

**A Study on Buying Behaviour for Branded Fine Rice in Kangeyam**

**Dr.S.Kalaiyarasi**

Asst. Prof and Head in the Department of Commerce, NIFT-TEA College of Knitwear Fashion, Tirupur

**Abstract**

This survey is mainly focused on the buying behavior of the consumer in purchasing rice and how it motivates them to purchase. Throughout the history rice has been one of man's most important foods. This unique grain helps sustain two-thirds of the world's population. The slogan "Rice is life" can be considered appropriate for our country as this crop plays a vital role in our national food security and is a means of livelihood for millions of rural households. The soil, rain and temperature in South India are more conducive for the growth of rice. As a result South Indians generally grew rice and ended up eating it in various forms. Similarly North Indians grew wheat as a major crop and ended up having it as part of their staple diet. The most crucial issue for the marketers is to identify the needs of the consumers. Only the identification of needs is of no value unless and until this is transformed into a meaningful and appropriate satisfiers. For this whole process of converting needs into actual satisfaction one needs to understand the complete make up of consumer's mind, and this process is known as consumer behavior. This study is based to identify the factors that influence the consumer buying behavior of rice in Kangeyam town.

Keywords: satisfaction, factors, consumer, buying behavior, respondents etc.,

**Introduction**

Rice is the edible starchy cereal grain. Roughly, one-half of world population including virtually all of East and Southeast Asia is wholly dependent upon rice as a staple food. 95 percent of the world's rice crop is eaten by humans. Majority of the human beings consume rice to sustain life. Human behavior in consumption process involves planning to make purchases, making purchases and evaluating purchases. Consumption behavior consists of both physical and mental activities. The physical activities involve visiting a shop, examining product, selecting product and the actual act of consumption.

A consumer making a purchase decision will be affected by the following three factors.

1. Personal
2. Psychological and
3. Social

The marketer must be aware of these factors in order to develop an appropriate strategy for its target market.

**Personal**

These are unique to a particular person. Demographic factors such as sex, race, age etc., will influence the decision making. Young people purchase things for different reasons than old people.

**Psychological factors**

Psychological factors include

**Motives**

A motive is an internal energizing force that orients a person's activities toward satisfying a need or achieving a goal. Actions are effected by a set of motives, not just one. If marketers can identify motives then they can better develop a marketing mix.

MASLOW hierarchy of needs are

- Physiological
- Safety
- Love and Belonging
- Esteem
- Self Actualization

There is a need to determine what level of the hierarchy the consumers are at, to determine what motivates their purchases.

### **Statement of the problem**

Consumer behavior is dynamic. Therefore it is necessary to continuously study, analyse and understand it and monitor this understanding. The producers and marketers of fine rice, who are primarily farmers and the rural entrepreneurs in India, should understand the product wise buying behavior of the consumers in the fast changing socio-economic environment and plan their marketing programmes accordingly. The changes in the socio-economic profile of the people such as increase in the level of literacy and increase in income have brought significant changes in the buying behavior of consumers. There is an increasing demand for branded high priced packaged quality rice. This necessitates that marketers must understand consumer needs, aspirations and expectations. In the light of the above backdrop, an attempt has been made to understand the buying behavior of consumers for branded rice. In this process the following questions arise

1. Which is the most preferred brand of rice?
2. Which are the factors influencing brand preference?
3. What are the factors considered by buyers in purchasing rice?

### **Review of previous studies**

A review of the following earlier studies enabled the researcher to formulate the present study.

Dr. Sanjaya, S.Gaur and K. Abdul waheed in their research work entitled “A study of Buying for Branded Fine Rice” made an analysis of the brand preference and satisfaction of consumers of Chennai in the purchase of branded fine rice. They concluded that most of the households purchase branded fine rice from rice mundy and a very small percentage of households are satisfied with the quality of rice.

The research conducted by international rice research institute, philipines in India shows that for every Indian 65 kg of rice is required per year. They also indicated that there would be likely increase in the consumption also. Hence for the million people we need 65 of rice. Hence for the growing population our country should produce 3.1% increase yield every year to become self sufficient.

N. Komarasamy in his research work entitled “A study on buyer behavior of C.R.S. Rubber Products in Banglore City” made an analysis of the buyer behavior of C.R.S products in Banglore city. He concluded that most of respondents are initiated by purchase manager to purchase CRS rubber products. According is him majority of the respondents make regular purchase and most of them are not satisfied with the credit policy.

S. Karthikeyan in his project work entitled “A study on consumer’s attitude towards ESSARS Gold Cream Biscuits with reference to Coimbatore District” stated that half of the respondents are having the opinion that price of Essars Gold Cream Biscuits are moderate and television media is the most attractive advertising media.

### **Scope of the study**

The study is confined to brand preferences of consumers towards rice and the factors influencing brand preference. The importance assigned to the product attributes have also been covered under this study.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are as follows

1. To understand consumer behavior in general
2. To study the socio-economic characteristics of the sample respondents and their purchasing pattern of rice.
3. To identify consumer brand preferences towards rice
4. To examine the factors influencing brand preference
5. To study factors considered by buyers while purchasing rice

### **Hypotheses**

To fulfill the fourth objective of this study the following null hypotheses have been formulated and tested.

- ❖ Brand preference is not influenced by the size of the family
- ❖ Brand preference is independent of level of education
- ❖ Brand preference does not depend on the occupation of consumers
- ❖ Consumers brand preference is independent of income level
- ❖ Religion does not influence brand preference
- ❖ Brand preference is independent of the location of residence of consumers

In order to achieve the fifth objective of study the following null hypotheses have been formulated and tested.

- ❖ The respondents of families of various sizes do not apply the same standards in the ranking of factors influencing purchase
- ❖ There is no similarity in the ranking of factors by the different educational categories
- ❖ Ranking of factors are not similar in the case of various occupational categories
- ❖ There is no agreement among respondents of various levels of income in the ranking of factors
- ❖ The respondents residing in various locations do not apply the same standards in ranking the various factors influencing purchase

### **Methodology and tools**

This study is an empirical research base on survey method. Data required for the study were collected through personal interviews of the decision makers in the households.

### **Sampling Scheme**

A sample of 100 respondents have been selected for the study. Consumers were selected from Kalimedu, Paliakadau, Kadaiyur, Nathakkadaiyur, Moorthi Reddipalayam, Sivanmalai, Nall road, Keeranoor, Uthiyur and Alambadi of Kangeyam Taluk. 10 households were selected from these places on a convenience basis making the sampling size 100.

### **Field work, Data Collection and processing of Data**

Field work was undertaken by the researcher during the period from September 2003 to January 2004. Consumers were contacted at their residence. By using the interview schedule, the researcher interviewed the consumers. Their responses were recorded in the schedule which were posted in the master table to facilitate further processing.

### **Framework of Analysis**

To accomplish the fourth objective of the study namely to examine the factors influencing brand preferences towards rice, consumers preferring various brands were identified. In order to test the significance of the relationship between demographic variables and brand preferences, Chi-square test has been employed.

To achieve the fifth objective of the study of identifying the factors considered while purchasing rice, ranks were allotted to the factors in the order of importance as the consumers felt. In order to determine the nature of relationship between the rankings of factors by consumers of various demographic characteristics, Kendall's co-efficient of concordance has been applied.

### **Limitations of the study**

The study covers consumers residing in different parts of Kangeyam Taluk only. Preferences of consumers of parts other than Kangeyam Taluk are not covered in the study.

Consumers preferring unbranded rice have been excluded from the study.

### **Rice cultivation scenario and popular brands**

The first objective of the study is to present a brief picture of the rice cultivation scenario in our country and the popular brands of rice in the market. This part has been devoted to fulfill this objective.

### **Rice Cultivation Scenario**

Rice is vital to more than half the world's population especially people of South Asian Countries. It is ultimately involved in the culture as well as food ways and economy of many societies. Globally rice (148 m ha) ranks second to wheat (232 m ha) in terms of area harvested, but in terms of importance as a food crop, rice provides more calories than any other cereal crop. Human consumption accounts for 85% of the total production for rice compared with 60% for wheat. Rice yield from one hectare could sustain 5.7 persons in a year compared to 5.3 for maize and 4.1 for wheat.

### **Cultivation**

More than 90 percent of the world's rice is grown in Asia, principally in China, India, Indonesia and Bangladesh with smaller amounts grown in Japan, Pakistan and various South East Asian nations. Rice is also cultivated in parts of Europe in North and South America and in Australia. The bulk of the rice cultivated in Asia is grown under water in flooded fields. Successful production depends on adequate irrigation, including construction of dams and water wheels and on the quality of the soil. The production of rice in India was 105482.1 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It decreased by -1163.4 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown a decrease of -1.09% as compared to the year 2013-14. There were 9 states having production of rice of more than 5000 thousand tonnes viz. West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, and Assam in 2014-15.

The production of rice in West Bengal was 14677.2 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It decreased by -693.5 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown a decrease of -4.51% as compared to the year 2013-14. The production of rice in Uttar Pradesh was 12167.9 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It decreased by -2468.1 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown a decrease of -16.86% as compared to the year 2013-14. The production of rice in Punjab was 11107 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It decreased by -160 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown a decrease of -1.42% as compared to the year 2013-14. The production of rice in Odisha was 8298.2 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It increased by 684.8 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown an increase of

8.99% as compared to the year 2013-14. The production of rice in Andhra Pradesh was 7233.9 tonnes in 2014-15. It increased by 264.2 tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown an increase of 3.79% as compared to the year 2013-14. The production of rice in Bihar was 6356.7 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It increased by 850.9 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown an increase of 15.45% as compared to the year 2013-14. The production of rice in Chhattisgarh was 6322.1 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It decreased by -394.3 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown a decrease of -5.87% as compared to the year 2013-14.

The production of rice in Tamil Nadu was 5727.8 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It increased by 378 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown an increase of 7.07% as compared to the year 2013-14. The production of rice in Assam was 5222.7 thousand tonnes in 2014-15. It increased by 295.6 tonnes in 2014-15. In percentage terms, it had shown an increase of 6% as compared to the year 2013-14.

### **1. North Eastern region**

This region comprises of Assam, West Bengal, South Bihar and Orissa. Rice is grown in the basins of Brahmaputra, Ganga and Mahanadhi rivers and are known for the highest intensity of cultivation in the country. This region enjoys heavy rainfall and here mostly rice is grown mainly under rainfed conditions.

### **2. Souther region**

This area comprises of deltaic tracts of Godavari, Krishna, Cauvery and Tambraparani rivers and non-deltaic rainfed areas of Tamil Nadu and Andhara Pradesh.

### **3. West coast region**

Kerala and the Costal Districts of Karanataka and Maharashtra comes under this. There is heavy rainfall during the monsoon period. Rice is grown under rainfed conditions.

### **4. Central region**

Madhya Pradesh, Telegana region of Andhra Pradesh and parts of Karnataka are the Central regions cultivating rice. Except in Andhra Pradesh, rice is grown as rainfed crop.

### **5. Northern region**

Northern region comprises of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and North Bihar. These areas have low winter temperatures and only a single crop of rice is raised from May – June to September – October.

### **Popular Brands of Rice**

Popular brands of rice available for the buyers in the market in the study are shown here.

#### **Ponni**

Ponni is one of the brands available in the markets in TamilNadu. This brand include its varieties such as Deluxe, White Ponni etc.

#### **Delux**

Table Presents information about prices of different package sizes available in the market.

**Delux**

Package Size	Price(Rs)
10 kg pack	170
25 Kg pack	455
75 kg pack	1275

As per above table deluxe brand is available in 10kg pack, 25 kg pack and 75 kg packs. Delux brand is the highest priced when compared to IR-20, Emergency etc.,

**White Ponni**

White Ponni another popular variety of Ponni which is priced high next to deluxe. The peacakge size with various prices are presented in Table.

**White Ponni**

Package Size	Price(Rs)
10 kg pack	150
25 Kg pack	410
75 kg pack	1200

Table above indicates that white ponni, is commonly sold in packages of 10 kg, 25 kg and 75 kg. The price of this variety is higher when compare to IR-20, Emergency, etc.

**IR-20**

The below Table presents details about prices of IR-20

**IR-20**

Package Size	Price(Rs)
10 kg pack	130
25 Kg pack	310
75 kg pack	900

It is obvious from that 75 kg pack of IR-20 Rs.900. Its price is low when compared to Ponni brand.

**Emergency**

Emergency is another popular brand of rice. Price is slightly higher than IR-20. The details of this brand are shown in Table.

**Emergency**

Package Size	Price(Rs)
10 kg pack	135
25 Kg pack	315
75 kg pack	925

Table shows that Emergency brand is sold commonly in packages of 10kg, 25 kg and 75 kg. It is priced higher than IR-20

**CO-43**

CO-43 is also one of popular brands. Information regarding availability of package size of CO-43 brand is presented in Table

**CO-43**

<b>Package Size</b>	<b>Price(Rs)</b>
10 kg pack	120
25 Kg pack	275
75 kg pack	825

From Table it is understood that price of CO-43 is lower when compared to ponni, IR-20 and Emergency etc.

**Bhavani**

Bhavani brand is also a popular brand of rice. It is also sold in packages of different sizes. The price details are given in Table

**Bhavani**

<b>Package Size</b>	<b>Price(Rs)</b>
10 kg pack	180
25 Kg pack	460
75 kg pack	1350

Table show that the price of Bhavani brand is higher when compared to Ponni, IR-20, Emergency etc.

**BRAND PREFERENCE AND FACTORS INFLUENCING BRAND PREFERENCE**

Brand preference of consumers towards a product may be influenced by many factors. This chapter makes an analysis of consumer brand preference towards rice and the factors influencing brand preference of sample respondents.

**Brands preferred**

Brands preferred by the sample respondents are shown in the following Table

**Brands preferred**

<b>Brands</b>	<b>No.of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ponni	50	50%
IR-20	26	26%
Emergency	14	14%
Co-43	4	4%
Bhavani	6	6%
Total	100	100%

Table shows that Ponni brand is preferred by majority of the respondents followed by IR-20. The least preferred brand is CO-43.

**Influencing factors**

The influence of socio-economic factors on consumers brand preference is studied under the following heads.

**Size of family and brand preference**

According to the number of members in the family, the size of family have been classified into three groups such as small, medium and large sized families. The brand preferences of these three types of families are presented in Table 4.2

**Size of family and brand preference**

Category	Ponni	IR-20	Emergency	Bhavani	CO-43	Total
Small	7(41)	5(29)	5(29)	-	-	17
Medium	42(51)	21(26)	9(11)	6(7)	4(5)	82
Large	1(100)	-	-	-	-	1
Total	50	26	14	6	4	100

Table 4.2 shows that Ponni is preferred by majority of all the three categories of families. In the case of medium sized families next preference is towards IR-20. Small families prefer emergency and IR-20 brands also.

So it is found that irrespective of family size majority of the respondents prefer the same brand i.e., Ponni brand of rice.

In order to test the significance of the relationship between size of family and brand preference. The following null hypothesis is formulated and tested here.

“Brand preference is not influenced by the size of family”

**Chi-square test:**

Degrees of freedom: 8

Calculated value: 9.901178

Table value at 5% level: 15.507

The calculated value of X<sup>2</sup> is less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis holds good and it is concluded that irrespective of the size of family brand preference is the same.

**Level of education and brand preference**

In order to study the relationship between education and brand preference he brands of rice preferred by the various educational categories are presented in Table

**Level of education and brand preference**

Category	Ponni	IR-20	Emergency	Bhavani	CO-43	Total
School educated	21(49)	14(32)	6(14)	2(5)	-	43
College educated	28(60)	8(16)	7(16)	3(6)	1(2)	47
Un educated	1(10)	4(40)	1(10)	1(10)	3(30)	10
Total	50	26	14	6	4	100



Table shows that the majority of the school educated and college educated respondents prefer Ponni brand. In the case of uneducated respondents IR-20 is the most preferred brand.

So it is understood that brand preference varies according to the difference in the level of education.

In order to study the significance of the relationship between education and brand preference the following null hypothesis has been formulated and tested.

“Brand preference is independent of level of education”

**Chi-square test:**

Degrees of freedom: 8

Calculated value: 28.238468

Table value at 5% level: 15.507

The calculate value of X<sup>2</sup> is greater than the table value and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It is therefore concluded that brand preference is dependent on the level of education.

**Occupation and brand preference**

The occupation of the respondents are agriculture, business, employed and professionals. The relationship between occupation and brand preference are shown in Table

**Occupation and brand preference**

Category	Ponni	IR-20	Emergency	Bhavani	CO-43	Total
Agriculture	7(25)	12(42)	5(17)	2(7)	2(9)	28
Business	21(51)	9(22)	6(15)	4(10)	1(2)	41
Employed	15(68)	4(18)	2(9)	-	1(5)	22
Professionals	7(78)	1(11)	1(11)	-	-	9
Total	50	26	14	6	4	100

From Table it is understood that all the occupational categories prefer Ponni brand except agriculturists. Lower percentage of the Agricultural category prefer Ponni brand. Majority of them prefer IR-20. Ponni is preferred by higher percentage of employed and professional categories.

It is found that brand preference varies according to the occupation of the respondents.

To analyse the significance of the relationship between occupation and brand preference the following null hypothesis is formulated and tested.

“Brand preference does not depend on the occupation of consumers”.

**Chi-square test:**

Degrees of freedom: 12

Calculated value: 21.325803

Table value at 5% level: 21.026

The calculated value of X2 is greater than the table value. So, the null hypothesis does not hold good. Therefore brand preference is dependent on the occupation of the consumers.

**Family Income and Brand preference**

According to the monthly family income three classifications have been made such as those whose monthly income is below Rs.5000, Rs 5000-Rs10000 and income above Rs 10000. The relationship between brand preference and family income are analysed here.

**Family Income and Brand Preference**

Category	Ponni	IR-20	Emergency	Bhavani	CO-43	Total
Below Rs. 5000	4(24)	7(41)	5(29)	-	1(6)	17
Rs.5000 to Rs.10000	13(35)	13(35)	5(14)	3(8)	3(8)	37
Above Rs.10000	33(33)	6(13)	4(8)	3(7)	-	46
Total	50	26	14	6	8	100

As per above Table highest percentage of the respondents whose monthly family income is above Rs.10000 prefer Ponni brand. In the case of respondents whose monthly income is Rs5000 to Rs10000, higher percentage prefer IR-20 brand followed by Ponni brand. IR-20 brand is preferred by higher percentage of the respondents whose monthly income is below Rs5000. The second preference of this category is Emergency brand.

It is thus found that brand preference varies according to the difference in the level of income.

In order to test the significance of the relationship between family income and brand preference following null hypothesis has been formulated and tested.

“Consumers brand preference is independent of income level”

**Chi-square test:**

Degrees of freedom: 8

Calculated value: 23.35061

Table value at 5% level: 15.507

Since the calculated X2 value is greater than the table value, the null hypothesis that brand preference is independent of income level does not hold good.

**Religion and brand preference**

Brand preference of consumers based on their religion is given in Table 4.6

**Religion and brand preferences**

Category	Ponni	IR-20	Emergency	Bhavani	CO-43	Total
Hindus	47(52)	21(24)	11(12)	6(7)	4(5)	89
Christians	3(27)	5(45)	3(28)	-	-	11
Total	50	26	14	6	4	100

Table reveals that majority of the Christians respondents prefer IR-20 and Emergency. Higher percentage of the Hindus prefer Ponni brand. So brand preference varies according to the difference in religion.

The significance of the relationship between religious belief and brand preference is tested for which the following null hypothesis is formulated.

“Religion does not influence brand preference”

**Chi-square test:**

Degrees of freedom: 4

Calculated value: 6.8559302

Table value at 5% level: 9.488

The calculated value of X<sup>2</sup> is less than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Location of residence and brand preference**

In order to study the relationship between location of residence and brand preference, the brands preferred by the categories residing in different locations are presented in the following table.

**Location of residence and brand preference**

Category	Ponni	IR-20	Emergency	Bhavani	CO-43	Total
Rural	30(41)	23(32)	10(14)	6(8)	4(5)	73
Semi-Urban	8(53)	3(20)	4(27)	-	-	15
Urban	12(100)	-	-	-	-	12
Total	50	26	14	6	4	100

Table indicates that higher percentage of all categories of respondents prefer Ponni brand. Rural consumers give second preference to IR-20 brand, followed by Emergency, Bhavani, and Co-43.

To study the significance of relationship between location of residence of consumers and brand preference the following null hypothesis is formulated and tested.

“Brand preference is independent of the location of residence of consumer”

**Chi-square test:**

Degrees of freedom: 8

Calculated value: 33.663465

Table value at 5% level: 15.507

The calculated value of X<sup>2</sup> is greater than the table value and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. So it is concluded that brand preference is dependent on the location of residence.

**Conclusion**

Brand preference and influencing factors have been analysed in this chapter. The following are the concluding observations:

- ❖ Higher percentage of respondents prefer Ponni brand.
- ❖ Size of family does not have significant influence over brand preference.
- ❖ Level of education, occupation, family income, and geographical location of residence of consumers are found to have significant influence over brand preference of consumers.
- ❖ Religious belief does not influence consumers brand preference towards rice.

**Factors considered in brand preference**

The fifth objective of the study is to identify the factors considered by respondents in their purchase decision. This chapter has been devoted to fulfill this objective. Factors considered by respondents while choosing a particular brand varies from buyer to buyer. The importance assigned to factors by the sample respondents have been studied here. Respondents have been asked to assign ranks to the various factors.

Scores have been allotted to ranks such as 7,6,5,4,3,2 and 1 for ranks 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7. Total scores have calculated for the factors by adding up the scores. Overall ranking of the factors have been done based on the total score, so obtained for the factors. This information is presented in Table.

**Factors Scores**

Factors	Total score	Rank
Quality	630	1
Brand image	529	3
Retailers influence	274	5
Price	530	2
Ready availability	326	4
Packaging	255	7
Credit facilities	256	6

As per Table 5.2 quality of rice gets the highest score. Therefore, this factor has been ranked as one. Price gets the second highest score followed by brand image, ready availability, retailers influence, credit facilities and packing. It is found that quality is the most important factor for buyers to select a brand and price is the second important factor.

Relationship between demographic variables and factors considered in brand preference

In order to study the factors considered by sample respondents in choosing the brand of rice mean factor scores for the attributes have been calculated for the demographic variables, and are presented as follows.

**Size of family and importance of factors**

The importance given to the factors by the families of different sizes are presented in Table

**Size of Family and Factor Scores**

Factors	Size of Family/scores		
	Small Family	Medium Family	Large Family
	Mean Score	Mean Score	Mean Score
Quality	5.88	6.39	6.00
Brand Name	5.47	5.23	7.00
Retailers influence	2.58	2.76	3.00
Price	5.64	5.24	4.00
Ready availability	3.64	3.15	5.00
Packaging	3.35	2.40	1.00
Credit facilities	2.00	2.68	2.00

Mean score is found to be the highest for quality in the case of small and medium sized families as per Table 5.2. Brand name gets the highest score in the case of large families followed by quality and ready availability.

It is found that importance given to the factors in taking purchase decision varies according to the size of family.

**Size of family and ranking of factors**

Based on the mean factor scores ranking has been done. These ranks are presented in Table.

**Size of family and factor ranking**

K=3 size of family	Quality	Brand name	Retailers influence	Price	Ready availability	Packaging	Credit facilities
Small family	1	3	6	2	4	5	7
Medium Family	1	3	5	2	4	7	6
Large Family	2	1	5	4	3	7	6
Sum of Ranks(Rj)	4	7	16	8	11	19	19
(Rj-Rj)2	64	25	16	16	1	49	49

Rj=84

S=220

The ranking of factors are not similar for the different family sizes as per Table 5.3

In order to study the relationship between size of family and importance assigned to factors rank correlation analysis has been made and the results are shown here.

$$R_j = \frac{\sum R_j}{N}$$

=84/7=12.

S=220

kendall's Co-efficient of concordance

$$W = \frac{S}{\frac{1}{12k^2}[N^3-N]}$$
$$= \frac{220}{\frac{1}{12}[3^2][7^3-7]}$$
$$= 220/252$$
$$= 0.897$$

This shows that there is a high degree of correlation between the rankings factors by the consumers of different categories.

The significance of the value is also tested by formulating the following null hypothesis.

“The respondents of families of various sizes do not apply the same standards in the ranking of factors influencing purchase”.

Calculated Value: S=220, W=0.873

Table Value:

At 5% level for k=3, N=7, S=157.3

Calculated value is higher than the Table value. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This shows that w=0.873 is significant.

#### **Inference:**

- i) The ranking of factors are independent of the size of family.(i.e) families of various sizes assume the same standard in ranking the seven factors.
- ii) Lowest value among Rankings (R<sub>j</sub>)=4. This shows that families of all sizes give more importance to quality of rice in their purchase decision.

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Majority of the human beings consume rice to sustain life. Human behavior in consumption process involves planning to make purchases, making purchase and evaluating purchases. Consumption behavior consists of both physical and mental activities. Without a sound knowledge of the reasons why consumers buy its goods or services, a company cannot expect to create marketing strategies and promotional plans that work. Consumers are constantly being bombarded with marketing information and promotional messages. Messages about new product launches, special product promotions, and low price offers are everywhere, from television advertisements to web site banners.

This study has been conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- ❖ To understand consumer behavior in general
- ❖ To study the socio-economic characteristics of the sample respondents and their purchasing pattern of rice
- ❖ To identify consumer brand preferences towards rice
- ❖ To examine the factors influencing brand preference
- ❖ To study the factors considered by buyers while purchasing rice

#### **FINDINGS**

The findings of the study are:

##### **Demographic profile**

Majority of the sample respondents are from medium sized families.

Higher percentage of the respondents are college educated.

Occupation wise classification shows that majority of the respondents are engaged in business.

Higher percentage of the respondents monthly income is above Rs.10000 engaged in business.

Higher percentage of the respondents monthly income is above Rs.10000.

Classification of respondents based on their religious belief shows that majority of them follow Hinduism.

Majority of the respondents are from rural areas.

### **Rice cultivation scenario and popular brands**

Analysis of rice cultivation scenario and popular brands revealed that.

West Bengal has the highest area of paddy cultivation. Productivity is the highest in Punjab.

❖ Production of rice increased every year, especially after independence.

Production of paddy is 88% of the production of total cereals on an average in our country.

❖ Popular brands of rice in the study area are Ponni, IR-20, and Emergency, Bhavani and CO-43.

❖ Deluxe Ponni is the highest priced of the popular brands of rice, next to Bhavani in the study area.

### **Product usage profile**

❖ Product usage profile indicates that;

Ponni is the brand of rice consumed by majority of the families.

❖ Husband is the purchase decision maker in majority of the families.

❖ Family members provide information about rice in the case of majority of the respondents.

❖ Purchasing pattern shows that majority of the families make purchase of rice on a quarterly basis.

❖ As regards the size of package purchased, one bag of rice is purchased by majority of the families at a time.

❖ Rice mundy is the place of purchase for a higher percentage of the respondents.

❖ Majority of the respondents expect soft and boiled rice.

Higher percentage of the respondents are willing to pay up to 25% increase in price if the brand suits their needs.

### **Brand preference and factors influencing brand preference**

❖ Brand preference and factors influencing brand preference revealed that

❖ Higher percentage of respondents prefer Ponni brand

❖ Size of family does not have significant influence over brand preference

❖ Level of education, Occupation, family income and geographical location of residence of consumers are found to have significant influence over brand preference of consumers.

❖ Religious belief does not influence consumers brand preference towards rice

### **Factors considered in brand preference**

Analysis of factors considered by consumers while purchasing rice indicated that

Quality of rice is the most important factor for consumers in choosing the brand of rice followed by price, brand image and ready availability.

Analysis of the relationship between demographic variables and standards used in ranking of factors show that consumers belonging to different family sizes, levels of education, Occupation, income and those residing in different locations apply the same standards in the ranking of factors in their purchase decision.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the findings of the study the following suggestions are made here.

It is found that demographical characteristics like education, occupation, family income and location of residence of consumers have significant influence over consumer's brand preference. So it is suggested that marketers formulate their marketing strategy accordingly.

Quality of rice is the most important factor for all the consumers. So, the primary task of the marketers is to assure and maintain the quality of rice.

Ponni is the most preferred brand by all the respondents except agriculturists. So, it is suggested that this brand of rice be made available at all times so that consumers can get it when needed.

### **Conclusion**

Buying behavior is dynamic. So, the producer and marketers need to continuously study, analyse, monitor and evaluate this understanding. In the Indian context especially social, economical, political and environmental scenario Contribute to the changes in the buying behavior of consumers.

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