

# Knowledge Regarding Health Hazards of Junk Foods among Adolescents

More Ujwala Ramchandra<sup>1</sup>, Avinash H. Salunkhe<sup>2</sup>, V. R. Mohite<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Clinical Instructor, Krishna Institute of Nursing Sciences Karad, Maharashtra, India

<sup>2</sup>Vice Principal, Krishna Institute of Nursing Sciences Karad, Maharashtra, India

<sup>3</sup>Principal, Krishna Institute of Nursing Sciences Karad, Maharashtra, India

**Abstract:** Study was aimed to assess the existing knowledge of adolescents regarding the health hazards of junk foods in a selected college and to find out association between selected demographical variables and health hazards of junk foods. **Materials & methods:** descriptive approach with 115 engineering students, by using non probability convenience sampling technique with structured questionnaire. **Results:** Majority of the samples (35.65%) belong to age group 18 years, in terms of gender 69(60%) subjects were females. Majority 99(86.05%) of the subjects are belong to Hindu religion, Educational status of fathers of the subjects 48(41.73%) are from graduate, Educational status of mothers of the subject 69(60%) are from secondary education. Majority fathers of subject are farmer i.e. 44(38.26%), in case of mother's majority are housewife that is 101(87.82%). Majority families of subjects have monthly income from 5001-10,000rs that is 36(31.30%). Majority height of the subject is from 151-160 that is 46 (39.13%). Majority weight of the subject is 30-45 that is 50(43.47%). Majority type of family is nuclear 60(52.17%). Majority of study subjects 69.56% samples had Average knowledge while 24.35% samples having Good knowledge, & 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. **Conclusion:** From this study it could be 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.

**Keywords:** knowledge, health hazards, junk foods, adolescents

## 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 nourishment. Man needs food for 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 eaten or drunk by an animal or human for nutrition or pleasure.

Junk food is the term given to food that is high in calories but low in nutritional content. In adolescents both boys and girls undergo several physical and psychological changes which make them to become partly responsible for their own health and welfare. Junk foods have no or very less nutritional value and irrespective of the way they are marketed, they are not healthy to consume. [1] 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. [ 2] Coming to Indian junk food, locally called 'chat', these mostly include the Samosas, Kachoris, Panipuris /golgappas are fried items with various filling within an outer layer made of refined flour. [ 3] In India even Chinese food sold in road side stalls is Junk food , because they contain high amount of Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) which is a flavour enhancer & this MSG is recognized as a health hazard if taken in larger quantities because it causes headache, nausea, weakness, wheezing, edema, change in heart rate, burning sensation & difficulty in breathing. [4] The finding of a new study out of Oxford University in the U.K. which revealed that processed junk food consumption can lead to aggression, irritability & even violent tendencies. The most common bad

effective obesity which has become very common even amongst children aged as low as 3-5 years & causes many other chronic diseases of hormonal imbalances in the obese person. [5] Nutrition experts have researched the bad effects of junk foods & come to the conclusion that junk food manufacturing companies are fooling the people by showing deceptive advertisement that market show junk food as healthy. We must substitute junk food with healthier food like fruits & vegetables. [6]

## 2. Literature Survey

Review of literature is a key step in research process. Review of literature refers to extensive, exhaustive and systematic examination of publications relevant to research project. It is the reading and organization of previously written materials relevant to the specific problems to the investigated; framework and methods appropriate to perform the study[7].

A study was conducted to assess the prevalence of obesity and overweight among adolescents showed that there is no significant difference between boys and girls. A significantly greater number of boys (15%) as compared to girls (10.2%) were overweight. Out of the total obese children, significant percentages (82.3%) were non-vegetarian, where as only 8.8% of vegetarians and ova-vegetarians were obese. They concluded that the incidence of obesity/overweight was found to be significantly higher in those adolescents who ate meals outside home[8].

A study was conducted to assess the socio-cultural and nutritional aspects of fast food among adolescents concluded that socio-cultural and nutritional aspects are having influence in the consumption of fast foods[9].

A study was conducted to examine the eating behaviors among female adolescents in two secondary schools concluded that, meal skipping, snacking and practicing various weight loss behaviors were some of the unhealthy eating behaviors depicted among adolescent girls. The study stresses the importance of Focusing on promotion of healthy eating that stresses on the importance of regular intakes of main meals during adolescence is crucial for their current and future health and well-being[10].

### 3. Problem Statement

A study to assess the knowledge of adolescents regarding health hazards of junk foods in selected college of karad”

### 4. Objectives of the Study

- 1) To assess the existing knowledge of adolescents regarding the health hazards of junk foods in a selected college.
- 2) To find association between selected demographical variables and health hazards of junk food.

### 5. Methodology

The researcher obtained permission from concern authority. The investigator introduced herself to subject. The investigator explained the purpose of the study to subject. Informed written consent was taken from the each subject. by using structured interview schedule collected data from students of SHRIMATI PREMLATAI CHAVAN POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE OF KARAD. Study conducted on engineering students of Shremati Premlatai Chavan Polytechnic College of Karad. The sample size was 115 by using interview schedule method .The study was conducted 15<sup>th</sup> December 2013 with using non probability convenience sampling technique was used. In the present study the basic study measure introduced was the assessment Chi-square test. The tool consisted of structured questionnaire .The structured questionnaire was constructed by the investigator as It deals with the analysis of demographic variables like gender, age etc.Section B: self administrated knowledge questionnaire on “junk foods .It consists of 16 items on knowledge of adolescents regarding junk foods and its hazards. Asking knowledge questions through interview schedule method investigator collected data. Data were collected, tabulated and analyzed in terms of objective of the study by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Chi-square test was used to assess the effectiveness by using instates.

### 6. Results/Discussion

**Table 1:** Distribution of subjects is according to demographic

| Age (in years) | freq. | Percentage |
|----------------|-------|------------|
| a) 17          | 30    | 26.08 %    |
| b) 18          | 41    | 35.65%     |
| c) 19          | 27    | 23.47%     |
| d) 20          | 17    | 14.78%     |

|   |     |         |
|---|-----|---------|
| <b>2. Gender :-</b>                             |     |         |
| a) Male   | 46  | 40%     |
| b) Female                                       | 69  | 60%     |
| <b>3. Religion:-</b>                            |     |         |
| a) Hindu  | 99  | 86.05%  |
| b) Muslim                                       | 15  | 13.04%  |
| c) Christian                                    | 1   | 0.86%   |
| <b>4. Education status of father:-</b>          |     |         |
| a) No formal education                          | 5   | 4.34%   |
| b) Primary / Secondary                          | 49  | 42.60%  |
| c) Graduate                                     | 48  | 41.73%  |
| d) Post graduate                                | 13  | 11.30%  |
| <b>5. Educational status of mother:</b>         |     |         |
| a) No formal education                          | 7   | 6.08%   |
| b) Primary / Secondary                          | 69  | 60%     |
| c) Graduate                                     | 31  | 26.95%  |
| d) Post graduate                                | 8   | 6.95%   |
| <b>6. Occupation of father:</b>                 |     |         |
| a) Farmer                                       | 44  | 38.26%  |
| b) Service                                      | 41  | 35.65%  |
| c) Business                                     | 22  | 19.13%  |
| d) Self employee                                | 8   | 6.95%   |
| <b>7. Occupation of mother:</b>                 |     |         |
| a) House wife                                   | 101 | 87.62%  |
| b) Service                                      | 14  | 12.17%  |
| <b>8. Family monthly income:</b>                |     |         |
| a) Below 5000rs                                 | 25  | 21.73%  |
| b) 5001 – 10,000rs                              | 36  | 31.30%  |
| c) 10,001- 15,000rs                             | 21  | 18.26%  |
| d) 15,001 & above                               | 33  | 28.69%  |
| <b>9. Height of the candidate IN Centimeter</b> |     |         |
| a) 140-150                                      | 25  | 21.73%  |
| b) 151-160                                      | 46  | 39.13%  |
| c) 161-170                                      | 36  | 31.30 % |
| d) 171-180                                      | 4   | 3.47%   |
| <b>10. Weight of the candidate in K.G.</b>      |     |         |
| a) 30-45  | 50  | 43.47%  |
| b) 46-55  | 33  | 28.69%  |
| c) 56-65  | 24  | 20.86%  |
| d) 66-75  | 8   | 6.95%   |
| <b>11. Type of family</b>                       |     |         |
| a) Nuclear                                      | 60  | 52.17%  |
| b) Joint  | 55  | 47.82%  |
| <b>12. Type of food:</b>                        |     |         |
| a) Vegetarian                                   | 51  | 44.34%  |
| b) Mixed  | 64  | 55.65%  |
| <b>13. Source of information:</b>               |     |         |
| a) Television                                   | 57  | 49.56%  |
| b) Friends                                      | 24  | 20.86%  |
| c) Newspaper                                    | 28  | 23.34%  |
| d) Others                                       | 6   | 5.21%   |

**Table no.1** indicates that majority of the samples (35.65%) belong to age group 18 years, in terms of gender 69(60%) subjects were females. Majority 99(86.05%) of the subjects are belong to Hindu religion, Educational status of fathers of the subjects 48(41.73%) are from graduate, Educational status of mothers of the subject 69(60%) are from secondary education. Majority fathers of subject are farmer i.e. 44(38.26%), in case of mother’s majority are housewife that is 101(87.82%). Majority families of subjects have monthly income from 5001-10,000rs that is 36(31.30%). Majority

height of the subject is from 151-160 that is 46 (39.13%). Majority weight of the subject is 30-45 that is 50(43.47%).Majority type of family is nuclear 60(52.17%). Majority of subject taking mixed food that is 64(55.65%). Majority subject got information from television 57(49.56%).

**Table 2:** Frequency and Percentage distribution of knowledge scores of Adolescents.

| Knowledge score (n=115) | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Good                    | 28            | 24.35%         |
| Average                 | 80            | 69.56%         |
| Poor                    | 7             | 6.08%          |

Majority of study subjects 69.56% samples had Average knowledge while 24.35% samples having Good knowledge, & 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 result shows that the males are most frequently used junk foods more than the females. They often take junk food from hostels and they have an average knowledge regarding health hazards of junk foods. Most of them have an average knowledge. study conducted during 2012 on Fast Foods and their Impact on Health by Ashakiran<sup>1</sup>\* & Deepthi R<sup>2</sup>, Kolar-563101 (Karnataka), India in their study they declared Fried and processed food, contains high amounts of trans fats, saturated fats in addition to ox cholesterol. Ox cholesterol is a little-known type of cholesterol which may prove to be a lethal compound to heart health as reported by Scientists from China in the National Meeting of the American Chemical Society in August 2009<sup>7</sup>. Junk foods have certainly carved up the .Third World. due to globalisation<sup>8</sup>.

Supportive study conducted in Spain, 2004 reveals that increase in snack consumption is associated with an increase in obesity, tooth decay and other chronic diseases. Education about junk food consumption and healthy eating habits in the family should be strengthened. Another study was conducted in Hyderabad, India to assess the nutritional knowledge of adolescents reveals that, there is a need to conduct planned teaching programme on health hazards of junk food among adolescents is important to modify their dietary pattern.

## 7. Conclusion

From this study it could be 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.

## 8. Future Scope

**Implication of nursing practice.** Nurses has major role in the preventive aspects. Nurses should able to explore the knowledge of hazards due to junk food.

**Nursing research** The primary objectives of nursing interventions among the population is to enhance primary prevention and prevent complications.

**Nursing administration** The findings of a study could be utilized by the nursing administrator to provide quality care to the clients in the community. They should encourage the staff and the students to carry out similar research in different population and different setting to find out the knowledge on hazards due to junk food. Preventing habits of eating junk so that necessary nursing interventions can be carried out and the problem can be tackled. Nursing administrator should organize periodic in service educational programs for staff and students in collaboration of both community and medical departments for importing knowledge on hazards of junk food. The hospital should have a policy to provide health education material to all in patients and out patients for healthy diet & junk free diet.

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## Author Profile



**Ms. More Ujwala Ramchandra** is working as Clinical Instructor in Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences Deemed University Krishna Institute Of Nursing Sciences Karad Dist-Satara



**Prof. Avinash H. Salunkhe** is working as Vice Principal, Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences Deemed University Krishna Institute of nursing sciences Karad. Dist-Satara (Maharashtra) 415539



**Mrs. V. R. Mohite** Principal, Krishna Institute Of Medical Sciences Deemed University Krishna Institute of nursing sciences Karad. Dist-Satara (Maharashtra) 415539