



ISSN (E): 2277- 7695
ISSN (P): 2349-8242
NAAS Rating: 5.03
TPI 2020; 9(11): 310-313
© 2020 TPI
www.thepharmajournal.com

Received: 19-09-2020
Accepted: 21-10-2020

Dr. Nilika Chandra
Research Associate, Department
of Home Science, Birsa
Agricultural University, Kanke,
Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

Rising trends of fast food among adolescent and teenaged school and college going girls

Dr. Nilika Chandra

Abstract

Consumption of fast foods has become almost a global phenomenon, as more and more people are lured by it day in and day out irrespective of demographic traits. But to know how students are attracted by fast foods has assumed importance in recent times. So the research subject of the study was to find out the “Rising Trends of Fast Food among Adolescent and Teenaged School and College Going Girls”. For the collection of data a representative sample of 56 urban adolescent students were randomly selected in the target area. A structured questionnaire was administered and interviews were carried out on the students in different schools and colleges of the Ranchi city to gather the data related to the subject. Study showed interesting results. On one hand sex and economic status were found chief variable in fast food consumption as girls are leading in former and adolescent students reading in private schools are up in the latter. On the other hand, flavor, variety, brand, fast service and availability were found main driving force in fast food intake. Also exposure to advertisements, media influence and urbanization were found chief factors in fast food intake.

Keywords: Fast food, adolescents, prevalence

Introduction

Food is an important part of our life. It is something everyone needs, every day. Life can be sustained only with adequate nourishment. Man needs food for growth, development and to lead an active and healthy life is the time of rapid growth and development in life. Nutrient needs are at the peak. Diet in this age has repercussions on the future health. High intake of fat, cholesterol and salt is associated with heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis and diabetes. Improper intake of nutrients and inactivity may even lead to lifelong obesity. Adolescents are least bothered about what they eat, so adults around them have to keep a watch on what, where and with whom they eat because it determines their eating patterns. Urban adolescents tend to enjoy soft drinks, breads, potato chips, popcorn and ready to eat meals. These foods are rich sources of carbohydrates but have low nutrient density. Socioeconomic conditions and cultural norms of our community have been changing. Food habits of our children are also changing facing such changes. Many of children are fond of readymade outside food. Some guardians are even reluctant in changing food habits of their children. They admit readymade outside food for their babies even willingly. Fast food culture is an emerging trend among the younger generation. The ready availability, taste, low cost, marketing strategy and peer pressure makes them popular among children and adolescents. Fast food is the term given to food that is high in calories but low in nutritional content. Oxford dictionary defines fast food as “easily prepared processed food served in snack bars and restaurants as a quick meal or to be taken away”. Junk foods have no or very less nutritional value and irrespective of the way they are marketed, they are not healthy to consume. The eating pattern of adolescents first gained attention in Western countries claiming that they have a poor diet. Owing to globalization and urbanization in developing countries, adolescent eating behaviour is also coming under the spot light in India too. Also, fast foods are one of the main agents responsible for many diet related non-communicable diseases and disorders like obesity, hypertension, and cardiovascular diseases later on in adulthood. Moreover fast food related concerns have alarmed people all over the globe and countries like India too. Children are especially vulnerable to current food environments because they have a biological preference for salty and sweet foods. Adolescents living in urban areas have been known to have higher consumption of fast foods because of easy availability and accessibility. Conversely semi urban and rural areas are supposedly less influenced and have lesser consumption frequency of

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Nilika Chandra
Research Associate, Department
of Home Science, Birsa
Agricultural University, Kanke,
Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

fast foods. With the bombardment of media and advertisements about various fast foods, awareness about fast foods and the consequent demand has trickled and infiltrated down to the semi urban areas too. Such foods have also become a way of life in semi urban areas; the quality and branding may differ but they are available and accessible. The urban adolescents may be consuming burgers and pizzas of international brands whereas their counterparts in semi urban areas would be getting lesser brands or locally made products. Fast food denotes food which is prepared and served quickly at outlets called fast food restaurants. Finger food comprises most of the fast food, and can be eaten without cutlery. Fast foods include chips, sandwiches, hamburgers, fried chicken, French fries, chicken nuggets, fish, pizza or ice-cream, although many fast food restaurants offer slower foods like chilly mashed potatoes or salads. Fast food is often highly processed and prepared in an industrial fashion, i.e., with standard ingredients and methodical and standardized cooking and production methods. It is usually rapidly served in cartons or bags or in a plastic wrapping, in a fashion which minimizes cost. The phenomenal growth of the fast food industry continues. Fast food restaurants appeal especially to person less than 35 years. For those who eat a meal or a snack in a fast food restaurant once a week or so, the effect on the nutritive adequacy of the diet is not great. But for workers and teenagers who might eat a meal daily at these places the nutritive contributions must be carefully considered. A typical meal in a fast food restaurant (Ham burger, French-fries, Milk shake) furnish about half of the caloric requirement of a teen age boy, 40 percent or more of his protein allowance, and up to one-third of his thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin allowances. The meal also provides significant amounts of calcium and iron. But if coffee or soft drink is substituted for the milk shake the calcium content of the meal is very low. Most fast food meals are low in fiber, vitamin A and C, folacin and some trace minerals. Many are low in calcium and iron. Gradually fast food restaurants are introducing break-fast items, orange juice, frozen yogurt and salad bars to provide wider choice and more opportunity to meet the nutrient requirements. Fast food is growing component in diet, and the frequency of fast food use has increased dramatically since the early 1970s. Fast food is especially popular among adolescents, who on an average visit a fast food outlet twice per week. Many people have raised concerns about the nutritional quality of fast food, not only for children and adolescents but also for adults. Several factors have contributed to this phenomenal increase in the use of fast food, including a greater number of working women, dual-career families, more diverse schedule of family members, an aging population and an increasing number of one and two person households. Fast foods meet the needs of many people because they are quick, reasonably priced and readily available. Also currently these restaurants are responding to the health concerns of their customers by changing some of their practices, such as the continued trend towards the use of vegetable oils instead of animal fats for frying, an increase in the number of low-fat menu items, and more fruits and vegetables available at salad bars. Food industry analysis even predict a future of increasing Prevalence Of Fast Food Intake Among Urban Adolescent Students home delivery services, high-quality vending machine foods and ready to eat packages for microwave equipped homes. Adolescence is the time of rapid growth and development in life. Nutrient needs are at the peak. Diet in this age has repercussions on the future

health. High intake of fat, cholesterol and salt is associated with heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis and diabetes. Improper intake of nutrients and inactivity may even lead to lifelong obesity. Adolescent are least bothered about what they eat, so adults around them have to keep watch what, where and with whom they eat because it determines their eating patterns. Urban adolescents tend to enjoy soft drinks, breads, potato chips, popcorn and ready to eat meals. These foods are rich sources of carbohydrates but have low nutrient density. For adequate intake of micro nutrients, fruits, vegetables are must. One of the marked changes in the urban eating habits is the trend of dining out. A number of factors contribute to the increasing popularity of eating out. Smaller families, working mothers, double income households, higher income, more fast food outlets and increased advertising are some of them. Increased availability of food away from home may adversely affect nutrition intake. Children tend to consume foods higher in fat and lower in fiber and calcium when they eat outside. Advertisements showing sodas with fast meals instead of milk or juice motivate children to select less nutritious foods. Eating low nutrient density food in moderation does not pose a serious threat to the nutritional status of an adolescent whose basic food habits are nutritionally sound. However when carried to extremes or when practiced by the adolescent who does not and/ or has not good food habits these practices may compromise growth and maintenance of body functions.

Factors related to fast food consumption

Fast foods are taking popularity by nuclear families because working parents have less time for meal preparation by themselves. Majority of working parents with school going children are in stress. Children spend most of the time away from home by attending tuition classes after school hours. Children take breakfast at home and fast food in school or outside school. A positive correlation of increased fast food consumption and increased body mass index was found among adolescents. Socio economic status is an important factor related to fast food consumption. Children from high socio-economic status prefer fast foods to traditional foods despite their better nutritional knowledge. It has been seen that children who are overweight are significantly more likely to recognize fast food restaurant logos than other food logos. Again, families' socio-demographic characteristics play a role in children's recognition of food logos. Factors related to fast food preference by students are convenience, easy accessibility, taste, cost and quick service in fast food shop. Most of the fast food users take such kind of food though they know well about negative effects on themselves associated with fast food consumption.

Methods and tools for data

Collection

A questionnaire method was used as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of:

General information: This part of questionnaire includes questions related General information of a subject which comprise of Institution's name, gender, age and educational status.

Fast food consumption pattern: The questionnaire included some questions regarding the fast food consumption pattern of students. These questions were used to inquire the

respondent's frequency, time, reasons, and expenditure on eating fast food.

Dietary intake: The fast food consumption frequency was recorded in terms of intake of Pizza, burger, chocolate, ice cream, and cookies/cake, chowmein and pasta, Maggi etc. The fast food consumption pattern assess by the fast food frequency questionnaire in term of daily, weekly, monthly, never.

The study was conducted out in students (Girls) of different schools and colleges in Kanke area of Ranchi District. A total 56 subjects were selected between the age group of 12 – 20 years. The duration of data collocation was 2 months September to October 2020. For data collection questionnaire and interview method was used.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Age and educational status of respondents

Age group	No. of students	Percentage	Mean
12-16	22	39.28	28
17-22	34	60.71	
School level			
Class 6-7	6	27.27	
Class 8-10	7	31.81	
Class 9-11	9	40.90	
College level			
Graduation	34	60.71	

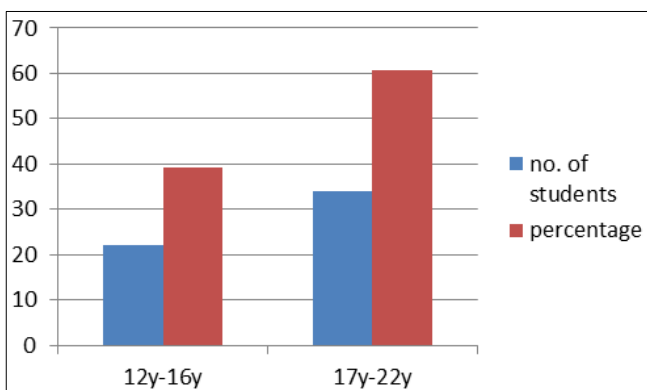


Fig 1: Figure 1(a): Age of the respondent

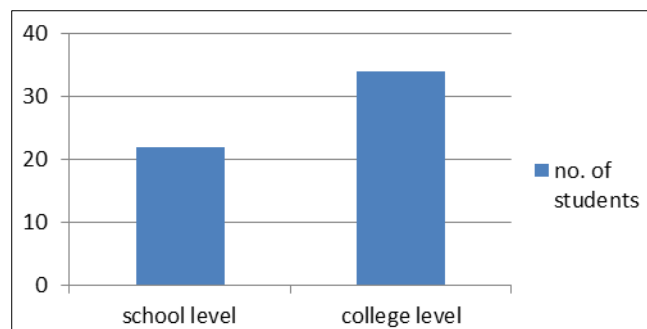


Fig 2: Figure 1(b): Educational status of respondents

Table 2: Likes, dislikes of fast foods of students

No. of students	Likes very much	Not likes too much	Do not like
56 (Total number)			
College	21	9	4
School	18	3	1

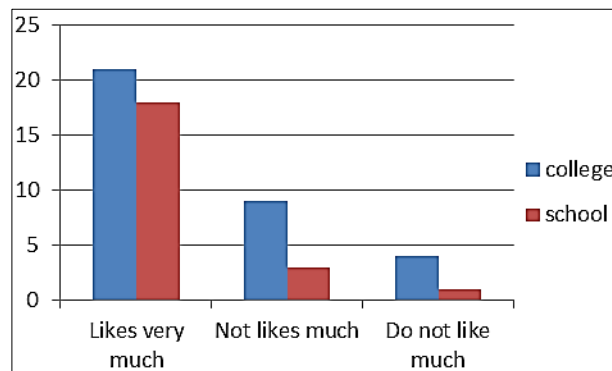


Fig 2: Likes and dislikes of fast food among respondents.

Table 3: Venue to have the fast food

Total number of students	Restaurants	Home	Street food
56	18	22	23

Note: 07 No. of students liked fast foods both at home and street foods

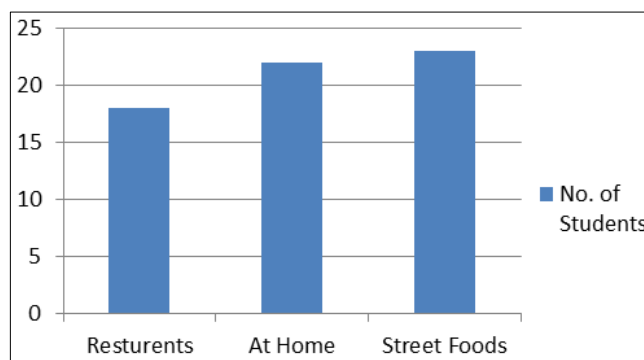


Fig 3: Venue to have the fast food

Table 4: Usual time of fast food consumption

No. of students	Breakfast	Lunch	Eve. snacks	Dinner
56	Nil	Nil	34	22

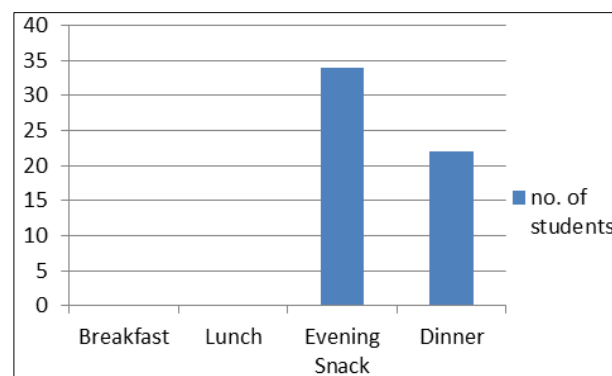


Fig 4: Usual time of fast food consumption

Table 5: Likes the item of fast food the most

Name of items	No. of students likes
Pizza	16
Chowmein	15
Maggi	18
Pasta	14
Momos, cold drinks, pani puri, ice-creams etc	Mostly liked by all the students.
Burger	Was the least liked item among these students

Some items were repeated due to which the numbers were exceeded from 56 to 63.

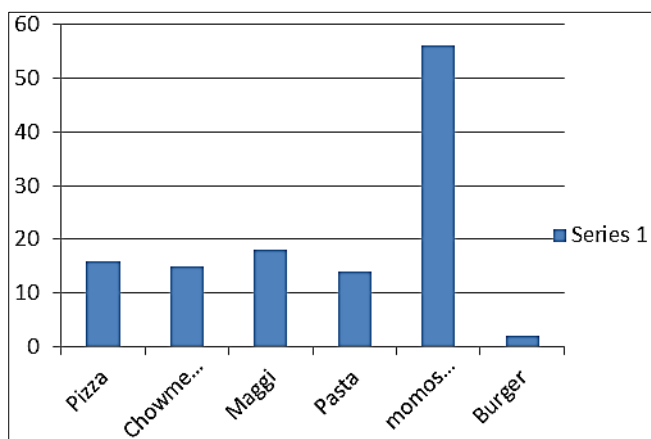


Fig 4: Usual time of fast food consumption the most

Fast foods and school and colleges

Scenario of food presentation in school areas differ from region to region. Junk foods are widely available by the sides of schools of country like ours. Cafeterias at the schools are reluctant with balanced nutritious diet; rather interested to offer cold drinks, chips and many other foods of low nutritional value. Junk foods in school cafeteria often compete with nutritious homemade school tiffin. Banning of junk foods in school cafeteria is a rare occurrence in this region. Mid-day meal program is not introduced in private schools of our country but this program has been introduced specially in government schools of many countries. Healthy foods are offered to children through this program. In primary schools of many European countries, commercial food activities are restricted. Beverages may be offered among secondary school students of these countries with active participation of educators and parents.

Reduction of fast food consumption

Availability of healthy food along with its campaign and surveillance on disease and association with dietary habits improves healthy food intake. School based programs and health education can also improve dietary habits of children. Price reduction is one of the most effective strategies of healthy foods purchasing. Price reduction on low fat snacks and placement of low fat label is associated with significant increase in their consumption among adolescent population. Time has arrived when advertisement of fast food and junk food in mass media is to be controlled strictly. Healthy feeding should be focused through televisions, radios, newspapers and school mid-day food programme. Children should be encouraged to take readily available and affordable home made nutritious foods. Government has to take measures to reduce cost of food grains in countries like ours. Implementation of tax on readymade food items might be appreciated. Disclosure of nutritional content in

Conclusions

Taking of fast food is a dietary habit of our present day children. Consumption of diet reaches in sugar, saturated fat, salt and calorie in children can lead to early development of health hazards.

There are various reasons for consumption of such food by children. Most of fast food users know well about negative effects associated with fast food consumption. However, they

take fast food without considering their health complications. The young generations are getting addicted to fast food which indicates a serious public health problem. Prompt necessary actions should be undertaken to tackle this health problem. Implementation of laws to regulate the marketing of fast foods may be an important step in reducing fast food consumption by children. Awareness regarding healthy feeding may save children from harmful effects of fast food in this area.

Suggestion

- Create awareness in the school going children about hazards of fast food consumption.
- Banned fast food use in school
- Banned carbonated beverage in school campus
- Nutrition education should give to the school students
- In canteen healthy foods like dhokla, idli etc. can be sold instead fast food.

References

1. Ashakiran Deepthi R. Fast foods and their impact on health. *Journal of Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences University* 2012;1:7-15.
2. Chiubber C. Children hooked to junk food: school fail to curb the menace. *The Tribune Ludhiana* 2010.
3. Jennifer Poti M. The association of fast food consumption with poor dietary outcomes and obesity among children. *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 2013;99:162-71.