , Vijayakumar Gajenderan <sup>3</sup>  

<sup>1,2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Sir Theagaraya College, Chennai-600, India

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Professor and Research Supervisor, Department of Commerce, Sir Theagaraya College, Chennai- 600 021, India



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## ABSTRACT

**Aim:** The study's purpose is to find out the factors influencing towards the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in Chennai city.

**Data Sources:** The study used both primary and secondary data. The secondary data obtained from the articles, research papers, newspapers, and magazines. The primary data is collected from the consumers of Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. The preliminary data sourced from the consumers through structured questionnaires.

**Sample size & Method:** The study employed the convenience sampling method. Overall, 400 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 392 filled questionnaires were collected from the consumers. Out of 392 questionnaires, seven questionnaires rejected due to inadequate information provided by the consumers. Finally, 385 questionnaires were used for the final analysis.

**Findings:** The study found that the factors namely Convenience, Quality, Mood, Sensory Appeal, Price, and Stress-free significantly influencing the purchase intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in Chennai city.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Food is fundamental and essential for human life. Healthy food provides nutrients and energy to develop and grow, be active and healthy, move, play, work, think, and learn. Food plays an essential role in the endorsement of health and disease prevention. Humans have an innate sense of attachment to natural things (Ulrich, 1993). Fast food gained acceptance of Indian palate after the multinational fast food players adapted the essential Indian food requirements viz. vegetarian meals and selected non-vegetarian options excluding beef and pork totally from their menu (Goyal & Singh, 2007). Consumer lifestyle has been changed to consume more convenience foods than home-

cooked meals (Lichtenstein, 2010). However, in the present fast-moving world, time has become precious; many have changed their food habits and shifted to several instant food products. Instant food products play a significant role in the present-day situation where both men and women are employed (Inbalakshmi, Govindarajan, Vijaya, Vijayanand, & Inbalakshmi, 2020). Ready-To-Eat food is a convenient food found in every household nowadays. Ready-to-eat food is already prepared and ready to consume or might need water and heat for preparation. RTE food segment is proliferating with a target group of young and working people. Changing lifestyle, busy work schedules, need for time to spend with family, and staying away from home are the primary reasons for preferring Ready-to-eat food. In south India, the acceptance level for Ready-to-eat food, i.e., traditional food in a convenient form, is high (Palaniammal, 2017).

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Inbalakshmi et al., 2020) found that there is no relationship between occupation, family monthly income, family type and spouse employment, and the monthly expenditure on ready-to-eat instant food products. (Chaurasiya et al., 2020) assume that taste & nutrition, convenience, and pricing are the principles that consumers will get into deliberation before buying RTE products. (Ganai et al., 2019) found that packaging material, design of the product, design, and label, and shape, sort of packaging, information, and brand seemed to be essential components for the packaging of ready to eat food products. (Adesoji Christopher et al., 2019) mentioned that the majority of the tested respondents paid consideration to the safety situation of packed foods. (Rajendra et al., 2019) point out that the Attitude towards RTEs and their purchase intention are similarly correlated, and the occasion is a moderator with the influence to strengthen or weaken that connection. While breakfast/ snacks are the favored occasion for consumption, the purchase intent is higher for Lunch or Dinner. It performs that RTE consumption for snacking is an impulse purchase, while RTE consumption for Lunch/ Dinner is planned. (Raina, Pathak, Rana, & Bathla, 2019) concluded that a significant segment of ready to eat food products consumers purchase these goods at discounts from the supermarkets in the area. Another rapidly utilizing component of prepared to eat food products favors these products as a convenience lifestyle component. (Thienhirun & Chung, 2018) mentioned in their study that the Thai and Japanese members had contradictory attitudes toward the taste and freshness of cross-cultural RTE food. Besides, these two factors were nearly concerned aspects when consumers decided to purchase RTE food. (Swathy, 2018) identified the convenience is the various crucial factor which determines the position of women towards such products. Convenience, ready availability, and saving time are the causes of consuming prepared to cook food products. (Palaniammal, 2017) describes that the respondents recognize RTE food as convenient and accessible to prepare. Price, quality, brand, taste, and promotional movements influence buyer behavior, irrespective of their gender and marital status. (Vijayakumar, 2015) point out that the consumers are influenced the packed food products on Healthiness, Price, Convenience, and Frame of Mind, Brand Name, Positive Appeal and Close Relationship. (Vardhan & Amulya, 2014) The purchasing behavior is subjected to the packing elements like packaging shading, company image, the material of the goods, package style, fitness of the wrapper, printed information, and the time spent looking at a product. Its packaging and consumers' tastes and habits impact consumers' purchasing choices to buy a product or brand over another. So packing makes a critical element in promoting alternating, particularly for the offer, and could be dealt with as a standout amongst vital segments affecting customer's purchasing choice. (Palaneeswari & Vijayalakshmi, 2013) Technological developments and the changes in people's lifestyles are the main reasons behind the instant food industry's rapid growth. There is a greater desire for instant food products, and the significant causes for the same are convenient usage, comfortable availability, less time consumed, and more satisfying taste. (Chaudhury, 2010) The purposes of purchasing RTE foods are the sensory appeal, convenience, mood, and price. Aside from this, the brand also represents a significant function in determining consumer behavior; the more the brand's visibility, the more is the purchasing tendency for that particular brand.

## 3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

In India, most of the consumption is still at the homestead. The development of employment possibilities has increased people's migration from tier 1 and tier 2 cities to metropolitans, an essential chauffeur for RTE food products. Nuclear families and bachelors residing in metros for study or employment purposes are among India's

RTE food products' significant consumers. The number of serving women is principally on the rise, which is newly driving the demand. All these determinants are generating significant awareness about ready meals among purchasers. An increase in retail chains and outlets is also continuing to the commodity awareness among customers in the country's supermarkets, convenience shops, and hypermarkets, which are emerging as the vital points-of-sale for giving a wide range of RTE food category products. The Indian cooking methods have undergone significant changes over the past few years due to recent technology and various other changes such as urbanization, developing working population, increased female work population, and nuclear families' ascension. People have frequently been shifting to ready-to-eat food things to save time associated with preparing meals. With the growing media awareness, literacy rates, and standard of living, people have developed more sensitivity to food products' health and cleanliness standards. There has been an alteration witnessed in the customer's center from price to quality in modern years, especially in the urban and a few semi-urban areas. Consumers have been moving from openly or loosely marketed food products to the consumption of hygienically packaged fortified RTE foods. In this present era, most women are working not in just ordinary jobs. Still, they are in an extremely responsible position to contend with the men in the corporate world, and because most of their time spent at work, they do not have the time to cook at home, leave alone performing specialties of different kinds. Consumers end up buying these readymade food items almost always, which has increased the demand for these ready-to-eat, off-shelf food products. This present study examines the existing consumer behavior towards ready to eat food products and divine the need for them to eat food products in Chennai city.

#### **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- 1) To find out the significant factors influencing the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products
- 2) To examine whether the factors influencing the purchase decisions of Ready-to-Eat food products in the study area

#### **5. HYPOTHESES**

- 1) The convenience factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area
- 2) The Quality factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area
- 3) The Mood factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area
- 4) The Sensory Appeal factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area
- 5) The Price factors do not influence the Purchase decision of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area
- 6) The Stress-free factor do not influence the Purchase decision of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area

#### **6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present paper's core objectives are to determine the factors influencing the purchase decision of Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. The study used both primary and secondary data. The secondary data obtained from the articles, research papers, newspapers, and magazines. The primary data is collected from the consumers of Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. The preliminary data sourced from the consumers through structured questionnaires. The study employed the convenience sampling method. Overall, 400 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 392 filled questionnaires were collected from the consumers. Out of 392 questionnaires, seven questionnaires rejected due to inadequate information provided by the consumers. Finally, 385 questionnaires were used for the final analysis. The study inferences are drawn based on these sample results. The

study used SPSS version 21 software for analysis. The study used simple frequency distribution, exploratory factor analysis, and multiple regression analysis.

## 7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Consumers**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	189	49.1
Female	196	50.9
Total	385	100.0
<b>Age (Years)</b>		
Up to 30 Years	160	41.6
31-40 Years	130	33.8
41-50 Years	54	14.0
Above 50 Years	41	10.6
Total	385	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	218	56.6
Single	167	43.4
Total	385	100.0
<b>Educational qualification</b>		
Up to HSC	34	8.8
UG	137	35.6
PG	124	32.2
Professional	90	23.4
Total	385	100.0
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
Up to Rs.25,000	85	22.1
Rs.25,001 -50000	147	38.2
Rs.50,001-75,000	103	26.8
Above Rs.75,000	50	13.0
Total	385	100.0
<b>Occupational Status</b>		
Private	130	33.8
Govt.	95	24.7
Professional	92	23.9
Business	68	17.7
Total	385	100.0
<b>Nature of family</b>		
Nuclear Family	291	75.6
Joint Family	94	24.4
Total	385	100.0
<b>Number of Members in the family</b>		
2 - 4 Members	281	73.0
4 - 6 Members	61	15.8
Above 6 Members	43	11.2
Total	385	100.0

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of consumers of Ready-to-Eat products in Chennai city. Out of 385 consumers, 196 (50.9%) consumers are male, and 189(49.1%) consumers are female. The study also established

that majority 41.6% of consumers are up to 30 years, followed by 33.8% of the consumers are 31-40 years, 14% of consumers are in the age group of 41-50 years, and 10.6% of the consumers are in the age group of above 50 years. Regarding the marital status, most 56.6% of the consumers are married, and 43.4% of the employees are single category. In connection with the educational qualification of consumers, majority 35.6% of the consumer's educational background is under-graduates, followed by 32.2% of the consumer's educational background is post-graduates, 23.4% of the consumer's educational background is professional, and 8.8% of the consumer's educational background is up to HSC. The study also inferred that majority of 38.2% of the consumer's monthly income is between Rs.25, 001 -50000, and 33.8% of the consumers are working in private organizations.

### 7.1. FACTORS INFLUENCING TOWARDS THE PURCHASE INTENTIONS OF READY-TO-EAT FOOD PRODUCTS AMONG THE CONSUMERS IN CHENNAI CITY

The study is focused on measuring the significant factors influencing the purchase intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. The extensive literature survey helps to identify the study variables. The study identified 28 variables related to the purchase intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products. For the analysis purpose, the twenty-eight variables are reduced into predominant factors. For the reduction variables, the study used exploratory factor analysis to reduce the data for important factors. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test is utilized in research to determine the sampling adequacy of data that are to be used for Factor Analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity tests the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, which would indicate that variables are unrelated and, therefore, unsuitable for structure detection. Table 2 highlights that the KMO value is 0.903. Thus, this is confirming the suitability of Factor Analysis. The p-value value < 0.05 indicates that there are probably significant relationships among the given variables. The p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, suggesting that the variables are highly correlated. The communalities variance ranges from 0.523 to 0.752. It indicates the 28 variables exhibited the variance from 52.3% to 75.2%. This variance limitation is statistically significant at the 5% level to conclude the factor reduction out of 28 variables is essential to symbolize the commitment variables. The next table illustrates the number of factors derived from Influencing consumers to purchase intensions of the Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city.

**Table 2:** The outcome of Exploratory Factor Analysis for Factors influencing towards the purchase Intentions of Ready to -Eat food products in Chennai city

	Component					
	Convenience	Quality	Mood	SA	Price	Stress-free
Easy to Prepare	.707					
Simple cooking process	.668					
Not taking much time for preparation	.613					
Easy availability	.574					
Simplicity of Storage	.535					
Time-saving	.524					
Simple Process of cleaning	.502					
High-level protein		.661				
Nutritious		.633				
It contains enormous vitamins and minerals		.616				
Keeps healthy		.613				
Is high fiber and roughage		.588				
No side effects		.540				
Helps cope with Stress			.678			
It helps cope with human life			.642			
Helps relax			.595			
Keeps awake/alert			.538			
Cheers up			.505			
A pleasant smell of RTE products				.750		

Good Appearance of RTE Products				.621		
It has a pleasurable feel				.604		
Good taste				.565		
Economical Price					.733	
Different Pricing Options					.623	
Value for money					.528	
Low calories						.760
Helps to control weight						.689
Low fat						.584
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.903					
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	6012.688(df=378), p=0.000**					
Variance Explained (%)	13.349	12.970	10.242	9.831	9.282	7.846

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization; a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations

The above table also reveals that Total Variance Explained- Factors influencing the consumers to purchase the Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. It is noted from the above table, 28 variables are converted into six predominant factors with Eigenvalue 3.719, 3.107, 3.021, 2.972, 2.583, and 2.552 individual variance 13.349%, 12.970%, 10.242%, 9.831%, 9.282% and 7.846%. It also shows that the derivations of six factors are meaningful in explaining the factors influencing the consumers to purchase the intention of Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. The study found six predominant factors, namely Convenience, Quality, Mood, Sensory Appeal, Price, and Stress-free.

**7.2. REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON FACTORS INFLUENCING TOWARDS THE PURCHASE INTENTIONS OF READY-TO-EAT FOOD PRODUCTS AMONG THE CONSUMERS IN CHENNAI CITY**

The multiple regression analysis was used to find out the cause-effect relationship between Independent and dependent variables. The present model used one dependent variable, i.e., purchase intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products, Independent variable, i.e., Convenience, Quality, Mood, Sensory Appeal, Price, and Stress-free. Here Y is the dependent variable (Purchase intentions), which is to be found. X<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>2</sub>... and X<sub>n</sub> are the known variables with which predictions are to be made, and b<sub>1</sub>, b<sub>2</sub>...b<sub>n</sub> are coefficient of the variables. In this study, the dependent variable is Purchase Intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products, and the Independent variables are Convenience, Quality, Mood, Sensory Appeal, Price, and Stress-free. The outcome of the regression model discussed below:

Dependent variable : Purchase Intentions (Y)  
 Independent variables : 1. Convenience (X<sub>1</sub>), Quality (X<sub>2</sub>), Mood (X<sub>3</sub>), Sensory Appeal (X<sub>4</sub>), Price (X<sub>5</sub>), and Stress-free (X<sub>6</sub>)

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.707 <sup>a</sup>	.499	.491	.77572

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stress-free, Convenience, Sensory Appeal, Quality, Mood, Price

The multiple correlation coefficient is 0.707 measures the degree of relationship between the actual values and the predicted values of the purchase intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products. Because the predicted values are obtained as a linear combination of Convenience (X<sub>1</sub>) and Quality (X<sub>2</sub>), Mood (X<sub>3</sub>), Sensory Appeal (X<sub>4</sub>), Price (X<sub>5</sub>), and Stress-free (X<sub>6</sub>), the coefficient value of 0.707 indicates that the relationship between Purchase Intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products and the six independent variables is quite strong and positive. The Coefficient of Determination R-square measures the goodness-of-fit of the estimated Sample Regression Plane in terms of the percentage of the variation in the dependent variables explained by the fitted sample regression equation. Thus, the value of R square is 0.499, means that about 49.99% of the variation in adjustment is enlightened by the estimated

SRP that uses Convenience, Quality, Mood, Sensory Appeal, Price, and Stress-free as the independent variables, and R square value is significant at 1 % level.

**Table 4:** ANOVA test for factors influence towards the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in Chennai city

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	226.785	6	37.798	62.813	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	227.459	378	.602		
Total	454.244	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention; b. Predictors: (Constant), Stress-free, Convenience, Sensory Appeal, Quality, Mood, Price

Table-4 highlights the ANOVA test results for factors that influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in Chennai city. The calculated F & p-value for factors that influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers is 62.813 & <0.001. The p-value is <0.01. Therefore, the study confirmed that the model is fit and concluded that the factors significantly influence the consumers to purchase Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study region.

**Table 5:** Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.410	.170		2.413	.016
Convenience	.112	.042	.113	2.644	.009**
Quality	.125	.036	.149	3.489	.001**
Mood	.110	.038	.129	2.926	.004**
Sensory Appeal	.169	.036	.196	4.734	.000**
Price	.156	.042	.177	3.744	.000**
Stress free	.266	.037	.292	7.238	.000**

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

The multiple regression equation is

$$Y = 0.410 + 0.112X_1 + 0.125X_2 + 0.110X_3 + 0.169X_4 + 0.156X_5 + 0.266X_6$$

### Null Hypothesis-1

**The convenience factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area**

The calculated t & p-value for convenience factors influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers is 2.644 & .009. The p-value is <0.01. Based on the p-value, the proposed null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that the convenience factors significantly influence the consumers to purchase Ready-to-Eat food products in the study area. Consumers prefer to consumers Ready-to-Eat food products because of their easy preparation for cooking and simple cooking. It leads the consumers are satisfied with the Ready-to-Eat food products. Consumers also prefer the Ready to -Eat food products because it does not take much time for preparation. The Ready-to-Eat products are easily available in the market, and consumers can easily save their valuable time preparing food products. Therefore, the convenience factors significantly influence the consumers to purchase intensions of the Ready-to-Eat food products their cooking process.

### Null Hypothesis-2

**The Quality factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area**

The calculated t & p-value for quality factors influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers is 3.489 .001. The p-value is <0.01. Therefore, the developed null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that the quality factors significantly influence the consumers to purchase Ready-to-Eat food products in the study

area. The consumers prefer Ready-to-Eat food products because it is high-level protein, and nutritious. It also contains enormous vitamins and minerals, and fibers. These factors also significantly influence consumers to purchase Ready-to-Eat food products. The consumers are strongly believed that the consumption of Ready-to-Eat food products is not any side effects on their body.

### **Null Hypothesis-3**

**The Mood factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area**

The calculated t & p-value for mood factors influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers is 2.926 & .004. The p-value is <0.01. The proposed null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that the mood factors significantly influence the consumers to purchase Ready-to-Eat food products in the study area.

### **Null Hypothesis-4**

**The Sensory Appeal factors do not influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area**

The calculated t & p-value for Sensory factors influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers is 4.734 & .000. The p-value is <0.01. As a result, the null hypothesis was refused and concluded that the Sensory Appeal factors significantly influence the consumers to purchase Ready-to-Eat food products in the study area. The consumers felt that Ready-to-Eat food products are a pleasant smell and a pleasing appearance. It also gives a lovely feel and good taste.

### **Null Hypothesis-5**

**The Price factors do not influence the Purchase decision of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area**

The calculated t & p-value for price factors influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers is 3.744 & .000. The p-value is <0.01. As a result, the null hypothesis was refused to accept and concluded that the price factors significantly influence the consumers to purchase Ready-to-Eat food products in the study area. The study results support that the consumers prefer Ready to eat food products at attractive prices.

### **Null Hypothesis-6**

**The Stress-free factor do not influence the Purchase decision of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in the study area**

The calculated t & p-value for price factors influence the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers is 7.238 & .000. The p-value is <0.01. As a result, the null hypothesis was refused to accept and concluded that the consumption of Ready to eat food products is stress-free. Therefore, many consumers are using the Ready to eat food products because of its stress-free.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The study is proposed to identify the factors influencing the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. The study results indicate that there are six predominant factors, i.e., Convenience, Quality, Mood, Sensory Appeal, Price, and Stress-free, significantly influencing the Purchase of Ready-to-Eat food products in Chennai city. Besides, the study also found that these factors, namely Convenience, Quality, Mood, Sensory Appeal, Price, and Stress-free, significantly influencing purchase intentions of Ready-to-Eat food products among the consumers in Chennai city.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author have declared that no competing interests exist.

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