

# Exploring factors influencing purchase intention on semi-prepared food among Malaysia consumers

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to discover Malaysian millennial consumer attitudes in the direction of semi-prepared food and their purchase objective. The objective set for this research was conducted with the following objectives respectively getting an insight into the semi-prepared food market in Malaysia and explore the attributes that local consumers attitude consumption and determine the relationship between each dimension(s) of consumers' attitude towards purchase intention of semi-prepared food. The study results supply a preferable understanding of the market as well as consumer mindset intake variables.

The design and the style of the set of the questionnaire in this research study were based on the actions of previous associated studies as well as literary works evaluation that has been established and utilized in the present research. Results have shown to be a legitimate mechanism for the dimension with 5 factors (Health Risk, Nutritional Value, Family Orientation, Value for Money, and Convenient & Lifestyle) toward with Purchase Intention. In this regard, other questions such as demographic information have been added in this research. Moreover, the findings showed that there is a significant positive relationship between the purchase intentions and three variables which are Health Risk, Nutritional Value, and Family Orientation. As intention to purchase is an important indicator of consumer attitude consumption, the

industry may use results as part of the tool when promoting and enhance acceptance of semi- prepared among the consumers.

**Keywords:**

Semi ready food, Purchase intention, Malaysian consumer

**1 Introduction**

Malaysia’s diverse cultures in Malaysian society have resulted in a compelling variety of semi- prepared food that is becoming increasingly sophisticated. In areas including marital status, education, workforce, and urbanization, substantial shifts in economic booms and recessions have demonstrated differences and experiences between older generations and millennials. However, within Malaysia's economic highs and lows, changes in living costs, consumer preferences, and lifestyle choices have contributed to an increase in demand for convenience food products, particularly semi-prepared food. Malaysian customers have evolved to demand more sophisticated offers, such as a greater choice of quality ready-to-eat snacks and hot-and-chilled beverages in the Malaysian food sector.

The goal of this research is to determine Malaysian consumers' attitudes toward semi-prepared food in the Klang Valley area among millennials, as well as the factors that influence their purchasing intentions. Because semi-prepared food has grown in popularity over the last decade, the study seeks to understand why more millennials prefer semi-prepared food over the older generation of Malaysian consumers.

This study is aimed at millennials living in the Klang Valley area, which includes major cities and towns in the state of Selangor as well as Malaysia's federal territories of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya. The Klang Valley area is not only densely populated, but it is also well-developed in terms of public infrastructure. Kuala Lumpur is one of the largest metropolitan cities in South East Asia in terms of population and economic development and is rated as an alpha world city.

**2 Literature Review**

Semi- prepared food is the inclusion of convenient food or tertiary refined food. This is readily ready food (often with handling) to enhance ease of intake and preparation. Such food is typically partly prepared to consume with minimal prep work. This product also is quickly mobile, has a long shelf life, and/or provides a mix of such hassle-free characteristics. With various criteria of semi- prepared foodstuff particularly through its ease, it became an essential food as well as ideal for lots of people particularly for those that are living with a busy lifestyle, typically called city citizens (Baskaran, et.al., 2017)

Consumer perception typically guides the option of whether to buy or consume. That is an individual's assumption of social force affects a person to undertake the practices concerned or otherwise. This often exposes the mindsets of people on exactly how they would certainly be viewed by their recommendation circles like family,

customs, traditions, society, etc. if they are associated with a particular action. This understanding can influence an individual to buy semi- prepared food because it manages the perspective of other individuals, who could have the capacity to influence the individual over a specific product. This thought can, as a result, shape consumer's attitudes and consequent purchase intentions to semi- prepared food products.

## **2.1 Purchase Intention**

Purchase intention is the preference of the consumer to buy the product or service. To put it simply, purchase intention has a further facet in which the consumer will purchase a product following evaluation (Wu & Chen, 2014). Several factors affect the consumer's intention though opting for the item as well as the conclusion depends upon consumers' intention with extensive peripheral factors. This choice can probably be regarded by many elements, for example, product qualities, the perception of various other consumers, along with the understanding of the manufacturing nation, that often originates out of high-quality factors to consider (Shafiq et al., 2011). The dependent variable in the research is purchase intention, which can be described as the sturdiness of thought to run distinctly to buy. The current research study investigates five factors - health risk, nutritional value, family orientation, value for money and convenience, and lifestyle. All these factors are viewed as to include in consumer acquisition objectives about semi- prepared foodstuff.

## **2.2 Convenient & Lifestyle**

It is preferable that all individuals similarly gain from advancement, despite their attributes. 'Convenience or ease of use' and 'Saving of Time' are both the most important components that influence buyers to buy convenience food products. Many parents get frozen suppers to conserve time on prep work (Isabel, Eluiza & Solange, 2019) since of the ease. It has likewise been discovered in a recent research study that convenience, as well as clean nutrition products, inhabited the lifestyle and equivalent assistance of workforce women. Satoshi & Washizu (2020), outcomes also suggest that those that know convenient food are willingly replacing their food preparation initiatives with convenience food

## **2.3 Family Orientation**

Family orientation can influence individual consumers' acquiring actions. A family creates the environment for an individual to get values, develop as well as shape personality. This setting uses the opportunity to create mindsets as well as points of view towards numerous topics such as social relationships, society, and national politics. Lautiainen (2015) found that family creates initial perceptions concerning products or brands as well as customer habits in acquiring coffee brands. Consumers that have developed brand assumptions when they were young, can lug out these same brand selections in grown-up life without even recognizing that their family members influenced these selections (Wekeza & Sibanda, 2019). In another spin, children also have a significant influence on their moms' and dads' buying opinions somehow. When performing household purchases, parents reported taking their kids' point of view right

into consideration. The regularly those parents bring their kids grocery shopping, a lot more mindful the kids become of information concerning products, such as rates as well as brands (Oyewole, Koey & Choudhury, 2010). Children pick up from parents or guardians and at the same time, they likewise affect their parents' purchasing decisions.

#### **2.4 Health Risk**

The usage of semi- prepared food is considered a financial investment for time and health. Semi- prepared foods can be called much healthier options than other kinds of convenient food like frozen, canned, or processed food. Health and wellness consciousness analyzes one's readiness to select purchase actions. Consumers that are worried about the long food preparation time but at the same time health-conscious, such as those recognized as semi- prepared food purchasers, are inspired to improve, or keep their health and lifestyle because of their understanding as well as concern regarding their well-being. Purchasers of semi- prepared foods understand the results of food intake and recognize the dangers related to the processing techniques. They favor healthier options of convenient foods to secure their wellness as well as ease their way of life. Kaufmann, Panni & Orphanidou (2012), suggested that consumers recognize the risks connected with ready-to-cook as well as convenient foodstuff. Because of this, semi- prepared foods are regarded as good things to be consumed. Health and wellness risk has been discovered to forecast consumer acquisition intention concerning convenient foods. Few studies reveal that health is the significant factor of consumer food purchase intention (Ryu, Lee & Kim, 2012; Zuratulraha et.al., 2016; Ryu & Han, 2010).

#### **2.5 Nutritional Value**

On top of that, consumers focused on the accessibility of nutrition. Nutritional worth, high quality, cleanliness, and tidiness, fat, as well as cholesterol level are being considered by customers. Consumers provide highlights on nutrition, deliciousness, pureness, top quality, affordable price, availability, and appropriate product packaging at the time of purchasing convenient food products. The use of semi- prepared food is assumed to be valuable for nutritionally enhancing the diet plan routines of the elderly of Japan, due to its ease and also loads with necessary nutrients that can be eaten through a straightforward and also fast prep work process. Over the last few years, the examination of fast food has transformed. A study by Satoshi & Washizu (2020 ), reveals practical food considered not to harm health as well as health and is currently positioned as a tool to maintain the nutritional routines of numerous other as well as elderly people in Japan. In industrialized nations where people are aging, beneficial foods are anticipated to improve the eating behaviors of the elderly, although it seems challenging for the elderly to approve practical food in its present type since it is accustomed to preparing food conventionally and also doubts the quality of the convenient foodstuff.

#### **2.6 Value for Money**

Value involves a general assessment made by the consumer concerning the energy of a product and services, based upon the presumptions of what is obtained as well as

what is spent for (Zeithaml, 1988). Perceived value has 4 measurements: practical value-- power that the customer concerns when choosing that will bring him/her sensible or useful results; economic worth-- economic worth associated with the exchange; social worth-- related to social approval in a supplied recommendation team, as a result of the selection made; as well as, psychological worth- on favorable psychological aspects stemmed from the option made. In a review by Baskaran et.al (2017), the checked-out worth of organic food is likewise connected to the nutrients existing in the item, taste, safety, along exceptional price. That is, from the viewpoint related to well worth, it is apparent a cost-benefit link for the consumer, as well as the rate is not truly a barrier for the acquisition of this type of food.

Based on above literature reviews the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: Convenience and lifestyle influences the purchase intention of semi ready foods.

H2: Family orientation influences the purchase intention of semi ready foods.

H3: Health risk influences the purchase intention of semi ready foods.

H4: Nutritional value influences the purchase intention of semi ready foods.

H5: Value for money influences the purchase intention of semi ready foods.

### **3 Methodology**

#### **3.1 Data collection**

The quantitative method, a self-completion questionnaire, was used as the survey's instrument. The use of self-completion questionnaires had the advantage of being a completely standardized measuring instrument because the questions were always phrased the same way for all respondents (Sapsford, 2007).

All items listed in the questionnaire were based on the consumer attitude in Malaysia which comprised of two major parts. Part one was designed using a nominal scale and focus on the respondent's demographic profile consisting of six related variables were the main factors of questions that had been asked, covering the aspects that would meet the set objectives. Part two of the questionnaire in this study is used to measure six (6) factors of consumers' attitude with thirty-three (33) of different attributes were identified by researcher. The six dimensions are health risk, nutritional value, family orientation, value for money, convenient and lifestyle and lastly, purchase intention.

The questionnaire distribution began in September 2020, with a total of 284 questionnaires (n = 284) distributed via online questionnaire. The millennial generation, born between 1980 and today, is the subject of this study. The consumers of semi-prepared foods in Malaysia, particularly in Klang Valley, served as the study's determining population.

### 3.2 Data Analysis

Partial Least Squares, a structural equation modelling technique that employs a principal-component-based estimation approach, was used to analyse the data. While dealing with measurement errors in the structural model, PLS-SEM can estimate causal relationships among all latent constructs at the same time (Hair et al, 2017). Furthermore, because our study is explanatory in nature, PLS-SEM is the best fit for this study. Using the guidelines proposed by Hair et al. (2017), measurement models were evaluated separately before structural models were evaluated.

To test the proposed hypotheses, SmartPLS 3 was used to perform a partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) study. PLS-SEM has several advantages, including its suitability for exploratory research and its adaptability to non-normal data and small sample sizes. Anderson and Gerbing (1988) evaluated a two-step analytical procedure approach, measurement, and structural models.

### 3.3 Measurement Model Analysis

Internal consistency reliability was determined by measuring composite reliability, outer loading, convergent validity, and discriminant validity to demonstrate the measurement model's reliability and validity (Hair et al., 2011; Sekaran, 2006). Constructs with high internal consistency usually have highly correlated indicators. Table 1 showed that all the constructs have excellent inter-item consistency with Cronbach's alpha recorded at between 0.740 and 0.935. In addition, composite reliability (CR) also indicated satisfactory and recorded at between 0.822 and 0.954. According to Hair et al. (2017), AVE should be at least 0.5 or higher and outer loadings should be greater than 0.708 to show that a latent variable can explain the variance of its indicators. Based on the table, AVE recorded at satisfactory level of more than 0.5, which ranging between 0.670 and 0.911. As seen in Table 1, outer loadings for all items exceeded the benchmark of 0.7 and few items which did not meet the benchmark was removed from the construct. Meanwhile, no multicollinearity has been found to exist as the VIF values are within the valid measure, which is between 0.2 and 5.0.

Table 1: Construct Reliability and Validity

Constructs	Items	Loading	AVE	VIF	Cronbach's Alpha	CR
Convenient And Lifestyle (C)	C1	0.804	0.681	1.660	0.825	0.822
	C2	0.835		1.827		
	C3	0.754		1.760		
	C5	0.851		1.748		
Family Orientation (F)	F1	0.811	0.670	3.159	0.929	0.942
	F2	0.846		3.703		
	F3	0.877		2.020		
	F4	0.727		2.851		
	F6	0.831		2.561		
	F7	0.818		2.561		

	F8	0.741		2.315		
	F9	0.855		3.554		
Health Risk (H)	H2	0.851	0.735	1.284	0.740	0.847
	H5	0.863		1.284		
Nutritional Value (N)	N2	0.956	0.911	3.097	0.903	0.954
	N3	0.954		3.097		
Value for Money (V)	V2	0.803	0.685	2.036	0.849	0.897
	V3	0.809		2.068		
	V4	0.870		2.212		
	V5	0.826		1.738		
Purchase Intention (I)	I1	0.901	0.838	3.322	0.935	0.954
	I2	0.906		3.359		
	I3	0.937		4.426		
	I4	0.918		3.529		

To examine discriminant validity, the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion and the cross-loading criterion were used. The square root of each construct's AVE should be higher than the construct's highest correlation with every other construct in the model, according to the Fornell and Larcker criterion. Table 2 showed the results of the Fornell and Larcker criterion assessment with the square root of the reflective constructs' AVE on the diagonal and the correlations between the constructs in the lower left triangle. Overall, the square roots of the AVEs for the reflective constructs Convenient and Lifestyle (0.807), Family Orientation (0.819), Health Risk (0.857), Nutritional Value (0.955), Value for Money (0.915) and Purchase Intention (0.827) are all higher than the correlations of the constructs with other latent variables in the path model. The researchers also checked the HTMT criterion (table 3) and found that none of the values in the matrix exceeded the thresholds of both with values of 0.90.

Table 2: Discriminant validity – Fornell-Larcker criterion

	C	F	H	N	V	I
Convenient and Lifestyle (C)	<b>0.807</b>					
Family Orientation (F)	0.518	<b>0.819</b>				
Health Risk (H)	0.359	0.617	<b>0.857</b>			
Nutritional Value (N)	0.483	0.780	0.655	<b>0.955</b>		
Value for Money (V)	0.493	0.803	0.675	0.971	<b>0.915</b>	
Purchase Intention (I)	0.621	0.673	0.560	0.711	0.724	<b>0.827</b>

Note: Convenient and Lifestyle (C), Family Orientation (F), Health Risk (H), Nutritional Value (N), Value for Money (V), Purchase Intention (I)

Table 3: Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT)

	C	F	H	N	V	I
Convenient and Lifestyle (C)						
Family Orientation (F)	0.571					
Health Risk (H)	0.465	0.800				
Nutritional Value (N)	0.535	0.852	0.862			
Value for Money (V)	0.533	0.859	0.872	0.852		
Purchase Intention (I)	0.740	0.747	0.746	0.793	0.791	

### 3.4 Structural Model Analysis

PLS generates the path coefficients for the modelled relationships between the constructs. The bootstrap approach, which supplied the t-values for each path estimate, was used to determine the significance of these coefficients. To assess the power of the model to predict the outcome variables, predictive power  $R^2$  and predictive relevance were used (Hair Jr et al., 2014). According to Chin (1998), 0.67, 0.33 and 0.19 are classified as substantial, moderate, and weak level of R-Square, respectively. The R-Squared value of the endogenous latent variable (purchase intention) is 95.0%, indicating substantial level of model fitness as per the above-mentioned criteria. Figure 2 and Table 3 presents the results of the PLS analysis on the structural model along with the path estimates and t-values. Support for the study hypotheses, which are labelled on their corresponding paths in Figure 1, could be determined by studying the direction (positive or negative) of the path coefficients and the significance of the t-values.



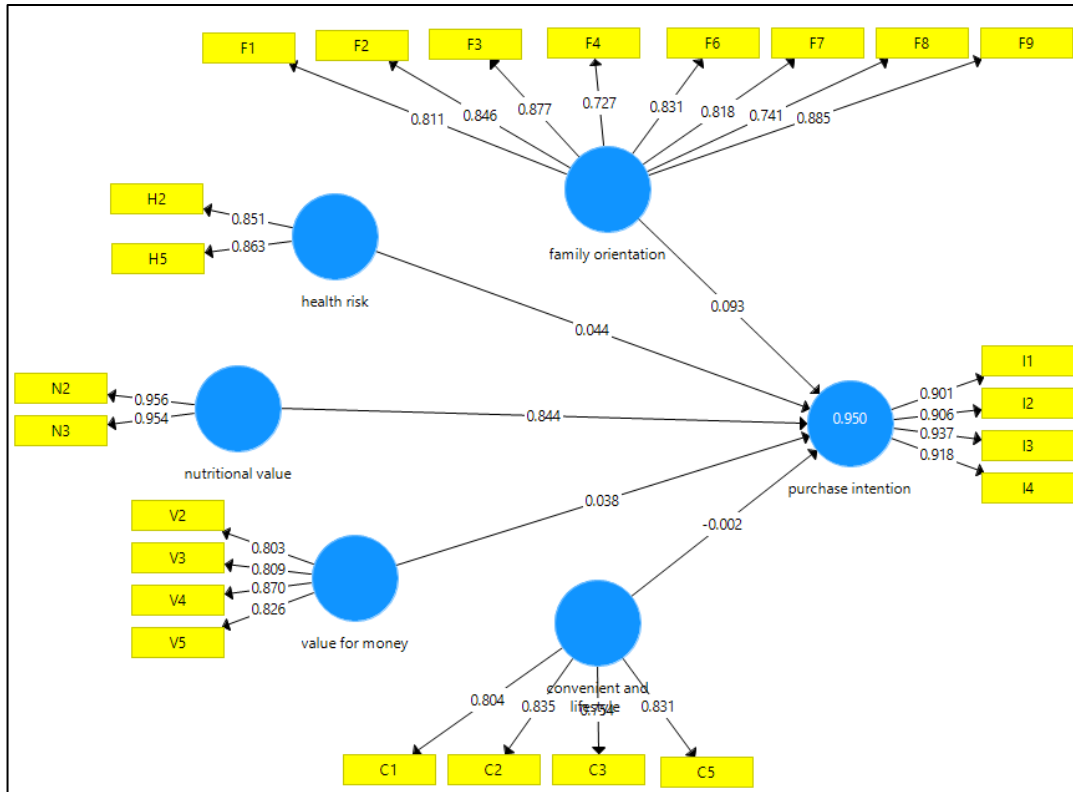


Figure 1: PLS Algorithm Path Model

Table 4 shows that the five research hypotheses are supported except for H1 and H5. The threshold for accepting or rejecting any hypothesis is the T-statistics value, which is supposed to be more than 1.96. Based on the H2 in this study obtained the results of the T-statistic of 3.609, the Path coefficient( $\beta$ ) value of 0.93, and the P values value of 0.000. The T-statistic value is less than the T-table value 1.96 and the P values value shows more than 0.05, this result shows that Family Orientation (F) has significant effect on Purchase Intention (I). This result empirically supports Hypothesis 2. H3 and H4, proposing the positive relationships of student satisfaction with communication and effectiveness, are supported with T-values of 2.227 and 32.029, and path coefficients of 0.044 and 844. Meanwhile, H1 and H5 states the relationship between computer capabilities and student satisfaction is positive but is not supported (T-value of 0.089, path coefficient of 1.483).

Table 4: Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient( $\beta$ )	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H1	C → I	0.002	0.089	0.929	Not Supported
H2	F → I	0.093	3.609**	0.000	Supported
H3	H → I	0.044	2.227***	0.026	Supported
H4	N → I	0.844	32.029**	0.000	Supported
H5	V → I	0.038	1.483	0.139	Not Supported

\*\*t-values: 1.96 (5%); \*\*\*t-values: 2.58 (1%)

Note: Convenient and Lifestyle (C), Family Orientation (F), Health Risk (H), Nutritional Value (N), Value for Money (V), Purchase Intention (I)

## 4 Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to determine Malaysian consumers' attitudes toward semi-prepared food in the Klang Valley area among millennials, as well as the factors that influence their purchasing intentions. The analysis indicates that nutritional value, Family Orientation and Health Risk have influence in determining Malaysian consumers' purchase intentions. The finding in the research is similar with Satoshi & Washizu (2020), reveals practical food considered not to harm health as well as health and is currently positioned as a tool to maintain the nutritional routines of numerous other as well as elderly people in Japan. Beneficial foods are expected to improve the eating behaviours of the elderly in industrialised countries where people are ageing, though it appears that the elderly will find it difficult to accept practical food in its current form because they are accustomed to preparing food traditionally and doubt the quality of the convenient foodstuff. It was discovered that those who are aware of the nutritional value of a product have a stronger desire to purchase semi-prepared products in the future.

Furthermore, Family Orientation and Health Risk strengthen the case for purchasing the semi-prepared food among Malaysia consumer. Individual customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by their family orientation. A family provides the setting in which a person acquires values, develops, and shapes his or her personality. This setting takes use of the chance to foster attitudes and points of view on a variety of themes, including social connections, society, and national politics. Lautiainen (2015) discovered that first views of items or brands, as well as customer habits in acquiring coffee brands, are influenced by family. Consumers who established brand assumptions as children can carry these same brand choices into adulthood without even realising that their family members influenced their choices (Wekeza & Sibanda, 2019).

Consumers who are concerned about the long time it takes to prepare food but are also health-conscious, such as those identified as semi-prepared food purchasers, are motivated to improve, or maintain their health and lifestyle as a result of their understanding and care for their well-being. Customers who buy semi-prepared goods are aware of the consequences of their choices and are aware of the risks associated

with the processing methods. To ensure their health and ease their way of life, they prefer healthier selections of convenient foods. Consumers are aware of the hazards associated with ready-to-cook and convenient foods, according to Kaufmann, Panni, and Orphanidou (2012). As a result, semi-prepared foods are seen as healthy items to ingest. Overall, this study demonstrated that the research model is useful and comprehensive in explaining Malaysian consumers' purchase intentions for semi-prepared food. The findings of this study give us some useful insights into the consumers' purchase intention of semi-prepared food.

However, the study's findings should be interpreted considering its limitations. This study has a few flaws, one of which is that it uses a non-probability convenience sampling method. The findings of the study could not be applied to the broader population because of the sampling procedure. As a result, future study should employ the probability-sampling method and retest the research model, allowing their findings to be generalized.

A second drawback is that the data were collected only from residents in the Klang Valley area, which could result in sampling bias. As a result, future research should broaden this study to include different cities, countries, and societies. Finally, additional marketing elements that potentially influence purchase intention of semi-prepared food, aside from Convenient and Lifestyle (C), Family Orientation (F), Health Risk (H), Nutritional Value (N), Value for Money (V), Purchase Intention (I), were not included in our study. Advertising and distribution, factors could all be incorporated into the research model. This research could serve as a springboard for additional research into halal food consumption in other countries and societies. Considering these factors, the findings of this study will be a valuable resource for future research.

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