



## **A STUDY ON THE CONSUMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS INSTANT NOODLES AFTER THE NESTLE MAGGI CRISIS**

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### **Introduction:**

Food is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for the body. It is usually of plant or animal origin, and contains essential nutrients, such as carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, or minerals. Historically, people secured food through two methods: hunting, gathering, and agriculture. Today, most of the food energy consumed by the world population is supplied by the food industry. Indian cooking and lifestyle have undergone tremendous changes in the last 15 years. There are many major factors that impacts this changes which includes liberalization policy, dual income, separate living of couples, Innovative kitchen applications, Media proliferation etc. There are people, who are migrating to cities for job and education and these people have found the Ready-to-eat products that are comfortable to eat rather than depending on restaurants.

### **Statement of the Problem:**

Maggi, a brand name used interchangeably with noodles in the country, was banned for a few months due to the excess amount of lead and mono sodium glutamate (MSG), at the same time other brands like the sunfeast yippee, top ramen, joymee instant noodles, horlicks foodles, knoor soupy noodles have entered the Indian market and occupied a legitimate shelf space in the stores and super markets of the country. At this juncture a study was undertaken to analyse the consumer preference towards instant noodles, after the nestle maggi crisis.

### **Scope of the Study:**

The study is confined to Coimbatore city. The study throws light on the brand preferences and the factors that determine the consumers to buy those brands. It also enables the researcher to understand the satisfaction level derived from consuming them.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

- ✓ To study the brand preferences of the instant noodles.
- ✓ To analyse the factors determining the consumer to buy the instant noodles
- ✓ To examine the satisfaction level of the respondents

### **Research Methodology:**

Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge. It is also defined as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. Research methodology is way to systematically solve the research problem. It is a plan of action for a research project and explains in detail how data are collected and analysed. This research study is a descriptive research study.

#### **1. Period of the Study:**

The period considered for the study is 4 months.

#### **2. Research Design:**

The researcher aims at analysing the satisfaction level of respondents regarding the instant noodles in Coimbatore district. Convenient sampling technique is used to collect the data. The sample size of the study is 150 respondents. The data required for the study has been collected from both the primary data and secondary data. Primary data have been collected through a structured questionnaire having 26 questions. Secondary data have been collected from various journals, magazines and websites.

#### **3. Statistical Tools Used for the Study:**

The collected data have been categorised and processed manually as well as through computer. The important statistical tools used for analysis are as follows:

- ✓ Simple percentage analysis
- ✓ ANOVA & t-test

### **Analysis and Interpretation:**

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Age	Below 15 Yrs	7	4.7
	15 -25 Yrs	53	35.3

	25-40 Yrs	50	33.3
	Above 40 Yrs	40	26.7
Gender	Male	84	56.0
	Female	66	44.0
Educational Qualification	Upto Sslc	14	9.3
	Hsc	12	8.0
	Graduation	107	71.3
	No Formal Educational	17	11.3
Occupation	Student	56	37.3
	Salaried	23	15.3
	Self-Occupied	40	26.7
	Professional	24	16.0
	Home-Maker	7	4.7
Marital Status	Single	88	58.7
	Married	62	41.3
Family Type	Nuclear Family	91	60.7
	Joint Family	59	39.3
Size of the Family	1-3 Members	27	18.0
	4-6 Members	78	52.0
	7-9 Members	23	15.3
	Above 9 Members	22	14.7
No. of. Children	One	23	15.3
	Two	65	43.3
	More Than 2	29	19.3
	None	33	22.0
Annual Income	Below 1 Lakh	19	12.7
	1-2 Lakhs	40	26.7
	2-3 Lakhs	41	27.3
	Above 3 Lakhs	50	33.3

It is inferred that 35.3 Percent of the respondents are in the age group of 15 - 25 years. 56 Percent of the respondents are male. 71.3 Percent of the respondents are graduated. 37.3 Percent of the respondents are students. 58.7 Percent of the respondents' marital status is single. 60.7 Percent of the respondents belong to the nuclear family. 52 Percent of the respondents have a family size of 4-6 members. 43.3 Percent of the respondents have two children. 33.3 Percent of the respondents have an annual income of more than 3lakhs.

Table 2: Brand Preference of the Respondents

		Mostly Preferred	Preferred	Neutral	Less Preferred	Not Preferred	Total
Nestle Maggi	No	29	59	26	18	18	150
	%	19.3	39.3	17.3	12	12	100
Sunfeast Yippee	No	62	42	26	16	4	150
	%	41.3	28	17.3	10.7	2.7	100
Top Ramen	No	32	44	45	21	8	150
	%	21.3	29.3	30	14	5.3	100
Joymee Noodles	No	16	23	36	39	36	150
	%	10.7	15.3	24	26	24	100
Horlicks Foodles	No	15	25	23	39	48	150
	%	10	16.7	15.3	26	32	100
Knoor Soupy Noodles	No	19	33	29	30	39	150
	%	12.7	22	19.3	20	26	100
Home Made Noodles	No	38	52	29	15	16	150
	%	25.3	34.7	19.3	10	10.7	100

From the above table it is clear that 41.3 Percent of the respondents mostly prefer Sunfeast Yippee, 39.3 Percent of the respondents prefer Nestle Maggi, 34.7 Percent of the respondents prefer Home-Made Noodles, 30 Percent of the respondents neutrally prefer Top Ramen, 26 Percent of the respondents prefer Joymee Noodles less, 32 Percent of the respondents does not prefer Horlicks Foodles and 26 Percent of the respondents does not prefer Knoor Soupy Noodles.

Table 3: Factors Influencing the Purchase of Instant Noodles

		Highly Influenced	Influenced	Neutral	Less Influenced	Not Influenced	Total
Taste	No	84	42	13	7	4	150
	%	56	28	8.7	4.7	2.7	100
Convenience	No	49	66	26	7	2	150
	%	32.7	44	17.3	4.7	1.3	100
Healthy	No	41	35	48	20	6	150
	%	27.3	23.3	32	13.3	4	100
Variety	No	33	52	26	34	5	150
	%	22	34.7	17.3	22.7	3.3	100
Quality	No	41	46	25	22	16	150
	%	27.3	30.7	16.7	14.7	10.7	100
Packaging	No	31	49	25	35	10	150
	%	20.7	32.7	16.7	23.3	6.7	100
Price	No	38	44	44	15	9	150
	%	25.3	29.3	29.3	10	6	100
Non-Sticky	No	28	56	38	20	8	150
	%	18.7	37.3	25.3	13.3	5.3	100
Time	No	46	49	30	19	6	150
	%	30.7	32.7	20	12.7	4	100
Long Noodle	No	28	56	36	21	9	150
	%	18.7	37.3	24	14	6	100
Easy To Cook	No	63	41	34	7	5	150
	%	42	27.3	22.7	4.7	3.3	100

From the above table it is clear that most of the respondents are highly influenced by taste(56 Percent) and the health factor(27.3 Percent), most of the respondents are influenced by the factors like the convenience(44 Percent), non-sticky(37.3 Percent), long noodle(37.3 Percent), variety(34.7 Percent), packaging(32.7 Percent), quality(30.7 Percent), price(29.3 Percent), time(32.7 Percent), and easy to cook(27.3 Percent).

Table 4: Satisfaction Level of the Respondents

		Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Less Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Taste	No	78	47	10	9	6	150
	%	52	31.3	6.7	6	4	100
Price	No	31	76	30	12	1	150
	%	20.7	50.7	20	8	0.7	100
Ingredients	No	28	50	47	22	3	150
	%	18.7	33.3	31.3	14.7	2	100
Quantity	No	21	62	32	32	3	150
	%	14	41.3	21.3	21.3	2	100
Quality	No	23	44	41	24	18	150
	%	15.3	29.3	27.3	16	12	100
Convenience	No	35	54	30	21	10	150
	%	23.3	36	20	14	6.7	100
Packaging	No	26	46	44	27	7	150
	%	17.3	30.7	29.3	18	4.7	100
Variety	No	26	46	44	27	7	150
	%	17.3	30.7	29.3	18	4.7	100
Flavors	No	27	53	30	30	10	150
	%	18	35.3	20	20	6.7	100
Hygiene	No	15	57	39	25	14	150
	%	10	38	26	16.7	9.3	100
Time	No	39	47	27	26	11	150
	%	26	31.3	18	17.3	7.3	100
Shape	No	31	42	30	22	25	150
	%	20.7	28	20	14.7	16.7	100

The above table depicts that the respondents are highly satisfied with taste (52 Percent). and most of the respondents are satisfied with the price(50.7 Percent), ingredients (33.3 Percent), quantity (41.4Percent),

quality (29.3 Percent), convenience (36 Percent), packaging (30.7 Percent), variety (30.7 Percent), flavours (35.3 Percent), hygiene (38 Percent), time (31.3 Percent) and shape (28 Percent).

**Anova & T-Test:**

The respondents were classified into low, moderate and high based on the overall satisfaction score using its mean and standard deviation.

Table 5: Age and Level of Satisfaction towards Instant Noodles

		Level Of Satisfaction			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Below 15 Yrs	No	2	1	4	7
	%	28.6%	14.3%	57.1%	100.0%
15 -25 Yrs	No	21	21	11	53
	%	39.6%	39.6%	20.8%	100.0%
25-40 Yrs	No	12	19	19	50
	%	24.0%	38.0%	38.0%	100.0%
Above 40 Yrs	No	9	16	15	40
	%	22.5%	40.0%	37.5%	100.0%
Total	No	44	57	49	150
	%	29.3%	38.0%	32.7%	100.0%

From the above table it is clear that 57.1 percent of the respondents who are in the age group of below 15 years have low level of satisfaction towards Instant noodles; 39.6 percent of the respondents who are in the age group of 15 to 25 years have high and moderate level of satisfaction towards Instant noodles; 38.0 percent of the respondents who are in the age group of 25 to 40 years have moderate and low level of satisfaction towards Instant noodles; and 40.0 percent of the respondents who are above 40 years have moderate level of satisfaction towards Instant noodles. ANOVA test has been applied to find out if there is any significant difference in the level of satisfaction of the respondents classified based on their age

**Ho:** “There is no significant difference in the mean satisfaction score of the respondents towards Instant noodles based on their age groups”

Table 6: Anova

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Value	Sig
Between Groups	235.847	3	78.616	2.147	.097	NS
Within Groups	5346.746	146	36.622			
Total	5582.593	149				

S-Significant, NS-Non Significant

The ANOVA result shows that there is no significant difference in the mean satisfaction scores of the respondents towards Instant noodles based on their age groups. Hence the hypothesis is accepted.

Table 7: Education and Level of Satisfaction towards Instant Noodles

		Level of satisfaction			Total
		High	Moderate	Low	
Upto SSLC	No	1	5	8	14
	%	7.1%	35.7%	57.1%	100.0%
HSC	No	3	6	3	12
	%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Graduation	No	39	43	25	107
	%	36.4%	40.2%	23.4%	100.0%
No Formal Education	No	1	3	13	17
	%	5.9%	17.6%	76.5%	100.0%
Total	No	44	57	49	150
	%	29.3%	38.0%	32.7%	100.0%

From the above table, it is clear that 57.1 percent of the respondents whose education level is up to SSLC have low level of satisfaction towards instant noodles, 50 percent of them whose education level is up to HSC have moderate level of satisfaction, 40.2 percent of them who are graduated have moderate level of satisfaction, 76.5 percent of them who have no formal education have low level of satisfaction towards instant noodles. ANOVA test has been applied to find out if there is any significant difference in the level of satisfaction towards Instant noodles among the respondents classified based on education.

**Ho:** “There is no significant difference in the mean satisfaction score of the respondents classified based on their education”

Table 8: Anova

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Value	Sig
Between Groups	860.284	3	286.761	8.866	.000	NS
Within Groups	4722.309	146	32.345			
Total	5582.593	149				

S-Significant, NS-Non Significant

The ANOVA result shows that there is no significant difference in the mean satisfaction scores of the respondents towards Instant noodles based on their education. Hence the hypothesis is accepted.

**Findings:**

**Simple Percentage Analysis:**

- ✓ 35.3 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 15 - 25 years.
- ✓ 56 percent of the respondents are male.
- ✓ Majority (71.3 percent) of the respondents are graduated.
- ✓ 37.3 percent of the respondents are students.
- ✓ 58.7 percent of the respondents marital status is single.
- ✓ 52 percent of the respondents have a family size of 4-6 members.
- ✓ 43.3 percent of the respondents have two children at home.
- ✓ 33.3 percent of the respondents have an annual income of above 3lakhs.
- ✓ The respondents are highly influenced towards taste (56 percent) and the healthy factor (27.3 percent).
- ✓ Most of the respondents are influenced towards the factors like the convenience (44 percent), variety (34.7 percent), quality (30.7 percent), packaging (32.7 percent), price (29.3 percent), non-sticky (37.3 percent), time (32.7 percent), long noodle (37.3 percent), and easy to cook (27.3 percent).
- ✓ The respondents are neutrally influenced towards the factor like price (29.3 percent).
- ✓ The respondents are highly satisfied with taste (52 percent).
- ✓ Most of the respondents are satisfied with the price (50.7 percent), ingredients (33.3 percent), quantity (41.4 percent), quality (29.3percent), convenience (36percent), packaging (30.7percent), variety (30.7percent), flavours (35.3percent), hygiene (38percent), time (31.3percent) and shape (28 percent).

**Anova:**

- ✓ There is no significant difference in the mean satisfaction score of the respondents towards Instant noodles based on their age groups. Hence the hypothesis is accepted.
- ✓ There is no significant difference in the mean satisfaction score of the respondents towards Instant noodles based on their education. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

**Conclusion:**

In the modern world consumer taste and preferences are changing day-by-day because of rapid changing technology in food production. Several factors are influencing the customers while they purchase a particular product. Hence, manufacturers should identify the target group and provide products to satisfy all types of consumers. The firm has to be constantly innovative and understand the consumers' needs and desires. Marketers should focus more on quality and intensive distribution of their branded noodles.

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