

A Study to Assess the Knowledge on Harmful Effects of Junk Food among High School Students at Selected School, Guwahati, Assam

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Abstract: ***Background:** Children find themselves amidst of a complex society that is undergoing breathtaking changes. Healthy nutritious foods have been replaced by the new food word - JUNK FOOD! Junk food comprises of anything that is quick, tasty, easily affordable, convenient and fashionable. It has included in all age groups starting from children to adults. Junk food has little nutritional values and includes high levels of calories, fats, cholesterol. **Objective:** 1. To assess the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food among high school students. 2. To find the association between the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food with their selected demographic variables among high school students. **Material and Methods:** Quantitative approach and non - experimental descriptive research design. The study was conducted in Province Senior Secondary School, Guwahati, Assam. .60 samples of High school students were selected by non - probability convenient sampling technique. The tool consists of two sections. Section - A consists of semi structured interview schedule to elicit the demographic variables and Section - B consists of semi structured interview schedule regarding harmful effects of Junk food. **Result:** The study result shows that majority 83.3% (50) of High school students had inadequate knowledge, 13.3% (8) had moderate knowledge, and 3.3% (2) of them had adequate knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food. There is a significant association between the knowledge on harmful effects of fast food with their demographic variables such as age, class of studying, education of the mother and source of information regarding junk food. There is no association with respect to other demographic variables such as religion, gender, type of family, monthly income, education of the father, occupation of the father, occupation of the mother, previous knowledge on effects of junk food on health.*

Keywords: High school students, knowledge, junk food

1. Introduction

Food is an important part of a balanced diet. It is something everyone needs, every day. Life can be sustained only with adequate food and nourishment, growth, development and to lead an active and healthy life. Food is a substance, usually composed of carbohydrates, fats, proteins and water that can be ingested or drunk by an animal or human for nutrition or pleasure and proper growth and development. Fast food is the term given to food which can be prepared easily and served very quickly within a short time. The term "junk food" was recognized in a dictionary by Merriam–Webster in 1951. Fast food is any food that is quick, convenient, and usually inexpensive. It is delicious, it is filling, is really affordable, and readily available.

Good health is the necessity of living a healthy existence for every person which needs to maintain a healthy diet and healthy habits throughout the life. However, the habit of consuming junk food is becoming a trend and affecting the younger generations.

Most of the children's of this age at some point of their meal time they eat junk meals and get addicted to the taste of junk meals which has a deleterious effect on the health of the children. . Though, junk foods are tasty but it has low nutritive value and excessive calories which in other words affect the health of the children. Junk ingredients are high in bad cholesterol and cause heart, liver issues. Junk foods are full of harmful effects which cause harm to a human body. Some of the health hazards of the junk food are Extra Calories, Insulin Resistance, High Blood Pressure, Bloating and Puffiness, Dental Distress, Blood Sugar Spike, Over Weight Problem, High Cholesterol, Hard on the Heart, Headache, and Acne etc.

It also affects ones learning ability like brain power, intelligence, cognition of the people.

Poor nutrition during any of the stages can leave the bad effect on the children's growth and development, resulting in decreased learning ability, poor concentration in the study, and impaired school performance.

Statement of the problem

A study to assess the knowledge on harmful effects of junk food among high school students at selected school, Guwahati, Assam

Objectives

- To assess the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food among high school students.
- To find the association between the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food with selected demographic variables among high school students.

2. Material and Methods

- Research design: Non experimental descriptive design.
- Setting: province senior secondary school, Guwahati, Assam
- Population: High school students
- Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique
- Sample size: sample size is comprised of 60

Description and development of tool

The tool consists of two sections. Section A consist of Questionnaire to elicit demographic variables of high school students such as age, class of studying, religion, type of family, monthly income, education of the father, education of the mother, occupation of the father, occupation of the

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mother, source of information. Section B consists of 25 semi structured questionnaire to assess the knowledge junk food among High school students.

3. Results and Discussion

Major findings of the study:

- Majority of the respondents i. e 24 (40%) were in the age group of 12 - 13 years 21 (35%) were in the age group of 13 - 14 years and the least 15 (25%) were in the age group of 15 - 16 years and none were in 14 - 15 years of age group.
- Regarding Gender majority of them 32 (53.3%) were girls and 28 (46.6%) of them were boys.
- Considering Religion majority 42 (70%) were Hindus, 10 (16.6%) were Christians, only 8 (13.3%) were Muslims, and no one belong to other religion.
- Considering Class of studying majority of them 24 (40%) were studying in 8th standard, 21 (35%) were studying in 9th standard, and the least 15 (25%) were in 11th standard and none of them were in 10th standard.
- Regarding Type of family majority 55 (91.6%) were living in nuclear family, 5 (8.3%) were living in joint family and no one belongs to extended family.
- Considering Monthly Income majority of them 25 (41.6%) were getting monthly salary between Rs10, 000 - 12, 000, 20 (33.3%) were getting monthly salary aboveRs15, 000, 15 (25%) were earning between Rs 5000 - 10, 000 and no one is getting below Rs 5000
- With regard to education of the father majority 21 (35%) had completed their secondary school education, 19 (31.6%) had completed their primary school education, 17 (28.3%) of them graduate and only 3 (5%) were illiterate.
- Regarding education of the mother majority 24 (40%) had completed their primary school education, 20 (33.3%) had completed their secondary school education, 11 (18.3%) of them graduate and only 5 (8.3%) were illiterate.
- Occupation of the father wise majority 38 (63.3%) were working in private job, 9 (15%) were doing Business, 7 (11.6%) were in Government job and 6 (10%) were working as a daily worker.
- Considering occupation of the mother majority 29 (48.3%) were house wives 19 (31.6%) were in private job, 10 (16.6%) were involved in Business and only 2 (3.3%) were doing Government job.
- Regarding the previous knowledge on effects of junk food on health majority 51 (85%) did not know about effects of junk food on health, 9 (15%) had known about effects of junk food on health.
- Regarding source of information majority 5 (8.3%) were known about junk food through Mass media, 4 (6.6%) were come to know through friends and none of them were known through Health care professionals and others.

Level of knowledge regarding Junk food among High school students.

The present study results revealed that, level of knowledge regarding junk food 83.3% (50) of High school students have inadequate level of knowledge, 13.3% (8) of High school students have moderately adequate level of knowledge, and 3.3% (2) High school students have adequate level of knowledge. The data was analyzed by using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

The present study revealed that, there is an association between level of knowledge regarding fast food with their demographic variables such as age, class of studying, mother's educational qualification and source of information regarding junk food which is significant at $p < 0.05$ level. The Chi square test was used to find the association between level of knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food with their selected demographic variables.

4. Recommendation

- A similar study can be conducted to find the differences in the knowledge level of the adolescent children on the basis of various institutional settings such as government and private institutions.
- A similar study can be conducted to find differences in the knowledge level of the adolescent children studying in the schools located in urban and rural areas
- A similar study can be conducted to find differences in the knowledge level, attitude and practice.

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