

# Trend of Fast Food Consumption and its Effect on Pakistani Society

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## Abstract

Fast food is convenient and tasty though it prepared with low nourishing or unhealthy ingredients. This paper focused on intensity of fast food trend and its effect on Pakistani society. Previous studied had reviewed to rationalize the results. Questionnaire had utilized as a data collection instrument. Microsoft Excel had used for tabulation and graphs while SPSS for descriptive and inferential analysis. Results showed that youngsters spend more money on junk food. Nuclear and Joint both family systems like fast food due to its taste. People like to eat fast food, outside their homes. Hunger can be satisfied with fast food. Moreover, fast food is not a cost effective mean. Fast food also used for the sake of enjoyment and fun. It is also evaluated that prolonged use of fast food is also a cause of health problems, obesity, indigestion problem and high cholesterol. Due to good taste and fluent availability people prefer fast food over home cooked food. Fast food is also a major cause of avoiding proper nutrition. People prefer fast food at their workplace due to their busy schedules. Age and Education have negative correlation with the likeness, consumption and spending money on fast food. However, with the increase in income there will be more likeness toward fast food.

**Keywords:** Fast food, Obesity, high cholesterol, Junk food

## 1. Introduction

Fast food denoted as food that can be cooked and dished up swiftly. They're admired as they serve filling foods that taste fine with low expenditures. Nevertheless, the food is frequently made with cheap items such as high fat beef, classy grains and added sugar & fats, rather than nourishing ingredients, for instance, lean meats, fresh fruits, and vegetables.

In earlier period people used to consume vigorous, freshly ready food with their relatives in the residence. Nowadays though, several people, mainly young people, have a preference to consume junk food such as hamburgers, fried chicken, Shawarma, or pizza. There are various causes for the fame of fast food. One of the major reasons is the modifying in standard of living. Many people functioning long hours, shifts, or comprehensive school days. They don't have time to discover ingredients or organize good food. A further reason is the enormous number of young, well off people. In most of countries larger amount of people are young population so they spend more money on fast food.

Fast food restaurants regularly target kids with television and Internet promotion. Children' meals with bright covering and mini toys appeal to young children, but they are loaded with fat, sodium and additional sugars. The rise of babyhood fatness and other ailments such as diabetes may be connected to the lofty fat and sodium content of these detrimental fast food meals.

The ill consequence of fast food and the probable hazard that it possesses by its usual eating is outrageous. Chubbiness, increase in cholesterol levels, dietary deficiencies, cardiac disorders, loss of muscle mass, depression, sexual dysfunction, asthma, strokes, type 2 diabetes, cancer (kidney / uterine / colon / breast / esophagus), liver disease, and cardiovascular diseases can all be caused by eating fast food on a regular basis.

Advertising is a gigantic wickedness when it comes to junk. Businesses take benefit of this tool to attract kids, particularly with good deals and offers on food ordered. Television ads and those in print have a way of creeping up on children right down to when they're toddlers, building upon brand devotion before they can even get the name right of the burger their sinking their little teeth into.

Fast food, though it is expedient and a delicious addition to a diet, can have serious health and communal effects. People should learn to choose fast food cautiously. Not all snack food is bad. Today, progressively fast food restaurants are offering improved options and new menu items. This paper reviews the trend and effects of fast food on the society of Pakistan.

## 2. Literature Review

The fast food business, initially conceived in Southern California during the 1940s, not only changed the eating habits of Americans, but also those in several other countries around the world, plus Asian countries (Schlosser, 2001). Fast food utilization increased radically in Pakistan. Aspects having impact on customers food choices are; attraction for eating out, socialization, urbanization, taste for college and university students, expediency for dual-income families in Pakistan, and numerous other (Baig and Saeed, 2012).

Globalization has influenced the manufacturing and processing of food plus its sales, arrangements and utilization and with growing relative significance of snacks, burgers, pizzas and fizzy drinks, people are snacking in a new way. Urbanization is also one of the issues leading to alter lifestyles and augmented income and sovereignty of young people, as it had been stated that requirement for food is related with the lifestyle of urban areas (Pingali, 2004). Utilization of western style food increased as the income level of developing countries increased (Regmi and Dyck, 2001).

A study carried out by a group of researchers in Houston illustrated that just 3% of kids' meals offered at a range of fast food restaurants met dietary standards describe by the National School Lunch Program (Wood, 2009). Research also evaluated that those who ate fast food at home were more probable to be heavy (MacFarlane et al., 2009). The researchers also showed that those students who attended school close to fast food restaurants were heavier than their corresponding persons who attended school not next to a fast food restaurant (Davis and Carpenter, 2009). Howard, Fitzpatrick and Fulfroost (2011) sought to find associations between schools located near fast food restaurants, convenience stores, and supermarkets and the rates of overweight students in California.

In Turkey just 15% of participants reported consuming the recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables. Nearly one-third of participants said that they choose junk food or fast food as a daily snack, and the same number also reported having fast food once or more daily (Akman et al., 2010). Goyal and Singh (2007) estimate importance of various factors affecting the choice of fast food outlets by Indian young consumers. They indicate that the young Indian consumer has passion for visiting fast food outlets for fun and change but home food is their first choice. They feel homemade food is much better than food served at fast food outlets.

Lots of people take pleasure in eating fast food every day, although they might have never recognized about its terrible effect to their health. One of the syndromes that causes from consuming fast food is cancer (Serve et al., 1980). Shockingly, the anticipated causes of cancer in the U.S. in 1993 demonstrated that the cause from diet because of high fat and fried food to create cancer can be about 25 % (Watson & Mufti, 1995).

Policy makers in numerous cities have countered by limiting the accessibility or content of fast food, or by requiring posting of the caloric content of the meals (Abdollah, 2007; McBride, 2008; Mair et al. 2005). Jekanowski, Binkley, and Eales (2001) inspected the effect of price, income, and demographic uniqueness on fast food. Ekelund and Watson (1991) also found that fast food utilization was empirically associated to opportunity costs of the household.

## 3. Objectives

This research has following objectives:

1. To find out the intensity of fast food trend in Pakistan
2. To corroborate the effects of fast food on people of Pakistan
3. To verify the association of demographics with research questions

## 4. Methodology

Data had been conducted using questionnaire as a data collection instrument. Questionnaire included close ended questions for the convenience of respondents. Most of the questions were on Likert Scale ranging from "strongly disagree to strongly agree". Data had been collected from 398 respondents, who belong to different demographics. Simple random sampling as a sampling technique had selected. There SPSS and Microsoft Excel had used to compiled the results. Microsoft Excel for tabulation and graphs while SPSS for descriptive and inferential analysis.

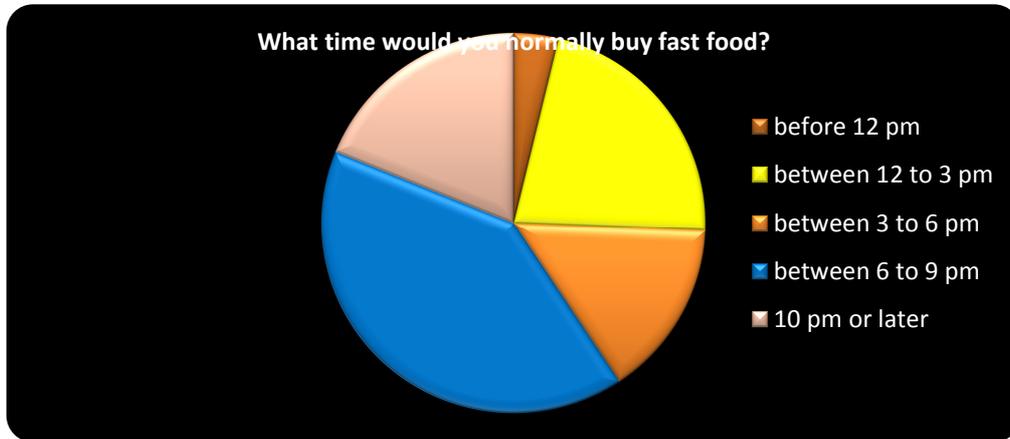
## 5. Empirical Results

Results has presented graphically, descriptively and inferentially.

### 5.1 Graphical Presentation

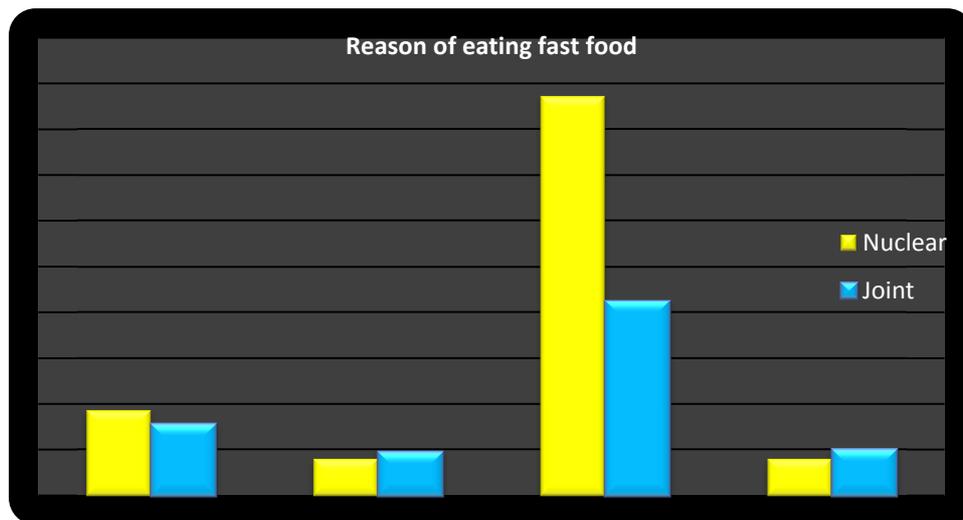
Data has also shown by using graphs to demonstrate more expediency in viewing results.

Chart No. 1: Time of Buying Fast Food



Above pie chart (chart no. 1) shows that people normally buy fast food between 6 pm to 9 pm as it covers the maximum portion in the chart. However, the least portion shows that very few people buy fast food before 12 pm.

Chart no. 2: Reason of eating fast food



Bar chart (Chart no. 2) shows that mostly people eat fast food due to its taste. Bars show that there was greater nuclear family system than joint family system. However, in case of price as the reason of eating fast food, joint family system have taller bar.

### 5.2 Descriptive Analysis

Now there is descriptive analysis of data using frequency and their percentages.

Table No. 1: Descriptive Analysis of Research Questions

Research Questions	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Mostly people like fast food	21	5.3	27	6.8	85	21.4	153	38.4	112	28.1	398	100
Usually people like to eat fast food outside	18	4.5	58	14.6	69	17.3	164	41.2	89	22.4	398	100
Fast food is a status symbol	46	11.6	110	27.6	83	20.9	119	29.9	40	10.1	398	100
Hunger can be satisfied by fast food	36	9	82	20.6	80	20.1	158	39.7	42	10.6	398	100
Every type of people eats fast food	39	9.8	119	29.9	100	25.1	98	24.6	42	10.6	398	100
Fast food saves cost	93	23.4	178	44.7	62	15.6	51	12.8	14	3.5	398	100
Almost every member of the family like fast food	32	8	81	20.4	68	17.1	157	39.4	60	15.1	398	100
You eat fast food just for the sake of fun & enjoyment	24	6	50	12.6	77	19.3	169	42.5	78	19.6	398	100
People prefer fast food over continental food	40	10.1	129	32.4	116	29.1	62	15.6	51	12.8	398	100
Fast food is a cause of high cholesterol	13	3.3	42	10.6	72	18.1	162	40.7	109	27.4	398	100
Fast food is a major cause of obesity	22	5.5	41	10.3	89	22.4	146	36.7	100	25.1	398	100
Most of people face indigestion problem due to fast food eating	12	3	48	12.1	110	27.6	150	37.7	78	19.6	398	100
Prolonged use of fast food causes major health problem	17	4.3	47	11.8	67	16.8	160	40.2	107	26.9	398	100
People prefer fast food over home cooked food due to taste and fluent availability	57	14.3	85	21.4	67	16.8	121	30.4	68	17.1	398	100
Fast food is a major cause of avoiding proper nutrition	21	5.3	46	11.6	71	17.8	163	41	97	24.4	398	100
Most of people prefer fast food at their workplace	14	3.5	53	13.3	91	22.9	171	43	69	17.3	398	100
Most of the people are addictive to fast food	20	5	48	12.1	94	23.6	153	38.4	83	20.9	398	100

Table no. 1 shows that most of the people liked to eat fast food. Usually people are fond of eating fast food outside. Whether fast food a status symbol or not, final results cannot be concluded as there is minimal difference between agree and disagree responds. Most of the people agreed that hunger can be satisfied by fast food. Respondents disagreed about eating fast food by every type of people. Fast food does not save any cost as retorting by respondents.

Most of the respondents agreed that almost every member of the family like fast food. Fast food 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. Due to good taste and fluent availability people prefer fast food over home cooked food. Fast food is also a major cause of avoiding proper nutrition. People prefer fast food at their workplace. Moreover, fast food is also an addiction for most of the people.

### 5.3 Inferential Analysis

To verify the results inferentially Pearson's Chi-Square and Correlation has applied. Age, Education and Income has chosen from demographics to corroborate their association with research questions.

Table no. 2: Pearson's Chi-Square and Correlation

Demographics	Research Questions	Chi-Square	Correlation
<b>Age</b>	Mostly people like fast food	0.007	-0.199
	People spend almost 25% of their income on fast food	0.000	-0.285
	Every type of people eats fast food	0.002	-0.048
	Fast food is a major cause of obesity	0.019	-0.103
	Most of people face indigestion problem due to fast food eating	0.006	-0.171
	Prolonged use of fast food causes major health problem	0.003	-0.143
	Most of the people are addictive to fast food	0.048	-0.126
<b>Education</b>	Mostly people like fast food	0.036	-0.172
	People spend almost 25% of their income on fast food	0.005	-0.113
	Most of people face indigestion problem due to fast food eating	0.002	-0.08
	Prolonged use of fast food causes major health problem	0.047	-0.06
<b>Income</b>	Mostly people like fast food	0.017	0.021

Table no. 2 shows demographics association with research question. However, only significant values have opted for succinct review. Age has association with likeness of fast food by most of the people. It has negative correlation with age. This means with the increase in age there is less likeness of fast food. Spending almost 25% of income on fast food has also associated with age with negative correlation. People spend less money on fast food with the increase in age. Moreover, as the older people hesitate to consume fast food so there are less health problems in older people as compared to younger ones.

Education is also associated with likeness of fast food. It shows negative correlation which means with the increase of education there is less likeness of fast food. Higher educated people also spend less wealth on fast food. Moreover, educated people are well aware of fast food affects on health so they have less health problems as compared to less educated people. Furthermore, income is also associated with likeness of fast food. It shows positive correlation so with the increase in income level there is greater likeness toward fast food.

## 6. Discussions

Fast food is convenient and tasty though it prepared with low nourishing or unhealthy ingredients. Hamburgers, fried chicken, Shawarma, or pizza are famous junk foods. People with much busy schedule mostly consume this type of food. Core population, who eat fast food and spent money on it vigorously are youngsters.

Fast food companies are targeting kids and youngster through great promotion strategies, delicious recipes and attractive advertisement. There are much greater side effects of fast food and people are unaware of its ill consequences. Chubbiness, increase in cholesterol levels, dietary deficiencies, cardiac disorders, loss of muscle mass, depression, sexual dysfunction, asthma, strokes, type 2 diabetes, cancer (kidney / uterine / colon / breast / esophagus), liver disease, cancer and cardiovascular diseases can all be caused by eating fast food on a regular basis.

Many researchers worked on fast food. They find out the origin, effects and consequences of junk food. The aspects having impact on customers food choices are; attraction for eating out, socialization, urbanization, globalization, taste for college and university students, expediency for dual-income families, and numerous other. Researchers also evaluated that about one-third population consume fast food.

The results of this research showed that in Pakistan normally people used to eat and buy fast food between 6 pm to 9 pm. In Pakistan Nuclear family system and joint family system both consume fast food due to its taste. Joint family system is more conscious about price than nuclear family system. Most of people like fast food and prefer to eat outside their homes. According to MacFarlane et al. (2009) the people who ate fast food at home were more probable to be heavy. Therefore, eating outside is bit better option.

Whether fast food a status symbol or not, final results cannot be concluded as there is minimal difference between agree and disagree responds. Most of the people agreed that hunger can be satisfied by fast food as there are many

fatty and oily ingredients. Junk food cannot be eaten by every type of people. People who are health conscious do not prefer to eat this kind of food. Results also showed that fast food does not save cost. There are many expensive deals with offered by most of the restaurants which target high income families.

Almost every member of the family like fast food, this fact is almost true for nuclear family system. As in nuclear family system most of the family members are youngsters. Fast food also used for the sake of enjoyment and fun. This result is related to the research by Goyal and Singh (2007) who indicate that the young consumer has passion for visiting fast food outlets for fun and change. However, people use continental food over fast food. Prolonged use of fast food is also a cause of health problems, obesity, indigestion problem and high cholesterol.

Due to good taste and fluent availability people prefer fast food over home cooked food; this result is contradictory to the research by Goyal and Singh (2007) who evaluated the preference of homemade cooking by people. Fast food is also a major cause of avoiding proper nutrition. According to Akman et al. (2010) 15% population is consuming the recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables. Nearly one-third of participants choose junk food or fast food as a daily snack, and the same number also reported having fast food once or more daily. People prefer fast food at their workplace due to their busy schedules. Moreover, fast food is also an addiction for most of the people.

The results are also validated inferentially by using Pearson's Chi-square and correlations to ensure demographics association with research questions. Only three demographics have selected, i.e. age, education and income. Age has association with likeness of fast food by most of the people with negative correlation. This means with the increase in age there is less likeness toward fast food. Spending almost 25% of income on fast food has also associated with age with negative correlation. People spend less money on fast food with the increase in age as youngsters have more passion toward it. Moreover, as the older people hesitate to consume fast food so there are less health problems in older people as compared to younger ones due to consumption of fast food.

Education is also associated with likeness of fast food. It shows negative correlation which means with the increase of education there is less likeness of fast food. Higher educated people also spend less wealth on fast food. Moreover, educated people are well aware of fast food affects on health so they have less health problems as compared to less educated people. Additionally, income is also associated with likeness of fast food. It shows positive correlation so with the increase in income level there is greater likeness toward fast food. This outcome is interrelated with the research by Regmi and Dyck (2001) who evaluated that utilization of western style food increased as the income level of developing countries increased.

## **7. Conclusion**

Fast food is convenient and tasty though it prepared with low nourishing or unhealthy ingredients. Youngsters spend more money on junk food. Fast food companies are targeting kids and youngster through great promotion strategies, delicious recipes and attractive advertisement. There are much greater side effects of fast food and people are unaware of its ill consequences. It can tend to many detrimental diseases.

People consume fast food between 6 pm to 9 pm. Nuclear and Joint both family systems like fast food due to its taste. People like to eat fast food, outside their homes. Hunger can be satisfied with fast food. Moreover, fast food is not a cost effective mean. Fast food also used for the sake of enjoyment and fun. It is also evaluated that prolonged use of fast food is also a cause of health problems, obesity, indigestion problem and high cholesterol.

Due to good taste and fluent availability people prefer fast food over home cooked food. Fast food is also a major cause of avoiding proper nutrition. People prefer fast food at their workplace due to their busy schedules. Moreover, fast food is also an addiction for most of the people. Age and Education have negative correlation with the likeness, consumption and spending money on fast food. However, with the increase in income there will be more likeness toward fast food.

## **8. Limitations and Suggestions**

Due to less finance data had been collected only from one city of Pakistan, i.e. Lahore. Futuristic researchers must cover other cities, particularly major cities of Pakistan for better results. Some other sampling techniques can also be applied.

## 9. Recommendations

It is recommended that fast food restaurants should use healthy ingredients in making of fast food. Parents should keep an eye on the diet of their children. Excess and prolonged use of junk food can have many ill consequences. Moreover, policy makers should limit or ban the unhealthy fast food restaurants. Media should spread awareness among people about the side effects of fast food.

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