

## Food Consumption Pattern Among Youth

**Anjana Yadav**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology*

*Govt. G.D. Girls College, Alwar (Rajasthan)*

*Email: anjana0622@gmail.com*

### **Abstract**

*Food consumption is variably concerned by an exclusive spectrum of factors including availability, accessibility and choice of food, which in turn may be determined by demography, geographical pattern, livelihood, urbanization, religion, culture and commercial attitudes.*

*Present article describe the changing trends followed by the youth generation focusing on the lifestyle and food consumption patterns. It focuses the idea, impacts by the role of media, family, and brands in adoption of these changing patterns by the youths of new era. Youths are considered as an influential target during formulating the marketing planning by many food manufacturers. The characteristics of traditional and modern food consumption pattern of younger generation are correlated and compared. The global youth market is important to international producers and marketing experts because of its larger proportion and its homogeneity. Various trends related to branding in the food business concentrate over youth are considered. There is a demand to audit how the recommendations in this report influence the behavior of youth consumers, and what further action is needed to change their diets towards more healthy patterns. Feasible food production, processing, trading, and utilization are integrated to augment financial, environmental and social health. Food policies will only be effective if they are developed with input from both the agricultural and health sectors, thereby facilitating the progression of rational policies that will conclusively be helpful to the environment, agriculture, and finally human health.*

**Keywords:** *Agriculture, Food Consumption, Social Health, Youth.*

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## **Introduction**

Youth is a grey area in the spectrum of life falling between childhood and adulthood. It is an age of transition when an individual experiences rapid growth and development, both physical and psychological and changes from being a child to an adult. The behavior affecting food and drink choices seems to change as the children become adolescents. Recent trends in nourishment demand show that the conception of food has undergone a radical transformation in recent years to the purpose to assign to food, additionally to their organic process and sensory properties, additionally a crucial role within the maintenance of health, on psycho-physical well-being and bar of sure diseases.

The idea of 'fast food' has been so much assimilated with the social life, transcending its boundaries of just eating phenomenon Fast foods, with new tastes and looks are invading the developing countries and inspiring a new interest among the consumers. Fast foods are convenient, attractive and are often associated with a sense of smart urbane feeling in the non-Western countries. The so called fast paced lifestyle of developed/developing nations may be seen as the main motivating factor in the rise of fast food industries. The reasons for fast food consumption have been well studied in contemporary sociological research. However, there have been limited sociological research studies conducted to understand the psychology behind human eating habits and fast food consumption. There is literature that focuses on human food intake processes and examines why individuals are prone to certain properties of taste of foods but most of the time they signify general eating processes, rather than social or cultural patterns for making food choices.

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 might even result in lifelong obesity. Adolescent square measure least bothered regarding what they eat, thus adults around them needs to keep watch what, wherever and with whom they eat as a result of it determines their consumption patterns. Urban youth tend to enjoy cold drinks, packed food, pizza, burger, chips, popcorn and other ready to eat meals. These foods are wealthy sources of carbohydrates, however, have low nutrient density. Varieties of factors contribute to the increasing popularity of eating out. Smaller families, operating mothers, double income households, higher financial gain, more fast food retailers and enlarged advertising are some of them. Youngsters tend to consume foods higher in fat and lower in fiber and calcium when they eat outside.

Advertisements showing sodas with fast meals rather than milk or juice encourage kids to pick less nourishing foods. Consumption of low nutritional value food carefully doesn't cause a significant danger to the nutritional status of a teenager whose basic food habits are nutritionally well. But when practiced by the adolescent who doesn't care for adequate healthy food habits, these practices might compromise the growth and body functions.

Food habits in general are influenced by socio-cultural background, religious beliefs, customs and individual taste. But among teenagers and youth, there may be some added reasons for adopting fast food culture. The behavior affecting food and drink choices seems to change as the children become adolescents. As already mentioned, few youth meet the official recommendations for nutrition. The consumption of fruits and vegetables often declines when entering adolescence, while the consumption of unhealthy food types increases.

The changes in food habits, in general are culture specific but the factors which promote contemporary food over traditional food are urbanization, globalization, sanskritization, little tradition, migration, parochialisation and universalization.

The diversity in food behaviours may be studied with the approaches based on the concepts of little and great tradition formulated by **Robert Redfield**. The concepts of parochialisation and universalization were given by **Mckim Marriott** in his little communities in indigenous civilization. This approach may be applied to how food consumption patterns move from local to global phenomena and vice-versa.

The body needs fuel & the hunger urge must be satisfied every day. It is also a profoundly social urge. Food is sort of invariably shared; individuals eat together; mealtimes are events once the entire family or settlement or village comes together. Our "tastes" have not been ruled exclusively by nutrition. Modern nutritionists chanted the litany of the "four food types" (vegetables, grains, dairy farm products, meats) from that we were imagined to take more or less equal amounts daily. Food becomes a spotlight of symbolic activity regarding sociality and our place in our society.

Binkley (2006) in his analysis titled "The impact of demographic, economic and nutrition factors on frequency of food far away from home" has used a model explaining visits to table service and Ready-To-Eat restaurants that are calculable with nutrition variables superimposed to standard demographic measures, whereby nutrition factors have less impact on table service. But the frequency of customers very aware of nutrition factors is considerably very less to tableware and Ready-To-Eat restaurants vis-à-vis others. Manchester and Clauson (1995) in their work titled "Spending for food aloof from home outpaces food at home" have analyzed how food expenditure has considerably enhanced on eating out.

Social difference is defined as all types of persistent and vital diversities in acquired health between social positions among equivalent social structures (Elstad 2000). Of all discourse factors, socioeconomic factors are, consistent with Davies, Crosby & DiClemente (2009), a number of the foremost formidable and least changeable. Many studies have found that families with low socioeconomic position tend to possess an additional unhealthy diet than those with higher socioeconomic position (Fahlman et al. 2010, Nilsen et al. 2009). Adolescents from low position families usually have a lower consumption of fruits, vegetables (Bere, van Lenthe, Klepp & Brug 2008, Roos et al. 2001, Neumark-Sztainer, Story, Resnick & Blum 1996) and dairy product (Larson et al. 2006) than adolescents with higher socioeconomic position. The association between socioeconomic position and dietary habits decreases with age. Socioeconomic variations in dietary habits additionally appear to vary across gender. The findings of socioeconomic position being strongest associated with the dietary habits of adolescent girls are confirmed in studies on consumption of fast food (French et al. 2001), fruits and vegetables (Nilsen et al. 2009, Giskes, Turrell, Patterson & Newman 2002), as well as soft drink (Ranjit et al. 2010).

*Fahlman et al. (2010)* found that students of low socioeconomic position had a higher intake of fast food and calorie-dense food than their counterparts with high socioeconomic position, while the intake of fruits and vegetables was lower. Self-efficacy to change behavior was explaining a great share of the variation in consumption across socioeconomic position. As with the other socio-demographic characteristics, it's additionally been shown that adolescents of low socioeconomic position are additional possible to report that unhealthy food is accessible within the home setting (Boutelle, Birkeland, Hannan, Story & Neumark-Sztainer 2007, MacFarlane, Crawford, Ball, Savage & Worsley 2007). This is in accordance with Bere et al. (2008), who found that the strongest intermediate of the variations in fruit and vegetable intake among adolescents of parents with high versus low academic level was the perceived accessibility of this sort of food at home.

As urbanization and industrialization speed up in India and also the country's political economy moves towards an arrangement additional compatible with globalized capitalist economy, the fast-food market, too, has enlarged dramatically. A sizeable section of urban India now senses the need for something like fast food. However, the formulaic concept of fast food has not made deep inroads in urban awareness.

### **Methodology**

The study was undertaken to access the prevalence of nutrition intake among urban students within the cohort of 14-19 years. The information concerning the

study was collected from both the sources viz. primary and also the secondary sources. The assortment of primary information was administered by perceiving the views and concepts of the girls and boys by filling up a structured questionnaire and interview. A random sample of 400 urban students (both boys and girls) from different schools was chosen. The data gathered and obtained for the study was carefully interpreted and condensed into a master chart. The information was then organized, tabulated and discussed upon and was presented with the assistance of tables and figures. The data was additionally analyzed statistically.

### **Results & Discussion**

The study shows that each one of the respondents within the cohort of 14-18 years eats fast foods. It absolutely was solely within the cohort of nineteen years that 4.16 percent respondents weren't eating fast foods. Majority of the respondents don't skip lunch, however students of 15 and 18 year cohort, about 50 percent of the respondents skipped lunch. It absolutely was disclosed that parents weren't in favor of their kid's consumption fast foods. They appear to be very health aware and possessed adequate knowledge with relation to the health hazards of fast foods. The study further showed that the pocket money of adolescents is suffering from consumption fast foods. More than 60 percent of the respondents within the cohort of 16 and 18 years pay their entire pocket money on fast foods. Whereas, within the cohort of 17 and 19 years only 50 percentage 41.66 percentage respondent's pocket money is suffering from eating fast foods respectively. Study highlighted that frequency of consumption of fast food.

When the students were interviewed on the statement that, "whether the respondents prefer fast food for his or her style, convenience and quick service", it was inferred that the most of the students were agreed to it. The similarity within the opinion would be attributed to the fact that the majority of the teenagers these days don't like spending more time on feeding and are invariably in a hurry. Adolescents are attracted by variety. Monotony in the foods offered may cause fatigue in them and they could reject the food.

It was solely within the cohort of 18 and 19 years that some youngsters were very rarely consuming quick foods. Consumption of fast food was highest during pre-lunch period. During mornings none of the youngsters were consuming quick foods this was due to the fact that children usually spent that time at their homes.

Regarding the opinion of the respondents on whether they get lured by the attractive presentation of quick foods, it was found that the majority of the respondents agreed to the present statement. it is renowned proven fact that even top quality

food could also be rejected if it is poorly presented and attractively served food could also be accepted well despite of its poor quality. Additionally the responses on the statement that whether consumption of fast food sometimes doesn't cause any harm to health, it was found that majority of the respondents agreed to it. The statements that, "consumption of fast food is related to respondent's independence, making them feel that they need a kind of freedom", was neglected by most of students. Concerning the opinion of respondents on the statement that whether consumption of fast food with friends and family is a kind of amusement to them, it was found that most of the respondents from the chosen sample disagreed to this. The results failed to blame high-tech life for habit of consuming fast foods among schools and college students. The responses on the statement that whether or not urbanization has a larger influence on dynamic food habits of urban students, it was found that the majority of the respondents agreed to it. Regarding opinion of respondents concerning contribution of varied factors like working mothers, high income, etc. to the habit of intake of fast food, it had been found that majority of respondents agreed to it, as can be inferred from the mean value of 3.48 and coefficient of variation of 32.76 percent. The responses over the statement that consumption of fast foods for many is largely controlled by the provision and cost, was agreed by majority of the respondents. In response to the statement on whether publicity molds the mind of individuals to consume certain kinds of fast foods, it was found the majority of respondents differed in their opinion, whereas some had an identical view point.

Fast foods have poor nutritional quality as they do not give any proteins, vitamins and minerals however only provide empty calories to our body. Thus, the excessive consumption of fast foods can cause several nutritional deficiency diseases and may conjointly lead to obesity a life threatening condition. Regarding the opinion of respondents about nutritional value of fast foods, a number of them agreed that they have poor nutritional standard whereas a majority disagreed to the present. The consumption of fast food among adolescents was found to be rising despite of their low nutritional status.

### **Recommendations**

1. The food consumption includes most of the desired items, the pattern suggests that the frequency of intake of fast foods is more than desired and needs to be reduced.
2. Regularity of food consumption is another point that needs to be focused.
3. Adolescents knew what is regular and good food but their practice showed that they did not quite follow the dietary pattern that they considered good

because of the social factors on one side and less-perceived importance of the regular and quality food on the other.

4. There is a need for nutrition counseling to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice.

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