

**EFFECTS OF CONVENIENCE FOODS ON CONSUMER EATING HABITS IN 3-
STAR HOTELS IN MACHAKOS TOWN, MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY,
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NOVEMBER, 2024

DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree or for any similar purpose in any other institution

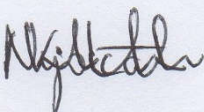
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Declaration by the Supervisor

This research project has been submitted with my approval as University supervisor.

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My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Nyokabi Kibathi for her intellectual leadership, support and innovative ideas which have made me to be able to write this research proposal.

May God bless you abundantly.

For the others not listed, I offer my hearty thanks. God bless you all.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my Lovely wife and daughters for the support they gave me while compiling this project.

Am also indebted to dedication to this project to my classmates, for their valuable support throughout compilation of this work.

May God bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

This research proposal is subdivided in to three main subsections or chapters, which have been named as chapter one, chapter two and the chapter three.

Chapter one, also referred to as the introduction and it contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, the research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study and definitions of terms.

Chapter two, also referred to as the literature review contains the introduction bit of it, review of related studies which has been categorized in to theoretical review, empirical review, critical review, and a summary of the above. In general the chapter contains literature material which has been sourced or obtained from other written documents such as books, magazines, journals among others.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This is the first chapter of the research and it contains; background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and conceptual frame work.

1.1 Background to the Study

Convenience foods are defined by Peter J. and H. Brembeck (1975), as fully prepared or partially prepared food items where some or all of the preparation time, culinary skills, or energy inputs are provided by the food processor-distributor rather than in the homemaker's kitchen. Also according to Anderson J. and Deskins B. (1995), convenience food is defined as commercially prepared foods designed for ease of consumption. Convenience foods are often prepared food stuffs that can be sold as hot, ready-to-eat dishes; as room-temperature, shelf-stable products; or as refrigerated or frozen food products that require minimal preparation. Convenience foods are also described as foods that have been created to "make them more appealing to the customers." Their development saves overall time of preparation of the food.

In the past, convenience foods were used by *Aztec* people in central Mexico that required only addition of water for preparation, which was used by travellers. The common used one by the travellers was cornmeal that was dried, often referred to as *pinolli*. In United States, canned convenience food occurred and was used by military during World War I, and the proliferation of World War II contributed to the development of frozen foods.

The modernity of convenience foods became more widespread in the United States after World War II. Many of these products had their origin in military developed foods designed

for storage longevity and ease of preparation in the battle fields. Following the war, several commercial food company thrived to continue with the preparation of convenience foods and these phenomenon spread to all other parts of the world.

Today there are variety of convenience foods and vary by country and geographical regions. According to Traub and Odland (1975), convenience foods are disaggregated into three classes, namely; basic convenience foods, complex convenience foods and manufactured convenience foods. The basic convenience food class processing is performed for preservation purpose and consist of a single or limited number of ingredients and require little or no culinary experience. They consists of such items as canned and frozen fruits, vegetables, and juices; shelled nuts; frozen fresh fillets; and yogurt. Complex convenience foods embody multiple ingredients, provide high levels of time saving and or energy inputs, and have culinary expertise built in. The complex class consist of food items that the layman normally thinks of as convenience foods; that is, it consists of items such as frozen and canned entrees, frozen desserts, pudding mixes, canned soups, ready-to-eat cookies, cakes, breads, and rolls. The manufactured convenience food class consist of items with no home-prepared counterparts. This group consists most of the carbonated and alcoholic beverages, breakfast toaster pastries, saltines, dry cereals, and so forth. All this three classes of convenience foods according to Anderson J. and Deskins B. (1995), are often sold in portion controlled, single serve packaging designed for profitability

Kenya has not been an exception in this tremendous development and growth of convenience foods. In all malls and shop outlets in Kenya are heavily stocked with vast variety of convenience foods ranging from processed canned foods to freshly prepared and packaged

foods kept in cold rooms and shelves for convenient choice by customers. The current trend in Kenyan market is ready made and cooked indigenous foods in the malls.

Kenyan eating habits and culture have been heavily influenced by inception of convenience foods. Kenyans are known by their indigenous foods which are freshly cultivated, harvested, prepare, cooked without additions off any additives and served immediately to customers. With changes in living standards, urbanization, jobs and varied income, increase in career women, time available for families to be together, beliefs and advancement in technology for instance internet and cooking ware, the beliefs, values and eating habits have changed tremendously from their indigenous foods to heavily depend on convenience foods. This has affected their indigenous food culture to mall-to-mall culture in search of convenience foods. This change in culture has given convenience foods manufacturers to tailor make the food items and package them exceptionally appealing to attract impulse buying by the customers. The era of cooking fresh indigenous foods has been replaced with purchasing of ready to eat foods which are either partially or fully prepared which only needs warming and serve to customers. This takes a maximum of up to 10 minutes unlike cooking fresh foods which might take up to two hours. For convenience foods to stay for long, they have been impregnated with a lot of chemicals, preservatives, and packed in all sorts of packaging.

This increasing trend of convenience foods have been criticised because of numerous issues. Several groups have cited the environmental harm of single serve packaging due to the increased usage of plastics that contributes to solid waste in landfills. Due to concerns about obesity and other health problems, some health organizations have criticised the high fat, salt, preservatives and additives contents that is present in some convenience foods. In conclusion, Kenyans fondly said saying “Muacha mila ni mtumwa” has long been watered down by

inception of convenience foods. Kenyans have to re-look on their rich agricultural land, diverse ethnicity and culture, varied ethnic cuisines, their beliefs and values, and stand above their active kitchen role and embrace competence cooking phenomenon. This not only improves on indigenous food cuisines but also will reduce the use of convenience foods which are a health hazard to consumers and environmentalist will stop crying fowl of pollution and hence foster health eating.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Kenya is an agricultural country with different communities cultivating different staple foods for their own consumption and for sale. This concept makes Kenyans to be dignified by their indigenous foods which are freshly cultivated, harvested, prepared, cooked without additions off any additives and served immediately to customers.

With changes in living standards, urbanization, jobs and varied income, increase in career women, time available for families to be together, beliefs and advancement in technology for instance internet and cooking ware, the beliefs, values and eating habits have changed tremendously from their indigenous foods to heavily depend on convenience foods.

Kenyan eating habits and culture have been heavily influenced by inception of convenience foods. This has affected their indigenous food culture to mall-to-mall culture in search of convenience foods. This change in culture has given convenience foods manufacturers to tailor make the food items and package them extraordinary appealing to attract impulse buying by the customers. For convenience foods to stay for long, they have been impregnated with a lot of chemicals, preservatives, and packed in all sorts of packaging. This increasing trend on use convenience foods have left many with no option rather than forgo their indigenous foods not knowing the effect the convenience foods have on their health, environment and long run consequences.

1.3 Purpose of the study

This study seeks to find out the effects of convenience foods on consumer eating habits.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

In this research, different variables were used to analyze the data. The variables comprised of:-

- a) Dependent variable
 - Customer eating habit- These variable depend on the independent variable; that is, their presence has to be as result of another variable.
- b) Independent variables will be convenience food which will be viewed under;
 - Growth of convenience foods
 - Types of convenience foods
 - Customers eating trends
 - Nutritional value of convenience foods
 - Advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods

The independent variable will form basis of how the dependent variable behaves and it is a measurable character that assumes different variables.

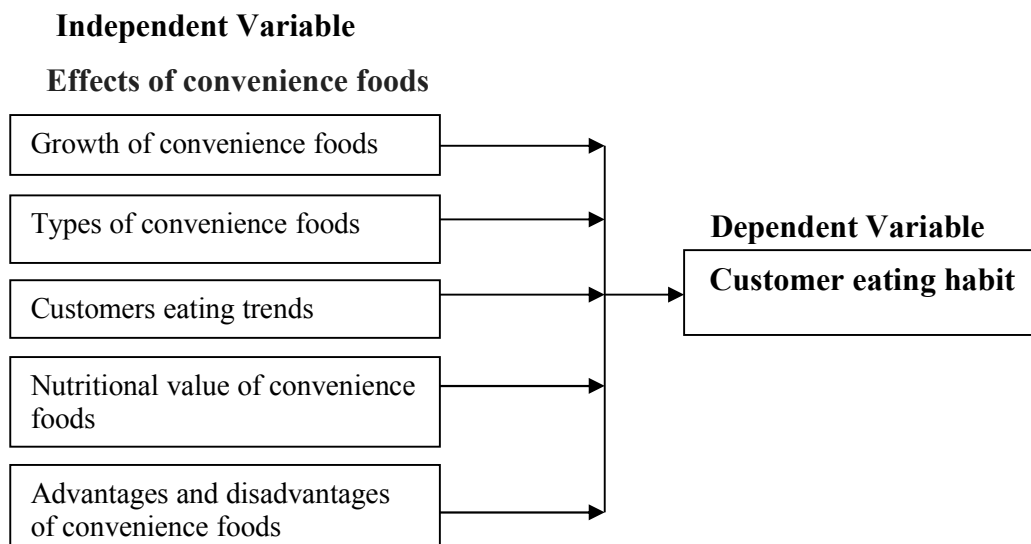


Figure 1.1: A conceptual model of the relationships between study variables

Source: Researcher

The conceptual framework forms the basis for the formulation of the research objectives that guided the researcher throughout the research process.

1.5 Research Questions

The research will seek to answer the following;

- i) What are the reasons for the rampant growth of convenience foods?
- ii) Which are the common types of convenience foods used and what are their nutritional values?
- iii) What are the customers eating trends or habits in respect to convenience foods?
- iv) What are the advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods?

1.6 Research objectives

To achieve the intended results the researcher will be guided by research objectives which will be both general and specific objectives.

1.6.1 General Objectives

The general objective will be to establish the effects of convenience foods on customer eating habits.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

The research proposal will be guided by the following objectives;

- i) To establish the reasons for rampant growth of convenience foods.
- ii) To determine the common types of convenience food used and their nutritional value.
- iii) To identify customers eating trends in respect to convenience foods.
- iv) To establish the advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods.

1.7 Hypotheses of the study

- i) Customer eating habits has significantly led to the growth of production and packaging of convenience foods.
- ii) Convenience foods have possess high nutritional values and are presented to customers in many types.

iii) Customer eating trends have greatly changed due to introduction of convenience foods.

iv) Convenience foods come with advantages but also with a number of disadvantages.

1.8 Significance of the study

The study will be beneficial to various individuals, organizations and even the government. The government, through the ministry Agriculture to get to know the intensity of the use of convenience food in the county, hence plan for food festivals to educate the public on health eating habits. The ministry can also use the information to propagate on farming methods and techniques to increase the production of fresh foods. The ministry can still come up with pricing strategies and policies to regulate the pricing of convenience foods hence make fresh foods affordable for common mwananchi.

The regulatory bodies can also use the information to regulate the licensing of convenience foods so as to cut down unworthy competition of convenience foods o fresh foods.

The researcher himself will also gain knowledge on the intensity of use of convenience foods, their impacts on fresh foods, and may use this to advice people on the changes in eating habits.

This information may be used to advice the hoteliers on the changing habits of customers and they can use this to project on customers eating habits and plan on improving on profit margins and customer satisfactions.

The information may also be useful to future researchers as they may use this as a basis of critical review of their researches and may use the information to improve on the existing literature.

1.9 Scope of the study

The researcher intends to carry out the research in three star hotels within Machakos town.

The targeted population will contain the employees of three star hotels within Machakos town and the sample size will be selected from the total population.

The research will be carried out between January to April 2024.

The research will concentrate on the effects of convenience foods on customer eating habits in three star hotels within Machakos town.

1.10 Limitation of the study

These are the hindrances or problems that the researcher thinks he may encounter when carrying out his study. These problems include:-

i) Harsh climatic conditions

January to April is the hottest season in Machakos and this is the time the research intends to carry out the research. This will be a challenge for the researcher to move from one place to another. The researcher intends to procure an umbrella and use Tuk tuk as the means of transport to move from one place to another though this may be very expensive for the researcher.

ii) Responses from the respondents

Many of the respondents may not be willing to fill the questionnaires, or to answer the interview questions in fear of being victimised or their business secrets being disclosed. This problem may result to the researcher taking more time to carry out the research as he will have to explain in depth, why the research is being carried out. The researcher intends to have a briefing with all the respondents so as to explain to them the purpose of the researcher and what are the benefits accrued from the research.

iii) Language barrier

Due to language barrier, the researcher thinks that some of the respondents may not give a viable feedback when they fail to understand the contents of the question or interpret it

wrongly. To counter this, the researcher intends to explain the question on research instruments to respondents so that the respondents may understand all the questions on the research instrument.

iv) Distance

The research will be carried out in Machakos town which covers a dimension of about 10 km². This distance will be too big for the researcher to carry out his researcher. The researcher plans to use relevant modes of transport available to move from one area to another. This will not only be conducive but also expensive for the researcher but conduciveness will outway the expensive aspect.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a record of what other researcher and other scholars have written in relation to the topic under investigation and research. The information will be collected from secondary sources of data especially literature materials such as books, journals, magazines, other researcher's findings and any other relevant deemed right. This information in this chapter will be outlined under theoretical review, empirical review, critical review and the conclusion and gap identification.

The researcher in this chapter has extensively carried out a literature review on the impacts of convenience foods on customer eating habits in 3-star hotels; which is the topic of study. The literature will be organized and directed by the objectives of the study which will form the basis of outlining the information

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Growth of Convenience Foods

According to Anderson J. and Deskins B. (1995), in the past, convenience foods were used by *Aztec* people in central Mexico that required only addition of water for preparation, which was used by travellers. The common used one by the travellers was cornmeal that was dried, often referred to as *pinolli*. In United States, canned convenience food occurred and was used by military during World War I, and the proliferation of World War II contributed to the development of frozen foods industry.

The modernity of convenience foods became more widespread in the United States after World War II. Many of these products had their origin in military developed foods designed for storage longevity and ease of preparation in the battle fields. Following the war, several

commercial food company thrived to continue with the preparation of convenience foods and these phenomenon spread to all other parts of the world.

According to Thomas T. and Pant S. (2012), nothing is constant in this universe, change is evident and we can feel it everywhere be it the changing environment, business, fashion, lifestyle, or food. Today we are living in a very fast-paced life, people are ambitious and career-oriented, families have both the members (husband and wife) working and with more and more households experiencing two-parent income, it makes meal time harder than ever to get together. Now, with more moms working outside of the home, there is simply not enough time to prepare meals. The previous generation of women would customarily be the homemakers who took care of preparing these meals; this is no longer the case today. Further, our ways of cooking have changed since more households are experiencing drastic change in eating habits, and meals need to be prepared as quickly and conveniently as possible in order to keep up with the pace of life. This is where convenience food has begun to fill the gap. More and more people now are dependent on convenience food as well as pre-packaged items to help them facilitate their day to day activity. Products designated as convenience foods are often prepared food stuffs that are sold as hot, ready-to-eat dishes; as room-temperature, shelf-stable products; or as refrigerated or frozen products that require minimal preparation. These products are often sold in portion controlled, single serve packaging designed for portability. Then there are some packaged mixes which require some preparation and cooking either in the oven or on the stove top.

Thomas T. and Pant S. (2012), point that there are various other reasons which have gradually resulted in the rise and growth of convenience food in the country. These are;

a) On-The-Go Lifestyle

On-the-go lifestyles have emerged as a result of several factors, longer working hours, longer commuting times, and a wider range of leisure activities, thus a family is less inclined to spend what valuable time it has on preparing food. The main consequence of this has been an increased incidence of snacking during the day and rising out-of-home consumption as well as a greater reliance on ready-prepared foods in the evening.

b) Mall Culture or Supermarkets

It is being evident in most of the tier I and tier II cities where a consumer can easily get all the household items, be it vegetables, fruits or groceries from same place, thus saving time and energy of not visiting three or four vendors to buy daily ration. These supermarkets are also creating an environment of impulsive buying where most of the convenience foods packed in their full splendour and tagged with hot offers lure the customers to try them. This has been complimented by selling of fully prepared convenience foods which only needs warming and ready to eat foods. This has made people lazier in cooking fresh foods for their families.

c) Packaging

Another main reason of the growth of convenience food is the packaging that comes with it and it serves a very important role to market processed food products. Although primarily, function of food packaging is to protect the quality and freshness of the product in addition to convenience and safety, but it also has to provide and enhance the merchandising value for the product when displayed in the retail shelf. The packages are tailor designed to attract more customers due to their physical appearance.

Also according Botonaki A. et al (2009), the high-speed and time-constrained lifestyle of many people has led to the rise of the food convenience industry and its significant impact on society's food consumption behaviours.

Many factors have been researched as to what determines a consumer's convenience orientation which ultimately impacts the consumer's decision of convenience food purchasing and full meal preparation activities. Widely researched factors have been respondents' time availability, income, beliefs/attitudes, such as convenience orientation, and product characteristics, such as preparation effort or price. However, the interdependencies of cooking competence (combination of both knowledge and skills) and home meal preparation and convenience food purchasing are poorly understood. Short proposes that the convenience food industry has led to the 'deskilling' of households with regards to home cooking, and found through a literature review that there are others who believe otherwise stating that these set of skills are evolving and being transformed.

According to Braverman's theory of deskilling in the industrial workplace, a worker is only assigned to complete one part of a larger project, and thus becomes 'divorced from the complete processes. The division of a task into multiple simplified segments 'deskills' the worker and turns it into a routine. This 'deskilling' is believed to also take place in cooking due to the high availability of pre-prepared meals and is perpetuated by parents who use pre-prepared meals as they will give their children fewer opportunities to learn cooking skills. The heavy use of convenience food by parents impact children negatively that only food can be bought ready made and served to the family. This often gives the children no room to understand cooking competencies, value of fresh foods and the indigenous foods of their cuisines. This totally divorces them from cooking fresh food to heavily depending on convenience foods.

2.2.2 Types of Convenience Foods

Today there are variety of convenience foods and vary by country and geographical regions. According to Traub and Odland (1975), convenience foods are disaggregated into three

classes, namely; basic convenience foods, complex convenience foods and manufactured convenience foods. The basic convenience food class processing is performed for preservation purpose and consist of a single or limited number of ingredients and require little or culinary experience. They consists of such items as canned and frozen fruits, vegetables, and juices; shelled nuts; frozen fresh fillets; and yogurt. Complex convenience foods embody multiple ingredients, provide high levels f time saving and or energy inputs, and have culinary expertise built in. The complex class consist of food items that the layman normally thinks of as convenience foods; that is, it consists of items such as frozen and canned entrees, frozen desserts, pudding mixes, canned soups, ready-to-eat cookies, cakes, breads, and rolls. The manufactured convenience food class consist of items with no home-prepared counterparts. This group consists most of the carbonated and alcoholic beverages, breakfast toaster pastries, saltines, dry cereals, and so forth. All this three classes of convenience foods according to Anderson J. and Deskins B. (1995), are often sold in portion controlled, single serve packaging designed for profitability

Also according to Stevens M. (2009), further say Convenience foods can include products such as candy; beverages such as soft drinks, juices and milk; fast food; nuts, fruits and vegetables in fresh or preserved states; processed meats and cheeses; and canned products such as soups and pasta dishes. Additional convenience foods include frozen pizza, chips such as potato chips, pretzels and cookies.

These products are often sold in portion controlled, single serve packaging designed for portability. This are classifies as;

a) Packaged mixes

Packaged mixes are convenience foods which typically require some preparation and cooking either in the oven or on the stove top. Examples include cake mixes, macaroni and cheese, brownie mixes, and gravy mixes. Some packaged mixes may have a high fat content.

b) By country

In 2007 it was noted in the book *Australia's food & nutrition 2012* that a distinct increase in convenience food consumption had been occurring in Australia, America, Japan etc. That symbolised that most convenience food are classified as per their country of origin.

In Japan, Onigiri (rice balls) are a popular convenience food. Additional Japanese convenience foods include prepared tofu (bean curd), prepared packages of seafood and instant ramen noodles.

Canned tuna packed in oil is a convenience food in the Solomon Islands.

c) By region

In Western Africa, processed cassava flour that has been grated and dried is a popular convenience food.

2.2.3 Customers Eating Trends

Personal eating styles are influenced by age, personal health, ethnicity, and family food attitudes. Population demographics, perceptions, awareness and attitudes are the key factors that influence food purchases. Monitoring these factors over time will provide a comprehensive understanding of the current consumer trends.

Food is not just food - the selection and consumption of food has always been a matter subject to a complex network of cultural and individual factors. But today consumer food choice is more complex than ever before. Consumers have developed more dynamic, complex and differentiated demands. These changes in consumer behaviour, reinforced by

changes in the retailing sector, provide both threats and opportunities for the food sector. On the one hand, they offer new opportunities for adding value and differentiating products, which can lead to less price competition, strong consumer preferences, brand equity, better negotiating power facing retailers and higher margins. On the other hand, doing this successfully requires competencies, which many actors in the food sector have only to a limited degree, and in many cases it requires new forms of cooperation between the actors in the food chain.

2.3 Trends in consumer food choice

Many food processors have been claiming that food consumers in the developed countries have become more difficult to understand and to predict. Some even claim that consumers act irrationally or even at random when choosing food products. We don't need to go that far, though – the complexity of consumer food choice can be viewed as a result of increasing differentiation of the food products to choose between on the one side, and increasing dynamics, complexity and heterogeneity of consumer demand on the other side (Grunert, 2002). It is a complexity which is amenable to analysis, and which can be turned into a source of competitive advantage for food producers. We can still assume that consumer food choice is influenced by food products' prices and quality and consumers' income. But what consumers regard as 'quality' has undergone considerable change during the past decades. We can approximate today's consumer food quality perception by distinguishing four groups of quality attributes for food products: sensory attributes, health attributes, process attributes, and convenience attributes (Brunsø, et al 2002; Grunert, et al, 1996).

Sensory attributes refer to the classical food quality aspects taste, appearance, and smell, with taste as the dominant aspect. Taste is an experience quality that can be evaluated only

after the purchase, and consumers use a host of market signals, like brand, price, and quality labels, in trying to predict the taste experience (Grunert, Poulsen & Juhl, 2001).

Health has been of increasing importance for consumer food choice for the last 50 years or so, and today analyses of consumer food quality perception many times indicate that health and sensory considerations have about equal weight. Health-related qualities are quite different from sensory qualities, though, in that they are, for the consumer, invisible. While consumers have learned that there is a link between eating and health, they don't expect the consumption of a particular product on a particular occasion to have a health implication that they can experience. Many health effects of food are of a rather abstract nature – like the risk of particular diseases being reduced by a certain percentage – and thus do not lead to consequences that are readily accessible to experience. Health as a choice criterion for food is thus a question of communication and of the interpretation of various signals. Messages about the healthiness of various types of food in the past have been conflicting, and consumers have constructed their own subjective theories of healthiness of food products. These theories depend on the learning history of the consumer and are thus individually different, but there are some recurring themes like that industrial production is less healthy than craftsmanship, that additives are unhealthy, that fat is bad and that vegetables are good (Brunsø, Fjord & Grunert, 2002).

More recently, food manufacturers have used the health criterion more proactively in their product development through the development of functional foods, i.e., food products which have an added positive health benefit (Frewer, Scholderer & Lambert, in press). Since the health benefit is still invisible for the consumer, the question of which health claims are allowed in the marketing of such products has become a major issue in the public debate. Even though the type of health claim of course will have an impact on consumer food choice,

it should be noted that such health claims, as all other relevant information, will affect consumer food choice not as such, but as interpreted based on consumers' subjective food health theories (Bech-Larsen & Grunert, in press).

Process attributes relate to consumers' interest in the way a food product has been produced, even when this has no analysable impact on the final food product. Consumers pay premiums for organic products which look and taste the same, for products which were produced with due concern for animal welfare and/or environmental considerations, and products which are guaranteed GMO-free. While this interest in production methods has been underway for some time, European consumers' interest in the way food has been produced has been additionally increased by the recent series of food scares, BSE being the most prominent. These have broadened consumer interest in production aspects in general, whereas it seems that consumer interest in more specific aspects, like organic production, may already have topped in some countries (Scholderer et al., in press).

Consumer interest in convenience has been rising quite considerably over the past few decades. Convenience is here defined as aspects of the product which save time or energy throughout the private household's meal production chain, i.e., during shopping, storage, preparation, eating, and disposal. In a wider sense, convenience relates to home-meal replacement alternatives like eating out (Darian & Cohen, 1995). Increased demand for convenience has often been related to family demographics like both adult household members' participation in the work force (e.g., Darian & Klein, 1989; Soberon-Ferrer & Dardis, 1991), but newer research indicates that demand for convenience is best explained by households' subjective perceptions of their resource constraints (Scholderer & Grunert, in press).

2.4 Nutritional value and knowledge

Nutrition knowledge is not sufficient by itself to implement dietary guidelines and improve dietary standards, but instead only provides the information of how to form a healthy diet. Culinary classes have been removed from many educational systems, and instead have been replaced with more theoretical classes such as ‘Science, Design and Technology’ or ‘Health Education,’ which only cover nutrition knowledge. This removal of cooking classes in school has led many to believe that the nutrition education is insufficient and takes away a vital opportunity for children to learn techniques needed to prepare healthy meals. Frobisher *et al.* have concluded that the dietary behaviour of the adolescents was not reflective of their nutrition knowledge.

Frobisher *et al* (2005), importance of home economics or culinary classes within the educational system is a means of providing the nutritional knowledge and cooking competence needed for everyday life. This knowledge will yield the experience required in choosing food that is nutritionary balanced be it fresh or convenience foods.

2.4.1 Nutritional issues

Food is not just food and we are products of what we eat. According to a page on the website of the *Cleveland Clinic*: "Most convenience foods on the market today are laden with saturated fats, sodium and sugar and provide little to no nutritional value." Are we aware of that?.

Salt is an essential nutrient, but sodium, usually in the form of salt, has been linked with high blood pressure. A single serving of many convenience foods contains a significant portion of the recommended daily allowance of sodium. Manufacturers are concerned that if the taste of each product is not optimized by adding salt that it will not sell as well as competing products. Tests have shown that some popular packaged foods are dependent on significant amounts of

salt for their palatability. Due to concerns about obesity and other health problems, some health organizations have criticized the high fat, salt, preservative and additive content that is present in some convenience foods.

The global trend in changing lifestyle has brought:

- Minimal time in food preparation
- More preference for health foods
- Minimally processed foods
- Convenience foods

2.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Convenience Foods

According to Thomas T. and Pant S. (2012), gives a summary advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods as below;

Advantages

- i) Less preparation time
- ii) Reduced planning, buying and storing of ingredients
- iii) Fewer leftovers
- iv) More variety, especially for inexperienced cooks
- v) Faster and easier cleanup
- vi) Storability – usually keep well for extended periods

Disadvantages

- i) May be less meat, fish or cheese than you would include in homemade versions
- ii) Cooking time is sometimes increased for thawing or longer baking time
- iii) Harder to control fat, salt and sugar levels
- iv) Cost per serving may be higher than homemade

2.6 Empirical Review

The demand for convenience food has increased manifold in past 2 years, according to a survey conducted by Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM). The survey indicates annual growth of about 40-60% between 2017 and the end of 2020 for the convenience and ready-to-eat food segments. Growing at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 15 to 20 per cent annually this includes snack foods, ready-to-eat foods, healthy and functional foods.

The survey indicated that, widely researched factors have been respondents' 50% time availability, 60% income, 20% beliefs/attitudes, such as convenience orientation, and product characteristics, such as preparation effort or price.

According to the survey as income levels increase, consumers buy more food and change the form and quality of food they purchase. The entry of women into the labor force contributes to the rise in consumer income. Consumers devote less time and effort to food preparation and reallocate spending away from raw food products to foods that are easy to prepare, require little preparation, and are convenient to eat.

With a slowdown in population growth and aging of the population, aggregate demand for food is slowing in North America and other developed countries. Increased labor market participation of women has brought significant social and economic change and reduced the amount of time women have available in households for meal preparation. More than 60% of women are in the labor force in the United States and Canada today, and time-use surveys estimate that the average amount of time that meal preparers spend in food preparation and cleanup during a week is less than one hour a day (Zafiriou, 2005; Statistics Canada, 1999; U.S. Department of Labor-Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). Consumers continue to look for ways to cut time in food and meal preparation. In Mexico, traditional homemade corn tortillas

have given way to commercially processed corn tortillas. Roasts and broiler chickens have been replaced by steaks, ground beef, and chicken breasts.

Increased consolidation and concentration in retail food markets and changes in food distribution channels mean retail food stores are larger, offer more variety and services, and are open more hours. At the same time, retail chains exert increasing control in the market, especially in Canada where the five largest supermarket chains have 90% of supermarket sales (Conference Board of Canada, 2005).

According to a survey conducted on December 1983 on impacts of convenience foods and non-convenience foods composition and expenditures showed that between 1980 and 1982 the use of convenience food had increased from 20-40% and the non-convenience food reduced from 60-40%. This clearly showed the customer eating trends on this two categories of foods. It also showed that manufacturers pack the food items tailor made for customers with different requirements. The survey also shows that the cost of convenience foods had increased considerably.

2.7 Critical Review

From the above reviews, its evident that Nothing is constant in this universe, change is evident and we can feel it everywhere be it the changing environment, business, fashion, lifestyle, or food. Today we are living in a very fast-paced life, people are ambitious and career-oriented, families have both the members (husband and wife) working and with more and more households experiencing two-parent income, it makes meal time harder than ever to get together. These are some of the reasons for the tremendous growth of convenience foods. This is where convenience food has begun to fill the gap. More and more people now are dependent on convenience food as well as pre-packaged items to help them facilitate their day to day activity.

The review also identifies three classes of convenience foods, namely; basic convenience foods, complex convenience foods and manufactured convenience foods. The review has also shown the customers trends and nutritional values and criticism of using convenience foods. However the researchers have failed to address on the cost of convenience foods in relation to fresh foods. It has failed to show the role of cultural believes in indigenous food prevalence, their value and benefits to the people. The research has also failed to show how hospitality industry has been affected by inception of convenience foods as many customers have changed their indigenous culture to mall-to-mall culture where customer get all their supplies in one stop. Customers eating habits have been highly influenced by convenience foods. The researchers have failed to highlight out the dangers associated with convenience foods and what customer should know about convenience foods. Life span has been reduced and inception of many health related conditions and diseases have emerged all this due to eating habits of the customers.

2.8 Conclusion and gap to be filled

From the existing literature about convenience foods; research on the types of convenience, cooking competencies, development of convenience food industry and the reasons for their growth have been done. However, little have been done on the effects of convenience foods on customer eating habits in hotels. Little is known about cost of convenience food against fresh indigenous foods and how people have shifted from farming to convenience food. Health related problems have increased tremendously and all have stemmed from the inception of convenience foods. Little known is that indigenous foods have started sky rocketing in terms of cost as only few people cultivate them anymore. The researcher intends to identify the effects of convenience foods on customer eating habits in 3-star hotels and determine the trends convenience has on the indigenous foods.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, targeted population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection instruments and data analysis and presentation methods.

3.1 Research Design

For the researcher to be able carry out the study effectively and come to a successful end, he intends to use the co-relational research design. This is because he will be comparing the relationship between two variables and how each affects the other that is, based on research proposal title.

3.2 Study Area

The study is to be carried out in Machakos town majoring on the 3-star hotels. This is because the town is highly populated meaning the researcher will not face much challenges in his research, secondly, 3-star hotels are readily available in Machakos town meaning data collection will be convenient.

3.3 Target Population

The term of “population’ as used in this research, refers to the total number of people, items, objects or outlets which the researcher will use for the study in order to obtain the needed information”; *Oxford Advanced learners dictionary*. The population to be used for the study by researcher will consist of all the 3-star hotels within Machakos town. The researcher will contact various managers and employees of the outlets selected in order to get the required information.

The researcher targets all employees of three star hotels within Machakos working under the food and beverage department as wells as those working in the procurement and stores department as they the ones directly involved in production, service, storage and purchase of

convenience foods. The target population will consist of an estimated number of about 270 employees of the six 3- star hotels within Machakos town. The population will be estimated as follows;

Table 3.1: Target population

Job title	No. of hotels	Estimated No. of employees	Estimated total No. of employees
Food and beverage manager	6	1	6
Head chefs	6	1	6
Other Chefs	6	20	120
Head waiters	6	2	12
Other waiters	6	15	90
Procurement officer	6	2	12
Store keepers	6	4	24
Total			270

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

According to mugenda, 2004; a ‘sample’ refers to a portion or a small percentage to the total population used for the study to represent the total population. The sample size is an important feature of any empirical study in which the goal is to make inferences about a population from a sample. Sample size determination is the act of choosing the number of observations or replicates to include in a statistical sample.

The sample size will consist of 90 respondents who will be selected using *stratified sampling technique*. According to Wikipedia; stratified sampling is where the population embraces a number of distinct categories, the frame can be organized by these categories into separate "strata." Each stratum is then sampled as an independent sub-population, out of which individual elements can be randomly selected.

The researcher chose this method because of the following advantages over other methods;

Advantages over other sampling methods

1. Focuses on important subpopulations and ignores irrelevant ones.
2. Allows use of different sampling techniques for different subpopulations.
3. Improves the accuracy/efficiency of estimation.
4. Permits greater balancing of statistical power of tests of differences between strata by sampling equal numbers from strata varying widely in size.

Disadvantages

1. Requires selection of relevant stratification variables which can be difficult.
2. Is not useful when there are no homogeneous subgroups.
3. Can be expensive to implement

The sample size was broken down as follows;

	Estimated Number
Food and beverage Managers	10
Head Chefs	10
Other chefs	20
Head waiters	10
Other waiters	20
Purchasing officers	10
Storekeeper	10
Total	90

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This basically refers to the tools and techniques used by the researcher to obtain or collect data from the selected samples or on the research problem. The tools to be used by the researcher will be questionnaires and interview guides.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

According to Wikipedia encyclopaedia; Questionnaire is defined as a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. The questions will be formulated guided by the research objectives and also the research questions set by the research title. The questions will comprise of both open-ended questions and closed ended questions. For the respondent to be able to answer these questions, the researcher will personally take the questionnaires to them, issue them with the questionnaires and the wait till they fill the required information on them before collecting. The researcher decided to use this instrument because of the following advantages;

The advantages of questionnaires

1. Practical.
2. Large amounts of information can be collected from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost effective way.
3. Can be carried out by the researcher or by any number of people with limited affect to its validity and reliability.
4. The results of the questionnaires can usually be quickly and easily quantified by either a researcher or through the use of a software package.
5. Can be analysed more 'scientifically' and objectively than other forms of research.
6. When data has been quantified, it can be used to compare and contrast other research and may be used to measure change.
7. Positivists believe that quantitative data can be used to create new theories and / or test existing hypotheses.

To make this instrument more viable the researcher intends to tests its validity by presenting a sample of the questionnaire to some respondents who will answer them hence the

researcher will see whether the intended information is captured from the respondents. This will enable him to have a viable research tool.

To ascertain the accuracy and reliability of the information collected, the researcher will critically evaluate the responses and remove or ignore those which seem to be ambiguous or irrelevant in relation to the question asked in the questionnaire.

3.5.2 Interview Schedules

Apart from the questionnaires, the researcher will also use the interview schedules. This refers to the process of asking questions to the interviewee (respondent) orally and then getting a response directly from him or her. It's a data collection method employing verbal questioning technique and enables direct interaction with the interviewee (respondent).

Interview schedules enforce the questionnaire method of data collection since this enables the clarity of the topic under research. The interview guides or questions will also be formulated from the research questionnaire but the questions will be asked verbally and immediate response is obtained. The researcher will then note down the response as per the questions asked.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation Methods

After the collection of the research, the research finding will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and will be represented using tables and charts.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter contains data analysis, presentations and interpretation of the research findings. The sub themes covered are the introduction, questionnaire return rate, personal information of the respondent, data presentation and summary. The variables used were Growth of convenience foods, Customers eating trends, Types of convenience foods, Nutritional value of convenience foods, Advantages and disadvantages of convenience .Quantitative data was coded using the SPSS analytical tool and the descriptive statistics analyzed using arithmetic mean, standard deviation, presented, frequencies and percentages and presented in tables.

4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

The quantitative data was obtained using open and closed-ended questionnaires. The research study had a sample size of 90 respondents. 90 questionnaires were administered. 68 questionnaires were filled and returned, achieving a return rate of 75.5%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), response rate of 50% is satisfactory, 60% is good, 70% is really good, 80% and above is excellent. Questionnaire return rate of 77.5% was really good and therefore appropriate for data analysis. The findings are indicated in table 4.1

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

Research Instrument	Sample Size	Percentage
Questionnaires returned	68	75.5
Questionnaires not returned	22	24.5
Total	90	100

4.1.1 Personal Information of the Respondents

The respondents were requested to indicate the following personal information: Gender, Age, organization they work in, level of education, how long have they have been working in the organization and their type of employment.

4.2 Respondents' Gender

The study sought to determine the respondents' age. The findings are indicated in Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Respondents' Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	43	63.24
Male	25	36.76
Total	68	100

From the findings, 63.24% of the respondents were female, forming the majority, while 36.76% were male. The high number of women respondents could indicate that they consume convenience foods highly consumed compared to men.

4.3 Respondents' Age

The study sought to determine the respondents age. The findings are indicated in Table 4.3

Table 4.3 Respondents' Age

Age Brackets (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20	2	2.94
20-30	11	16.18
31-40	24	35.29

41-50	14	20.56
51-60	12	17.65
Above 60	7	7.35
Total	68	100

From the study findings as shown in table 4.3, 2.94% of the respondents were below the age of 20 years, 16.18% were within the age of 20-30 years, 35.29% were within 31-40 years, 7.35% were within 41-50 years, 17.65% were within 51-60 years of age and 20.56% were above 60 years. The high number of respondents within the 20-30 years age bracket. Convenience foods are not highly consumed by those below 20 years and the elderly (above 60 years).

4.4 Respondents' level of education

The study sought to determine the highest level of education of the respondents. The results are indicated in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Respondents' level of education

Highest Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
PhD	2	2.94
Masters	6	8.82
Undergraduate	34	50
Diploma	19	27.94
Certificate	7	10.29
Total	68	100

According to the study findings, 50% were undergraduates, 27.94% of the respondents went had diploma and 10.29% studied up to certificate level, 8.82% studied up to masters level and 2.94% had PhD. These findings depicted that all the respondents were educated and understood the questionnaire's line statements.

4.5 Respondents employment type

The study sought to find out the type/ form of employment for the respondents. The results are indicated in Table 4.5

Table 4.5 Employment type.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Self employed	28	41.18
Salaried	33	48.53
Unemployed	7	10.29
Total	68	100

From the findings, 41.18% of the respondents were self-employed while 48.53% of them relying on salaries from different employers. 10.29% of the respondents were not yet in any form of employment.

4.6 Respondents ethnicity

The study sought to find out the respondents ethnicity since different ethnic groups are known to strongly promote their traditional foods as compared to convenience foods. The results are indicated in Table 4.6

Table 4.6 Respondents ethnicity.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
African	49	72.06
African American	10	14.71
Asian	6	8.82
Others	3	4.41
Total	68	100

72.06% of the respondents are African by ethnicity while 14.71% of them were African America. 8.82% of the respondents were Asians while 4.41% of them were form other ethnic groups.

Table 4.7 Consumption of convenience foods

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	61	89.71
No	7	10.29
Total	68	100

From the findings, 89.71% of the respondents consume convenience foods while as low as 10.29 of the respondents stated that they consume home-made foods.

4.8 Respondents' frequency of consumption of convenience foods.

The study sought to determine respondents' frequency of consumption of convenience foods.

The results are indicated in Table 4.8

Table 4.8 Respondents' frequency of consumption of convenience foods

Times (per week)	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	7	10.29
2-3	11	16.18
3-4	14	20.59
4-5	17	25
Over 5	19	27.94
Total	68	100

According to the study findings, 10.29 % the respondents indicated their consumption was between 1 and 2 times per week, 16.18% indicated they consume between 2-3 times, 20.59% indicated 3-4 times, 25% consume 4-5 times while 27.94% indicated over 5 times. As number of times per week grew, people consume convenience foods more according to the study.

Table 4.9 Fixed meal Consumption

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	8	11.76
No	60	88.24
Total	68	100

From the findings, 11.76% of the respondents have a fixed meal schedule where they are able to take their own prepared meals which are prepared as per their schedule while 88.24% did not have fixed meal time thus buying convenience foods just any time of the day.

4.10 Respondents' family members' consumption

The study sought to determine whether the respondents' family members also consumed convenience foods. The results are indicated in Table 4.10

Table 4.10 Respondents' family members' consumption behavior

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	59	86.76
No	9	13.24
Total	68	100

From the findings, 86.76% of the respondents' family members also consume convenience foods highly while only 13.24% have family members who don't consume convenient foods at all mostly relying on home-made foods.

4.11 Purchasing habits of respondents.

The study sought to find out whether the respondents were in any way influenced into purchasing convenience foods by either the promotions and adverts on fast foods or even the social media. The results are indicated in Table 4.11

Table 4.11 Influence on Purchasing habits of respondents.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	55	80.88
No	13	19.12
Total	68	100

The study findings indicated that 80.88% of the respondents agreed that the social media where convenience foods are sold e.g. Glovo, radio and television adverts and also other promotions lure them in to purchasing convenience foods. 19.12% however indicated that their purchasing is not influenced by the medias in any way but by personal decisions.

4.12 Source of the convenience foods.

The study sought to find out from which outlet most convenience foods are bought.

Table 4.12 Source of the convenience foods.

Outlet	Frequency	Percentage
KFC	32	47.06
Mc Donalds	7	10.29
Pizza Hut	11	16.18
Burger King	10	14.71
Others	8	11.76
Total	68	100

According to the study findings, 47.06% of the respondents sourced their convenience foods from KFC while 10.29% got from Mc Donalds café, 16.18% of them bought from Pizza Hut and 14.71% sourced from Burger King. 11.76 of the respondents got their convenience foods from other outlets other that the stated ones. These findings depicted that most respondents' buy their foods from KFC for different reasons.

4.13 Discounts by the outlets.

The study sought to investigate whether the respondents can switch to other outlets if discounts are offered to them. The results are indicated in Table 4.13

Table 4.13 Discounts by the outlets

Percentage discount	Frequency	Percentage
1-10%	2	2.94
10-24%	4	5.88
25-50%	10	14.71
50-75%	10	14.71
Above 75%	42	61.76
Total	68	100

According to the findings, only 2.94% would change from the outlet they source their convenience foods to others once the competitor gives a discount of 1-10%. 5.88% of the respondents revealed that they would switch to the competitor if a discount of 10-24% is offered. If a competitor offers a discount of between 25-50%, 14.71% of the respondents will change, the same percentage will apply if the competitor offers a discount of between 50%

and 75%. 61.76% of the respondents stated that they will only change from their current outlet to that of their competitor if a discount of above 75% is given by the competitor.

4.14 Health condition associated with convenience foods.

The study sought to investigate whether the respondents suffer from any of the health conditions associated with consumption of convenience foods. The results are indicated in

Table 4.14

Table 4.14 Health conditions

Outlet	Frequency	Percentage
Obesity	28	41.18
Diabetes	18	26.47
Heart diseases	9	13.24
Cancer	10	14.71
Others	3	4.41
Total	68	100

According to the study findings, 41.18% of the respondents disclosed that they have been diagnosed with obesity due to heavy consumption of convenience foods while 26.47% also said that they suffer from Diabetes due to consumption of convenience foods. 13.24% stated that they suffer heart diseases and 14.71% have been diagnosed with different types of cancer caused by heavy reliance on convenience foods. Only 4.41% revealed other types of diseases caused by convenience foods. These findings depicted that convenience foods are to some extent attached to causing different health conditions.

4.15 Rate of Meat consumption

The study sought to find out which type of meat the respondents enjoy consuming. The results are indicated in Table 4.15

Table 4.15 Rate of meat consumption

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	34	50
Somewhat agree	20	29.41
Strongly disagree	5	7.36
Somewhat disagree	9	13.24
Total	68	100

According to the study findings, 50% of the respondents stated that they highly enjoy consuming meats prepared in fast food outlets as compared to homemade meats. 29.41% somehow agree to enjoy consuming meats prepared in fast foods. 7.36% of the respondents somehow disagree to enjoying meats prepared in fast foods while 13.24% of the strongly disagreed to enjoying meats prepared in fast foods but agreed to enjoy homemade foods. It is clear from the findings that most people enjoy consuming foods and meats prepared in fast food outlets.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights the summary of findings, discussions, conclusion and recommendations made from the findings. Finally, suggestions for further research are given, made in line with the outcomes of the study.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study sought to determine the effects of convenience foods on consumer eating habits

The summary of study findings are as follows:

5.1.1 Consumption of convenience foods

With regards to consumption of convenience foods, the study sought to determine indicators respondents' patterns of consuming convenience foods. Respondents asserted that 89.71% of them survived on convenience foods. This is based on different factors including:

- a) On- the- go lifestyle
- b) Mall culture or supermarkets
- c) Packaging
- d) Time saving way of accessing foods
- e) More variety (choices)
- f) Fast and easy in cleaning etc.

Only 10.29% of the respondents did not consume convenience foods but rather chose to stick to traditional and manmade foods with citing of the disadvantages that come with convenience foods, including:

- a) May be less meat, fish or cheese than you would include in homemade versions
- b) Cooking time is sometimes increased for thawing or longer baking time
- c) Harder to control fat, salt and sugar levels

d) Cost per serving may be higher than homemade.

5.1.2 Frequency of consumption

According to the study findings, 10.29 % the respondents indicated their consumption was between 1 and 2 times per week, 16.18% indicated they consume between 2-3 times, 20.59% indicated 3-4 times, 25% consume 4-5 times while 27.94% indicated over 5 times. As number of times per week grew, people consume convenience foods more according to the study. Most of the respondents attached consumption of convenience foods to the busy schedules that they have at work, the packaging and this being a more efficient and effective way of sourcing foods without much struggle.

5.1.3 Influence on purchasing habits of respondents.

The study findings indicated that 80.88% of the respondents agreed that the social media where convenience foods are sold e.g. Glovo and other online buying and delivery platforms, radio and television adverts and also other promotions lure them in to purchasing convenience foods. .19.12% however indicated that their purchasing is not influenced by the medias in any way but by personal decisions.

5.1.4 Source of the convenience foods.

According to the study findings, 47.06% of the respondents sourced their convenience foods from KFC while 10.29% got from Mc Donals café, 16.18% of them bought from Pizza Hut and 14.71% sourced from Burger King. 11.76 of the respondents got their convenience foods from other outlets other that the stated ones. These findings depicted that most respondents' buy their foods from KFC for different reasons. Most of the foods sourced from the outlets included:

a) Fried chicken

- b) Processed meats
- c) French fries
- d) Burgers
- e) Sandwiches

5.1.5 Discounts by the outlets

According to the findings, competition is key in the sector since many respondents will shift their purchasing to the outlets which offer more discounts. Only 2.94% would change from the outlet they source their convenience foods to others once the competitor gives a discount of 1-10%. 5.88% of the respondents revealed that they would switch to the competitor if a discount of 10-24% is offered. If a competitor offers a discount of between 25-50%, 14.71% of the respondents will change, the same percentage will apply if the competitor offers a discount of between 50% and 75%. 61.76% of the respondents stated that they will only change from their current outlet to that of their competitor if a discount of above 75% is given by the competitor.

5.1.6 Health condition associated with convenience foods.

These findings depicted that convenience foods are to some extent attached to causing different health conditions. According to the study, 41.18% of the respondents disclosed that they have been diagnosed with obesity due to heavy consumption of convenience foods while 26.47% also said that they suffer from Diabetes due to consumption of convenience foods. 13.24% stated that they suffer heart diseases and 14.71% have been diagnosed with different types of cancer caused by heavy reliance on convenience foods. Only 4.41% revealed other types of diseases caused by convenience foods.

5.2 Conclusions

The study established a number of reasons as stated in the findings in 5.3.1 above with each respondent giving out their own reasons for turning from homemade foods to convenience foods. This is despite being aware of the disadvantages that come with high consumption of the convenience foods.

Secondly, the study established the common types of convenience foods consumed by the respondents and the major sources of these foods. They however, stated that they would consider changing from one outlet to another citing discounts offered by different outlets. They stated that Fried chicken, Processed meats, French fries, Burger and Sandwiches are some of the convenience foods that are highly consumed.

Also, the study findings concluded that different eating trends have been exhibited by the respondents. They included:

- a) Out of home meal consumptions
- b) Increased travelling to adventure and tourism
- c) Long working hours
- d) Increased number of Malls, supermarkets and other outlets
- e) Availability of home delivery services
- f) Ease in storage. etc

Finally, the study findings concluded that so many advantages and disadvantages have accrued out of consumption of convenience foods examples being:

a) Advantages

- i.** Less preparation time
- ii.** Reduced planning, buying and storing of ingredients
- iii.** Fewer leftovers
- iv.** More variety, especially for inexperienced cooks
- v.** Faster and easier cleanup
- vi.** Storability – usually keep well for extended periods

b) Disadvantages

- i.** May be less meat, fish or cheese than you would include in homemade versions
- ii.** Cooking time is sometimes increased for thawing or longer baking time
- iii.** Harder to control fat, salt and sugar levels
- iv.** Cost per serving may be higher than homemade

5.3 Recommendations

From the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

Since most of the convenience foods have been linked directly to health issues, it is recommended that consumption of this foods be in minimal levels. Different health conditions were stated during the study.

GMO foods should be drawn out of the food preparation cycle to help upload consumption of organic foods which have great health benefits due to their high nutritive values.

Awareness through trainings, workshops and seminars should be planned by NGOs, the hospitality industry stakeholders and the government to create sensitization on the merits and demerits of high consumption of convenience foods to enable people not only take the convenience foods but also seek other measures to counter health related diseases eg, exercising, timing of meals etc.

Regulations should be drafted to control the hospitality industry to prevent entry of business people who are just out to make profits other than providing the best products to the economy which in turn leads to cases of food poisoning and other illnesses that come with consumption of convenience foods.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study only focused on four factors that bring out the effects of convenience foods and also majors on Machakos town only. These are not the only factors that affect consumption of convenience foods. Therefore, future research should focus on these other factors and also extent to other parts of the country so as to get a clear picture on the effects of consumption of convenience foods.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to collect data about consumption rates of convenience foods.

Typically, the ideal respondents will be the general public and hotel staff.

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

2. What is your age?

Below 20

20-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

Above 60

3. What is your highest level of education?

PhD

Masters

Undergraduate

Diploma

Certificate

4. Which amongst the following best describes your employment type?

Self employed

Salaried

Unemployed

5. Do you consume convenience food?

Yes

No

6. How often do you consume instantly made food (like noodles, canned food, frozen food, food that can be prepared easily in a microwave) at home?

1-2 times in a week

2-3 times in a week

3-4 times in a week

4-5 times in a week

More than 5 times in a week

7. Do you have a fixed meal time that you follow?

Yes

No

8. Do your family members also consume convenience food?

Yes

No

9. Has your purchasing habit ever been influenced by promotions of fast food chains on social media?

Yes

No

10. Please select the fast-food restaurants you visit frequently.

KFC

McDonald's

Pizza Hut

Burger King

- Cinnabon
- Subway
- Dairy Queen

11. What percentage of discount would you need to switch from your current brand to a competitor brand?

1-10%

10-24%

25-50%

50-75%

Above 75%

12. Do you have any of these health conditions?

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Other (Please specify)

I enjoy consuming only meat preparation in a fast food restaurant

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

Somewhat disagree

Strongly disagree

13. What is your ethnicity?

African

African American

Asian

Other (Please specify)

Appendix B- Work Plan

Activity	Timeline	Expected outcome
Writing the proposal	February 2024	Research Proposal
Revising the proposal based on recommendations and suggestions	February 2024	Revised Proposal
Preparing the research instruments	March 2024	Survey questionnaire
Validating the research instruments	March 2024	Validated questionnaire
Administration of the instruments	April 2024	Survey questionnaire for administration.
Analysis of outcomes	June 2024	Values drawn from the outcome