

# A Study on the Consumption of Processed Container Foods

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**Abstract:** Processed container foods are passed through a series of mechanical and chemical operations to preserve it for longer shelf life. Processed foods are those that come in tetra packs (box) and plastic or bottle containers with nutrient label which have more than one item on the list of ingredients. They are commercially prepared to ease the process of consumption. Some processed foods have artificial additives that are added for various purposes. The present study was aimed to know about the consumption of processed container foods among adults. The unstructured questionnaire was distributed among 100 participants. The study revealed that, 33% of the participants consume container foods weekly, 28% consume monthly and only 7% consume daily. Among the total respondents 43% consume because of the taste, 15% consume due to attractive look, 42% of them consume because of availability, 32% considered it has longer shelf life, 8% considered it as less expensive and 10% reported that they have some other reasons for the consumption of processed container foods. Among the participants, 39% of them preferred glass bottles, 33% preferred plastic bottles and only 28% of them preferred tetra pack. Most of the participants preferred banned container foods and 35% didn't use it, 8% of them think that container foods contain healthy nutrient components whereas 62% of them considered container foods to be non-nutritious and 30% does not have much awareness about the nutritional role in packages. Regarding the side effects on the usage of processed container foods only 15% of the participants reported that they had side effects, 25% of them are not aware of the side effects and the majority stated that there were no side effects.

**Keywords:** Processed container foods, Preservation, Consumption, Artificial additives.

## INTRODUCTION

Food is essential and important for human life. Healthy food provides nutrients and energy to develop, grow, be active, play, work, think and learn. Food plays an essential role in the endorsement of health and disease prevention. Humans have an innate feel of attachment to herbal things. Fast food won popularity of Indian palate after the multinational fast food players tailored the essential Indian food requirements viz. vegetarian meals and selected non vegetarian alternatives apart from red meat absolutely from their menu. Consumer way of life has been modified to devour extra comfort meals than domestic cooked food. However, in the present fast moving world, time has become precious; many have changed their food habits and shifted to several instant food products. Instant food products play a significant role in present day situation where both men and women are employed. Ready to eat meals are handy meals discovered in each family nowadays. It is already organized and equipped to eat or would possibly want water and heat for preparation. RTE meals is proliferating with a goal of young and working people. Changing way of life, busy work schedules, need for time to spend with family, and staying away from home are the primary motives for who prefer ready to eat meals. In South India, the acceptance level for ready to eat meals i.e., traditional food in a convenient form is high.

India is considered to be in the midst of a demographic, epidemiological and nutrition transition. Several factors such as growing population, increasing urbanization and changes in lifestyle are thought to be responsible for the occurrence of nutrition transition [1]. India's economic growth during the 1990s was relatively faster. During the post economic reforms period, a substantial change in various dimensions took place including dietary patterns along with rapid economic transformation [2-6]. The changes in dietary pattern were not uniform and varied with various socio-economic groups [7]. India, the country with the second largest population in the world, is facing an evolving challenge

of the double burden of malnutrition. On top of the persisting high burden of under nutrition, there is an increasing prevalence of obesity, which is a known risk factor for a range of diseases including several cancers and cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) [8]. These are known to be positively associated with changes in dietary and lifestyle patterns.

The nutrition transition is particularly characterized by a drastic change in the dietary pattern i.e., shifting away from a less varied and indigenous traditional form of diet to a varied diet. This type of diet mainly includes more processed container foods, animal foods, more fats and sugary products [9]. There has been a rapid increase in the consumption of carbonated drinks, fast foods and pre-packaged meals in Latin America, Asia and parts of Europe. Rapid urbanization has been shown to be positively linked to increased adaptation to western foods in many developing societies. Historically it is believed that Indian consumers have had higher priority for fresh foods rather than paying attention to the purchase of convenience food [10]. In a survey conducted by marketing and research group respondents were asked to rank the activities based on their priority. The results showed that cooking was given seventh rank out of the list of various activities as a leisure and personal interest. Increase in the number of working women brings a gradual change in the traditional lifestyle. This increases the demand for processed food products as they can be prepared easily and quickly [11]. It has been demonstrated through research that, younger Indian consumers are more open to novel food products and they have innate tendency of perceiving imported foods to have high quality in composition to locally produced products [12]. The present study was undertaken with an objective of exploring the consumption trends of processed container foods among various age group of 18 – 35 years.

## METHODOLOGY

A sample of 100 participants aged between 18 – 35 years are randomly selected from the longitudinal cohort of both males and females. Data was collected by distributing prepared questionnaires to the participants which consists of consumption, storage and disposal of processed food containers. The data were analysed by using Microsoft Excel and the results were expressed in percentage

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Background information of the respondents

**1.1 Age Group:** Among the selected subjects, 58% of the subjects were between the age of 21 – 23 years, 29% belongs to 18 - 20 years of age, eleven percentage belongs to 24 – 26 years of age, two percent belongs to 30 - 32 years of age. It was recorded that all the respondents were between the age group of 18 – 35 years from the longitudinal cohort of both males and females.

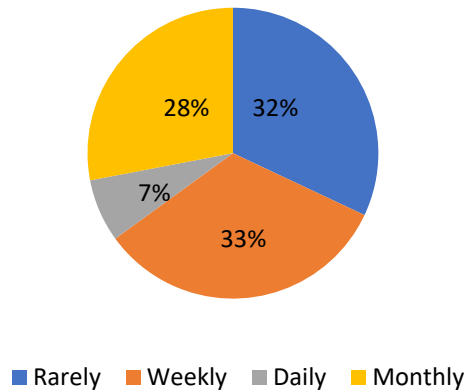
Age	No. of respondents ( n = 100 )	
	No	%
18 – 20	29	29
21 – 23	58	58
24 – 26	11	11
27 – 29	0	0
30 - 32	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### 2. Pattern of consumption of processed container foods among respondents

#### 2.1 Frequency of consumption of processed container foods

There has been an increase in the consumption of processed and packaged foods due to the fast-moving lifestyle of individuals. This change in traditional lifestyle and stimulated the demand for processed food products since they can be prepared easily and quickly. Regarding the frequency of consumption of processed container foods, it was revealed that 33% of the participants consume the container foods weekly, 32 % consume rarely, 28% consume monthly and only 7% consume daily.

**Frequency of consumption of processed container foods**

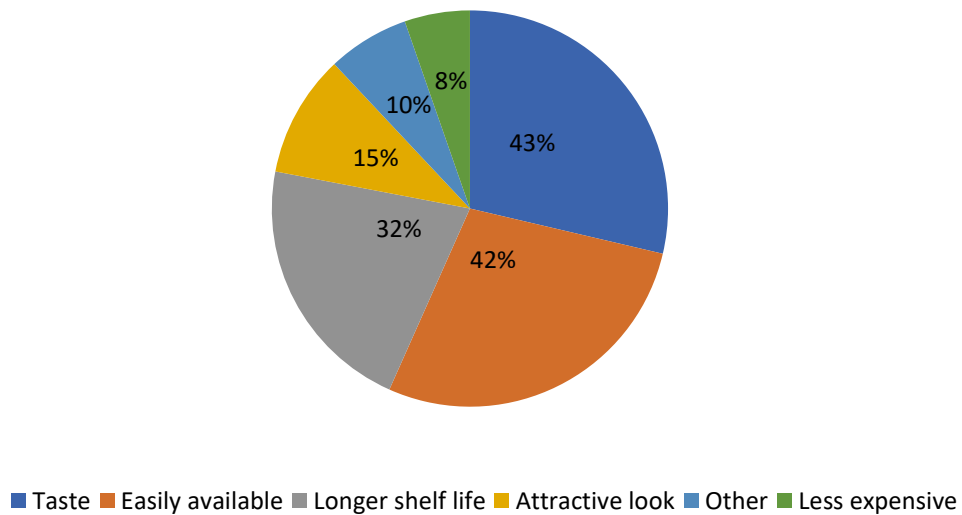


**Figure 1 Frequency of consumption of processed container foods**

**2.2 Attitude towards the consumption of processed container foods**

From the below figure 2 it is clear that among the total participants, 43% of them consume the processed container foods due to the taste, 42% of them consume as it is easily available, 32% consider it has longer shelf life, 15% consume as it has attractive look, 8 % consider it as less expensive and 10% reported other reasons for consumption of processed container foods.

**Attitude towards the consumption of processed container foods**

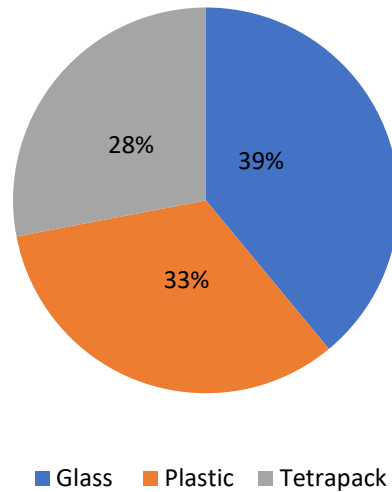


**Figure 2 Attitude towards the consumption of processed container foods**

**2.3 Type of containers preferred for consumption**

From the figure-3 below it was clear that among total participants, 39% of them prefer glass bottles, 33% prefer plastic bottles and only 28% of them prefer tetra packs.

**Type of containers preferred for consumption**

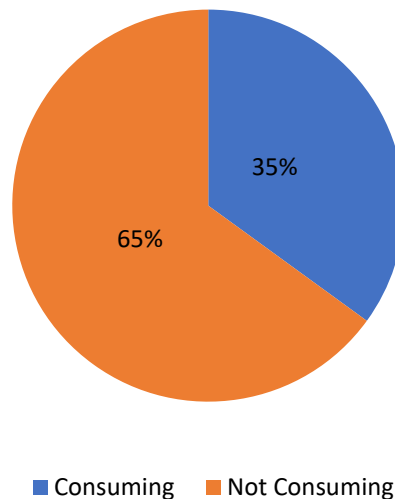


**Figure 3 Type of containers preferred for consumption**

**2.4 Consumption of banned container foods among people**

Figure-4 Regarding the frequency of consumption of banned container foods, 35% of total participants using banned container foods and majority 65% of them do not use banned container foods.

**Consumption of banned container foods among people**

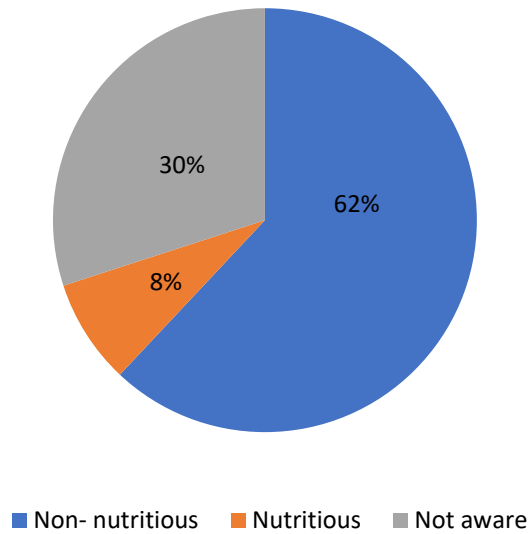


**Figure 4 Consumption of banned container foods among people**

**2.5 Peoples thought on the nutritional quality of container foods**

From the figure-5 below it was clear that among the total participants, majority 62% of them considered container foods to be non-nutritious, 8% of them considered container foods to be nutritious, and 30% did not have much awareness about the nutritional role of container foods.

### Peoples thought on the nutritional quality of container foods

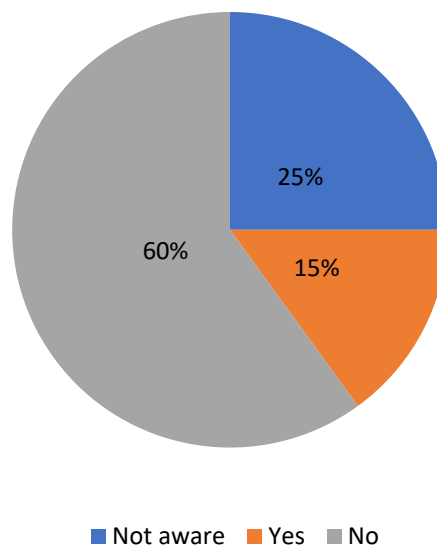


**Figure 5 Peoples thought on the nutritional quality of container foods**

### 2.6 Side effects on the usage of processed container foods

Figure-6 Regarding the side effects on the usage of processed container foods, only 15% of the participants reported that they had side effects, 25% of them are not aware of the side effects and the majority 60% of them stated that there were No side effects in using of container foods.

### Side effects on the usage of processed container foods



**Figure 6 Side effects on the usage of processed container foods**

**CONCLUSION**

The increasing acceptance of processed container foods is widely noticeable in the present world. Almost all food is processed some way or the other before it is consumed. Present study has tried to understand the attitude and consumption pattern of processed container foods among adults between the age group of 18 – 35 years. From the study it was clear that the majority of the participants did consume processed container foods regularly and the main reason for consumption was its Taste, Longer shelf life and Easy availability. Even though the majority of them believe that processed container foods are not nutritious when compared to that of normal food products.

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