Fast food consumption pattern amongst Commerce undergraduates at KES Shroff College in Kandivali

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Abstract: Maintaining a nutritious diet throughout one's life can help prevent malnutrition and various NCDs. However, eating patterns have shifted due to increased manufacturing of processed foods, urbanisation, and shifting lifestyles. A study involving KES Shroff college students in the Commerce stream aimed to evaluate the consumption pattern of fast food and its perceptions among the target undergraduate population. The research aimed to identify the demographic profile of college students, determine if brands have any relation to the age of college students, and understand the reasons for food preference behaviour. The study surveyed 212 college-aged young adults, with the majority being women. The majority of students reported a positive attitude towards fast food, with 71% reporting a positive attitude. Most students consume fast food at least once every other day, with the majority eating it three to four times per week. Branding meals in fast food is considered significant by 83% of students. Price is a factor in purchasing decisions, with 90% of students stating that it is a factor. Emotional factors such as sadness, happiness, anger, and tension also influence fast food consumption. The study found no correlation between age and brand loyalty, price to pay, nutrition, or age and disease due to fast food consumption. Taste is the most important reason for consuming fast food, followed by friendliness, company, and the variety of fast food options. The study's findings suggest that fast food consumption is influenced by personal preference and available funds rather than demographic factors like age or gender.

Keywords: Nutritious diet, fast food, college students, KES Shroff College, Convenience.

1. INTRODUCTION

Malnutrition in all its forms and a variety of NCDs and illnesses can be avoided by maintaining a nutritious diet throughout the lifespan, as defined by the World Health Organisation in 2020. However, eating patterns have shifted as a result of increased manufacturing of processed foods, growing urbanisation, and shifting lifestyles. Many people nowadays do not consume nearly enough of the recommended daily allowance of fruits, vegetables, and other sources of dietary fibre, such as whole grains, and they are eating more foods that are heavy in energy, fats, free sugars, and salt or sodium.

The following are components of a healthy diet:

- Whole grains (such as unprocessed maize, millet, oats, wheat, and brown rice) and legumes (like lentils and beans) are also recommended.
- Include at least 400 g (or five servings) of produce daily (4); do not include tubers, yams, cassava, or other starchy roots.
- 10% or less of total energy intake from free sugars (4, 6), which for a healthy-weight individual consuming about 2000 calories a day is 50 g (or about 12 level teaspoons), and ideally less than 5% of total energy intake for extra health benefits (6). Sugars found in honey, syrups, fruit juices, and fruit juice concentrates, as well as those added to foods and drinks during production, preparation, or consumption, are all considered free sugars.

- Consume fewer than 30 percent of one's daily calories from fat (8, 4, 5). Saturated fats (found in fatty meat, butter, palm and coconut oil, cream, cheese, ghee, and lard) and trans-fats (found in industrially produced baked and fried foods and pre-packaged snacks and foods, such as frozen pizza, pies, cookies, biscuits, wafers, and cooking oils and spreads) should be avoided in favour of unsaturated fats (found in fish, avocado, and nuts and in sunflower, soybean, canola, Saturated fat consumption should account for less than 10% of total energy intake, while trans-fat consumption should account for less than 1%of total energy intake(5 recommendations). Trans fats, especially those manufactured industrially, do not belong in a healthy diet and should be avoided (10, 11).

The specifics of what constitutes a varied, balanced, and nutritious diet rely on factors such as the specific person's needs (such as age, gender, lifestyle, and level of physical activity), the specifics of their cultural setting, the foods that are readily available, and the dietary norms that are widely practised. The fundamentals of what should be included in a healthy diet, however, have not changed. Many people's lifestyles have shifted significantly as a result of growing urbanisation and the development of cutting-edge contemporary technologies. Individuals' dietary patterns have shifted as a result of their increasingly fast-paced lifestyles. The term "fast food" is commonly used to describe meals that are made rapidly. The popularity of fast food in India has skyrocketed. Fried and roasted foods are popular among the public, especially among teenagers. Multiple studies have found that individuals enjoy fast food for a variety of reasons, including convenience, taste, social contact, and pleasure (Hesamedin Askari Majabadi et al., 2016; B. Narayan and M. Prabhu, 2015; M. S. Anitharaj, 2018). While there is undeniable demand for fast food among a sizable percentage of the population, This study was consequently carried out among the students currently enrolled in KES Shroff College of Kandivali in the Commerce stream, along with the following objectives: to evaluate the consumption pattern of fast food and the perceptions held by the target undergraduate population; and to research the existing information concerning quick intake of food linked to the development of non-communicable diseases.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There has been an attempt to identify he gap in the field by conducting a critical evaluation of the existing literature on the topics at hand.

Narayan, B., and M. Prabhu (2015) expressed that "Taste, time, money, cleanliness, and hygiene are the variables that have impacted students attitudes towards fast food. According to the findings, male college students eat morefast food than their female counterparts. According to the research, consumers frequent fast food restaurants not just for meals but also for get-togethers with family and friends, colleagues, and schoolmates.

Mr. S. Anitharaj (2018) explained that people frequent fast food joints for social gatherings, celebrations, and the delicious food. It was shown that the cost of certain fast food items correlates highly with the frequency with which people frequent these establishments. The study also found that "consumer acceptances of food served at fast-food outlets are very important" for the rapid expansion of fast-food chains.

According to N. Syafiqah N.R. Normala et al. (2018), according to their study conducted, female students are more likely to eat fast food than their male counterparts. The study found that "consumers consume fast food anywhere from once per week to five times per week."

S. Abraham, M. Manuel, et al. (2018) explained that the health of a person can be inferred

from their eating habits. According to (2018), students' awareness about the dangers of their unhealthy eating habits does not match up with their actual behaviour. The report also recommended that pupils be educated on the risks associated with eating fast food.

V.B. Dhange, V. Pari, S. et al. (2017) reported that 31.87 percent of their respondents didn't know about the negative impacts of eating fast food, as reported by et al. (2017). According to the findings, "an awareness campaign regarding the detrimental effects of fast food consumption and the usefulness of a balanced diet" is recommended.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the demographic profile of the college students

2. To find out whether brand has any relation with the age of college students.

3. To find out the reason for consumption and food preference behaviour

4. METHODOLOGY

Period of Sampling: The purpose of this research is to examine how frequently college students eat at fast-food restaurants. A total of 250 surveys were sent out to KES Shroff College students. However, just212 pupils out of the original population answered. Three statements on a five-point Likert scale (1 representing a strong agreement and 5 representing a strong disagreement) have been used to create a structured questionnaire. According to the available research, four explanatory variables and one dependent variable can be identified. Therefore, the survey's questions have been limited to those that probe for information on independent and dependent variables. The research was performed in March 2023.

Sample Size: KES Shroff College students who regularly eat fast food served as our sample. In this research, we selected a sampling method that was both quick and easy.

The analysis of the data was performed using SPSS version 20. Reliability testing and Chi-square analysis are some of the tests that have been performed. Statement validity was tested using a reliability coefficient, and associations between variables were analysed using Chi-square and regression.

TABLE NO 1: Demographic profile of respondents:

	Description	Participants (N= 212)
Age (Year Wise)	18-20	83
	20- 22	105
	22-24	24
Gender	Male	82
	Female	130
Enjoyment of Fast Food	Yes	143
	No	4
	Sometimes	65
Number of times a week student consumes fast food.	0 times	11
	1-2 times	132
	3 -4 times	44
	5 times or more	25
Branding affects choosing of fast food	Agree	83
	Disagree	9
	Maybe	81
	Strongly Agree	38
	Strongly Disagree	1
Price of fast food influences the type of fast food chosen	Agree	110
	Disagree	10
	Maybe	55
	Strongly Agree	37
	Strongly Disagree	00
Amount spent by students for fast food	100 Rs	120
	200 Rs	64
	300 Rs.	22
	More than 500 Rs.	6
Impact of nutrition in choosing fast food to eat	Always	6
	Mostly	38
	Not at all	19
	Rarely	48
	Sometimes	101

Choosing fast food is influenced by emotion and emotional factors such as sad, Happy, angry and stress	Agree	79
	Disagree	18
	Neutral	63
	Strongly Agree	45
	Strongly Disagree	07
Respondents view on the consumption of fast food in future will increase	Certainly	45
	No	22
	Yes	146

Table 1 summarises the various demographic profiles. There are 105 students in the 20–22 age range, 83 students in the 18–20 age range, and 24 students in the 22–24 age range; all are college-aged young adults. There were 82 male and 130 female participants in this study, suggesting that more women than men attended this particular survey. Of the entire sample of 212 students, 71% (143) report a positive attitude towards fast food, 29% (65) report a neutral attitude towards fast food, and 4% (four) report an adverse attitude towards fast food. Most students in the study consume fast food at least once every other day, with 132 respondents reporting that they do so at least once every other day. Another 44 students reported eating fast food three to four times per week, 25 students reported eating fast food five times per week, and 11 students reported eating fast food on occasion but not on a weekly basis. According to a survey of KES college students, 83% of students think that branding meals in fast food is significant, with 38% strongly agreeing that branding is necessary and 9% and 1% disagreeing that branding is not important, respectively. In a survey of 120 students, 90% said price was a factor when making a purchasing decision, whereas 10% disagreed. Assume a minimum expenditure of 100 rupees because of their habit of consuming fast food. One hundred and one students report that they sometimes feel that nutrition is vital, whereas just nineteen report that it is not at all necessary. Emotional states and characteristics, such as sadness, happiness, anger, and tension, all play a role in determining which fast food restaurants students visit. Emotional considerations are not significant, according to all except 7.

Hypothesis 1:

H0: Age and Branding of fast food consumption are not associated

H1: Age and branding of fast food consumption are associated

Table No. 2: Various factors affecting consumption of Fast food decision

Age (in Years)		Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig	p value	Inference
	16	3.65	.814	.467	.878	**>.05**	NS
	17	3.69	.856				
	18	3.65	.832				
	19	3.69	.793				
Does Branding affect the chosen fast food	20	3.85	.801				
	21	3.88	1.126				
	22	4.20	.837				
	23	3.43	.976				
	24	3.83	.408				
	Total	3.70	.828				

The above table contains a statistically significant test result of the null hypothesis should be rejected because the P value, 0.0878, is greater than 0.05. If the P value is greater than 0.05, then there was no significant finding. Therefore, there is no correlation between seniority and fast food brand loyalty. It doesn't even matter.

Hypothesis 2:

H0: Age and the price to pay for fast food consumption are not associated.

H1: Age and the price to pay for fast food consumption are associated.

Table No. 3: Agewise expectation of respondent to pay for fast food

Age (in Years)		Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig	p value	Inference
On average, how much would you expect to pay for a fast food meal	16	1.64	.729	2.171	0.031	<0.05	S
	17	1.41	.722				
	18	1.74	.689				
	19	1.56	.892				
	20	1.69	1.109				
	21	1.38	.744				
	22	1.60	.548				
	23	2.57	.976				
	24	1.33	.816				
	Total	1.59	.788				

Given that 0.031 is less than > 0.05, the test result is statistically significant and supports acceptance of the null hypothesis. When it comes to fast food, young people don't care about cost if the p-value is less than.05. So there is a correlation between getting older and spending more on fast food.

Hypothesis 3:

H0: Age and significance of nutrition in fast food consumption are not associated.

H1: Age and significance of nutrition in fast food consumption are associated

Table No. 4: Agewise distribution of respondents preferring nutritional information in consumption of fast food

Age (in Years)		Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig	p value	Inference
How does nutritional information influence your decision to eat fast food	16	2.84	.916	.346	.947	>.05	NS
	17	2.85	.962				
	18	2.96	1.022				
	19	2.56	.892				
	20	3.00	1.080				
	21	2.63	.916				
	22	2.80	.447				
	23	2.86	.378				
	24	2.67	1.033				
	Total	2.83	.923				

The above table contains a statistically significant test result. A p-value of > 0.05, or 0.0947, indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be true. If the P value is greater than 0.05, then there was no significant finding. Therefore, there is no correlation between age and the nutritional value of fast food. It doesn't even matter.

Hypothesis 4:

H0: Age and choice of fast food consumption due to emotion; emotional factors such as sadness, happiness, anger, and stress are not associated.

H1: Age and choice of fast food consumption due to emotion; emotional factors such as sadness, happiness, anger, and stress are associated.

Table No. 5: Agewise distribution of respondents who choose fast food due to emotion, emotional factors such as sad, happy, angry and stress

Age (in Years)		Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig	p value	Inference
Choosing fast food is influenced by emotion, emotional factors such as sad, happy, angry and stress	16	3.48	.704	.574	.799	>.05	NS
	17	3.37	.740				
	18	3.70	.470				
	19	3.38	.806				
	20	3.54	.660				
	21	3.50	.535				
	22	3.60	.548				
	23	3.29	.951				
	24	3.50	.837				
	Total	3.47	.698				

The above table contains a statistically significant test result of a p-value of 0.0799 or greater than 0.05 indicates that the null hypothesis should be rejected. If the P value is greater than 0.05, then there was no significant finding. Hence, there is no correlation between age and fast food preferences influenced by negative emotions like sadness, joy, anger, or tension. It doesn't even matter.

Hypothesis 5:

H0: Age and disease due to fast food consumption are not associated.

H1: Age and disease due to fast food consumption are associated.

Table No. 6: Agewise distribution of respondent's awareness of the disease due to consumption of fast food

Age (in Years)		Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig	p value	Inference
Are you aware of disease that will affect you from the fast food you consume	16	1.47	.777	1.766	0.086	>.05	NS
	17	1.71	.892				
	18	1.65	.935				
	19	1.31	.704				
	20	1.15	.555				
	21	1.38	.744				
	22	1.00	.000				
	23	1.43	.787				
	24	2.17	.983				
	Total	1.53	.823				

The statistically significant test result in the above table is 0.086, which is less than > 0.05 and means that the test hypothesis is true and should be accepted. A P value less than 0.05 means that youngsters are concerned with the disease due to their consumption of fast food. So, age and disease due to fast food consumption are associated.

Table No. 7: Reasons to choose fast food

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total	
Taste	88	22	27	27	48	711	I
Cheap	32	75	31	53	21	680	II
Time	28	42	90	32	20	662	III
Variety	27	47	37	66	35	601	IV
Friends	37	26	27	34	88	526	V

Taste is the most important reason behind consuming fast food, whereas consuming fast food due to friendliness is the least preferred. The other reasons for which fast food is preferred are that it is not costly, the time taken to prepare the food is fast, and a variety of fast foods are available.

Table No. 8 Preference of Fast Food

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Burger	80	10.01
French Fries	75	9.39
Vada Paav	106	13.27
Samosa Paav	103	12.89
Idli	103	12.89
Medu Vada	112	14.02
Sandwich	111	13.89
Pizza	80	10.01
Others	29	3.63
Total	**799**	**100.00**

Medu Vada is highly preferred, followed by sandwiches, followed by Vada pav, samosa paav, and Idli, then Pizza, Burger, and Finger chips, and then lastly, the least preferred are other fast foods.

Limitation: Only 212 people participated in the study. The research is also limited to only KES Shroff College students. Therefore, the results of the current study cannot be extrapolated to other college students because it is assumed that the college students are young and that most of them will have the same tendency.

5. CONCLUSION

Fast food restaurants and their popularity have been on the rise in recent years. The study's results demonstrate that fast food consumption has little to do with demographic factors like age or gender and has everything to do with factors like personal preference and available funds. Despite the known negative effects of eating fast food on human health over time, its consumption has been rising at an alarming rate. Fast food consumption should be reduced over the next few years through education campaigns and legislative changes.

In order to reduce the consumption of fast food in the future, it is imperative to implement an awareness programme and establish appropriate policy measures.

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