

# Comparative study on consumption pattern of preserved foods

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Food, clothing and shelter are the three basic needs of human beings. Most fruits and vegetables are edible only for a very short time, unless they are promptly and properly preserved. To make food palatable and digestible, various preserved foods are added in diet. Looking into this scenario, a study was undertaken to compare the consumption pattern of army families and farm families in regards to preserved foods. All the respondents (100%) from both army and farm families consumed pickles daily. Consumption pattern of chutney for farm family respondents was more as compared to army family respondents. Regarding the consumption of murabbas, only 10 per cent army family respondents consumed it daily, while none of the farm family respondents consumed murabba.

**Key Words :** Army family, Farm family, Consumption pattern, Preserved food

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## INTRODUCTION

Food habits have been a very important aspect of Indian society since its origin. Food habits depend on socio-economic and cultural factors. What one eats, why it is eaten and how it is eaten were once thought to solely a gastronomic issue. Infact, food is always more than just a source of nourishment. Changing trends and lifestyles invariably change food consumption patterns and behaviour, which in turn is translated into diversified food habits. These changing trends in food consumption and lifestyle have further solidified food practices and patterns (Rahman, 1999). Many of our most common means for preserving food have been with us since the beginning of history and can be found distributed in many different locations. Drying, pickling, fermenting, and smoking have all been incorporated into the foodways of cultures throughout the world (James and Kuippers, 2003). Although the methods are diverse, what they all have in common is an

attempt to create an environment that is inhospitable to microorganisms such as molds, yeast, and bacteria.

Various researchers have classified foods in different ways, generally they are categorized as perishable (which spoils very fast), non-perishable (relatively slower spoilage), harvested food, raw food, fresh food, formulated food, synthetic food and functional food (Passos and Ribeiro, 2009). Fruits and vegetables provide an abundant and inexpensive source of energy, body-building nutrients, vitamins and minerals. Their nutritional value is highest when they are fresh, but it is not always possible to consume them immediately. To make food available throughout the year, humans have developed methods to prolong the storage life of products by preserving them.

Thus, a study was conducted to compare the consumption pattern of preserved foods from nearby families of Ferozepur from different professional background (army families and farm families).

## METHODOLOGY

A total sample of one hundred and forty respondents was selected randomly during the survey. The sample consisted of wives of army men (70) and rural farm women/ girls (70).

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The data were collected during survey through pre-structured questionnaire. The gathered data was processed, tabulated, classified and analyzed in terms of percentage in light of objectives of the study.

### OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

The data in Table 1 show that majority (58.57 %) of the respondents from army families, were from the age group of 20-30 years whereas in case of respondents from farm families the majority (45.71 %) belonged to the age group of 30-40 years. A large number of respondents from army families (67.14 %) belonged to Sikh religion, while the rest were Hindus. On the other hand, almost half (55.71 %) of farm family respondents' were from Sikh religion. Regarding the army families, 62.86 per cent respondents belonged to general category, while 75.71 per cent of the farm family respondents were from general category. None of the respondents from army families was illiterate whereas, 15.71 per cent from farm families were illiterate. Around 1/5th of the respondents (18.57 %) from army families were post graduates while none of the farm family respondents' had their education upto post graduation. All the respondents (100 %) from army families were married and were housewives. On the other side in farm families, 81.43 per cent of the respondents were married and were housewives. The rest (18.57 %) were unmarried out of which 10 per cent were studying and 8.57 per cent were at home.

Regarding the land holding of the respondents, 70 per cent from army families and 82.86 per cent from farm families were landless. All the respondents (100 %) from army families were living in nuclear families with less than four members, while 47.14 per cent from farm families were residing in nuclear families with 10 per cent having more than eight members and 8.57 per cent having family members from five to eight. Since all the army family respondents' were from the same class their annual income was between 2-3 lakhs. As regards the family income of farm families, less than half of the respondents *i.e.*, 41.43 per cent had income between one to two lakhs, followed by 32.86 per cent respondents having income between 2-3 lakhs whereas the remaining had income upto one lakh. None of the respondents from army families were aware of Krishi Vigyan Kendra in their area whereas only thirty per cent of the respondents from farm families were aware of it.

After receiving the socio-personal profile of the respondents, the consumption pattern of these respondents in regards of preserved foods was studied.

#### Consumption pattern of preserved foods :

As evident from Fig. 1, all the respondents (100 %) from both army and farm families consumed pickles daily. Consumption pattern of chutney for farm family respondents

**Table 1 : Socio-personal profile of trainees (n=140)**

Characteristics	No. of army wives (70)	Percentage	No. of farm women (70)	Percentage
<b>Age (years)</b>				
20-30	41	58.57	25	35.71
30-40	27	38.57	32	45.71
40-50	2	2.86	13	18.57
<b>Religion</b>				
Sikh	47	67.14	39	55.71
Hindu	23	32.86	31	44.28
<b>Caste</b>				
General	44	62.86	53	75.71
Scheduled caste	26	37.14	17	24.28
<b>Education</b>				
Illiterate	-	-	11	15.71
Upto matric	31	44.28	37	52.85
Upto +2	7	10.00	21	30.00
Graduate	19	27.14	1	1.43
Post – graduate	13	18.57	-	-
<b>Marital status</b>				
Married	70	100	57	81.43
Unmarried	-	-	13	18.57
<b>Occupation</b>				
Studying	-	-	7	10.00
At home	-	-	6	8.57
Housewife	70	100	57	81.43
<b>Land holding</b>				
Landless	49	70	58	82.86
Small (upto 4 acres)	3	4.28	9	12.86
Medium (5-8)	12	17.14	3	4.28
Large (Above 8)	6	8.57	-	-
<b>Type of family</b>				
Nuclear	70	100	33	47.14
Joint	-	-	37	52.85
<b>Size of family (members)</b>				
Upto 4	70	100	57	81.43
5-8	-	-	6	8.57
More than 8	-	-	7	10.00
<b>Family income</b>				
Upto 1 lakh	-	-	18	25.71
1 lakh- 2 lakh	-	-	29	41.43
2 lakh- 3 lakh	70	100	23	32.86
<b>Awareness of KVK in district</b>				
Yes	-	-	21	30
No	70	100	49	70

was more as compared to army family respondents *i.e.* 36 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively. Consumption of squashes was almost three times more in army family respondents than farm family respondents. Furthermore, 46 per cent of army family respondents consumed jams daily. On the other hand only 13 per cent farm family respondents consumed jams daily. Taking into account the consumption of murabbas, only 10 per cent army family respondents consumed it daily, while none of the farm family respondents consumed murabba.

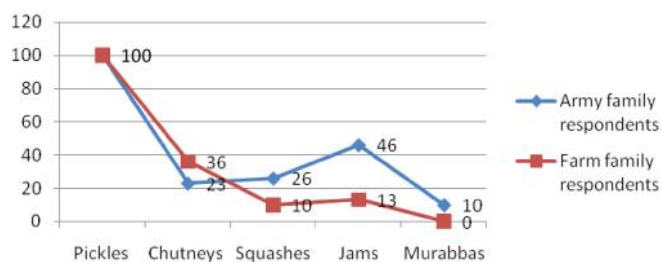


Fig. 1 : Consumption pattern of preserved foods of respondents

**Consumption pattern of pickles :**

The consumption pattern of preserved foods from the army and farm families was studied and compared. The data in Table 2 depicts that all the respondents from both the army and farm families *i.e.* 100 per cent used pickles at home at regular basis. Out of these, 87 per cent of respondents from farm families prepared pickles at home, whilst only 10 per cent respondents from army families prepared it at home. All the respondents from army families used to buy pickles once every month. A small number of respondents from both army (18.57%) and farm (7.14%) families were aware of the presence of preservatives and colours added in the pickles. Almost one fourth (27.14%) of the army families and half (51.43%) of the farm families consumed pickles more than once daily.

**Consumption pattern of chutneys :**

Taking into account the consumption pattern of chutneys, it was observed that almost 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the respondents (24.28%) from army families and 84.28 per cent from farm families used it at home. Negligible number of respondents (4.28%)

from army families while, 65.71 per cent from farm families prepared chutneys at home. It can be elicited from the table that 11.43 per cent of the army families and 27.14 per cent from farm families bought chutneys once in a month. Only the respondents from army families (44.28%) were aware of the presence of preservatives and colours in chutneys while, just 17.14 per cent of the respondents from farm families consumed chutneys more than once daily.

**Consumption pattern of squashes :**

A little less than half of the respondents from both army and farm families *i.e.*, 44.28 per cent and 47.14 per cent, respectively used squashes at home and bought it once a month. Neither all the respondents prepared squashes at home nor they consumed more than once a day. As regards the awareness of preservatives and colours present in squashes, 37.14 per cent from army families and 21.42 per cent from farm families were known to the fact.

**Consumption pattern of jams :**

Taking into account the consumption pattern of jams, 67.14 per cent from army families and 27.14 per cent from farm families used it at home. None of them prepared jams at home. Almost one fourth of the respondents from army families (24.28%) and only 8.57 per cent from farm families bought it once a month. It was found that 22.86 per cent from army families and 11.43 per cent from farm families were aware of presence of preservatives and colours in jams. Thirty per cent of the army family respondents' and 11.43 per cent of farm family respondents' consumed jams more than once a day.

**Consumption pattern of murabbas and sauces :**

Only ten per cent of the respondents from army families used murabbas at home and were aware of the presence of preservatives and colours in it, 1.43 per cent of them bought it once a month. Taking in to account the consumption pattern of sauces, 81.43 per cent respondents from army families and 61.43 per cent respondents from farm families used it at home. None of the respondents from both army and farm families prepared it at home or bought it once a month. As regard with the awareness of presence of preservatives and colours,

Table 2 : Usage of preserved food in army and farm families

Factors	Usage at home		Preparation at home		Buying once a month		Awareness of presence of preservatives and colours		Consumption more than once daily	
	Army families	Farm families	Army families	Farm families	Army families	Farm families	Army families	Farm families	Army families	Farm families
Pickles	70 (100)	70 (100)	7 (10)	61 (87)	70 (100)	-	13 (18.57)	5 (7.14)	19 (27.14)	36 (51.43)
Chutneys	17 (24.28)	59 (84.28)	3 (4.28)	46 (65.71)	8 (11.43)	19 (27.14)	31 (44.28)	-	-	12 (17.14)
Squashes	31 (44.28)	33 (47.14)	-	-	31 (44.28)	33 (47.14)	26 (37.14)	15 (21.42)	-	-
Jams	47 (67.14)	19 (27.14)	-	-	17 (24.28)	6 (8.57)	16 (22.86)	8 (11.43)	21 (30.00)	8 (11.43)
Murabbas	7 (10)	-	-	-	1 (1.43)	-	7 (10)	-	-	-
Sauces	57 (81.43)	43 (61.43)	-	-	-	-	29 (41.43)	20 (28.57)	3 (4.28)	-

41.43 per cent from army families and 28.57 per cent from farm families were aware of it. Similar findings were observed by Giridharilal and Siddappa (2009), Norman and James (2004), Shah and Bhola (2008) and Srivastava and Kumar (2009).

**Conclusion :**

From the sample of one hundred and forty respondents from Ferozepur, all of them consumed pickles at home at regular basis. All the respondents from army families used to buy pickles once every month. A small number of respondents from both army (18.57%) and farm (7.14%) families were aware of the presence of preservatives and colours added in the pickles. Only 10 per cent army family respondents consumed it daily, while none of the farm family respondents consumed murabba.

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