

# Analyze the Effects of Fast Food on the Health of College Going Students

SAIRA ABBAS<sup>1</sup>, MADIHA NAZ<sup>2</sup>, SYED MUHAMMAD AHMAD GILLANI<sup>3</sup>, SAIMA AFZAL<sup>4</sup>, NORINA JABEEN<sup>5</sup>, ADEELA MANZOOR<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Agricultural Extension, Education and Rural Development, University Agriculture Faisalabad

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer Sociology, Department of Sociology, Riphah International University Faisalabad Campus

<sup>3</sup>M. Phil Sociology, Department of Sociology, Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan

<sup>4</sup>Assistant Prof. of Sociology, Department of Sociology, Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan

<sup>5</sup>PhD Rural Sociology, Department of Rural Sociology, University of Agriculture Faisalabad

<sup>6</sup>Assistant Prof. (Visiting), Faisalabad Business School, National Textile University Faisalabad

Corresponding author: Adeela Manzoor, Email: [adeela.bhatti@uaf.edu.pk](mailto:adeela.bhatti@uaf.edu.pk)

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Fast food is a major part of our present life, due to some factors such as the style of life, value and the huge commercial advertisements, it has several effects on human health.

**Objectives:** The basic purpose of this study was to identify the effects of fast food on the health of college-going students.

**Material and methods:** Mixed method research is used for data collection. For qualitative data, 4 key informant interviews were conducted. For quantitative data, a descriptive research design was used and simple random sampling techniques were selected for data collection. The sample size consisted of 107 respondents. A guideline questionnaire was used for key informants as well as a well-structured questionnaire was used for the purpose of data collection. For analysis of qualitative data thematic analysis was used. Statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) were used for quantitative data analysis.

**Results:** The main effects of fast food on the health of college-going students like heart problems, obesity, fat, sugar and blood pressure. Majority (91.6%) of the respondents have information about fast food and (8.4%) did not have any information about fast food disease. A majority (77.6%) of the respondents have information about the controlled use of fast food and 22.4% did not know it.

**Conclusion:** Mass media should spread awareness among students about the side effects of fast food. So, it is a dire need of time to create awareness among the society at youngsters' level and nutrition programs should be studied as well as the role of mass media should be changed for creating awareness regarding the effects of fast food.

**Keywords:** Fast food, youngsters, Human health, Lifestyle, and Awareness.

## INTRODUCTION

Now a days, fast food has dominated the life of people. It has serious negative effects on college-going students and their health. It has become very popular among the youth. No street is free from restaurants that offer fast food. The concept of fast food is not new but it is related to hundreds of years ago. After that, people started to recognize and start making fast food everywhere and whenever they want it [1]. Fast food can be defined as meals that contain a lot of fat and sugars, oil, salt, and high calories but it is considered to have low nutritional value and quality. For example, these types of food are chicken nuggets, burgers and fried potato cutters, canned chips, pies, pizza and soft drinks. Originally, it calls fast food because it is easy to prepare and eat [2]. The largest group that prefers this food are kids and teens that need healthier food for their growth. There are millions of people who eat this type of food every day. Many of them do not consider the sources, the way of making and the effects on their health. Even though, it is becoming a major part of human beings nutrition life but it has serious negative effects on the health of human beings due to many factors in this regard [3]. The communities and their markets are having a significant increase in the size of the fast food, and great demand by one of the leading reasons that have helped to spread fast-food restaurants chains across the globe. One of the most important causes of spreading the effects of fast food is the way of living which is different between the past and recent in many different aspects of life [4-6]. People lose their habits in their daily lives as new habits enter which control their way of life and the details of their young lives. As the fast lifestyle now controls work and at home at the same time [7]. As a result, people who are in rush have no adequate time for cooking and setting with the family for a lunch or dinner meal because of the important time. On the other hand, the sedentary lifestyle which is the second type of lifestyle is completely different from the first one [8]. It indicates how people like to spend much time, setting or doing nothing. In other words, it means the laziness of the people is leading them towards this particular eating habit. Spending hours and hours in front of the televisions or computers screens can be the most popular reason in such cases. Also, people can make their food orders on the internet at the same time as they do their work on a computer [9]. The second cause of spreading fast food is the value

of this food which can be divided into three main parts. Those three parts are low priced, delicious and easy to get. Most fast-food restaurants provide different prices but they are considered reasonable and entirely cheap food [10]. The prices of this food are handy, so everyone can buy fast food. The reason for the low prices of fast food could be the reason that made it for poor quality materials. Due to the poor health supervision in some countries, some food companies take advantage to sell their poor food to consumers [11]. As a result, they control the cost of the primary material of fast food to achieve the maximum profit from low-quality food. Many people like fast food because it has a rich taste. Such food has different and special tastes because it contains a lot of spices that make it tasty [12-13].

**Objectives:** The main objective of the study is:

1. To analyze the effects of fast food on the health of college-going students.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in District Faisalabad. The study was carried out by the Punjab Group of Colleges in Tehsil Faisalabad. The population of this study was the F.A/F.Sc. and B.A/B.Sc. students. 1000 students are selected as a population for this study. There are 4 branches of the Punjab group of colleges in Faisalabad. From all the branches, one branch is selected. The sample size has been drawn by using the online available software [www.surveysystem.com](http://www.surveysystem.com) sample size drawn 107 having a confidence interval of 9%. The data analysis was done through statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS). For qualitative data 4 key-informant interviews were conducted with teachers of that classes and for analysis, thematic analysis was used.

## RESULTS

The data was collected from 107 participants and the majority (86.9%) of the respondents were male and (13.1%) of the respondents were female. It is explaining the gender-wise distribution of respondents (Fig 1). It was very important to overview both aspects of gender in our study because the researcher was studying the impacts of family background on the grades of students. This distribution helped us to understand the fact that either both gender behave similarly in the same family

background conditions or vice versa. This distribution shows that more than (86.9%) of males while females are less than (13.1%) in the sample, but this is a very wide difference. The present study attempted to probe the educational level of the parents and its effects on the education of their students and their achievements [10].

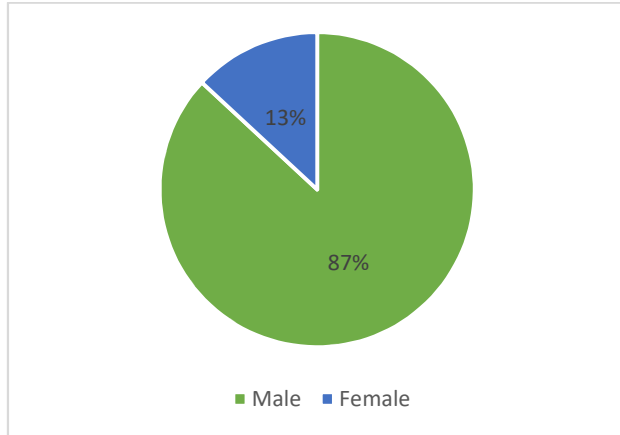


Fig 1: Frequency according to gender

Based on age, the respondents were distributed into categories for example, (16-18), and (19-20). Data demonstrate that most of the respondents (88.8%) belonged to the age group of 16-18 years and few of the respondents (11.2%) were belongs to the age group of 19-20 years (Fig 2). In this study age of the respondents was considered the years from birth to the time of data collection. The behavioural changes may be attributed to the years passed by an individual. The young ones are considered more absorbent to the change with more exposure and usage of recommendations than the older ones [14].

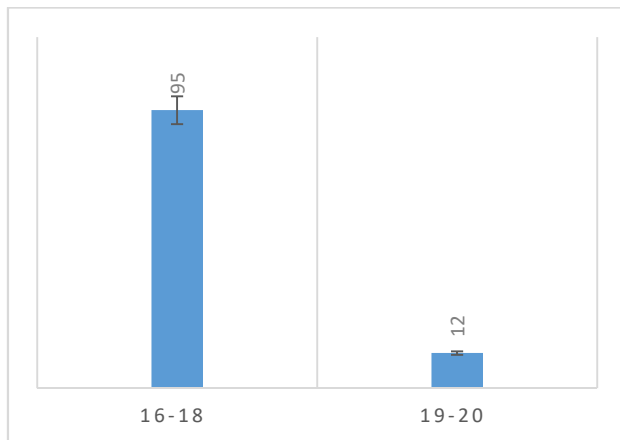


Fig 2: Frequency according to age

Data in the given table 1 demonstrate that majority (86.7%) of the respondents were day scholars and (13.3%) were hostel residents. A standard of living is the level of wealth, comfort, material goods and necessities available to a certain socioeconomic class or a certain geographic area. The standard of living is closely related to the quality of life. A standard of living is the level of wealth, comfort, material goods and necessities available to a certain socioeconomic class or a certain geographic area. The standard of living includes factors such as income, gross domestic product (GDP), national economic growth, economic and political stability, political and religious freedom, environmental quality, climate and safety [16].

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their living status.

Living status	Frequency	Percentage
Day scholar	96	86.7
Hostel resident	11	13.3
Total	107	100.0

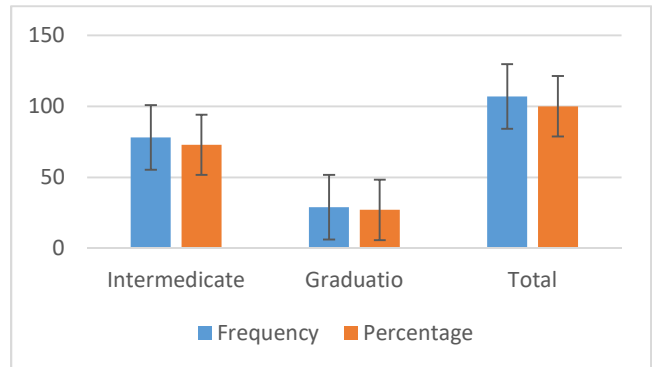


Figure 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their degree level.

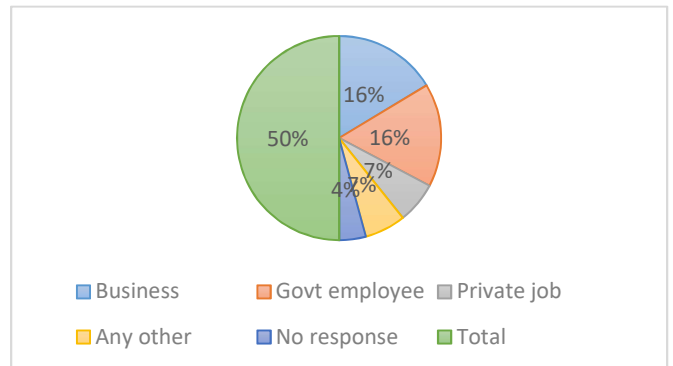


Figure 4: Distribution of the respondents according to their father occupation.

Data demonstrate that (72.9%) of respondents were having qualifications up to F.A/ F.Sc. and (27.1%) of the respondents were a B.A/BSc level of education (Figure 3). Data distribution shows that around 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of our sample population lies in job level having a business (32.7 %) and the same proportion of the respondents were having Government jobs while private job holders were (13.1%) and the same number of the respondents were having other jobs but (8.4%) of them had no response (Figure 4). Table 02 shows that most (91.6%) of the students had information about fast food disease and (8.4%) did not know it. (77.6%) had information about the controlled use of fast food and (22.4%) did not know it. (71.0%) had information about hunger and (29.0%) did not know. (77.6%) have information about every type of people who eat fast food and (22.4%) were not knowing it. (86.0%) had information about fast food may cause obesity and (14.0%) were not known to it. Qualitative data endorsed that, "a majority of students knew that the side effects of fast food usages but they cannot control it due to its easy availability and taste, availability at every street level at every school, college and universities level. It seems that the students who have belonged to rich families show positive behaviour about the usage of fast food as compared those students who belong to poor families".

According to the obtained data research organized memory and learning, the problem was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean value (3.93) Skin joint and the bone problem got 2<sup>nd</sup> rank with the mean value (3.85.) High blood pressure got 3<sup>rd</sup> rank with a mean value (3.74) and standard deviation (1.54) A risk of digestive disease was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> with mean value (3.69) and standard deviation (1.59).

Dental issues that are originated in consequences of taking fast food were ranked 5<sup>th</sup> with a mean value (3.67) and standard deviation (1.59). Qualitative data endorsed that, “a majority of respondents suffer different diseases like obesity, skin problems, depression etc. are showing”. Students used fast food for pleasure moments like that as celebrating birthdays, engagements, and grades and considered to be a joyness to eat fast food.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their awareness of the effects of fast food.

Awareness about the effects of fast food	Yes		No	
	f	%	F	%
Do you have any information about fast food disease?	98	91.6	9	8.4
Do you have any idea how to control the use of fast food?	83	77.6	24	22.4
Do fast foods can satisfy hunger?	76	71.0	31	29.0
Do every type of people eat fast food?	83	77.6	24	22.4
Do you know that taking fast food frequently may cause obesity?	92	86.0	15	14.0
Do you mostly eat fast food going out of home?	77	72.0	30	28.0
Do you eat fast food at home?	75	70.1	32	29.9
Do you know that fast food is bad for your health?	85	79.4	22	20.6
Do you think you could stop eating fast food?	84	78.5	23	21.5
Do you and your family members eat fast food?	91	85.0	16	15.0

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to the effects of fast food on college-going students.

Effects of fast food	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank Order
Cause memory and learning problems	3.93	1.44	1
Cause skin Joint and bone problems	3.85	1.50	2
High blood pressure	3.74	1.54	3
Increase risks of digestive diseases	3.69	1.59	4
Dental Issues	3.67	1.59	5
Cause obesity and cardiovascular disease	3.65	1.49	6
Contribute to depression and addiction	3.58	1.49	7
Fast food causes excess energy and weight	3.41	1.66	8

## DISCUSSION

Fast food is a speedily developing industry in the world specially in small and large cities, as well as in the urban area. Consumption of food has become nearly a worldwide phenomenon and other people are attracted [14-15]. But day by day regardless of the demographical characteristic. On the other hand, literature of research is available on junk foods. Such food is ready or quickly serve in homes and restaurants also fast foods channels [16]. The food consists of potato chips; sandwiches, fries' hamburgers, French deep-fried chicken fish ice creams chicken fish nuggets pizza [17]. Now many junk foods and fast foods hotels in India offered fast food like formal salad and crushed potatoes [18]. American company McDonald and other foods hotels modified the simple Indian food necessities vegetable meat and a selection of no vegetarian choices are including meat mutton and others menu [19-21]. Majority of people liked to eat fast food. Usually, people were found of eating fast food at outside. Whether fast food is a status symbol or easily available at their doorstep. Results cannot be concluded as there is minimal difference between agreeing and disagreeing responses. Most people agreed that hunger can be satisfied by fast food. Respondents disagreed about eating fast food of every type of people. Fast food does not save any cost as retorting by respondents [22].

Most of the respondents agreed that almost every member of the family like to eat fast food. Fast food is also used for the sake of enjoyment and fun. People do not prefer fast food over continental food. Prolonged use of fast food is also a cause of health problems, obesity, indigestion problem and high cholesterol [23]. Fast food is a speedily developing industry in the world like in India small and large cities, especially in the urban area. Consumption of food has become nearly a worldwide phenomenon and other people are attracted. But day by day regardless of the demographical characteristic [24]. On the other hand, literature of research is available on junk foods. Such food is ready or quickly serve in homes and restaurants and also fast foods channels. The food consists of chips; sandwiches chips fries' hamburgers French deep-fried chicken fish ice cream chicken fish nuggets pizza. Now many junk and fast foods hotels in India offered fast food like formal salad and crushed potatoes. American company McDonald and other foods hotels modified the simple Indian food necessities vegetable meat and a selection of no vegetarian choices are including meat mutton and others menu [25].

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded that there are much greater side effects of fast food on students and the student was unaware of its ill consequences. It can tend to many harmful diseases. Students like to eat fast food, outside their homes and continuous use of fast food is also a cause of health problems, obesity, indigestion problem and high cholesterol. However, with the increase in income, there will be more likeness toward fast food. A good nutritional diet or balanced diet is a fundamental need for the development and growth of human beings.

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