CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was started with the major objective of finding the place of Ready-To-Eat food products in the scenario of food lifestyle of the consumers. Consumers’ awareness, acceptance, attitudes and availability of Ready-To-Eat food products are very crucial for framing the marketing strategy. Therefore a sample study of six hundred respondents equally divided between homemakers and working women was conducted in Salem with the help of a detailed schedule.

Based on the analysis of the collected information the researcher was able to arrive at certain findings about the sampled respondents. These findings help to accomplish the objectives of the study. This Chapter highlights the findings of the study in fulfilling the formulated objectives.

5.1 The factors which influence the purchase of the Ready-To-Eat food products.

The first objective of the present study was to find out the factors which influence the purchase of the Ready-To-Eat food products. This objective is fulfilled by the analysis of the demographic profile and the purchase behavior of the sampled respondents.

5.1.1 A comparison of the age of the respondents in two groups of working women and homemakers shows that respondents of the younger age group (20-29 years) are more in working women group and the respondents who are in the higher age groups are mostly homemakers. This indicates the changing demographic profile of the Indian women. Age is thus an important factor which makes a difference in the consumption pattern.

5.1.2 Marital status wise comparison shows that in the case of respondents who are single, the number of working women is more than that of homemakers. However the married respondents are of majority in both the groups.

5.1.3 Educational qualification shows that working women are highly qualified than homemakers.

5.1.4 Monthly personal income data shows that for the higher income category working women are more than homemakers. But majority in both groups belong to the income group of below Rs 10,000.

5.1.5 In the case of the monthly income of the family, except for the highest income group (Above Rs. 1,00,000) homemakers are more in number than working women.
5.1.6 When the type of the family is considered, working women’s preference appears to be in the single or couple type of family, whereas in the case of homemakers majority respondents are found in the 2 Generation and 3 Generation family type.

5.1.7 The analysis of the size of the family supports the previous finding because majority homemakers belong to the family with 4-6 members whereas working women are having 1-3 members in their family.

5.1.8 When the eating out pattern of the respondents is considered, it is found that majority of them eat out very rarely. It is also found that working women eat out more regularly than Homemakers.

5.1.9 Majority of the respondents in both the groups spend below Rs.500 per month for eating out. Eating out expenditure is thus very less.

5.1.10 Working women spend more amount on Ready-To-Eat food than homemakers.

5.1.11 Analysis on the option used for having tasty food shows that working women are more frequently going to restaurants, while homemakers prefer Ready-To-Eat Food at home. The higher earning capacity of the working women is the reason behind this attitude. Thus homemakers prefer Ready-To-Eat food more than working women as it gives restaurant like tasty food at the convenience of having food at home.

5.1.12 It is found that working women use Ready-To-Eat food on special occasions and emergencies, where as Homemakers use it once a week. This once again confirms the previous finding that Ready-To-Eat food is preferred and used by the Homemakers than the working women.

5.1.13 For the homemakers the main occasions for the use of Ready-To-Eat food are birthdays and anniversaries and when they feel low or tired. For the working women Ready-To-Eat food is preferred only when there is a get together of the family.

Thus the analysis of the demographic profile of the respondents has established the acceptance of the Ready-To-Eat food products by both homemakers and working women.

5.2 Brands and products of Ready-To-Eat food products which are preferred by the respondents.

Second section of the analysis has helped to achieve the second objective of identifying the most preferred brands in the Ready-To-Eat food products.

5.2.1 For both the respondents group, the Ready-To-Eat food which are frequently sought are Noodles, Soups and Gravy items.

5.2.2 The items which are not bought frequently are Desserts and Snacks.
5.2.3 In the case of Soups, Maggie and Knorr are the most preferred brands and the varieties which are preferred are Tomato and Sweetcorn. The least preferred variety is Mushroom.

5.2.4 For the Noodles, the most sought out brands are Maggie, and TopRamen. The most preferred variety is Veg masala. The least preferred is Green curry. Aachi and Foodles are other preferred brands.

5.2.5 In the Tiffin items the most wanted variety is Dosa in the brand MTR, and then Parotta from brand Krishna. The least preferred product is Chappathi from MTR.

5.2.6 For the Gravy items the demand is more for MTR brand and the second important is Knorr. Channa masala and Panneer are the most sought varieties.

5.2.7 The preference for Rice items is low compared to other products. MTR and Mother’s Recipe are the most sought after brands with Sambhar rice and Briyani as the most preferred varieties.

5.2.8 In the Snacks category also MTR and Aachi are the most preferred brands. However local traditional brands like Krishna is also preferred with these brands for the traditional dishes like Murrukku, Bajji Bonda and Vadai. The least preferred is VegIt.

5.2.9 In the case of Desserts the most preferred brand and variety is GulabJamun by MTR. Payasam and Jalebi are other preferred varieties.

5.3 Drivers and inhibitors for the consumer behaviour towards Ready-To-Eat Food products.

The third objective of the study was to analyse the drivers and inhibitors of the consumers’ attitude towards Ready-To-Eat food products. This section of the analysis helped to gain insight into this objective.

5.3.1 Personal Preference is the main reason for the selection of Ready-To-Eat food for majority of the respondents in both the groups.

5.3.2 Price is not considered as a major factor for selecting Ready-To-Eat food. A major change in the food lifestyle of the consumers is that they are more health conscious than price conscious.

5.3.3 The top 5 attributes considered by home makers for purchasing Ready-To-Eat food products are

5.3.3.a) Quality

5.3.3.b) Taste

5.3.3.c) Manufacturing and expiry date

5.3.3.d) Nutrient values and 5.3.3. e) Brand name
5.3.4 For the working women the top 4 scores are the same. However they give more importance to Price instead of Brand as the 5th attribute. This indicated that consumers are more moving towards being health conscious and quality conscious and they are not price conscious.

5.3.5 Both the homemakers and working women prefer to buy Ready-To-Eat Food from the supermarkets. Quality is the reason behind this choice. Accessibility is another reason. However affordable price is considered as a reason by more number of homemakers than working women.

5.3.6 Advertisements in Television are considered as the major source of awareness for both the group of respondents.

5.3.7 For homemakers and working women, the influence from children is the most influencing factor for Ready-To-Eat food Purchases and influence from self is the next factor.

5.3.8 In both the groups, the Ready-To-Eat food purchases are made with fixed set of grocery products during the monthly purchases. Impulse buying is not considered very effective in the case of Ready-To-Eat food purchases for both the groups.

5.3.9 Ready-To-Eat food is preferred between the meal as snack by working women, while it is preferred as a meal (Dinner) by homemakers. It is found that Ready-To-Eat food is not preferred for breakfast and lunch.

5.3.10 The main co-consumer for Ready-To-Eat food is found to be Family for both the group of respondents. However the second important co-consumer is friends for the homemakers and self for the working women as there are more single respondents in the working women group.

5.3.11 The motivational factors considered for consuming Ready-To-Eat food are “Time convenience”, “Taste”, and “Diverse cuisine” for both the groups. These three factors are considered to be the major drivers for the growth in the market of Ready-To-Eat food. These are factors which are the result of changes in the lifestyle of the consumers.

5.3.12 It is interesting to note that these three factors also emerge out during the Factor analysis conducted to find the food lifestyle and consumption in general and Ready-To-Eat food lifestyle in particular.

Thus the major findings of this section have confirmed that that the preference of the consumers towards Ready-To-Eat food is changing. They are becoming more quality conscious, and at the same time they expect good taste in these products. Though these
products are convenience products, consumers also expect taste and diverse cuisine along with quality from such kind of products.

5.4 **Factors influencing the Food related lifestyle and consumption**

One of the objectives of the study was to analyse the food related lifestyle and consumption pattern of the respondents. The findings of this section helps to identify the food related lifestyle of the respondents.

5.4.1 Factor analysis helped to identify the 4 major factors which determine the food lifestyle and consumption of the Salem respondents. The main 4 factors are :

5.4.1.a) Health
5.4.1.b) Convenience
5.4.1.c) Taste
5.4.1.d) Tradition

5.4.2 Regarding the Health factor, the respondents opined that, “It is important to choose food for their nutritional values than taste”. Thus it is found that Quality is given importance over taste.

5.4.3 The other two opinions which ranked next are “They avoid food stuff with high fat content” and “If there is an opportunity, they are ready to buy organic and natural food”

5.4.4 The innovative nature of the respondents has emerged out in the analysis of taste factor, where the top ranked opinion is “Joy of eating is one of the most important things in life”. They also support the opinion that “They like to visit new and famous restaurants”

5.4.5 The analysis of the convenience factor shows that the respondents frequently buy pre-cooked food at hotels and shops and they eat instant food as they are convenient to prepare. Thus it is found that Instant food is preferred for Convenience.

5.4.6 The factor analysis threw light on a particular segment of consumers who are always for home food. They ranked the opinion “They take pride in cooking from scratch and develop culinary skills” as top rank. Thus this factor is termed as Tradition and this group is against Ready-To-Eat food.

5.4.7 A comparison of the 4 factors between the home makers and working women shows that, in the case of Health, Taste and Convenience, working women are more in number than Homemakers.

5.4.8 Since Convenience factor has got lowest mean score and Health factor has got highest mean score, it is found that health is the main criteria than convenience for general food lifestyle.
5.4.9 In the case of factors Health, Taste and Tradition the difference in the attitude is insignificant. There is significant difference in the attitude of homemakers and working women with respect to Convenience and overall attitude.

5.4.10 It is tested which demographic factor is the main reason for the difference in attitude of respondents towards various factors influencing the food lifestyle and consumption. In the case of Health factor the difference in the attitude of the homemakers and working women is mainly due to the educational qualification and monthly personal income. Regarding all other demographic factors homemakers and working women have same attitude.

5.4.11 Marital status, educational qualification, personal and family income per month, type of the family and number of members in the family are the main demographic factors which influences the attitude of the homemakers and working women towards the taste factor.

5.4.12 Age is an influencing factor only in the case of Convenience aspect.

5.4.13 Monthly personal income of the respondent is one of the major influencing factor in the case of Health, Taste, and Convenience.

5.4.14 Type of family, family income per month, and number of members in the family influence the attitude of the homemakers and working women in the case of Taste and Tradition factors.

5.4.15 Education is an influencing factor only in the case of Health and Taste factor.

5.4.16 Marital status influences Taste, Convenience and Tradition factor.

5.4.17 The overall attitude about the food lifestyle and consumption shows that difference in the attitude of Homemakers and working women are mainly due to the occupational status, monthly personal income and monthly family income. Thus income and occupation are the major factors influencing the food lifestyle of the respondents.

5.5 Factors influencing the Ready-To-Eat lifestyle of the consumers

The next step in the analysis was to find out whether the factors influencing the general food lifestyle was applicable to the Ready-To-Eat Food products also. Section V of the analysis helps to identify the Ready-To-Eat food lifestyle of the consumers.

5.5.1 The factor analysis helped to identify 4 major factors which determine the Ready-To-Eat lifestyle of the respondents. They are

5.5.1.a) Quality
5.5.1.b) Diverse cuisine
5.5.1.c) Economy
5.5.1.d) Convenience
It is noted that Diverse cuisine and Convenience, the top ranked motivating factors of Ready-To-Eat consumption emerge out as major factors in this analysis also.

5.5.2 Convenience factor analysis shows that the main opinion which supports Ready-To-Eat Consumption is that “Ready-To-Eat food provides convenience without going to Restaurants.” This finding confirms the general hypothesis that Ready-To-Eat food is preferred over restaurants.

5.5.3 The analysis of economy factor shows that Ready-To-Eat food is considered as a costlier option than home cooked food. However they consider that this is a cheaper option than restaurants.

5.5.4 Ready-To-Eat food products are considered as an option for tasty food and this is clear from the Diverse Cuisine factor that Ready-To-Eat food is useful for dishes which is difficult to prepare and gives satisfaction in cooking tasty food. RTE food is preferred only for the variety and taste they offer and not for their quality.

5.5.5 The findings show that respondents do not have the attitude that RTE food is of good quality. However they agree that the information provided on the packages reveal their quality.

5.5.6 On comparing the attitude of the Homemakers and working women towards RTE lifestyle factors, it is found that there is significant difference in the attitude for factors – Convenience, Economy and Diverse cuisine. Quality is the only aspect where the attitude of homemakers and working women are the same.

5.5.7 Age, marital status, education, monthly family income, and type of family are the factors which influence the difference in the attitude of homemakers and working women in the factors of Convenience, Economy and Diverse cuisine.

5.5.8 Number of members in the family influences the Ready-To-Eat food lifestyle only to some extent.

5.5.9 In the case of Quality factor, educational qualification is the only aspect which has a significant difference in the attitude of Homemakers and working women.

5.5.10 Regarding the overall attitude of the respondents about the Ready-To-Eat Food lifestyle and consumption, all the demographic factors except marital status are significantly influencing the attitude of homemakers and working women.
5.6 The level of satisfaction of the respondents over the availability of the Ready-To-Eat food products.

The level of satisfaction of the respondents over the availability of the different brands and products of Ready-To-Eat food are identified in the Sixth section of the analysis. This has helped to achieve the sixth objective of the study.

5.6.1 Respondents are satisfied with the availability of Noodles, Soups, Snacks and Desserts.

5.6.2 The availability of Rice and Gravy items are not up to the mark.

5.6.3 Age-wise comparison of the level of satisfaction shows that respondents in the age group of 20-29 are more satisfied with the availability of various Ready-To-Eat food products. It is also found that there is significant difference in the level of satisfaction over availability and age of the respondents, in the case of Noodles, Tiffin, Gravy, Rice, Snacks and Desserts.

5.6.4 Marital status has its influence in the level of satisfaction over availability of the products like Tiffin items, Gravy varieties, Rice items and Desserts.

5.6.5 For the products like Noodles, Desserts, Soups, Rice items, and Snacks, the level of satisfaction over availability is influenced by educational qualification. The diploma holders are highly satisfied with the availability of these Ready-To-Eat food products.

5.6.6 Analysis as per the Monthly personal income of the respondents shows that satisfaction level for common products like Soups and Noodles are high for low income group and other products it is high for the high income groups. It is found that the monthly personal income is a major factor for significant difference in the level of satisfaction over the availability of Tiffin items, Rice items, Desserts and Snacks. There is no difference in satisfaction level over the availability of Noodles and Soups as it is consumed irrespective of income and earnings.

5.6.7 As per the occupational status, the level of satisfaction is high for working women except for Soups. Difference in the level of satisfaction over availability according to the occupational status is significant for all the varieties like Soups, Rice items, Tiffin items, Gravy varieties, Snacks and Desserts.

5.6.8 Monthly family income-wise analysis shows that satisfaction level of availability is high for high income group. There is significant difference between Family monthly income and level of satisfaction only in the case of Gravy items.
5.6.9 Level of satisfaction over availability as per the type of family reveals that level of satisfaction is high for the Couple type of families. Thus this finding shows that the preference for RTE is not found much in joint family.

In the case of Desserts, Gravy items and Rice items the difference in the satisfaction level according to the type of family is significant.

5.6.10 Level of satisfaction over availability is high for family with 1-3 members. (Nuclear family). Only for Rice varieties, the number of members in the family and level of satisfaction has a significant difference. Thus number of members in the family has not much influence in the level of satisfaction over availability.

5.6.11 It is found that the demographic factors have its influence on the level of satisfaction over availability of those RTE products whose availability is not very high. In the case of commonly available products like Soups, Noodles, Tiffin items etc the difference in the level of satisfaction over availability is not very significant for various demographic factors.

5.7 Level of satisfaction over the price of RTE

The findings of the Seventh section aim to attain another objective of analysing the level of satisfaction over the price of RTE food products.

5.7.1 Level of satisfaction over price is high for Tiffin items, Desserts, Rice varieties, and Soups. Though the respondents are satisfied with the availability of Noodles, the satisfaction level over price is not very high.

5.7.2 The level of satisfaction over price is analysed with respect to demographic factors. It is found that the educational qualification has no influence on the level of satisfaction over price.

5.7.3 Occupational status of the respondents is the feature which creates a significant difference in the level of satisfaction over price in the case of Gravy, Rice items and Soups.

5.7.4 When the type of family is considered the difference in the level of satisfaction over price is significant only in the case of Soups and Rice items.

5.7.5 In the case of Soups and Noodles, there is highly significant difference in the level of satisfaction over price with respect to number of members in the family. However in the case of Snacks the difference is significant.

5.7.6 Thus the level of satisfaction over price of Ready-To-Eat is showing significant difference in the demographic factors like Monthly income (personal and family), occupational status and number of members in the family.

5.7.7 With reference to the level of satisfaction over price, both personal and family creates highly significant difference in the respondents for various Ready-To-Eat products.
5.7.8 Education has no influence on the level of satisfaction of price of various Ready-To-Eat food products.

5.7.9 Age and marital status-wise data shows significant and highly significant difference in the level of satisfaction of Gravy items.

Thus the analysis in this section shows that the demographic variables of income and occupation influence the level of satisfaction over the price of the Ready-To-Eat food products.

5.8 **Level of influence of Advertisements**

Eighth section of the analysis has helped to find the level of influence of advertisements of these Ready-To-Eat food products which was the eighth objective of the study.

5.8.1 The influence of advertisements is found to be high for the products like Noodles, Soups and Tiffin items.

5.8.2 The influence of advertisements is not very effective in the case of Snacks and Desserts.

5.8.3 This section also analysed the effect of demographic features on the influence level of advertisements.

5.8.4 Age plays an important factor and makes significant difference in the level of influence of advertisements of Noodles, Snacks and Desserts as the advertisements of these products are targeted at youth.

5.8.5 Marital status of the respondents, creates a significant difference in the level of influence of advertisements of Gravy items, Rice, Snacks and Desserts.

5.8.6 Demographic factors like Monthly Personal Income and Number of members have no effect on the level of influence of advertisements of various Ready-To-Eat Food Products.

5.8.7 Educational qualification of the respondents has an influence on the respondents and creates a highly significant difference in the case of level of influence of advertisements felt by the respondents. The difference in the influence level is highly significant for Noodles and significant in the case of Gravy items.

5.8.8 For the product variety of Gravy and Rice, where the influence of advertisements are not very high, occupational status and family income per month creates highly significant difference.

5.8.9 It is found that for the products whose advertisements are highly influencing, the demographic factors have no significant difference with the level of influence except for Noodles. In the case of Noodles, age and educational qualification is creating highly significant difference in the level of influence of advertisements.
On the whole the analysis shows that the demographic factors are not affecting respondents’ level of influence of advertisements of Ready-To-Eat food products.

5.9 **Inhibitions /Risks related to the Ready-To-Eat food products:**

The study includes an objective of identifying the inhibitions of the respondents associated with the purchase and consumption of the RTE food products. This section helped to find the opinion of the respondents about the risks associated with the RTE food products.

5.9.1 The data finds that majority of the respondents in both homemakers and working women group are not willing to switch over to a new brand from the brand of RTE food which they are using currently. Thus they are satisfied with the RTE products which they consume now and therefore brand loyalty is high in Ready-To-Eat food products.

5.9.2 No significant association is found between the occupational status and interest in switching the brand.

5.9.3 The major risk associated with the usage of RTE is the use of unhealthy ingredients and then the risk of being of low quality. Thus it is found that the low preference for RTE food is mainly due to health considerations.

5.9.4 Regarding the further improvements to be made in the RTE food products, the respondents wanted more healthy ingredients, to improve the health aspects.

5.9.5 It is found that they do not give importance to offers and sales promotions in RTE food products.

5.10 **Segmentation of the consumers as per the food lifestyle and consumption pattern.**

One of the important objectives of the study was to segment the consumers of Salem according to their food lifestyle and consumption. The finding of this section aims to achieve this objective.

5.10.1 Based on the Cluster analysis, the consumers of Salem are segmented based on their food lifestyle and consumption.

5.10.2 Mainly 4 Clusters are identified from the Cluster analysis. These segments and their features are:

5.10.2.a) **Ready Foodie:**

- This segment is most inclined towards Ready-To-Eat food products.
- They are quality conscious and consider Ready-To-Eat food as value for money.
- They consider the consumption of Ready-To-Eat food as status symbol and take pride in using these products.
5.10.2.b) Traditional foodie:
- The consumers of this segment are against RTE food products.
- They are further not interested in innovative products.
- They have strong beliefs in food style and food attributes.
- They are not concerned about seeking variety or taste.

5.10.2.c) Quality seekers:
- This segment includes consumers who are quality and cuisine conscious.
- They consider RTE food as superior quality products.
- They expect a treat for their taste buds.
- They are mostly adventurous and like to try new products.
- They are lovers of good and tasty food.

5.10.2.d) Convenience seekers:
- This segment considers convenience as the major factor in their food lifestyle and consumption.
- They are price conscious and would like to go for cheaper options.
- They are not very brand conscious.
- They expect convenience not only in the consumption but also in purchases.
SUGGESTIONS:

- What makes Ready-To-Eat Food products is its versatility to any women both working women as well as homemakers, who would like to have a surprise element on her dining table apart from treating the family to an original restaurant taste. Thus this innovative product range suits the growing convenience and cuisine need of the consumers.

- As the consumers are seeking quality in these products there is an emotional aspect about possessing the product. This aspect is found more in the case of working women than homemakers. To satisfy this quality need of the consumers the producers of Ready-To-Eat products must include healthy and quality ingredients while processing the food products. The use of state-of-the-art technology to maintain world-class quality and meeting the exact standards of food safety and hygiene will help to accomplish this.

- The consumers are found to eat out very rarely. Thus in Salem the competition from restaurants is not very much and this can be taken as an opportunity by the manufacturers and marketers of Ready-To-Eat Food to find a niche for their product by formulating restaurant like taste and good quality of home food.

- Since it is the working women who prefer to go to restaurants ,the RTE food marketers need to take efforts to cater to this group by showing concern for them about balancing their professional and personal life and in turn they will show enduring loyalty and attachment towards the product.

- Ready-To-Eat food products satisfy the immediate need of time-conscious consumer. However there is a hesitation on their part due to the health and the quality aspects. This creates a gap in the repurchase aspect and thus a long term commitment towards the product is missing. This can be set right only by improving the quality aspect.

- As the usage of RTE food is mainly during special occasions like birthdays and get togethers marketers can adopt product bundling by offering some products related to these occasions along with their products.

- The consumers give more preference for Noodles, Soups, Gravy items and Desserts. The awareness of other products and varieties need to be strengthened.

- As advertisements are major source of influence for consumers, advertisers should look for faster ways of engaging the time starving consumers. Advertisements of Snacks and Desserts are to be improved. The advertisements can be made more engaging and interactive to catch the minds of customers. This will also help the manufacturers and marketers to know the needs of the consumers. In turn the consumers also will have the satisfaction of being a part
of the preparation of the products they consume. Due to this co-creation the customers will get the delight of using the product and there will also be loyalty to the brand.

- The marketer should aim for winning at the first moment of truth - the point where the consumer shops for the product. The accessibility platform of the products needs to be strengthened in such a way that the visibility and freshness of the product is maintained at all times. The distribution strategy can be adopted in such a way that products are more available in supermarkets and kiranas as they will improve the accessibility. This will also help to make the products more accessible to the older age group so that they can find the product in the right place at the right time.

- Variety offered is another vital aspect to increase the product success. As diverse cuisine is an important reason for purchase and consumption of RTE food, offering more variety is very essential.

- Consumers would like to have Spinach soup, Lung fung soup, etc in the basket of RTE food in future.

- On the trend of moving towards “healthy”, there is a perception that Ready-To-Eat Food is unhealthy and risky, the marketers need to communicate to the consumers that they are healthier and tastier with quality ingredients. In India the market for these products are still unsaturated, and there is more scope to move towards value added products. Fat content and preservatives can be reduced, more healthy, organic and natural ingredients can be included in these products.

- As more and more nuclear families are growing in the country, the marketers need to address the needs of both the nuclear as well as joint families. Packaging and other aspects are to be altered to address the need of consumers both as a family and as individuals. The modern marketers have to consider innovative task of packaging viz; improving the stability, protecting and preserving the quality, and increasing the shelf life. This kind of active packaging will surely enhance the quality of the food products and will enable to have a superior look-and feel for the product.

- Consumers are on a journey towards greater affluence and marketers’ job is to understand the realities of that journey. They must cater to the demand of the consumers for the cheapest and the best by providing good quality at the low end and aspirational choices at the high end.

- It is found that educational qualification is important factor which creates a difference in the attitude of the homemakers and working women. Hence manufacturers and marketers should educate the customers about the products, its availability, nutritional values, and other health benefits.
With declining area under cultivation, there is a growing demand for products with shelf life. Many firms are interested in making food products mainly traditional products. Thus the demand for these Ready-To-Eat food products is huge. The manufacturers need to find the right way to make the snacks, and food products to match it with better quality and taste. This will also provide growth for the micro, small and medium scale industries to help in generating employment opportunities to many.

As age, occupation and income are the important factors which makes a difference in the consumer attitude of homemakers and working women, these factors are to be considered while formulating marketing strategies.

An aspect of Eminence is to be attached with the products as more consumers are also concerned about the status with their consumption pattern and food lifestyle.

India is entering a new era and the average younger generation of India is financially empowered. Money is right in their wallet waiting to be taken out for purchase. The consumers are not price conscious, they are trading up the price ladder in search of value and brand promise.

The various marketing strategies which can be adopted for different market segments of Ready-To-Food Lifestyle are:

**Ready foodie:**
- As these are the most oriented segment towards Ready-To-Eat, emphasizing the product attributes will tempt this segment.
- As this segment consider the Ready-To-Eat as value for money, there is an opportunity to charge a premium price.
- There is also a scope for adding new product varieties and extend the product range.
- Use of celebrities and famous chefs is also another aspect which can be used to catch their minds.

**Traditional foodie:**
- This segment can be captured by emphasising food attributes which may encourage them to buy the Ready-To-Eat food products.
- Promoting Ready-To-Eat food which are traditional and wholesome, will attract the attention of these conservative group.
- Emphasising the origin and ingredients is also another aspect of luring this group.
• The traditional segment of consumers take it as a pride to cook at home from scratch, the Ready-To-Eat food products can be positioned in such a way that a touch of cooking it at home and customising it according to their liking can be added with the recipe.

**Quality seekers:**

• As the consumers in this segment are lovers of good and tasty food, stimulating their taste buds through the advertisements is the best way of approaching this segment.
• Introducing new varieties will also attract these innovative people. Out-of-the box thinking practices than the routine practices will do wonders here.
• These consumers give importance to the joy of eating more tasty products and this motive can be used to attract them.
• They can also be lured with free gifts and promotions.

**Convenience seekers:**

• This segment is more convenience oriented and the availability and usage of the RTE products are to be stressed to this group.
• Pricing should be done very carefully.
• Attributes and brands may not attract them and as they look for convenience in purchasing the ambience and point of purchase features can be concentrated upon.
CONCLUSION

Consumer choice for food is definitely influenced by the product property and relationship with surroundings. But it is influenced by lifestyle and basic values to a greater extent. When the Ready-To-Eat food products are considered, the most vital aspect expected by the consumers is Quality, and this must be the main consideration by the manufacturers and marketers too. In today’s human centric era, where consumers will be treated as human beings who are active, anxious and creative and this needs a 360° innovation in marketing because customer today want to participate in the entire purchase process. The marketer need to delight them with wide range of customized value added products which are developed by proper research and insight into the consumer needs with deep understanding of the Indian palate and India centric nutritional strategies.

The Food Business marketing philosophy should be based on key principles of creating innovative products which are particularly pertinent to concentrate on various consumer needs and providing a superior overall experience. India has a large stock of food grains. These major findings and suggestions will surely help to improve the marketability of the Ready-To-Eat food product as a value added product to improve the food security of our country.
SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The field of Food Consumer Behavior is very multifaceted and more research is needed to understand it from further viewpoints. The findings of the study will provide potentially useful insights for future researchers on various factors which have emerged out from the study. Researchers can take up any of these factors for analyzing the importance and influence of these factors on the purchase decision of the consumers.

The different factors influencing consumer behavior towards Ready-To-Eat food products and casual relationship between them can be studied in detail.

The impact of social environment on the consumer behavior towards Ready-To-Eat food products can be studied more extensively.

It might be interesting to research on the attitudinal factors which determines the purchase pattern of Ready-To-Eat food.

The study was limited to the respondents of Salem city and further studies can consider developing a systematic study to include or compare various parts of the district.

Further strategies derived from the research can be applied more often and their effectiveness can be evaluated in the long run and short run. Thus results in turn can provide new impulses for future research on consumer behavior towards food in general and Ready-To-Eat food in particular.