



FAST FOOD CONSUMPTION AMONG THE ADVANCED LEVEL SCHOOL STUDENTS IN HATTON IN THE DISTRICT OF NUWARA ELIYA

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Introduction

Food is the most precious energy supplement to human being. In the modern era people consume fast food frequently. Therefore, many food industrial companies engage in these type of products. Fast food culture spreads across the world including Sri Lanka. Fast food is easy to prepare and eat. Fast food can be defined as meal which contain a lot of fat and sugar, oils, salt, high-calories, but has low nutritional value and quality (Al saad,2016). Generally, fast food is given a very attractive appearance by adding food additives and colors to enhance flavor texture for increasing long shelf life (Ashakira and deephi,2012). This paper investigates Unhealthy fast food consumption among the advance level school students.

Objective

- I. To find the contributory factors to consume the fast food among school students.
- II. To identify the health issues among the school students.
- III. To provide recommendations to mitigate and manage the negative impacts of fast food.

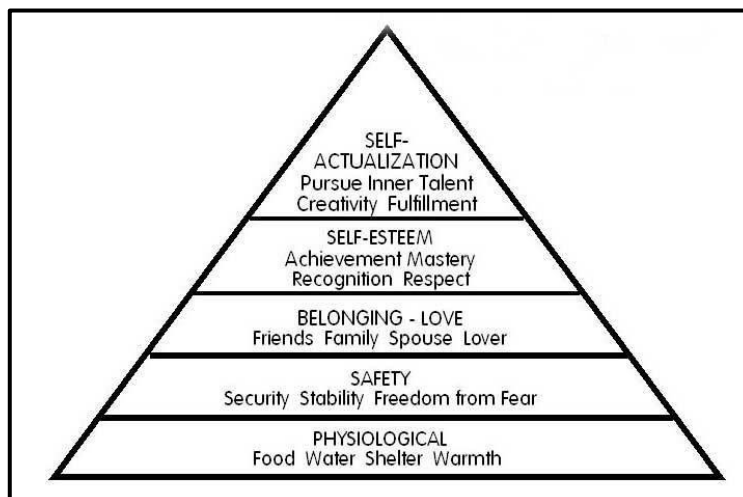
Methodology

This research mainly utilizes Primary and Secondary data. Primary data was collected through the school students in Hatton. A structural questionnaire survey was conducted using hundred questionnaires according to simple random sampling techniques in the school students via Google Forms. Further, focus groups discussions were conducted to collect detailed data. Moreover, Secondary data has been collected from research articles, Published and unpublished sources, related books and internet sources. Data has been analysed through MS-Excel and SPSS and presented in the form of charts, graphs and pictures.

Results and Discussion

Find the contributory factor to consume the fast food among school students

The relationship between fast Food consumption and Maslow's Hierarchy of needs Figure - 01 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



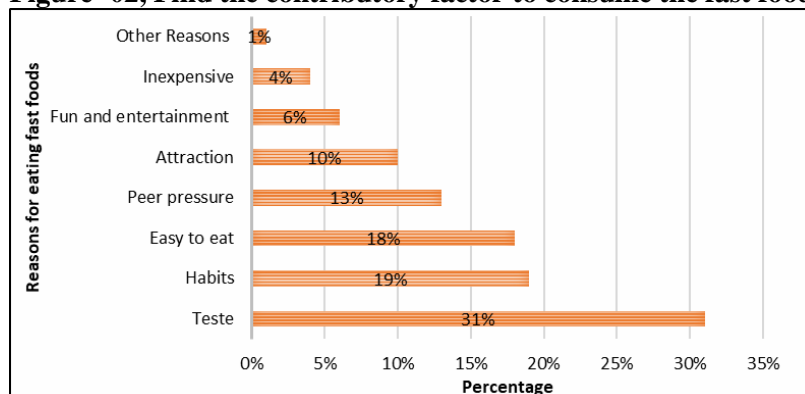


The base of this pyramid shows basic needs that are imperative to maintain health and normal functioning including food, water, air, sleep and shelter. These are the most basic survival needs for a human, and since they require the most immediate satisfaction, they are located at the most bottom of the pyramid. A person stuck in this stage of needs will only be motivated to satisfy his physiological needs, rather than worrying about the satisfaction of the needs existing in the other stages. Today’s population and demand of food production has been rapidly increasing in the modern era. thus, food companies have been applying different strategic to sell fast food to people. These strategies are addicting the people to fast food consumption. So new generation youngsters can’t stop eating fast food. Because food is a primary need to human being and it requires the most immediate satisfaction. further, they easily get their fast food everywhere.

According to the findings 31% of students have agreed with the fact that taste is prime cause to consume the fast food among the students. Hereby, students are forced to eat fast food frequently. Mostly in the evening time (67%) they are consuming the fast food items like unhealthy and oily food. Habits make life style 73% of students have agreed it’s a habit (19%) for consuming the fast food. Studies show that easy to eat (18%) is the third cause to consume the fast food. We should wash our hands before and after eating homemade food. But when eating fast food, they are very comfortable to eat which means that such meals can be eaten anywhere at any time. Because of this, student’s meals are eaten in classroom, bus, canteen and playground. Mostly students eat fast food with family and friends. This socializing event create a peer pressure (13%) for eat fast food among the students.

In this study, 10 % of students stated that they eat fast food because of its attraction. thus, fast food companies are employing different methods such as graceful advertisement, attractive packaging and add tasteful artificial ingredients. Moreover, according to findings inexpensiveness (4%), Fun and entertainment (6%) and other reasons are deeply connected to consume the fast food among school students.

Figure -02, Find the contributory factor to consume the fast food among school students



Sources: Filed survey, 2020

Identify the health issues in the school students

According to the results, obesity (21%) has been a vulnerable health impact among the school student. Fast food is high in fat, salt that is sodium and sugar which can lead to obesity. Over 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese in 2016. One of the fundamental causes is an increased intake of energy-dense foods that are high in fat and sugar (WHO,2020). Dense sugar contents of sweets have created the dental decay (18%) to students. Specially, 52% of male students and 56% of female students have been affected due to the dental decay. They couldn’t properly consume their meals because of that dental decay toothache. Further this caused gastritis.

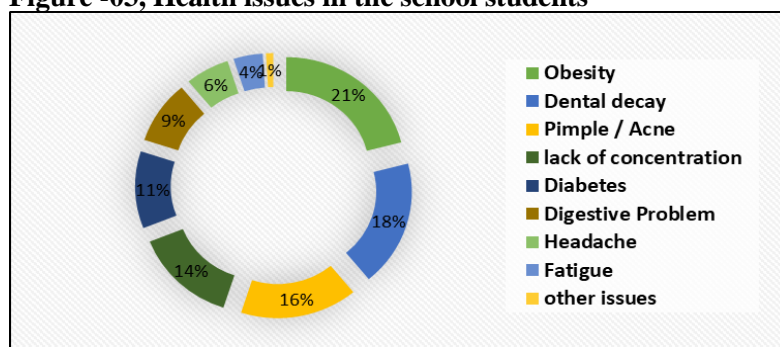


Unhealthy fast food tends to pimples and acne. Approximately 80% percentage of students have agreed with unhealthy, fast food consumption is one of the top reasons to pimple or acne (16%). The oil glands when the body is triggered by eating unhealthy fried food and sweets which spikes the blood sugar levels to produce more insulin too. These are pre-disposing factors for having oily skin and having acne (Chikitsa,2019). Especially, if the quality of the chocolate is not good that has led to worsened skin.

Junk foods don't provide essential nutrients thus students lose their concentration in the studies. This study has shown there were 14% of students facing this adverse effects. There is a causal link between a diet high in saturated fat and simple carbohydrates, typical of much fast food, and a lower capacity for memory and learning (Huzar,2019). The combination of high sugar can make diabetes. The study findings show that, 11% of students are face with this unhealthy condition. Moreover, according to the study, about 96% of students underestimate how much sugar is in their fast-food meals.

The study has found that, 76 % students have eaten mostly fast foods in evening and night times. During this times they have taken Chips, Snacks, Fried rice and Soft drinks items. This is the which caused to the digestive problem (9%), headache (6%) and fatigue (4%). Specially, Chips and Snacks contain form of concentrated salt. This form of salt is detrimental to the human health. Monosodium glutamate (MSG) is a flavoring agent which a form of concentrated salt, added to foods to enhance the flavor that is present in a variety of fast food and convenience food items. Depression, seizures, headache, migraines, chest pain, nausea, and weakness may occur because MSG in fast food (Leech,2018). Further, some students are addicted to fast foods like instant noodles, fried rice, non-Standard high sugar chocolate and soft drinks which caused financial struggles to their families.

Figure -03, Health issues in the school students



Sources: Filed survey, 2020

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The study focused on the unhealthy fast food consumption among the advanced level school students. Further taste, habits, easy to eat and attraction have been primary contributory factor to eating fast food. Thus, they faced health difficulties in very young age. Finally, this study conveys appropriate recommendations to minimize the impact of the fast food consumption in school students.

Recommendations

1. Schools should create the awareness about the importance of meals for human body, proper food consumes habits and negative health impacts of fast food.
2. Class teachers should monitor the students' breakfast and lunch.



3. Students must understand the negative impact of eating fast food and must slowly reduce eating fast food and their consumption.
4. Bring the healthy food from home (Piece of fruits and nuts)
5. Parents must prepare a well- balanced diet and sugar free meal such as fruits and vegetables for students' breakfast, lunch and dinner.
6. Parents should provide the natural drinks instead of soft drinks to students. Examples - Water, Fruit juice, Coconut water and Fresh milk
7. Make homemade versions of fast food.
Examples - Roles, vaddai, Katlat, Patties, Cakes, Fried rice, Kothu rotti

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