



## Consumption Pattern of Junk Foods among Young Generation - Preference and Reasons - A Study with Special Reference to Kanchipuram Town

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### ABSTRACT

The conservation of energy can be neither created nor destroyed. The major part of mechanical energy of every human being is obtained through consumption of food and accessories. The food consumption of every individual is performed through the consideration of various factors like energy, calories, content and hygienic. In addition to that, the various forms of food consumption at different circumstances by every consumer are labeled through social image, economic status, preservation and consumption value. The influence of socio-cultural, psychological and physical aspects is predominant in the consumption of food and its accessories. But at the same time, the food consumption of every consumer is done through conscious and subconscious backgrounds in which the rational and emotional decisions play due role. The consumption of junk foods is reflecting cultural symbols in modern economies. The consumers prefer junk foods due the changes in their economic system, status symbol, physique presence, social value and time constraints. But at the same time, many consumers may or may not aware about the consumption conspiracy of junk foods in terms of fat and cholesterol content, side effect and other consequences. In addition to that, the consumption quantum and varieties of junk foods are increasing on day by day both in urban and rural markets. The product and brand extension of various forms of junk foods increase the consumption quantity of junk foods. In this aspect, in order to understand the consumption pattern of junk foods among the consumers, reason and preference for consumption, awareness about the impact of consuming different forms of junk foods, the present research paper has been made as an attempt by considering the semi urban background of Kanchipuram Town in Tamilnadu.

**Keywords**---- Food and accessories, consumption pattern, consumption value, consumption conspiracy.

### I. INTRODUCTION

The individual physique and health environment are highly depending on the type of foods and pattern of consumption. The food culture and consumption in every individual are influenced by their personal, family, income, social and cultural factors. The food habits in the society are influenced by socio – economic background and environmental influences. In present day world, consumption of food is culture cum fashion oriented. In addition to that, the changes in the family system like double earning pattern, profound engagement of time and changes in taste and choices stimulated both young generation and adults to change their consumption pattern of food in terms of amount of consumption, type, pattern and situation. The growth of branded foods in market economy has made significant impact on the food consumption pattern of our society. In this aspect, the food consumption pattern among the individuals radically changes from the stage of child to elder. The culture and relationship aspects among the young generation, importance given for them towards spending, preference of choices and taste and finally attitude towards benefit and value for money induce them to delineate modern consumption pattern towards food and food accessories. Majority of consumption towards food and food accessories among the young generation are inflexed through brand value, market availability, fashion and social image. In this aspect, the inclination of modern day young generation towards home made food and ready to eat items are able to be demarcated. In the given context, junk foods are becoming a fashion cum socially accepted food accessories among the young generation and elders. In addition to that junk foods are positioned as price economy and less preparatory backgrounds. The preference of junk foods among the young generation is happening through the reasons of brand and product line extensions, varieties, colours, offers and taste values.

The junk foods are continuously less prescribed by food and health committees as suitable food for young generation and elders, but the preference of young generation towards junk foods are increasing on regular phase. The number of Fast Moving Consumer Goods Companies (FMCGs) are diversifying and extending their business in the manufacturing and selling of junk foods. The junk foods are occupying 30 to 35 percent of categories choices in any form of retails shops ranging from convenience to shopping malls. The preference and choice of consuming junk foods are getting augmented in urban, semi urban and rural markets among the young generation. In present day situation, the nature of family distribution both in urban and rural places towards nuclear system also influence the preference of consuming junk foods among the young generation. But at the same time, junk foods are less energizers and more fat & sugar content reaches the market with warming responses among the young generation. Majority of parents are well aware about the disadvantages on permitting the young generation to consume junk foods, but still the entry and introduction of mammoth branded and private label entries are increasing in urban and rural markets. In this aspect, in order to understand the imperfect equation of health conscious and brand extension of junk foods among the consuming community of young generation, the present research paper has been attempted to learn the consumption pattern of junk foods along with the reasons and preferences among the young generation at Kanchipuram Town.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The transformation and exchange of traditional and modern culture in various countries are heavily made impact on food consumption and habits. The value of traditional foods, its preparation, preservation and consumption pattern are highly replaced by western food habits like ready to eat pattern, less preservation value and artificial content. The hygienic background of traditional foods is compromised by western food culture. In this aspect, the growth of junk foods is penetrating in traditional countries like India. The junk foods are ready to eat in nature, contain fewer calories and fatter, in addition to that majority of junk food varieties are health hazardous and slow killing nature. By knowing the facts, majority of the young generation in traditional countries prefer junk foods due to its fast serving taste, colour, varieties and packaging designs. The changes in demographic pattern among the present day young generation, family nature, parents occupational related hazardous induce them to consume more amount of junk foods. The consumption culture of junk foods is cascading from urban to rural markets in India. In this aspect, the product and brand penetration are augmenting periodically in junk food varieties and majority of the young generation, the junk food has become core food rather than chatting items. In this

aspect, the social relevance related studies are required to understand the preference and reasons of junk foods among the young generation is highly needed. By understanding various studies related to junk food consumption, selling pattern and strategies and demand availability, the gap of understanding the young generation preference and choices along with reasons are yet to be studies in various parts of our country. In this aspect, the present research paper has been made as an attempt to understand the preference and reasons on consumption pattern of junk foods among the young generation in the selected study location of Kanchipuram Town.

## III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Ashakiran & Deepthi (2012)<sup>1</sup>**, in their research article titled "Fast Foods and their Impact on Health" stated that Junk foods have certainly carved up the third world due to globalization. It is an integral part of life in the developed and also the developing world, and coming with it is a massive increase in obesity and associated problems. The key to eating these junk foods is moderation, occasional consumption and preferably in small portions. It is not impossible to win war with junk foods against healthy foods.

**More Ujjwala Ramchandra, Avinash Salunkhe and Mohite(2013)<sup>2</sup>** in "Knowledge Regarding Health Hazards of Junk Foods among Adolescents", says that majority type of family is nuclear 60(52.17%). Majority of study subjects 69.56% samples had Average knowledge while 6.08 % samples having Poor knowledge regarding the health hazards of junk foods. There is a significant association between expense of junk food and knowledge regarding health hazards of junk food. The study concluded that the adolescents have average knowledge regarding junk food and its hazards. Most of the students had not undergone any teaching program regarding the hazards of junk food.

**Poornima, Ramakrishna and Shivakumar (2013)<sup>1</sup>** in their study entitled "Consumption Pattern of Fast Foods among Young Adults Attending Medicine OPD At Mimsh, Mandya City, Karnataka" revealed that, A total of 1165 subjects 684 (58.71%) were males and 481 (41.28 %) were females. 460 (67.25%) males and 324 (67.36%) females like fried foods like vada, bajji, 416 (60.81%) males and 302 (62.79%) females liked chats like pani puri, masala puri, etc 269 (39.33%) males and 212 (44.07%) females liked bakery foods cakes, pastries, puffs, 265 (38.74%) males and 178 (37.00%) females liked desserts sweets and chocolates. 54 (7.89%) males were vegetarians, 69 (10.08%) men were vegetarians. 58 (12.05%) women were vegetarians and 39 (8.10%) women were vegetarians. Common reasons cited by males for indulging in fast foods were easily available, party with friends and taste, where as among females taste, munching during watching television, celebration with family members.

#### IV. NEED FOR THE STUDY

The present day food culture and consumption has become totally mismatching for our country's food culture and environment. The changes of food pattern with westernized concepts and application in our traditional economy created health hazardous and less hygienic consumption environment. The preference of modern western food culture has been extended both in urban and rural markets irrespective of market condition and locations. Majority of the young generation after the continuous consumption of junk foods are unable to accept and consume traditional foods and which affect their nervous system, blood management in the body and also incur the issues of weight imbalances and memories losses. It is also learn that the market value and selling quantum for junk foods are increased in semi urban and rural markets compare to urban markets. The recent establishment of organized food and retail outlets changes the preference of food consumption at negligible level compare to consumption of junk foods. Kanchipuram is a land mark for Indian tourism along with its business viability. It is the location in which the population density is increasing reasonably in very short period of past one decade. The District Statistics of Kanchipuram reveal that the major population increase happens in the location between the age group of 15 to 25. In these circumstances, the growth of market places in Kanchipuram, the entry of modern retail outlets and changing pattern of traditional stores operations assort heavy amount of fast food items, ready to eat food items and also the entry of reasonable junk food sellers. In this aspect, the food habit and consumption of junk food among the young generation in the selected study location has shown marginal change in the food culture of population at Kanchipuram Town. By keeping the general view of consumption of food and cultural

changes and also changes and preferences of junk foods by the young generation at Kanchipuram Town, the present research paper has been attempted.

#### V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the background profile of young generation selected for the present study.
2. To learn the opinion of young generation about junk foods
3. To know the sources of influences and reasons to prefer junk foods.
4. To know the brand preference and choice of selection of foods among young generation

#### VI. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study on consumption pattern of Junk Foods among the young generation – preference and reasons with reference to Kanchipuram Town has been undertaken only at selected locations in Kanchipuram Town. The study covered the young generation of age group between 15 and 25. The study covers the personal profile of young generation, their family background, types of food consumed. The study also covered the aspects on opinion about junk foods, reasons for consumption, food culture of individuals, preferred brands, sources of consumption and knowledge about junk foods. The study also attempted to cover the aspects of impact of consumption of junk food among the young generation on their personal and health related aspects.

#### VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sl.No.	Instruments	Description
1	Research Design	Descriptive in Nature
2	Study Area	Kanchipuram Town
3	Study Population	Young generation population between 15 and 25
5	Sampling Unit	Young generation between 15 and 25 belongs to both gender and occupation category like students and employed.
6	Sample Size	140
7	Sampling Method	Convenience sampling method
8	Sources of Data	Primary and Secondary Sources
9	Source of Primary Data	structured questionnaire with pre tested questionnaire comprised of suitable scaling
10	Source of Secondary Data	Obtained from books and journals on negotiation skills and its specific with women employees

11	Mode of Approach of Sample Respondents	Selected places of selling points where the junk foods are consumed by the respondents
11	Tools Used	Percentage analysis and Cross tables

### VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is based only on the questionnaire. Hence the success of the study depends highly on the answers given by the respondents.
- The sample size is constrained to 140 due to limited time.
- Some of the respondents were busy with their work so they not shown interest to fill the questionnaire.
- The study has not made any special classification for categorizing the junk food varieties before data collection.

### IX. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1  
Background Profile of Respondents and preference of Junk Foods

Sl.No	Background Profile	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage to Total
1	Age	15-20	84	60
		20-25	56	40
2	Gender	Male	71	51
		Female	69	49
3	Occupation	Students	97	69
		Others	43	31
4	Educational Background	Less than Graduation	30	21
		Graduation	68	49
		Post Graduation	24	17
		Others	18	13
5	Income (Monthly)	Nil	76	54
		Less than 15000	28	20
		More than 15000	36	26
6	Nature of Family	Nuclear	92	66
		Joint	48	34
7	Location Background	Urban	85	61
		Rural	55	39
<b>Total</b>			<b>140</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: computed primary data

Table 2  
Favorite Junk foods of Respondents based on their Age

Preferred Category of Junk Foods	Age Background( in Years)		Total
	15- 20	20-25	
Fast Food and chat items	26 (31)	14 (25)	40 (29)
Snacks	18 (21)	11 (19)	29 (21)
Soft Drinks	11 (1)	6 (11)	17 (12)
Biscuits	19 (23)	12 (21)	31 (22)

Candies	10 (1)	13 (23)	23 (16)
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b> <b>(60)</b>	<b>56</b> <b>(40)</b>	<b>140</b> <b>(100)</b>

Source: computed primary data, Figures in Brackets Indicates percentage to Total

**Table 3**  
**Food consumption of Respondents based on their Weight**

Weight (Kgs)	Food Consumption		
	Vegetarian	Non-Vegetarian	Total
Less than 60	24 (57.1)	45 (45.9)	69 (49.2)
More than 60	18 (42.9)	53 (54.1)	71 (50.8)
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b> <b>(30.0)</b>	<b>98</b> <b>(70.0)</b>	<b>140</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

Source: computed primary data, Figures in Brackets Indicates percentage to Total

**Table 4**  
**Opinion about preference to eat junk food based on their gender**

Gender	Preference hours to eat junk food				Total
	Mornings	Afternoons	Evenings	Night Time	
Male	3 (2.1)	4 (2.9)	44 (31.4)	20 (14.3)	71 (50.7)
Female	4 (2.9)	5 (3.6)	43 (30.7)	17 (12.1)	69 (49.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(5.0)</b>	<b>9</b> <b>(6.4)</b>	<b>87</b> <b>(62.1)</b>	<b>37</b> <b>(26.4)</b>	<b>140</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

Source: computed primary data, Figures in Brackets Indicates percentage to Total

**Table 5**  
**Opinion about influencing factors of junk food based on their status.**

Influencing Factors	Occupation Category		Total
	Students	Others	

Time	27 (28)	12 (28)	39 (28)
Taste	43 (44)	14 (33)	57 (41)
Changing Life Style	19 (20)	10 (23)	29 (21)
Influence of Advertisement	8 (8)	7 (16)	15 (10)
<b>Total</b>	97 (69)	43 (31)	140 (100)

Source: computed primary data, Figures in Brackets Indicates percentage to Total

**Table 6**  
Status of Checking the quality of junk foods based on their Occupation Status

Status of checking Quality	Occupation Status		Total
	Students	Others	
Yes	54 (56)	22 (51)	76 (54)
No	16 (16)	10 (23)	26 (19)
Sometimes	27 (28)	11 (26)	38 (27)
<b>Total</b>	97 (69)	43 (31)	140 (100)

Source: computed primary data, Figures in Brackets Indicates percentage to Total

**Table 7**  
Opinion about the checking the nutrient fact label of junk food based on their status

Status of checking the Nutrient Fact Label in the Junk Food	Occupational Status		Total
	Students	Others	
Don't Know	19 (20)	6 (14)	25 (18)
Yes I Could Check	39 (40)	17 (40)	56 (40)

No I Don't Check	26 (27)	9 (21)	35 (25)
Sometimes I Check	13 (13)	11 (26)	24 (17)
<b>Total</b>	97 (69)	43 (31)	140 (100)

Source: computed primary data, Figures in Brackets Indicates percentage to Total

**Table 8**

**Awareness about Chemicals content present in the Junk Foods based on their Gender**

Gender	Awareness about Chemicals content present in the Junk Foods		Total
	Yes	No	
Male	53 (74)	18 (14)	71 (51)
Female	39 (57)	30 (44)	69 (49)
<b>Total</b>	92 (66)	48 (34)	140 (100.0)

Source: computed primary data, Figures in Brackets Indicates percentage to Total

**Table 9**

**Awareness about Health Hazardous based on their Gender**

Awareness About Health Hazardous	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
<b>Yes</b>	58 (82)	50 (72)	108 (77)
<b>No</b>	13 (18)	19 (28)	32 (23)
<b>Total</b>	71 (51)	69 (49)	<b>140</b> <b>(100.0)</b>

Source: computed primary data, figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total

**Table 1** describes the background profile of respondents selected for the present study at Kanchipuram Town. Regarding the age group, 60 percent are between 15 to 20 and 40 percent are between 20 and 25. The age group of 15 to 20 consumes more

junk foods compare to 20 to 25 categories. 51 percent of male consume junk foods compare to 49 percent of female. 69 percent of student category prefers junk food compare to other categories like employed, housewives and so on. Among the consumers of junk food, 21

percent are below graduates, 49 percent are graduates, 17 percent are post graduates and 13 percent are diploma holders and others. 54 percent of no income group prefers junk foods, 20 percent of income group below Rs.15000 and 26 percent of above Rs.15000 groups prefer junk foods in the selected study location. In the category of 66 percent of nuclear family and 34 percent of joint family consume junk foods. Regarding the consumer of junk foods 61 percent are urbanites and 39 percent are rural.

**Table 2** shows favorite junk foods for respondents based on their age category. In the category between 15 and 20 ages, 31 percent prefer fast food and chat items, 23 percent prefer biscuits, 21 percent prefer snacks and 1 percent prefer candies and soft drinks. Where as in the category between 20 and 25 ages, 25 percent prefer chat items and fast food, 23 percent candies, 19 percent prefer snacks and 21 percent prefer biscuits.

**Table 3** shows the distribution of food consumption by respondents based on their weight. In the category of less than 60 weights, 57.1 percent are vegetarian and 45.9 percent are non-vegetarian. Where as in the category of more than 60, 42.9 percent are vegetarian and 54.1 percent are non-vegetarian. In overall it is understood that compare to vegetarian of 30 percent 70 percent are non vegetarian and which is higher in the category of more than 60kgs.

**Table 4** shows the opinion of respondents about the preferred hours to eat junk food based on their gender. 31 percent of the male and 30 percent of female respondents prefer to eat junk food in the evenings. In the case of 14.3 percent of the male respondents and 12.1 percent of female respondents prefer to eat in night times. During afternoon times, 2.9 percent of male and 3.6 percent of female prefer to take junk foods. The preference during morning for taking junk food is 2.1 percent by male and 2.9 percent by female. It is also observed that 62.1 percent of male and female prefer junk foods by evening times.

**Table 5** shows influencing factors for consuming junk foods based on the occupational background of respondents. In the category of students, 28 percent consume for time passing, 44 percent for taste, 20 percent for life style changes and social image and 8 percent through the influence of advertisement and promotion. The other categories include employed, housewives, 33 percent for taste, 23 percent for changes in life style, 28 percent for time passing and 16 percent due to ad and promotional influences. It is observed from both categories the major influence through taste of junk foods and next to that time factor.

**Table 6** shows the status of checking quality of junk foods by respondents based on their occupation status. In the category of students, 56 percent check the quality, 16 percent do not check and 28 percent check occasionally. Regarding other categories like employed and housewives, 51 percent check the quality, 23 percent do not check and 26 percent check occasionally. It is

observed from both categories that around 50 percent check the quality of junk foods before to consume it.

**Table 7** shows the status of checking the nutrient fact label of junk foods by respondents based on their occupation status. In the category of students, 40 percent check it, 27 percent do not check it, 20 percent do not aware about it and 13 percent sometimes use to verify it. In the category of other occupants, 40 percent check it, 26 percent sometimes check it, 21 percent do not check it and 14 percent do not aware about it. It is observe that compare to others, students category have more unawareness level.

**Table 8** shows awareness about chemical content present in the junk foods among the respondents based on their gender background. In the category of male respondents, 74 percent aware about it and 14 percent do not aware about it. Among female respondents, 57 percent aware about it and 44 percent do not aware about it. The level of awareness among male is higher than female.

**Table 9** highlights the awareness about health hazardous among the respondents about junk foods based on their gender. 82 percent of male respondents aware about it and 18 percent do not aware about it. In case of female respondents, 72 percent aware about it and 28 percent do not aware about it. It is observed that compare to male category female category have less awareness about the health hazardous aspects of junk foods.

## X. CONCLUSION

The consumption life cycle use to have different phases from innovation to deterioration. It differs among the consumers based on the product category and usage features. In this aspect, the consumption food among the consumers also undergoes for consumption cycle and which is influenced various socio economic indices and psychographic background of consumers. But at the same, the product like food and accessories are something human physic and health related and which will also have impact on the psychological and social background of consumers. The changes in terms of food consumption in countries like India has brought cultural metamorphism among the consumption and pattern of food ranges from western, European and Asian location influences. It also affects our traditional food culture and habits, in addition to that, the mushrooming of fast food culture and consumption for time management also made drastically changes among the young generation consumers in India. It is spread all places in India irrespective of rural and urban destinations. In this aspect, the present study undertaken showed the various backgrounds of consumers, their consumption pattern, period of consumption, purpose of consumption of junk foods, awareness about health content and quality aspects. The study also provided quite interesting results obtained from the study location like comparison of consumption pattern of consumers in terms of their personal and

professional backgrounds.

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