CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The 2001 Food Code of Florida$^{110}$ of the US defines a ready-to-eat food as a food that: Is in a form that is edible and does not require additional heat treatment (to kill bacteria or viruses) or freezing (to destroy parasites) in order to make it safe to eat; Is a raw or partially cooked animal food and the consumer is provided with a written consumer advisory concerning the consumption of raw or undercooked animal food; may receive additional preparation (heating) in order to make the food more palatable or more pleasing to touch, taste, look or smell. Foods may be in a form that is safe to eat from a food safety standpoint of food safety, and yet not be ready for service to the customer (e.g., frozen/refrigerated cooked meat). Heating food to improve its taste or smell is common, but does not alter the Food Code definition that describes the food as “ready to eat” because the food has already been cooked to the minimum required temperature and safely cooled. The term “ready-to-eat” does not require food be ready to serve, only that it is safe to eat. Ready–to–eat Food products that are prepared in advance and can be eaten as sold redy-madae for purchase and can be eaten as sold$^{111}$

Modern convenience food saw its beginnings in the period that began after World War II in the United States. Many of these products had their origins in military developed foods designed for storage longevity and ease of preparation in the battle field. Like many product introductions, not all were successful—convenience food staples such as fish sticks and canned peaches were counterbalanced by failures such as ham sticks and cheeseburgers-in-a-can$^{112}$ Products designated as convenience foods are often prepared food stuffs that can be sold as hot, ready-to-eat dishes; as room-temperature, shelf-stable products;

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$^{110}$ Industry Bulletin for Florida’s Food Service Industry, Bare Hand Contact and Ready-To-Eat Foods, Number: 200801 Date: June 12, 2008.

$^{111}$ Based on WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection. © 2003-2012 Princeton University, Farlex Inc.

or as refrigerated or frozen products that require minimal preparation (typically just heating)\textsuperscript{113}

The packaged foods industry in India has not experienced significant growth due to inadequate demand arising from low household incomes and consumer preference for fresh and home-cooked food. There is thus a huge untapped market opportunity arising due to rapid demographic shifts in income, urbanization and proportion of urban working women in India. The industry needs to concentrate on broadening the market and increasing penetration amongst Indian consumers.

The RTE foods market in India has remained under-penetrated owing to factors like consumers’ penchant for freshness, low affordability and the Indian housewife’s preference for home cooked food. Packaged foods in India have grown at approximately 7% p.a. between 2000-2005, with RTE foods being the fastest growing category at CAGR 73%. The Indian RTE foods market, canned/preserved segment is more popular, contributing to approximately 90% of the market and growing at a CAGR of 63% between 2001 and 2006. The chilled and dried ready meal segments are non-existent RTE foods like Masalas, Applams, produced inside the household required locally and in open market.

The Rural FMCG Market of India is on the verge of registering substantial expansion across the country. The Indian Rural FMCG market is mostly unorganized and it is generally dominated by small time retailers. The organized FMCG market is only confined to the urban areas of India. Rural India mostly depends on agriculture, directly or indirectly for livelihood. Further, almost 70% of Indian population lives in rural India in around 6,00,000 villages. Rural India offers tremendous growth prospects for the Further, very low per capita consumption of FMCG products also provide tremendous opportunity for the growth of Rural FMCG markets in India\textsuperscript{114}.

Ready-to-eat foods market in India is expected to reach Rs.2,900 crores by 2015 from its present size of Rs.128 crores (2006). The factors contributing to this growth would be changes like cold chain development, disintermediation, streamlining of taxation, economies of scale on the supply side, coupled with increasing disposable incomes, diminishing culinary

\textsuperscript{113} "Convenience Foods", Swiss Association for Nutrition. Health and Age Center. 2003-05-08
\textsuperscript{114} business.mapsofindia.com/fmcg/rural-fmcg.html
skills and the rising need for convenience on the demand side. In southern region of India, the products mainly produced are Ready to eat food, Packed food, Instant Mixes, Oil free pickles, Pickles in vinegar, Fruits pulps, Dehydrated Fruits and Vegetables, Sauce, Processed food, Dehydrated fruits and Papad.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), processed foods can be of three types - primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary processed foods involve basic cleaning, grading and packaging. Secondary processing means modification of the basic product to a stage just before the final preparation. Tertiary processing leads to high value-added RTE foods products like bakery products, instant foods, etc.

One of India’s major achievements has been self-sufficiency in food production. However agricultural sector which employs 57% of the work force is suffering from low growth rate for decades. If India wants to attain double digit growth rate it cannot be achieved without growth in agricultural and allied industry. Food processing industry has the potential of turning this sector into fast track of development. India’s middle class segment will hold the key to success or failure of the processed food market in India. With higher level of income and increasing proportion of female work force participation the demand for prepared foods is expected to be high. This is conducive to an expansion in demand for RTE foods of Indian-style.

Unprocessed foods are prone to spoilage by biochemical processes, microbial attack and infestation. Good processing techniques, packaging, transportation and storage can play an important role in reducing spoilage and extending shelf life. The challenge is to retain the nutritional value, aroma, flavour and texture of foods, and presenting them in near natural form with added conveniences. Processed foods need to be offered to the consumers in hygienic and attractive packaging, and at low incremental costs.

Although there are criticisms that RTE foods are half cooked and unhygienic, yet quality products could be sold. While there is huge market for the RTE foods segment in the rural India, there arises a need to find out the factors that are facilitating such a market as well those factors that stand in the way of the producers of RTE foods to tap the full potential of
the industry in rural India. Therefore, there is vast potential in the rural areas and semi-rural areas for the RTE foods and hence the study would explore the best marketing practices and marketing mix for RTE foods in rural markets of Tamil Nadu. Hence the present study was mater minded with the following objectives.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To find out the demographic characteristics of rural consumers and their perceptions about RTE Foods.
2. To ascertain the promotional strategies for the manufacturers of RTE Foods based on the perception of retailers and consumers of rural area.
3. To explore the factors that would contribute to the perception of the RTE Foods among consumers and retailers.
4. To find out the RTE Food products preferences of consumers in the rural market.
5. To suggest on the methods to improve awareness, availability and promotional strategies of RTE food products in rural area.

**FINDINGS ON THE STUDY**

Some of the major findings of the study that are presented at various sections of the report have been summarized below.

**THE DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF RURAL CONSUMERS**

In any analysis on social science, the gender analysis becomes a significant component. Since this research work is on buyer behaviour in rural areas, and more over it is targeted towards eating/ buying habits of rural masses on RTE foods.

- As per the study of collected samples Males constituted the vast majority of 74.1% and females constituted the remaining 25.9% of the sample and hence the respondents of the sample area shows that males are more than females. *The male respondents greater than female will show the real impact of RTE foods habits or ability to buy RTE foods, as male are in most situations the deciding agents in buying behaviours.*
The study was carried in three districts of Tamil Nadu namely Tirunelveli, Madurai and Trichy regions. The rationale for selecting these regions was explained in the First Chapter. To find out whether RTE foods buying habits are similar with the residents of rural areas was considered to be identified. And so the importance of classification of respondents of the study was randomly chosen.

- The largest numbers of respondents were from Trichy, constituting 39.5% of the sample. Respondents from Madurai and Tirunelveli constituted 32.6% and 27.9%, respectively.

RURAL LOCATIONAL STUDY OF CONSUMERS

The population varies from few hundred to few thousand and sometimes few thousands are mostly located in rural part of India. It is generally called as village, whereas for any marketing potential study of rural relates to urban neighborhood. This also enabled specialization of labour and crafts, and development of many trades, including RTE foods market. The cultural impact of villages is felt in urban neighborhoods. Semi-urban areas are also having the characters of rural area, although urban culture influence is felt for easy identification of sample respondents, the rural areas were classified as villages, panchayat Union categories and sub-urban areas.

- According to the study, almost half (at 48.6%) of the respondents were from panchayat unions. Respondents from villages and sub urban areas constituted 28.6% and 22.9%, respectively. Hence maximum respondents are from panchayat union.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF RURAL CONSUMERS

Education has always greater impact on the behavioural aspects. Since this study is about buying behaviour which is part of perception of consumers, it is very important to analyse the educational background of the buyers. It becomes very essential for the researcher to know the educational background of the respondents, as it would greatly influence the findings of the study. The understanding of product, its features, quality, health related aspects and so on are directly related to education. Hence the samples were identified as to their educational level.
As per the study largest category (at 44.3%) of the respondents was undergraduates, followed by post graduates at 27.5%. School pass outs constituted 19.1% of the sample. While those having technical degree and professional diploma constituted 7.8% and 1.3%, respectively.

A total of 80.6% constitutes undergraduates and above clearly states that education level in rural segment is good. It is most useful to create awareness and promotion of RTE foods products in rural segments.

AGE-WISE CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL CONSUMERS

Perception of consumers in FMCG (fast moving consumer foods) segment plays a vital role in Market potentials. Market potential refers to the volume of sales that could generate in given region. Whereas sales per capita is expressed as the product of the ratio of real sales to real income, real income per adult, and the share of adults in the population: Retail sales Per Capita = (Retail Sales/Income) x (Incomes/Adults) X (Adults / Population). Population requires age wise segmentation for identifying exact buyer perceptions of RTE foods. Hence the samples were classified according to their age-wise classification.

Through this research, it is found that Majority (at 67.1%) of the respondents were from the age group of 21 to 30 years. This was followed by age groups of 16 to 20 years and 30 to 50 years who constituted 21.4% and 10.3%, respectively, of the sample. The respondents aged above 50 and below 16 stood insignificantly at 0.8% and 0.4%, respectively.

Total respondents were 494. Out of which 8 (1.6%) were not interested to disclose their age. Hence responded respondent 486 were considered as collected sample for age group analysis.

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INCOME LEVEL OF RURAL CONSUMERS FAMILY

During last Two decades, that is, 1975-76 to 1994-95, there was a remarkable change in the composition of rural income while comparing the findings of MIMAP survey (1994-95) and NCAER survey (1975-76)\textsuperscript{116}. The comparison shows increase in the share of salaries from 22.7% to 33.6% and other incomes from 7.2% to 12.4%. The decision making power of purchase of RTE foods mainly lies in family income in rural segments. Purchase power, mind-set, are few stimuli generated from income source of an individual. Hence the samples were identified as to their family income level.

- By this research study, it is identified that majority of the respondents (at 50.2%) had a monthly income of more than Rs. 10,000. Those having a monthly income between Rs. 7501 and Rs. 10000 constituted 37.9% of the sample while the respondents whose monthly income was less than Rs. 7500 constituted the remaining 11.9% of the sample. The study clearly indicates that \textit{income level of rural households at an average is more than Rs.10,000}.

FAMILY MEMBERS OF RURAL CONSUMERS

Purchase behaviour, a part of perception of consumers is influenced not only by an individual, friends, peers and family members but also the size of the family.

- This study reveals \textit{that majority of respondents (at 55.2%) had four family members and five members (at 25.1%)} This was followed by respondents having less than 3 family members at 10.4% of the sample. Respondents having more than five family members constituted the remaining 9.4% of the sample.

INCOME EARNER

Decision making power of an individual empowers the purchases and ultimately it induces the potential of the market. This phenomenon along with the source of income promotes the product in rural market. Hence the samples were identified whether the respondent is the bread-winner of the family. The income of the family is an important factor that enables the ability to by RTE foods.

This research reveals that just about 11% of the respondents were the only bread winners of their family. The rest had other family members who were also earning. This indicates that most families in rural areas do not depend on single earnings. Family members of rural consumers indicate family size for rural masses were having an average of five members. Hence, it is very clear that both men and women in rural areas are work together to fulfill their family needs.

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF RURAL CONSUMER FAMILY**

When the income of the family is high there is greater economic freedom for the family. This enables them to allot a greater percentage of their income for expenses. However, past researches indicate that, the disposable income of urban, besides being high differences in the income levels.

- Total income of the family is the main source for funds allotment for expenses. As per the study 77.63 % of rural people spent their earning in the same year. They save a little compared to the urban counterparts.

- Many cases (34.5%), two other members of respondents' family were also working. In case of 33.9% of the sample, one member was working while in case of 10.5% and 4.2% of the sample, three and four, respectively, family members were working. In case of 16.9% of the sample, no other family member was working.

- While collecting primary data, 16 respondents (3.2%) are not disclosing the required information regarding income status of their family. Hence the research study data collected were used for the analysis.

**INFLUENCER OF RURAL CONSUMERS’ BUYING DECISION**

Need of the product initiate the consumer to search information regarding his requirements. During information search, customers will be aware of some brands through mass media and advertisement. This awareness meets the initial buying criteria and it will be considered for further evaluation. Whereas all the factors will influence the customer to make final decision of buying the products. After all these decision based on information is further influenced by many. One of those is the family. In this research study it was clear to study the influences of the family in buying decisions of RTE foods.
Statistical analysis of the collected responses reveals that in 42.7% of the cases, the buying decision of RTE Food products at respondents’ homes was taken by their parents. This was followed by respondents themselves, children and spouses at 8.6%, 2.7% and 1.9%, respectively. The cases when decisions were taken by everyone together constituted 44.1% of the sample. While collecting primary data, 16 respondents (3.2%) did not disclose the required information regarding their buying decision on RTE foods.

RURAL CONSUMER BUYING HABITS OF RTE FOOD PRODUCTS

In India RTE foods market primarily dominated by young generation, is gradually switching to branded products. A typical upper middle class young consumer of Indian rural market is beginning to look beyond the utility aspect of a product to seek intangibles like brand and lifestyle associated with the product. As a result of this changing trend in rural market, the RTE foods segment of the Fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector witnessing a significant shift buying habits of rural consumers.

The buying habits of rural consumers are influenced not only by the selection of products and availability in retail market, but by the demographics of the consumers themselves. Rural consumers tend to have higher expectations for product durability and considerably different media habits, which means they may not see or respond to the same advertisements. These phenomenons of rural consumers influence their preferences in products, styles and brands. Rural consumers may exhibit measurable loyalty to retailers that are available to them, even when traveling into more urban areas. This loyalty is likely where a product of the consumer's familiarity is with the retailer as many rural markets offer limited competition. Usually limited competition builds a strong bond with the rural consumer, though some consumers may abandon their loyalties to purchase products at lower prices from second-hand stores, and competitors in nearby markets.
RURAL CONSUMER BUYING HABITS ON GENDER, REGIONS, MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME

Ho 1 - The buying habits are same irrespective of gender of the respondents.

- In rural segments they consume less costly RTE foods, that is, when products are available in sachets at economical prices. Hence price plays a key role in the marketing potential of RTE foods. Hence it is very clear that buying habits of RTE foods among males and female rural consumers are same.

Ho 2 - The buying habits are same irrespective of regions of the respondents.

- From the Statistical analysis, there is no significant difference between the buying habits of RTE foods among consumers across different region such as Tirunelveli, Madurai and Trichy considered for research study. Hence it is clear that irrespective of regions, rural consumers act alike.

Ho 3 - The buying habits are same irrespective of monthly family income of respondents.

- When the family income of rural segment is taken for analysis, they mainly prefer home cooked foods. But there is significant difference in the opinion not relating to paying much attention to quality but to price, consume less costlier foods and in the opinion on paying attention to masala and pickles. Hence it is crystal clear that rural consumers are very particular in ‘cost’ and they compromise on quality when price is lowered.

RURAL CONSUMERS AWARENESS ON RTE FOODS

Awareness of RTE foods in rural market refers the percentage of potential customers or consumers who recognize the product. There are certain RTE food products frequently remembered by the consumers. Product which remembered by the consumer always is called Top-of-mind awareness (TOMA). TOMA is the percent of respondents who, without prompting, name a specific brand or product first when asked to list all the advertisements they recall seeing in a general product category over the past 30 days. Top of mind awareness is a way to measure how- well brands rank in the minds of consumers. In Rural market Top-of-mind awareness is achieved mainly through media exposure on TV channels. Unfortunately, few advertisements in rural segments sometime make false promises, are highly exaggerated and give incomplete descriptions of products. The consumption patterns.
are changing fast and rural consumers today are very clear on their choices regarding food, especially on RTE foods.

AWARENESS OF RTE FOODS AND RESPONDENTS’ GENDER, REGION, AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Ho 4 - The awareness of RTE Foods is same irrespective of gender of the respondents.

- Statistical analysis of the responses given by respondents clearly states that male and female respondents are same about the awareness of RTE food categories - Confectionary Items (Biscuits, Bread, Cookies), Sauces, Jams, Ketchup; Papads, Fried Dals (Haldiram, Pepsi moongdal etc.,), Readymade Masala, Pickles, Readymade chappathies, Parota, Ediappam, Noodles, Any other as per their interest, whereas male and female respondents awareness are different for RTE food categories such as Potato chips (Lays, Bingo etc.), and Culinary Paste. This is due to, the understanding of the products among the rural consumers (male and female) is not adequate and popularity of potato chips (Lays, Bingo etc.), and culinary paste has not significantly influenced them.

Ho 5 - The awareness of RTE foods is same irrespective of regions of the respondents.

- As per the analysis, respondents awareness in the different regions namely Madurai, Tirunelveli and Trichy are same of RTE foods – categories - Confectionary Items (Biscuits, Bread, Cookies), Sauces, Jams, Ketchup; Papads, Fried Dals (Haldiram, Pepsi moongdal etc.,), Readymade Masala, Pickles, Readymade chappathies, Parota, Ediappam, Noodles; whereas Potato chips (Lays, Bingo etc.); Culinary Paste are not same. Hence it is concluded that **Branded potato chips like Lays, Bingo and culinary paste like Tomato curry, Vathakulambu paste, Tamarind paste, dry fish curry etc., were not clearly understood by the rural consumers whereas confectionary items, readymade chappathies, Idiappam, Paraota and Readymade masala, pickles, are known to them. Hence marketers should identify a proper strategy in rural areas to bring the awareness about their products.**
Ho 6 - The awareness of RTE foods is same irrespective of place of residence of the respondents.

The respondents were grouped according to their place of residence namely, villages, panchayats, and sub-urban and the responses were analysed on their awareness on RTE foods.

- Statistical analysis clearly states that respondents’ awareness of RTE Foods – categories- Potato chips (Lays, Bingo etc.), Culinary Paste are not same across the respondents different place of residence such as villages, panchayats and sub-urban of the selected sample regions however the awareness is same for Confectionary Items (Biscuits, Bread, Cookies); Sauces, Jams, Ketchup; Papads, Fried Dals (Haldiram, Pepsi moongdal), Readymade Masala, Pickles; Readymade chappathies, Parota, Ediappam, and Noodles. Therfore, all the respondent’s place of residence had similar awareness about confectionary item, breads, sauces, Jams, ketchup, chips and other RTE foods items except Readymade masala, pickles and culinary paste.

IMPACT OF LOCATIONAL AVAILABILITY OF RTE FOODS

A Good Rural marketing system can provide better prices to producers and improve the availability of competitively priced goods to consumers. In some cases new markets or improvements to existing markets in rural areas can help overcome many of the marketing problems faced. There are few causes of inefficient marketing of RTE food products in rural area felt by the marketers which are unsafe roads, lack of knowledge about product, and inadequate quantity of products to attract sufficient traders. In the current trend road are well connected to all villages and panchyats in Tamil Nadu Region. Mass media Instrument (Television) is available in every village and hence creating awareness can play a major role to tap the rural RTE food Market. However it is equally important to ensure the RTE foods are sufficiently available to both consumer and marketer. This is called as locational availability study of RTE food products.
LOCATIONAL AVAILABILITY, LOCA TIONAL ADVANTAGE AND SALE LOCATIONS OF RTE FOOD AND RESPONDENTS’ REGIONS, PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

LOCATIONAL AVAILABILITY OF CONFECTIONARY ITEMS AND RESPONDENTS’ PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Ho 7 - There is no relationship between locational availability of confectionary items and respondents’ place of residence.

- As per statistical analysis, chi square value for ‘RTE foods (for confectionary items’) variable is 20.20 and the significance value is 0.010. Since the significance value is <0.05, the same is significant at 5% level. This shows that the locationsof availability of confectionary items and respondents’ place of residence are interrelated. This clearly indicates that the locational advantages for sales of Confectionary items are differently influenced by the respondent’s place of residence. Hence the marketers should device plan for locating the shops and making available of RTE foods (especially Confectionary items) in the regions of respondents place of residence such as villages, panchayat union and sub-urbans.

SALE LOCATIONS FOR SAUCES, JAMS & KETCHUP AND RESPONDENTS’ REGION

Ho 8 - There is no relationship between the sale locations of sauces, jams & ketchup and the responses of respondents’ different regions.

- As per statistical analysis of collected samples, the chi square value of sale locationsfor sauces, jams, and ketchup (RTE foods) and (various categories of respondents' region is 15.63 and the significance value is 0.048. Since the significance value is <0.05, the same is significant at 5% level. RTE food sale locations of sauces/jams/ketchup and respondents' regions such as Tirunelveli, Madurai and Trichy are interrelated. This brings to sharp focus that the locational advantage for sales of Sauces, Jams and Ketchup is differently influenced in various regions (Districts). Hence the marketers should keep in mind not only that they device plan for locating the shops and making available of RTE foods (especially Jams and Ketchups) but also see the development of the region, whether a developed district and developing district and the villages / towns surrounded in the region.
SALE LOCATIONS FOR SAUCES, JAMS & KETCHUP AND RESPONDENTS’ PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Ho 9 – There is no relationship between sale locations of sauces, jams and ketchup & respondents’ place of residence

- The statistical analysis of collected samples reveals that the chi square value for ‘sale locations for sauces, jams & ketchup’ for respondents' place of residence is 26.54 and the significance value is 0.001. Since the significance value is <0.05, the same is significant at 5% level. The sale locations of sauces, jams & ketchup and respondents' places of residence such as villages, panchayat union, sub-urban are interrelated. This brings to sharp focus that the locational advantage for sales of Sauces, Jams and Ketchup is differently influenced in respondents’ place of residence. Hence the marketers’ promotional strategy should focus not only planning for locating the shops and also making available of RTE foods (especially Jams and Ketchups) in respondents’ place of residence in the respective regions.

SALE LOCATIONS FOR PAPADS, FRIEDDALS AND RESPONDENTS’ REGION

Ho 10 – There is no relationship between the sale locations of papads, fried dals and the responses of respondents’ different regions.

- Analysis reveals that the chi square value of sale locations for papads, fried dals (RTE foods) and various categories of respondents' region is 12.60 and the significance value is 0.127. Since the significance value is >0.05, the same is not significant at 5% level RTE foods sale locations of papads, fried dals and respondents' regions (Districts) such as Tirunelveli, Madurai and Trichy are independent. Hence the marketers should keep in mind that they have to identify a strategy for locating the shops and make variety products available. Whereas they have to continuously monitor the development of the region and the villages / towns surrounded in the region.
SALE LOCATIONS FOR PAPADS, FRIED DALS AND RESPONDENTS’ PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Ho 11 – There is no relationship between sales locations of papads, fried dals and respondents’ place of residence

➢ The chi square value for sale locations for papads, fried dals’ respondents' place of residence is 13.35 and the significance value is 0.100. Since the significance value is >0.05, the same is not significant at 5% level. Hence, there does not exist relationship between the sale locations of papads, fried dals and respondents’ place of residence. Hence the marketers should keep in mind that they have to identify a strategy for locating the shops and make variety of products available. Whereas they have to continuously monitor the development of the region and the villages / towns surrounded in the region.

SALE LOCATIONS FOR READYMade MASALA, PICKLES AND RESPONDENTS’ REGION

Ho 12 – There is no relationship between the sale locations of readymade masala, pickles and the responses of respondents’ different regions

➢ As per the chi square value for ‘RTE Food sale locations for Readymade masala, pickles variable (respondents' regions) is 9.53 and the significance value is 0.299. Since the significance value is >0.05, the same is not significant at 5% level. RTE Food sale locations for masala powders and respondents' regions are independent. Hence the marketers should keep in mind that they have to identify a strategy for locating the shops and make variety of products available. Whereas they have to continuously monitor the development of the region and the villages / towns surrounded in the region.

SALE LOCATIONS FOR READYMade MASALA PICKLES AND RESPONDENTS’ PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Ho 13 – There is no relationship between sales locations of Readymade masala, pickles and respondents’ place of residence

➢ As per statistical analysis, the chi square value of sale locations for Readymade masala, Pickles for respondents' place of residence is 23.98 and the significance value is 0.002. Since the significance value is <0.05, the same is significant at 5% level. Hence, here the sale locations for readymade masala, Pickles and respondents' place
of residence are interrelated. This brings to sharp focus that sales locations of readymade masala, Pickles differently influenced in various places of respondents. When the sale locations considered for the region-wise the perception of respondents are independent whereas as per the place of residence it becomes dependent, this is due to their eating habits and the influence of residence. Hence the marketers should keep in mind not only that they device plan for locating the shops and making available of RTE foods (especially Readymade masala, Pickles) but also see the development of the region, whether a developed district and developing district and the villages / towns surrounded in the region

SALE LOCATIONS FOR CULINARY PASTE AND RESPONDENTS’ REGION

Ho 14 – There is no relationship between the sale locations of culinary paste and the responses of respondents' different regions

➢ As per the chi square value for sale locations of culinary paste(RTE food) and respondents' region is 7.16 and the significance value is 0.519. Since the significance value is >0.05, the same is not significant at 5% level. Hence, RTE foods sale locations for culinary paste and respondents' regions are independent. Hence the marketers should keep in mind that they have to identify a strategy for locating the shops and make variety products available. Whereas they have to continuously monitor the development of the region and the villages / towns surrounded in the region.

SALE LOCATIONS FOR CULINARY PASTE AND RESPONDENTS’ PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Ho 15 – There is no relationship between sales locations of culinary paste and respondents’ place of residence

➢ The chi square value of sale locations for culinary paste for respondents' place of residence is 13.29 and the significance value is 0.102. Since the significance value is >0.05, the same is not significant at 5% level. Hence, that there does not exist dependence between the sale locations for culinary paste and respondents' place of residence. Hence the marketers should keep in mind that they have to identify a strategy for locating the shops and make variety products available. Whereas they have to continuously monitor the development of the region and the villages / towns surrounded in the region.
SALE LOCATIONS FOR READYMADE CHAPPATHIES, PAROTA, EDIAPPAM, NOODLES AND RESPONDENTS’ PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Ho 16 – There is no relationship between sales locations of readymade chappathies, parota, ediappam, noodles and respondents’ place of residence

- The chi square value for sale locations of readymade chappathies, parota, ediappam, noodles for respondents' place of residence is 24.90 and the significance value is 0.002. Since the significance value is <0.05, the same is significant at 5% level. Hence, there exists dependence between sale locations of readymade chappathies, parota, ediappam, noodles and respondents' place of residence. This brings to sharp focus that the locational advantage for sales of Readymade Chappathies, parotta, Ediappam, noodles is differently influenced in respondents’ place of residence. Hence the marketer’s promotional strategy should focus not only planning for locating the shops and also making available of RTE foods (especially Readymade Chappathies, parotta, Ediappam, noodles) in respondents’ place of residence in the respective regions.

PURCHASE LOCATIONS OF RTE FOODS AND THE RESPONDENTS’ REGION.

Ho 17 – There is no relationship between the purchase locations of RTE foods and the responses of respondents’ different regions.

- As per the statistical analysis, the chi square value for ‘purchase locations of RTE Food products and various categories of respondents' region is 6.14 and the significance value is 0.631. Since the significance value is >0.05, the same is not significant at 5% level. Hence, the purchase locations for RTE food products and respondents' regions are interrelated. This brings to sharp focus that the locational advantage for purchase locations of RTE food which is differently influenced in respondents’ place of residence. Hence the marketer’s promotional strategy should focus not only planning for locating the shops and also making available of RTE foods in respondents’ purchase locations near by their residences in the respective regions.
RURAL CONSUMERS’ SPENDING PATTERN ON RTE FOODS.

Ho 18 – There is no relationship between the RTE food spend and the responses of respondents’ different regions.

- As per the chi square value of ‘average RTE food spend’ and various categories of respondents' region is 12.49 and the significance value is 0.131. Since the significance value is >0.05, the same is not significant at 5% level. Hence, there exist dependence between the average RTE food spend and respondents' regions of different region. This brings to sharp focus that the locational advantage for spending on RTE foods in rural area is differently influenced in respondents’ place of residence. Hence the marketers’ promotional strategy should focus not only planning for locating the shops and also making available of RTE food at an affordable price in respondents’ place of residence in the respective regions.

APPEALING RTE OF FOODS IN RURAL CONSUMER MARKETS

Tirunelveli district has created an appeal for readymade masala, Pickles, followed by potato chips and confectionary items, in that order.

- In Madurai district there is a good appeal in the order of potato chips, confectionary items and papads/fried dals follow in that order.
- In Trichy district the appeal is felt for potato chips, followed by sauces/jams/ketchup.
- In Villages confectionary items & readymade masala, pickles, followed by potato chips had a good market.
- Panchayat Unions had good market for RTE food in the order of potato chips, papads/fried dals and confectionary items follow in that order.
- Sub Urbans have been an appealing market for potato chips, followed by for readymade chappathies / parota / ediappam /noodles & confectionary items.

RURAL CONSUMERS’ PERCEPTION ON RTE FOODS

As per Statistical analysis of Cronbach's alpha test, a coefficient of reliability test used as a measure of the internal consistency for the following sixteen factors contributing to the buyer perception. Going by the thumb rule, .9 > α ≥ .8 interprets into ‘Good’ internal consistency. Hence, the alpha value of 0.865 obtained translates into Good internal consistency for these following factors.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Products packing are appealing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Packed in good and hygiene conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Products items are visible in picture in the wrapper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Net weight and rates are visible to take decision to buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Easy to open the packing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Food items are tasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Stimulate to buy again and again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Colour and design of the product is crazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sufficient variety is available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Affordable to buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Easily available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Not able to cook/prepare the item at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Purchase of such RTE foods saves time by way of easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>RTE foods are food supplements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Most RTE foods are available for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Children like RTE foods than cooked foods at home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RURAL CONSUMERS’ PREFERENCES ON RTE PRODUCTS**

Factor analysis is used to find a method of summarizing the information contained in a number of original variables to a smaller set of new composite dimensions (factors) with minimum loss of information. Principal Components Analysis (PCA) is used to extract factors to represent the data.

For the analysis factors are considered as detailed below:

- **Factor 1** studying the perception of “packing mode and Quality” with the variables such as Packed in good and hygiene conditions, Net weight and rates are visible to take decision to buy, Products items are visible in picture in the wrapper, Food items are tasty and Easily available.

- **Factor 2** studying the perception of “Affordability and variety available” with the variables such as Affordable to buy, Stimulate to buy again and again, Children like RTE foods than cooked foods at home and Sufficient variety is available.

- **Factor 3** studying the perception of “Health and Life style” with the variables such as Purchase of such RTE foods saves time by way of easy, Not able to cook/prepare the item at home and RTE foods are food supplements.
Factor 4 studying the perception of “Appeal of packing” with the variables such as Products packing are appealing and Colour and design of the product is crazy

Principal Component Method for factor extraction is used in this research, wherein the number of factors necessary to represent the data and the method of calculating them must be determined. At this step, how well the chosen model fits the data is also ascertained. Eigen value is kept closer or greater than 1 to extract factors from the given variables. This step is to determine the method of factor extraction, number of initial factors and the estimates of factors.

Eigen Values are expressed as a percentage of the total variance. As such, factor 1, packing mode and Quality accounted for about 34.31% of the total variance, factor 2 Affordability and variety available about 10.24%, factor 3 Health and Life style about 7.97% & factor 4 Appeal of packing about 7.57% of the total variance.

For this task, the cumulative variance extracted is 60.09%. The sums of square of all the variables in given factors are called the Eigen values. If Eigen value is greater than 1, it becomes factor. In similar pattern, sum of square of a variable across factors are called communalities. As a threshold level, communalities should be greater than 0.5. and all the variables have communalities greater than 0.5.

In this analysis is Varimax Rotation used. This is the most commonly used method and attempts to minimize the number of variables that have high loadings on a factor. This should enhance the interpretability of the factors. The Rotated Component Matrix using Varimax rotation is given in the above table, where each factor identifies itself with a few set of variables.

Thus, the 14 variables in the data were reduced to 4 factor models. It clearly indicates respondents purchase perceptions of RTE foods are good in rural Tamil Nadu . Hence marketers should realize that there is good potential market in rural Tamil Nadu .
Regression analysis was used to find the effect of four factors identified such as packing mode and Quality, Affordability and variety available, Health and Life style and Appeal of packing on preference of consumers towards RTE food products.

As per the statistical analysis the correlation coefficient value is \( R \) 0.588 for Model1, which exhibits a good amount of correlation between the Independent variables (four factors) and dependent variable (preference of consumers towards RTE FOOD products), with the F-ratio being 45.741 and its associated significance level being small \( P<0.01 \). The R square value gives us the goodness of fit of the regression model. That is, the amount of variability explained by the whole of the selected predictor variables in the model for 34.6.0% \( (R^2\%=.346 \times 100) \) of variation in the dependent variable (preference of consumers towards RTE food products).

As per the analysis the effect of four factors on preference of consumers towards RTE food products. In all the cases, the sig values are less than .01, hence it is statistically significant at 1% level. The signs between variables are also expected.

- Hence there is a statistically linear relationship between four factors and preference of consumers towards RTE food products.

**RURAL CONSUMERS’ EATING HABITS OF RTE FOODS**

- Eating / buying habits are one of influential factor for buying RTE foods. Apart from cultural factors such as caste, language, behvioural pattern of regions etc., habits develop from environments also. Especially in FMCG food segment, that too in Ready-to-eat time, cost, likeliness are also playing role.

The weighted Arithmetic mean (WAM) analysis indicates that Rural India RTE consumer prefers mainly home cooked food whose WAM is 4.10. Further Rural RTE market is not depended much on RTE Foods as its WAM shows 3.09, whereas it is focused on Price. They consume less costly foods, including RTE foods.

- If RTE foods are available at affordable price then market condition will improve better. Hence it clearly shows that, though they prefer home cooked foods, RTE foods market potential is their but it depends on its price.
RURAL CONSUMERS’ PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR ON RTE FOODS

The weighted Arithmetic mean (WAM) analysis states that RTE foods in Rural Indian Market depends mainly on the following influencing factors. It has been summarized according to their weighted average mean score.

1. Packed in good and hygiene conditions 4.08
2. Products packing are appealing 4.07
3. Easily available 4.04
4. I buy from Retail or medium stores because they have latest varieties 3.91
5. I buy from Retail or medium stores because they have latest varieties 3.90
6. Food items are tasty 3.90
7. Products items are visible in picture in the wrapper 3.88
8. I buy only if I am convinced of the quality of goods from a shop 3.87

- Hence rural consumers are not only price conscious; they are very particular about hygienic conditions, packing, easy availability, and taste of products. In nutshell price and quality plays a vital role for the potential of rural market on RTE foods.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF RURAL RETAILER

REGION OF RETAILER

- As per the study, the largest number of retailers were from Trichy, constituting 39.3% of the sample. Retailers from Madurai and Tirunelveli constituted 32.7% and 28.0%, respectively, of the sample size of 150. Hence Trichy retailers markets were influenced by RTE foods products

LOCATIONS OF RETAILER

- From the samples collected from three different regions namely Madurai, Trichy and Tirunelveli, it is found from the study that almost half (at 48.7%) of the retailers were from panchayat unions. Retailers from villages and sub-urban areas constituted 28.7% and 22.7%, respectively, of the sample. It clearly shows that Retailers’ sales promotion of RTE foods are more in Panchayat Unions when compared to villages and sub-urban. Locations of the retailer play one of the vital roles in RTE foods Market.
CATEGORY OF RETAILER

As per the study, the single largest category of the retailers (33.3%) was from large stores (selling Vegetables, grocery, RTE foods and food grains in one slot), followed by those from grocery stores (31.3%). Retailers from big provision stores and bakery shops constituted 15.3% and 14.0%, respectively, of the sample. The remaining 6.0% of the respondents were from petty shops. The retailers’ business premises of RTE foods were categorized according to their size of business. The study clearly states that the maximum business from rural consumers were in the order of large stores, Grocery stores, Big provisions stores followed by bakery and petty shops. Hence marketers should device a strategy to cater the need of rural consumers taking into consideration of rural retailers’ business premises as stated above.

PROMOTIONAL FUNCTIONS OF RURAL RETAILERS

In this research promotional functions of rural retailers such as Category of RTE foods, Impact of wrapper design of RTE foods, product appealing, product selling, price ranges, selling seasons preferences were considered and analysed.

RETAILERS’ PREFERENCE ON RTE FOODS PROMOTION

➢ According to the eating habits of consumers of the selected area of this study Ready to eat food and Ready to cook food are mostly consumed by them. In order to identify retailers’ interest in promotion of business products both RTE and RTC were classified separately. As per the research study it is clear that vast majority (96.0%) of the retailers were from the category of both RTE & RTC. The remaining 4% retailers were from RTC category. Hence majority of the retailers are interested in the promotion of both Ready to cook and eat foods.

WRAPPER DESIGN IMPACT ON PROMOTION

➢ Appeal of packing is also one factor in promoting RTE foods. Hence the study focused on retailers regarding impact of wrapper design in their product promotion. Of the surveyed retailers, 73.3% said that wrapper design impacts promotion. The remaining 26.7% replied negative on this. Hence as per the study, Retailers’ perception, clearly states that wrapper designs were having good impact in promotion of RTE foods products.
CATEGORY OF PRODUCT APPEAL BY RETAILERS (REGION-WISE)

- Tirunelveli has an appealing market for readymade masala, pickles followed by Readymade chappathies, Barota, Idiappam and Noodles and potati chips, in that order.
- Madurai has an appealing market for readymade masala, pickles, potato chips and Readymade chappathies, Barota, Idiappam and Noodles.
- Trichy has an appealing market for potato chips and ‘Readymade chappathies, Barota, Idiappam and Noodles, followed by readymade masala, pickles.

SELLING PRICES OF RTE FOOD PRODUCTS BY RURAL RETAILERS

- The study states that, vast majority of the retailers (80.7%) are in favour of all price ranges. Those who stated Rs. 16-20 and Rs. 11-15 price ranges constituted 13.3% and 4.7%, respectively, of the sample. Those stating Rs. 6-10 price range constituted 1.3% of the sample. Hence it is concluded, as per the retailers’ perception of sales promotion with respect to price range of RTE foods products, retailers are interested in promoting all ranges of RTE foods products.

SELLING SEASONS OF RTE FOOD PRODUCTS BY RURAL RETAILERS

- Retailers’ perception of sales period season such as festival season, month-end, all periods were considered for the study. The table and diagram states that according to vast majority of the retailers (95.3%) all seasons are conducive for sales of RTE foods products. Those stating festive and month-end as conducive periods constituted only 2.7% and 2.0%, respectively, of the sample. Hence it is concluded that irrespective of seasonal variances, all periods are conducive for sales promotion of RTE foods products by rural retailers.

PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES OF RURAL RETAILERS

Promotional strategy for RTE foods for rural retailers are categorized such as,

- Consumer relations
- Locational advantage and consumer loyalty
- Channels for retailers. - It includes various retailers’ channels such as Labels in vernacular (Tamil) Language, Advertisement in vernacular (Tamil) Language, Advertisement in Rural TV channels and FM radio, Better delivery system for rural market, Retailers proudness about rural locality, Optimum Use of improved transport and infrastructure due to Change of rural characteristics, Focusing Young consumers and Kids and Explaining Product using Methods.

- Positioning. - It includes Quality, Packing and Heigenity of RTE foods.

- Channels for Manufacturers. - It includes various manufacturers’ channels of Advertising New arrivals, Periodical supply to stockist, Equal information about product to rural customers, considering price factor, supplying all varieties.

- As per the statistical analysis, consumer relation and locational advantage and consumer loyalty obtained the highest mean scores of 4.18 each. Channels for manufacturing followed with a mean score of 4.11. Channels for retailers and positioning attributes obtained mean scores of 4.08 and 4.06, respectively. Hence it is concluded that Manufacturers’ strategy have to be strengthened followed by Retailers promotional strategy in order to improve the rural market for RTE foods.

PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES OF RTE FOODS AND PERCEPTION OF THE RETAILERS’ REGIONS, LOCATIONS, DIFFERENT CATEGORIES (TYPES OF SHOPS) AND WRAPPER DESIGN.

PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES ACROSS RETAILERS’ REGION

Ho 19 - There is no relationship between RTE Foods promotional strategies and the responses of retailers’ different regions.

The study clearly indicates that the perception of retailers’ promotional strategy such as consumer relation, Locational advantage and consumer loyalty, Channel for retailers, Channel for manufacturers and Positioning are same with respect to the rural consumers selected area such as Tirunelveli, Madurai and Trichy. Hence marketers should plan the appropriate and suitable promotional strategy for the promotion of RTE foods products according to implementation of promotional strategies. Further towns near by sub-urban having the characteristics of villages should also be considered while implementing the appropriate promotional strategy.
PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES ACROSS THE RESPONDENTS’ LOCATIONS

Ho 20 - There is no relationship between RTE Foods promotional strategies and the responses of retailers’ different locations.

➢ The study clearly indicates that the perception of retailers’ promotional strategy such as consumer relation, Locational advantage and consumer loyalty, Channel for retailers, Channel for manufacturers and Positioning are same with respect to the rural consumers locations. Hence marketers should plan the appropriate and suitable promotional strategy for the promotion of RTE foods products according to place of rural consumers locations such as Villages, Panchayat Unions, and Sub-urban. Further areas near by sub-urban having the characteristics of villages should also be considered while implementing the appropriate promotional strategy.

PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES ACROSS THE DIFFERENT CATEGORY OF RETAILERS

Ho 21 - There is no relationship between RTE Foods promotional strategies and the responses of different category of retailers.

➢ This study clearly indicates responses given by retailers according to their types of shops such as grocery shop, bakery, big provision shops, and large stores. and promotional strategy such as consumer relation, Locational advantage and consumer loyalty, Channel for retailers, Channel for manufacturers and Positioning for the promotion of RTE foods are same. Hence marketers should device suitable promotional strategies according to their types of shops such as grocery shop, bakery, big provision shops, and large stores. In addition to it, types of shops will change due to growth of business and hence suitable strategy should be advocated for such shops in order to cater the RTE foods products promotion in rural area.
PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES ACROSS AN IMPACT OF WRAPPER DESIGN OF RTE FOODS PRODUCTS

Ho 22 - There is no relationship between RTE Foods promotional strategies and the wrapper design of RTE Foods products.

➢ The study clearly indicates responses given by respondents with respect to Wrapper design of RTE foods promotional strategy such as Consumer relation, Locational Advantage and Consumer Loyalty, Positioning (Quality, Packing and Heigenity), Retailers promotional strategy and Manufacturers Promotional strategy are same. It clearly states that Wrapper design has got more impact in promotion strategy.

CORRELATION BETWEEN PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERCEPTION OF RTE FOODS RETAILERS’ OF ALL SELECTED REGION.

➢ AS per statistical analysis of correlation between promotional strategies and Respondents regions positive correlations. Hence it is concluded that promotional strategies should be adopted to improve the RTE foods market.

CORRELATION BETWEEN PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES AND PERCEPTION OF RTE FOODS RETAILERS OF TIRUNELVELI, MADURAI, TRICHY REGION

➢ As per statistical analysis of correlation between promotional strategies and retailers perception such as Consumer relation, Locational Advantage and Consumer Loyalty, Channels for Retailers, Positioning are showing positive correlations in Trunelveli, Madurai, Trichy region individually. Hence it is concluded that promotional strategies should be adopted to improve the RTE foods market.
SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions emanate from the findings of the study:

TO THE GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS MARKETERS’ OF RTE FOODS:

➢ The knowledge and awareness of Ready-to-eat foods consumers are though significant yet not complete. Hence, the Marketer’s must moot the efforts to increase the knowledge of the general public about the usages and benefits of RTE foods. Arranging of video-cum promotions, product features and demonstrations in rural area about RTE foods has to be done on a massive scale.

➢ Preparing instructions clearly be mentioned and conspicuously on the packets of RTE foods especially those of Ready-to-cook foods.

TO THE GOVERNMENT:

‖ In rural segment Unbranded RTE foods are available. Which may unhygienic and many times it affects health of rural end-users. Prevention of Food Adulterations (PFA) authorities should take appropriate steps to avoid unhealthy unbranded RTE foods in rural areas

‖ Weights and Measures Department of State Government should insist the display of net weight in sachets to be bolder than the existing size which enables the rural consumers to easy purchase decisions

‖ For vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods Square with Dot inside logo in Green and Brown is mandatory by Ministry of Food Industry FPO Rules 1955. Apart from this manuscript like Vegetarian and Non-vegetarian should marked in the wrapper above the place of net weight in regional language(Tamil, as per this study) to make the rural consumers psychological satisfaction, since most of the rural consumers are not aware about the Logo.
TO THE MARKETERS AND PROMOTORS OF RTE FOODS

❖ Responses to RTE foods shows that rural consumers population of male are higher than female, hence new variety of products attracting them to be introduced in the market.

❖ Rural consumers are always keen on value for the money, hence more quantity than the prescribed net weight to be served not only on the specific period but also during all seasons in rural market.

❖ Unlike the individual rural consumers, always keen on price, the family purchasers are keen on quality. Hence marketers should capitalize the chance of promoting bulk-family packing with special quality RTE foods.

❖ Product visibility is a must for rural consumers. Product packing appealing is good as per the perception rural consumers.

❖ In order to improve the existing market of RTE foods marketers should keep in mind that they have to make available variety of products in their purchase locations such as nearby hospitals, schools, in front of hotels.

❖ At present, average income of a family is Rs.10,000 per month in rural area as per this study. Hence the marketers should concentrate not only the specific rural area alone but also continuously monitor the development of the region and the villages / towns surrounded in the region.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

➢ The study was carried out in the state of Tamil Nadu, there are many other states where the perception of rural consumers may be different. Studies can be undertaken in other states, many more of rural background.

➢ India is considered to be a country where consumption of RTE food is good. Research on a PhD level can be undertaken on state-wise comparing of rural markets with urban markets.
CONCLUSIONS

The Indian rural market has a huge demand base and offers great opportunities to marketers. Two-thirds of Indian consumers live in rural areas and almost half of the national income is generated here. The rural market is zooming ahead at around 25 per cent annually. The rural market is growing faster than urban India now.

In rural Tamil Nadu consumers are trading up, or spending on higher value products, more than their urban counterparts as conspicuous consumption gains momentum in the hinterlands. India’s Tier-4 (rural area / semi urban) consumers moved up the value chain by 37% purchase occasions against 31% in the metros in the past one year.

With increasing incomes and awareness levels, the needs and consumption in rural Tamil Nadu are converging with larger, more affluent urban. Rural Tamil Nadu consumer across income segments display both trading up and trading down tendencies, including the lower middle class with monthly earnings of Rs.7500-10000 spending more on 35% of their purchase occasions. These consumers trade up more on healthier food, better education for children and on superior personal and household care products.

Socio-economic changes (lifestyle, habits and tastes, economic status), Literacy level (25% before independence – more than 65% in 2001), Infrastructure facilities (roads, electricity, media), Increase in income, Increase in expectations are more favorable towards the growth rural RTE foods market as per the rural consumers perceptions.

The rural markets are now characterized by urban behaviours of modern life style / consumption behavior. Rural consumption pattern has changed over time and are having anxiety towards tasting and consumption of new varieties of RTE foods. The research study reveals that if the appropriate promotional strategies are adopted and channeled through retailers they can cover-up the rural market for RTE foods, whose market is big. Awareness about the availability of such RTE foods in rural market has to be done, so that marketers (Manufacturers, retailers) can gain more on the RTE food, in rural areas.