

Consumption Of Junk Food And Awareness Regarding Its Effects On Health Among Adolescents Of A Selected Public School In Birgunj

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Abstract

Globalization and urbanization have greatly affected one's eating habits and forced to consume high calorie fast foods, popularly known as Junk foods. Coronary artery disease, obesity and diabetes mellitus has significant rise due to junk food consumption. The objective of the study was to find out consumption and awareness regarding health hazards of Junk food among adolescents. The findings of the study revealed that majority (89.1%) of the adolescents had high level of consumption of junk food. Most adolescents (76%) had low awareness level regarding health hazards of junk food consumption. There was no significant association between the levels of awareness regarding health hazards of junk food consumption with selected socio-demographic characteristics of adolescents. . Methodology- A Descriptive cross sectional study was conducted among 129 adolescents of Public School, Birgunj selected by using disproportionate stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected by using pre tested Self-administered structured questionnaires. Data analysis was done using Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage. Inferential statistics like Chi square test was used to find out association between levels of awareness regarding health hazards of junk food consumption with selected Socio-demographic variables of adolescents. Result- The study concluded that there was high consumption level and low awareness level regarding health hazards of junk food consumption among adolescents. So, this study could be important in designing the community based interventions where teachers and school administration can organize awareness programs on consumption and awareness regarding health hazards of junk food among adolescents and parents in adopting strategies.

Key words- Consumption, Junk food, Awareness, Health effect, Adolescents

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence, the transitional phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. Psychological development of adolescents such as independence and acceptance by peers may affect adolescent's food choices and nutrient intake, which places them to adopt unhealthy eating behaviors like addiction to junk foods (The World Health Organization [WHO], 2019). Junk food is pleasant and rich in calories but less nutritional content. The term "junk food" was invented in 1972 by Michael F. Jacobson, Director of the Centre for Science, Washington D.C. Junk food refers food that is high in calories from sugar or fat, with little dietary fiber, protein, vitamins or minerals. Food generally considered junk foods include salted snack foods, sweet dessert and fried fast food, sugary beverages, candies, burgers, pizza. The health effects due to junk food include obesity, cardiovascular disease, and many other chronic health conditions (Junk Food, n.d.). "Eat healthy and live healthy." Today's generation has adapted to feasting of junk foods which has many health effects. Globalization has significantly affected in consumption and enforced to consume Junk foods. Commonly, if one of the first two elements is oil or a form of sugar, probability of junk food (Ashakiran & Deepthi, 2012). The shadow adjacent of junk foods is not an unfamiliar statement. Many studies have revealed that junk foods have increased childhood obesity, heart disease and diabetes and other chronic diseases (Eba, Harmful Effects of Junk Food, 2017). Fast food is referred as junk food which can be easily made and consume easily. The causes of the health effects in the consumers are due to the fats present on junk foods. Junk food has attractive kind of taste. The simplicity to manufacture, consume and taste made junk foods more widespread. When the junk food is consumed in excessive amount, may cause health effects. Obesity is due to the high calorie content with sugar in junk food whereas high blood pressure, stroke and heart diseases are due to cholesterol and salt. Kidney's functions are highly affected by the excessive salts present in junk food. Muscles fatigue can result after consuming excessive junk food as there is reduced level of essential nutrients (Mishra & Pathania, 2016).

AIM OF THE STUDY

Aim of the study was consumption of junk food and awareness regarding its effects on health among adolescents of a selected public school in birgunj. This could help in spreading the knowledge about consumption of junk food and awareness regarding its effects on health among adolescents to a larger group of students.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Around 1.2 billion adolescents are in today's world making up 16% of the world's population. Majority (85%) of the World's adolescents live in developing countries with almost 60% in Asia. Adolescents cover 24.2% of total population of Nepal. 82% of total adolescents live in rural area and almost half of the adolescents of the country lives in Terai. The adolescent's growth rate is 1.6% per annual year. The figure of adolescents is 87, 65,474 in Nepal (Population Monograph Report, 2014). Nutritional requirements in proper amount are required for adolescent for overall growth and development. Many research studies show that the adolescents group is mostly exposed with junk food consumption which leads to health effects like heart diseases, obesity, fatigue and anemia (Khongrangjem et al., 2017). Awareness regarding health effects of junk foods is rising deliberately. Numerous junk foods with less nutritional worth pose recognized dangers to adolescents' health which was the realm of adults, appears more frequently in adolescents. Lack of awareness about consumption of convenience foods resulting adolescents with non-communicable chronic diseases. In twenty- first century, Junk food accounts for 28.8% of the total caloric intake among the average American.80% of Americans report that consumption of junk food at least once per month, despite of recognized about the health effects of junk food (Gaille, 2017).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The general objective of the study was to find out Consumption of Junk Food and Awareness Regarding Its Effects on Health among Adolescents of a Selected Public School in Birgunj. A Descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted for the study to assess the Consumption of Junk Food and Awareness Regarding Its Effects on Health among Adolescents. In this study Independent Variables is Socio-demographic variables and Dependent Variable is Consumption of junk foods among adolescents Awareness regarding health effects of junk food among adolescents. The study was conducted in Shree Nepal Rastriya Madhyamik Vidhyalaya, Birgunj- 16, Parsa. Birgunj is a metropolitan city in Parsa, in Province-2 of Southern Nepal. It lies 135 kilometers south of Kathmandu, attached in the north to Raxual in the border of India. Shree Nepal Rastriya Madhyamik Vidhyalaya was established on 1960 A.D. There were altogether 930 students. The study population was students studying in Grade 8, 9 and 10 of Shree Nepal Rastriya Madhyamik Vidhyalaya, Birgunj- 16. There were 66 students in Grade 8, 46 students in Grade 9 and finally 45 students in Grade 10 respectively. The sample size was 129 adolescents of Shree Nepal Rastriya Madhyamik Vidhyalaya, Birgunj- 16, Parsa. Disproportionate Stratified Random Sampling technique was used for selection of sample. First of all, the whole adolescents of the Grade 8, 9 and 10 were assembled in a hall then were grouped into three strata with 43 adolescents from each strata using lottery method on the basis of their roll numbers where the chosen numbers were not replaced back in container. Self-administered structured questionnaire in Nepali version was developed by researcher to identify the Consumption of Junk Food and Awareness Regarding Health Effects of Its among Adolescents in Public School. An instrument was developed according to objectives of the study after reviewing the related literatures, consultation with thesis guide and subject expertise. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was taken from Institutional Review Committee of NMCTH, Birgunj. Data was collected after getting formal permission from Principal of Shree Nepal Rastriya Madhyamik Vidhyalaya, Birgunj-16, Parsa prior to the study. Self-introduction was given. The objectives of the study were clearly explained in Nepali language to the adolescents. Written consent was taken from each adolescents prior to the data collection. Confidentiality of the data was maintained and privacy was maintained during data collection. The dignity of the adolescents was secured by giving right to discontinue from the participation in the study at any time if they were not interested. The data was collected by the researcher herself by using self-administered structured questions on 01/09/2019. Data was checked and rechecked for completeness at the end of the data collection. Data was coded and entered. Analysis of data was done by using Statistical Package for the Social Science 20.0 version. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used. Inferential statistics like Chi square test was used to find out association between the selected socio demographic variables and level of awareness regarding health effects of junk food consumption among adolescents. Interpretation of data was done on the basis of analyzed data. The findings were presented on the relevant tables.

RESULTS-

GRAPH-1 Shows Awareness Regarding Health Problems due to Consumption of Salty Snacks

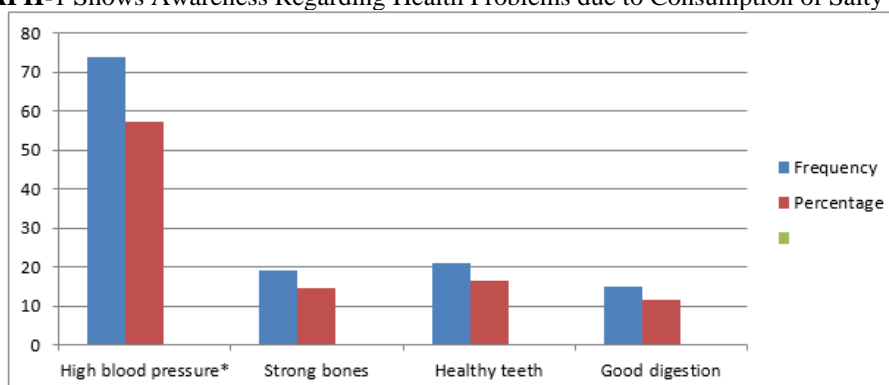


TABLE -1 Shows Awareness Regarding Health Problems due to Consumption of Salty Snacks		
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Excess Salt Present in Junk Food Causes		
High blood pressure*	74	57.4
Strong bones	19	14.7
Healthy teeth	21	16.3
Good digestion	15	11.6
Total	129	100

Table 1 presents awareness regarding health problems due to consumption of salty snacks. More than half (57.4%) of the adolescents stated correctly on excess salt present in junk food causes high blood pressure. Only few (11.6%) mentioned that good digestion was caused due to excess salt present in junk food.

Graph-2 shows Awareness Level Regarding Health Effects of Junk Food Consumption

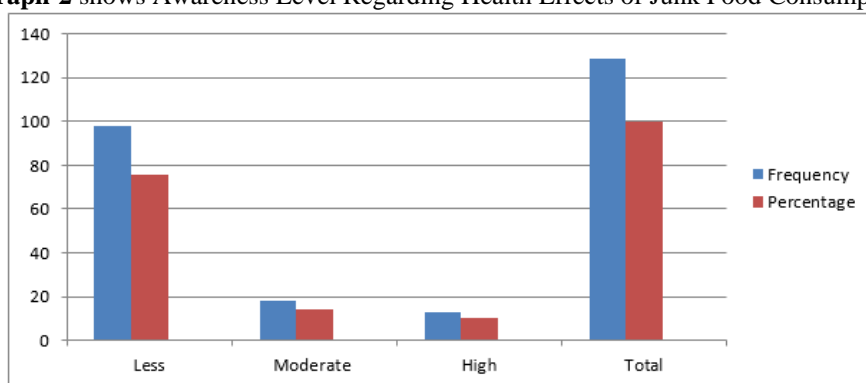


TABLE 2		
Awareness Level Regarding Health Effects of Junk Food Consumption		
Awareness Level	Frequency	Percentage
Less	98	76.0
Moderate	18	14.0
High	13	10.0
Total	129	100

Table 2 shows The Awareness Level Regarding Health Effects of Junk Food Consumption among Adolescents. Mostly 76% of the Adolescents had less Awareness Level Regarding Health Effects of Junk Food Consumption. 14% had medium awareness level whereas only (10%) had high Awareness Level Regarding Health Effects of Junk Food Consumption.

DISCUSSIONS

Most 60.5% consumed Sugary foods 1-2times/week. More than half (54.3%) consumed sugary Beverages 1-2 times/week which was inconsistent with the study conducted by Sahu et al. (2017) where, majority of the study participants consumed some sort of junk food (either bakery products, eating chips, carbonated drinks, fast foods or chocolate) for 1-4 days. Mostly 89.1% of the Adolescents consumption level of Junk food was high whereas 10.9% had low level of junk food consumption which was contrasting with the study conducted by Poudel (2018) showed that among 88.2% had a low level of junk food consumption, while 11.8% had high level of junk food consumption. 40.3% knew the meaning of junk food. More than half (67.4%) of the adolescents were familiar with the composition of the junk food as high fat, salt and sugar which was consistent with the study conducted by Thamarai et al. (2015) on Awareness of Health Consequences of Junk Foods among Students. 93.3% of students were familiar of the definition and 61.7 % were aware of the composition of the junk foods. More than half (58.1%) revealed that Pani Puri as Junk food. Only 3.1% of adolescents responded Chapatti as Junk food. Most 67.4% stated that spices were used to increase the taste in junk food. Nearly half (45.7%) stated that Noodles basically contains fats whereas only 9.3% stated that proteins as basic contains. Nearly half (42.6%) of the adolescents stated that another name of Ajinomoto was Mono Sodium Glutamate. More than half (55.8%) of the adolescents were familiar with the effect of the junk food consumption on brain function as junk food made addicted. 45.7% mentioned that the short term effect of junk food on health was tiredness which was consistent with the study conducted by Thamarai et al.(2015) on Awareness of Health

Consequences of Junk Foods among Students. 67 % of students were unaware of the Health effects like obesity related disorders due to foods rich in salt & trans fatty acids such as pizza, chips and carbonated soda drinks.

CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data obtained from 129 students studying in Grade 8, 9 and 10 on the basis of objectives of the study on Consumption of Junk Food and Awareness Regarding Health Effects of Its among Adolescents. The collected data was checked for completeness and then organized. The obtained data was analyzed according to objectives of the study by using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented in terms of frequency, percentage. The association between dependent and independent variables was tested by Chi square test. Analyzed data presented in the following tables in order to facilitate interpretation. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that there was high consumption level of junk food in more than four fifth of adolescents and low awareness level regarding health effects of junk food consumption in more than three fifth of adolescents. There was no significant association between the levels of awareness regarding health effects of junk food consumption with selected socio-demographic characteristics of adolescents

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors certify that they have no involvement in any organization or entity with any financial or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this paper.

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