

## Modern Kitchen Tools: A Boon for Homemakers

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**ABSTRACT** With the urbanization and industrialization, Indian woman is engaged in both household and professional activities. She has to perform dual roles, at work and home for which lot of physical and mental efforts are required. Sometimes due to over burden she may have frustration also which leads to dissatisfaction and unpleasantness at home. This kind of pressure due to dual roles can be reduced by engaging paid help or using labour saving tools in kitchen as maximum time of housewife is consumed in a kitchen. A housewife has to face lot of changes with design, price and metals of these tools. But by using these tools, a housewife can save her time and energy which she can use for other useful activities. Considering the importance of kitchen tools in the life of homemakers, a study was planned to know the changing scenario of these tools in the market. Two markets of Ludhiana city were purposively selected for the survey which, were having maximum number of crockery shops selling kitchen tools. Five shops each from these markets were selected randomly thus making a selection of 10 shops for the study. A pre-structured interview schedule was prepared to get the information from shop-owners regarding the availability of branded and non-branded kitchen tools and frequency of sale of modern kitchen tools. Study revealed that homemakers were keen to purchase these kitchen tools to reduce their time and energy. Moreover, shop-owners also had a good sale of kitchen tools and interested to possess more of these new and latest kitchen tools.

### INTRODUCTION

The kitchen is one of the important rooms of a residential building. A woman spends much of her time in kitchen for preparation of food and other related activities. The kitchen as one sees them today, has come a long way since the primitive cave man invented fire and cooked food on stove using wood. Constant development in the field of science and technology has resulted into various sophisticated labour saving devices that have become an indispensable part of the present day kitchen. Labour saving kitchen devices are those appliances / tools that help one to speed up the cooking process, save time and energy. Apart from being effective in their performance, the equipment have also proved to be very user-friendly. Further, they also reduce the food contamination risk by minimizing handling of food materials (Kaur 2005).

In the early days, most of the scientists had been working more for improving the industrial situation than the situation at homes, but with the advent of science and technology, they have started paying more attention to the activities performed by the homemakers at home to make them cost effective by introducing effective work methods and developing functional designs of household equipment (Dhablania 1992).

The need for labour saving devices to help in housekeeping is more evident in the small houses than in the large houses which are still run by the paid helpers and a small house is kept by the lady of the house. In urban homes nowadays, there is a boon of buying the labour saving kitchen tools (Kaur and Mehrotra 2004). Kanwar et al. (2003) were also of the view that by using improved kitchen tools and equipment, homemakers can efficiently manage their time and labour. They can adopt these technologies to simplify their work and reduce fatigue while attending in the kitchen. These tools kept in the shops to attract the customers especially women through their varied colours and designs. Moreover, they get special place in the modern kitchens. Therefore, to know the changing scenario of markets, the present study was undertaken with following objectives:

1. To study the availability of modern kitchen tools in the selected shops.
2. To know the reasons for possession and non-possession of modern kitchen tools.
3. To find out the frequency of sale of modern kitchen tools.

### METHODOLOGY

A market survey was done to find out the availability and frequency of sale of modern

kitchen tools in the market. Two markets of Ludhiana city were purposively selected for the market survey which, were having maximum number of crockery shops selling kitchen tools. Five shops each from these markets were selected randomly thus making a selection of 10 shops for the study. A pre-structured interview schedule was prepared to get the information from shop-owners regarding the availability of branded and non-branded kitchen tools and frequency of sale of modern kitchen tools. The reasons of possession and non-possession of modern kitchen tools reported by shop-owners were also taken. The data was analysed by calculating percentages and means scores and then mean ranks were given accordingly. For calculating mean scores the following formula was used

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{\text{Total score given by respondents} = \sum x_i}{\text{Total no. of respondents} = n}$$

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The market survey was conducted for getting the information regarding the possession of kitchen tools in the market and their frequency of sale.

It is clear from Table 1 that kitchen tools like grater, peeler, *poori* presser, chopping board, egg beater, potato chips maker and potato masher were available at all the shops selected for survey. Citrus juicer was available at 90 per cent of shops followed by churner, tomato slicer, chilli cutter and spatula (80%). Apple cutter, colander and *vada* maker were available at 70 per cent of shops followed by *poori* picker, cheese slicer and *saag* cutting machine (60 %), hand food processor (50 %) and egg slicer (40 %). Table 1 further reveals that kitchen tools like hand food processor, egg slicer, *poori* picker and chopping board were of branded companies. So it can be concluded that most popular tools were found to be grater, peeler, *poori* presser, chopping board, egg beater, potato chips maker and potato masher as they were available at all the shops which may be because they were much in demand by consumers.

Vyas (2004) also studied the frequency of use of tools and found that the maximum tools possessed by rural and urban families were knife, vegetable peeler and lemon squeezer. Whereas, egg slicer and onion chopper were used by less number of respondents. Majority of respondents were highly satisfied with the performance of knife and lemon squeezer.

**Table 1: Availability of kitchen tools at selected shops (N=10)**

| Kitchen tools               | No. of respondents | Type of tools |           |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------|
|                             |                    | Branded       | Unbranded |
| Grater                      | 10(100.00)         | 6(60.00)      | 8(80.00)  |
| Peeler                      | 10(100.00)         | 8(80.00)      | 7(70.00)  |
| <i>Poori</i> presser        | 10(100.00)         | 6(60.00)      | 7(70.00)  |
| Chopping board              | 10(100.00)         | 9(90.00)      | 4(40.00)  |
| Egg beater                  | 10(100.00)         | 6(60.00)      | 9(90.00)  |
| Potato masher               | 10(100.00)         | 9(90.00)      | 6(60.00)  |
| Potato chips maker          | 10(100.00)         | 6(60.00)      | 7(70.00)  |
| Citrus juicer               | 9(90.00)           | 6(66.66)      | 3(33.33)  |
| Churner                     | 8(80.00)           | 6(75.00)      | 3(37.50)  |
| Tomato slicer               | 8(80.00)           | 6(75.00)      | 2(25.00)  |
| Chilly cutter               | 8(80.00)           | 6(75.00)      | 4(50.00)  |
| Spatula                     | 8(80.00)           | 6(75.00)      | 6(75.00)  |
| Apple cutter                | 7(70.00)           | 4(57.14)      | 5(71.43)  |
| Colander                    | 7(70.00)           | 4(57.14)      | 5(71.43)  |
| <i>Vada</i> maker           | 7(70.00)           | 6(85.71)      | 3(42.86)  |
| <i>Saag</i> cutting machine | 6(60.00)           | 4(66.66)      | 2(33.33)  |
| Cheese slicer               | 6(60.00)           | 4(66.66)      | 2(33.33)  |
| <i>Poori</i> picker         | 6(60.00)           | 6(100.00)     | 2(33.33)  |
| Hand food processor         | 5(50.00)           | 5(100.00)     | -         |
| Egg slicer                  | 4(40.00)           | 4(100.00)     | -         |

Figures in parentheses are percentages

## Reasons for Having and Not Having Kitchen Tools by the Shop-owners

Reasons for having and not having kitchen tools by the shop-owners were also studied. It was found that the reason of 'easy availability' was given by all the shop-owners for having maximum number of kitchen tools. Whereas, the reason of 'latest in trend' was given by all the shop-owners for tools like grater, peeler, egg beater, potato chips maker, citrus juicer and potato masher. While 'easy to operate', 'available with guarantee' and 'standardized' were the main reasons quoted by majority of shop-owners for having kitchen tools like grater, peeler, chopping board and egg beater. The reason of 'attractive' got least importance for having tools like *poori* presser, apple cutter, potato masher, colander and *saag* cutting machine. Therefore, the most common reasons given by maximum number of shop-owners for having specific kitchen tools were 'easy availability', 'latest in trend', 'standardized' and 'attractive'. Whereas, the most common reasons for not having kitchen tools like egg slicer, hand food processor, *poori* picker, cheese slicer and *saag* cutting machine at their shops included 'not much in demand', 'less awareness' and 'difficult to clean and repair'. Kaur

et al. (2006) also mentioned that by use of time and labour saving devices, 45 per cent of physical energy can be saved and these devices are easily available in the market.

**Table 2: Frequency of sale of kitchen tools in market (N=10)**

| Kitchen tools        | Mean score | Mean rank |
|----------------------|------------|-----------|
| Peeler               | 3.00       | I         |
| Chopping board       | 2.40       | II        |
| Tomato slicer        | 2.38       | III       |
| Grater               | 2.30       | IV        |
| Churner              | 2.25       | V         |
| Citrus juicer        | 1.78       | VI        |
| Poori presser        | 1.70       | VII       |
| Potato masher        | 1.70       | VII       |
| Potato chips maker   | 1.60       | VIII      |
| Egg beater           | 1.40       | IX        |
| Chilli cutter        | 1.37       | X         |
| Saag cutting machine | 1.33       | XI        |
| Poori picker         | 1.33       | XI        |
| Colander             | 1.33       | XI        |
| Apple cutter         | 1.29       | XII       |
| Spatula              | 1.25       | XIII      |
| Cheese slicer        | 1.16       | XIV       |
| Hand food processor  | 1.00       | XV        |
| Vada maker           | 1.00       | XV        |
| Egg slicer           | 1.00       | XV        |

For calculating the frequency of sale of kitchen tools in the market, mean scores were calculated and mean ranks were assigned accordingly. It was found that some of the most popular tools which were frequently sold (according to calculated mean scores) in the market included peeler, chopping board, tomato slicer, grater and hand churner. This may be due to the reason that homemakers need these handy tools much in their kitchen as all these tools are used in the preparatory activities of cooking. Some of other frequently sold tools were citrus juicer, *poori* presser, potato masher, potato chips maker, egg beater and chilli cutter. It was observed that some of the

kitchen tools were sold very less frequently in the market, these included *poori* picker, apple cutter, cheese slicer hand food-processor, *vada* maker and egg slicer. This could be due to the reason that homemakers may have alternate tools to perform all these activities instead of using these tools.

## CONCLUSION

On the whole, it can be concluded that as far as the overall scenario of market of Ludhiana city is concerned, it was observed that homemakers were keen to purchase these kitchen tools to reduce their time and energy. Moreover, shop-owners also had a good sale of kitchen tools and interested to possess of more of these new and latest kitchen tools.

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