



Awareness Level on Fast Food Selection Factors Among Catering Students

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Abstract: Consumption of fast food among students regularly or uncontrolled can contribute to various long-term health problems in the future. This is because, fast food contains ingredients that can leave an impact on a person's health in the short term and also in the long-term if its intake is uncontrolled. There are various factors that influence these students in the selection of fast food. Therefore, this study was conducted to find out the awareness of fast-food intake among catering students and the relationship with fast food selection. This study was conducted based on a quantitative descriptive survey method using a questionnaire instrument and were analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The data obtained were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 to obtain the mean values, standard deviation and Spearman Rank to see the relationship. Overall, this study shows that the main factors of fast-food selection among catering students are service factors and purchases incentives with means score of 4.29. While the level of awareness of students on the long-term effects of fast-food intake is high with mean scores 4.08. The results of this study are expected to help students to practice healthier food choices to prevent any long -term diseases and have a healthy survival in the future.

Keywords: Fast food, awareness, fast food selection

1. Introduction

The demand for fast food in the community seems to be no stranger. This is because, most of these fast-food restaurants not only offer a tempting menu at affordable prices, but also captivate the minds of the community by offering certain services such as food delivery services and drive-thru which are very much in line with the lifestyle of most people on these modern lives. The sophistication of technology now allows food to be ordered by online and customers do not need go to a restaurant and get the food (Triyanti, 2014). At the same time, the preparation period of fast food is also much faster than the preparation of regular food because most of the fast food is ready to be cooked and only needs to be heated before being served to customers.

Although the consumption of fast food is often plagued with various negative effects on health through the mass media and electronic media because it contains various content that is not good for health, but this fast food still has a privilege in people's heart.

1.1 Background of Study

Many people in the world, including Malaysian, suffer from chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, high blood pressure, obesity and others from various backgrounds and ages (Abd Talib, 2015).

The trend of enjoying fast food is no stranger to the lifestyle of modern society today, although most of them know that consuming fast food can leave side effects if taken uncontrollably due to the content of the food such as sugar, salt, cholesterol and excessive food additives that can affect a person's health.

Despite various efforts and provisions have been made by the Ministry of Health in an effort to encourage Malaysians to adopt a healthy lifestyle, there are still many people who do not care about such efforts. The number of people suffering from chronic diseases in Malaysia is now increasingly worrying and a big challenge to the country in combating it. Many of us neglect our health even though we need to take care of it from a young age (Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia, 2011).

1.2 Problem Statement

In the current development of globalization, many individuals tend to ignore the adverse effects of fast food intake instead of prioritizing healthy food intake while the responsibility of choosing healthy food to consume is on their shoulders. Based on the background of the study, many of us are less careful in choosing daily food based on the food pyramid. This has led to the number of chronic patients and the death rate from this problem in various age groups continuing to increase. Malaysia is also one of the most obese countries in Southeast Asia and ranks sixth in the Asia Pacific region as well as sixth in Asia and 17th in the world for the population with diabetes (myMetro, 2015). According to Professor of Public Health, International Medical University, Kuala Lumpur, Datuk Dr. Lokman Hakim Sulaiman, 11.6 percent of the country's population has diabetes and from that number, 3.5 million adults, consisting of college and university students in Malaysia, have diabetes (Tinjauan Kebangsaan dan Morbiditi (NHMS), 2019). The results of the Health Education Authority (2011) also found that the most consumers who choose the fast-food menu were teenagers aged 15 to 34 years old. Thus, it is not surprising that students are also among the most consumers who choose and consume fast food.

Therefore, this study was conducted to identify the extent of awareness in fast food intake on long-term health among catering students by selecting the group of students. An unbalanced diet during university life can lead to adverse psychological effects which lead to a link between food and chronic diseases.

1.3 Objectives

1. Identify fast food selection factors among catering students.
2. Identify the level of awareness among catering students on the long-term effects of fast-food intake

2. Literature Review

Food is one of the basic necessities for every human being to survive other than protection. Foods can be categorized into several categories such as routine food, basic food, side food, snacks, supplements and others. Food is very important in supplying energy to humans. Fast food can be defined as food that can be prepared and served quickly (Sulistijani, 2012). Fast food restaurants can be found anywhere including in Malaysia. The fast-food restaurant started in Malaysia in 1963 with the opening of the A&W franchise at Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman (TAR) by Lie Boff of America. In 1965, the restaurant began to introduce fast food sales based on the drive-thru concept. Meanwhile, the Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) restaurant opened in Malaysia in 1973. The opening of the KFC restaurant has influenced the eating culture of most of the Malaysian community, where this fast food is beginning to be accepted by most Malaysians. Meanwhile, in 1982, franchises such as Burger King, Shakey's Pizza, Pizza Hut and McDonald's began to open in Malaysia. Now, there are many fast-food restaurants in Malaysia from various brands and can be easily found. According to Triyanti (2014), the menu offerings are encouraging, the atmosphere is comfortable and the interior décor is attractive, the facilities are diverse as well as well-trained employees have led to the acceptance of fast food by most of the community.

In Malaysia, the problem of obesity is like a disease that is familiar to its people of all backgrounds and ages caused by various factors, one of which is the lack of awareness in the aspect of healthy and proper food selection. Students can be categorized as those who are exposed to various knowledge including knowledge related to healthy food as well as the importance of maintaining health taught from the school bench. The formation of food patterns in college should be preserved as best as possible as it can affect the health of students for a long time (Azeman, Raduan and Othman, 2016). Unbalanced eating practices during college life can have bad psychological effects which leads to an association between food and chronic diseases (Jeong, 2011). Therefore, students should practice the knowledge learned wherever they are especially during college and foster a high level of awareness in fast food intake.

3. Methodology

Methodology is used to carry out this study which aims to ensure that research performance can be achieved well and perfectly.

3.1 Research Design

Study design is very important in conducting a study where the study design plays a role as a guide to answer research questions as well as ensure that the objectives of the study can be achieved. The purpose of this study was to see the awareness level of fast-food intake among catering students at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia. The most appropriate design for this study is by use a descriptive survey study design consisting of quantitative methods. The approach used in data collection is quantitative methods using questionnaires.

3.2 Population and Sample Size

For a student, awareness of food quality and food intake patterns is important as it affects the development or physical and mental response of a student who is the mainstay of human capital for the country in the future (Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia, 2011). Based on the study of Purahit, Shah and Harsoda (2015), as many as 40 percent of students love fast food and more than 60 percent of them are unaware of the fact that fast food is unhealthy. For this research, catering students were chosen in order to identify the fast-food selection factors as well as the level of awareness among catering student on the long -term effects of fast-food intake. Thus, the population of this study were among catering students from Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education (FPTV) with total of 225 students from cohort 10 to cohort 16. A total of 140 students were selected from the total size of catering student population. The sampling method used in this study is to use simple random sampling. The number of sample sizes of this study was determined based on the table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) that is 140 respondents to obtain data related to the study.

3.3 Research Instrument

This study was conducted based on quantitative descriptive survey method and using questionnaire instrument. Questionnaire method is used as the main instrument to obtain information for the purpose of this study such as the background of respondents, fast food selection factors among catering students and awareness level among catering students on the long -term effects of fast-food intake. This study instrument was adapted from the previous study of the Lockman and Amalia study (2018). The instrument of the study, which is a questionnaire, is divided into three main parts, namely part A, part B and part C. Part A contains the respondent's personal information item, while part B contains questions related to fast food selection factors among catering students and part C contains questions related to the level of awareness of catering students on the long-term effects of fast-food intake.

3.4 Data Analysis

Questionnaire data collected and recorded will be analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics to show the percentage (%), frequency (f), mean and standard deviation for demographic, fast food selection factors, among catering students and student awareness levels.

4. Results and Discussion

The results and discussion section presents data and analysis of the study that have been obtained from the raw data collected as a result of the findings from the questionnaire which was distributed to 225 students from cohort 10 to cohort 16 for the Bachelor of Vocational Education (catering) at the Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education (FPTV), Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM).

4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

4.1.1 Demographic

Table 1 - Demographic data

Demographic	Detail	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	40	28.6
	Female	100	71.4
Cohort	10	33	23.6
	11	19	13.6
	12	27	19.3
	13	10	7.1
	14	17	12.1
	15	15	10.7
	16	19	13.6
Fast food intake	Yes	140	100

Frequency of fast-food intake (a week)	No	-	-
	1 time	57	40.7
	2-4 times	49	35.0
	5-7 times	16	11.4
	other	18	12.9

Table 1 shows that the number of respondents consisted of 100 female students which is 71.4 percent more than male students of 40 people which is 28.6 percent. This proves that the number of female students is higher than the number of male students for catering students because most of the FPTV students who take catering courses are dominated by female students.

In addition, the results of demographic data analysis found that a total of 140 people in the sample answered this survey questionnaire from the total population of catering students consisting of cohorts 10 to 16. Based on the study, a total of 140 people (100 percent) respondents said yes that they consumed fast food and 0 people (percent) stated no. This indicates that all catering students involved in this study consume fast food. While the frequency of fast food intake among the sample of this study is dominated by the frequency of intake of 1 time a week with the number of respondents 57 people (40.7 percent) followed by 2-4 times a week (49 people, 35.0 percent), 5-7 times a week (16 people, 11.4 per cent) and others (18 people, 12.9 per cent).

4.1.2 Mean analysis part B: Fast Food Selection Factors Among Catering Students

Table 2 - Mean score analysis of service and purchasing incentives

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Interpretation
1.	I can order fast food directly from home	4.05	1.22	High
2.	I can order my own food at fast food restaurants through the digital application (kiosk machine) provided without having to go to the counter	4.26	0.98	High
3.	I can make payment using a credit card to facilitate my purchase	4.22	1.13	High
4.	I can order fast food by phone call	4.25	0.97	High
5.	I can order fast food through the food ordering app	4.41	0.84	High
6.	I can get a variety of fast food restaurant services that meet my criteria and tastes as a customer	4.29	0.88	High
7.	I can get efficient service from trained fast food restaurant employees	4.12	0.90	High
8.	I can use the drive-thru service provided	4.51	0.80	High
9.	I can use the food delivery service	4.50	0.76	High
10.	I can use the self-collect service provided	4.32	0.94	High
	Total average	4.29	0.94	High

Table 2 shows that fast food selection factors from the aspect of service factors and purchase incentives among catering students as a whole are at a high level. Analysis related to fast food selection factors from the aspect of time and location among the respondents found that the mean interpretation is high overall with a mean score value of 4.51 to 4.05.

Item number 8 has the highest mean score value of 4.51 and is at a high level of mean interpretation. This data analysis shows that the convenience of drive-thru service provided in every fast-food restaurant is the main factor in the selection of fast food by respondents in terms of purchase incentives. The variety of purchase incentives offered as well as good service by Fast Food restaurants can be fully utilized by students as well as providing satisfaction and meeting the demands of their customers. As supported by Nabi Alam and Nagarathanam, (2013) where fast food restaurants tend to attract more beneficial customers and a successful restaurant business is a restaurant that understands the needs of its customers accurately and in turn can grow its business according to market trends. While item number 1 showed

the lowest mean score of 4.05. However, the mean interpretation for this item is at a high level. This shows that the convenience of ordering fast food directly from home also contributes to the factor of fast-food intake among respondents in terms of service.

Table 3 - Mean score analysis of time and location factor

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Interpretation
1.	I can order fast food at any time	4.29	1.04	High
2.	I can order fast food easily wherever my location is	4.09	1.07	High
3.	I can get fast food quickly even though my study schedule is too busy	4.20	0.95	High
4.	I find the operating hours of fast-food restaurants are longer than other eateries	4.22	0.95	High
5.	I found that there are fast food restaurants that operate 24 hours a day	4.12	1.09	High
6.	I found that buying fast food can save my time	4.37	0.79	High
7.	I found that there is a wide selection of fast-food restaurants around where I live	3.99	1.10	High
8.	I found that fast food restaurant easily available in most locations	4.31	0.84	High
9.	I found that fast food delivery time very short which is 15-30 minutes	4.14	0.83	High
10.	I found that fast food preparation much faster rate	4.14	0.99	High
	Total average	4.18	0.96	High

Table 3 shows that fast food selection factors from the aspect of time and location factors among catering students as a whole are at a high level. Analysis related to fast food selection factors from the aspect of time and location among the respondents found that the mean interpretation is high overall with a mean score value of 4.37 to 3.99.

Item number 6 has the highest mean score value of 4.37 and is at a high level of mean interpretation. This data analysis shows that the purchase of fast food can save time is the main factor in the selection of fast food by respondents in terms of time. This research found that respondent can get the food from any fast-food restaurant available around their location at a faster rate than other foods and may save their time. This is in line with the Lutfi study (2011), which stated that students prefer fast food because of its fast serving so that it saves time and can be prepared anytime and anywhere. While item number 7 showed the lowest mean score of 3.99. However, the mean interpretation for this item is at a high level. This shows that the variety of fast-food restaurant options around the respondents' residence also contributes to the factor of fast food intake from the aspect of location.

Table 4 - Mean score analysis of lifestyle factor

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Interpretation
1.	I visit fast food restaurants for social purposes because it is comfortable to visit	3.77	1.16	High
2.	I can follow a new modern lifestyle if I consume fast food	3.74	1.14	High
3.	I enjoy visiting fast food restaurants	4.05	0.98	High
4.	I consume fast food because I am influenced by friends	3.88	1.06	High
5.	I am often influenced by friends who invite me to eat at fast food restaurants	3.91	1.09	High
6.	I was influenced to try the new fast-food menu introduced by my friend	3.90	1.15	High
7.	I take fast food because influenced by the eating habits of people around me	3.82	1.08	High

8.	I consume fast food because it can satisfy my tastes in terms of physiological demands	3.84	1.04	High
9.	I consume fast food because I am a food hunter	3.76	1.23	High
10.	I found the concept of a fast-food restaurant consisting of various elements intriguing me to visit it	4.12	0.91	Tinggi
Total Average		3.87	1.08	High

Table 4 shows the factors of fast-food selection from the aspect of lifestyle among catering students as a whole are at a high level. Analysis related to fast food selection factors from the aspect of lifestyle among the respondents found that the mean interpretation is high overall with a mean score value of 4.12 to 3.76.

Item number 10 has the highest mean score value of 4.12 and is at a high level of mean interpretation. This data analysis shows that the concept of fast-food restaurant consisting of various elements has attracted the interest of respondents to visit it and become the main factor in the selection of fast food by respondents from the aspect of lifestyle. This shows that the diversity of elements found in fast food restaurants is the main impact that influences fast food selection among students in terms of lifestyle in line with the Indahwati et al study, (2017) which states that fast food often finds a place in the hearts of customers because its type of food meets the taste, is considered prestigious food, modern food as well as leisure food for young people. While item number 9 showed the lowest mean score of 3.76. However, the mean interpretation for this item is at a high level. This shows that most respondents are "food hunters" and also contribute to the factor of fast-food intake from the aspect of lifestyle.

Table 5 - Mean score analysis menu offered and price

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Interpretation
1.	The fast-food restaurant consists of a variety of menu concept options	4.30	0.89	High
2.	The fast-food restaurant offers a variety of menus	4.27	0.85	High
3.	Fast food restaurants often release new menus	4.35	0.70	High
4.	Fast food restaurants often display ads on social media and pique my interest in getting the food	4.30	0.84	High
5.	The fast-food restaurant offers a very casual menu to consume	4.22	0.87	High
6.	Fast food restaurants offer reasonable prices, in line with my ability	4.06	0.98	High
7.	Many fast-food restaurants offer promotional prices	4.34	0.75	High
8.	Many fast-food restaurants offer special packages	4.27	0.87	High
9.	The fast-food restaurant offers good value for money with a menu	4.08	0.81	High
10.	The fast-food restaurant has its own menu variety	4.20	0.92	High
Total Average		4.23	0.84	High

Table 5 shows the factors of fast-food selection from the aspect of menu offerings and prices among catering students as a whole are at a high level. Analysis related to fast food selection factors from the aspect of menu offerings and prices among the respondents found that the mean interpretation was high overall with a mean score value of 4.35 to 4.06.

Item number 3 has the highest mean score value of 4.35 and is at a high level of mean interpretation. This data analysis shows that new menus that are often released by fast food restaurants are the main factor in the selection of fast food by respondents in terms of menu offerings. While item number 6 showed the lowest mean score of 4.06. However, the mean interpretation for this item is at a high level. This shows that the price of fast food that is affordable with their

ability also contributes to the factor of respondents consuming fast food. Most fast-food restaurants are constantly introducing new menus and are limited to a period of time to attract customers to visit fast food restaurants. This is in line with the study of the Nabi Alam and Nagarathanam (2013) which states that in addition to menus, reasonable or reasonable pricing is an important factor for customers to be satisfied as customers evaluate services based on the price paid by them.

In summary, the selection of fast food among catering students is at a high level in the four aspects studied. Service factors and purchasing incentives become the main factors influencing the choice of fast food among catering students because they can make the most of the services and purchasing incentives provided by most fast-food restaurants as well as facilitate their purchase and obtain the desired satisfaction as customers.

4.1.3 Mean Analysis Part C: Level of Awareness Among Catering Students on the Long-Term Effects of Fast-Food Consumption

Table 6 - Level of awareness

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Interpretation
1.	Although I am aware that fast food is not good for health, but I still consume fast food	4.17	0.90	High
2.	I am aware that excessive fast-food intake can cause various diseases	4.54	0.70	High
3.	I will choose to order fast food when my schedule is busy	4.06	1.08	High
4.	I will try every new menu released by the fast-food restaurant	3.85	1.17	High
5.	I consume fast food foods such as hamburgers, pizza, fries, and fried chicken	4.22	0.90	High
6.	The variety of food and the quick presentation made me pay a visit to the fast-food restaurant	4.12	0.98	High
7.	I buy fast food because of the promotional packages offered	4.13	0.99	High
8.	I consume fast food because the location is close to where I live	3.97	0.90	High
9.	I balance fast food intake with exercise to control the impact of excessive fast-food intake on health	3.95	1.14	High
10.	I visit fast food restaurants to improve my socialization and follow the current lifestyle	3.80	1.23	High
	Total Average	4.08	0.99	High

Table 6 shows that the level of awareness among catering students on the long-term effects of fast-food intake as a whole is at a high level. Analysis related to the awareness level among the respondents found that the mean interpretation was high overall with a mean score value of 4.54 to 3.80.

Item number 2 has the highest mean score value of 4.54 and is at a high level of mean interpretation. This data analysis shows that the awareness among respondents about the effects of excessive fast-food intake on health is high, however they still consume fast food. While item number 10 showed the lowest mean score of 3.80. However, the mean interpretation for this item is still at a high level. This indicates that although most respondents are aware of the long-term effects of fast-food consumption on health, they still consume fast food.

Overall, the results of this study discovered that the level of awareness of UTHM catering students on the long-term effects of fast-food intake is high. However, due to lack of seriousness and sound discipline in healthy food choices and consistently, makes them choose to consume fast food and set aside about the knowledge and awareness that they know and aware.

5. Conclusion

As a conclusion, this study proves that there are various factors that motivate an individual in the selection of fast food. But at the same time, awareness of the long-term effects should not be underestimated. This is because food is one of the main engines to one's health. Each of us is responsible in determining what we eat from now on for a healthier survival in the future in addition to practicing a healthy lifestyle consistently. From the results of the analysis of this study, it can be concluded that the most important factor in fast food selection among catering students is the service factor and purchase incentives where respondents can use the drive-thru service facilities provided. While the level of awareness of catering students on the long-term effects of fast-food intake is at a high level. In conclusion, there are various factors that drive an individual in the selection of fast food. But at the same time, awareness of the long-term effects should not be underestimated. This is because food is one of the main engines for a person's health.

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