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Research Article

RESOLUTION OF ADOLESCENT FOOD HABITS ON THE BASIS OF AGE AND TYPE OF FAMILY

Albha Tiwari

Department of Home Science, V R G Girls Postgraduate College, Morar, Gwalior 474006 (M.P)

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is the stage of human life between 13 – 18 years of age. It is an important because body changes require nutritional and dietary requirements. It is the psychological and emotional transition period between childhood and adulthood. According to the type of family adolescents tend to eat more meals away from home because of increase in appetite and desire to have fast food. They eat imbalanced foods and also at improper time. Type of family of homes play a powerful role in children's eating behavior by making food available to them. In single family boy's adolescents had highest nutritious food habits and fast food habits in boy's age group of 13-15 and 16-18 yrs. Whereas, in single parents (either mother or father) in both age group (13-15 and 16-18 yrs) nutritious food habits were predominant than fast food. In single father family, nutritious food consumption was more (13-15 yrs) than fast food whereas opposite pattern was found in age group of 16-18 yrs. In girls adolescents; in both age group 13-15 and 16-18 yrs, in single family, predominant fast food consumption was observed than nutritious food. While, opposite trend was observed in joint families. In single parent families, fast food intake was more than nutritious food. Fascinatingly, single mother families, boys of 13-15 yrs age intake of fast food was more than the age group of 16-18 age group. Families of single parent (father), both habits of food intake fast food and nutritional were identical among adolescent girls. In FWMC and FWLC families, the fast food consumption; in age group of 16-18 yrs, were more than nutritious foods. In families having, adopted child and only child in age of 13-15 yrs, the nutritious food intake was more than fast food. Whereas, opposite trend was observed in 16-18 yrs age adolescents.

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INTRODUCTION

The dietary intake has not undergone any reduction; in fact prepared availability of fast foods and other energy rich food items of affordable costs have resulted in increased energy consumption among members of families. This led to increase energy intake over and above the requirement especially among urban and rural prosperous population. Balanced nutritious rich food eating during adolescent period is an important because body changes require nutritional and dietary needs. Adolescent tends to eat more meals away from home because of increase in appetite and desire to have fast food. Parents in family provide the most important social influences on adolescents eating behavior (Birch and Davison, 2001).

As a key source of socialization, parents influence adolescent's eating behavior. Family meals may be an opportunity for parents to make certain foods available, model and reinforce eating habits, and execute certain feeding practices. Parents may also encourage children to reduce foods intake which are

low in nutritional value and to increase their consumption of nutritious food options. Klesges (1991) have found that both the threat of parental monitoring and actual parental presence decreases children's intake of non nutritious foods. Dietary habits are often associated with an amplified desire to be popular and accepted, female adolescents may be more inclined to use impression management and self-presentational strategies and adjust their intake to convey an image of healthy eating in front of their peers and friends. As a result, adolescent girls (but not boys) would eat fewer fast food and more healthy snacks in the presence of their friends than in the company of their mothers. During the adolescent period eating habits play a central role in shaping food choices, diet quality and weight status. Parents play a powerful role in children's eating behaviour by making food available to them.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in 400 adolescent boys and girls of 13 to 15 years and 16 to 18 years of age were selected

*Corresponding author: Albha Tiwari

Department of Home Science, V R G Girls Postgraduate College, Morar, Gwalior 474006 (M.P)

randomly from Gwalior, Morar and Laskhar for conducting this research work which represents the whole Gwalior City (Table1).

Variables: The independent variable (Age and type of family) and dependent variable (dietary pattern) were used in samples under study in order to determine the adolescent’s food habits.

Independent Variable

Age: All adolescents were listed according to age groups.

Type of Family: Family type was divided into major categories i.e. single, joint, single parent, single mother/father, family with many children, family with fewer children, adopted child, only child.

Dependent Variables

Nutrient Intake: Nutrient intake may be considered in two general headings i.e. nutritional adequate or balance diet, which maintains and promote health. Secondly, fast food, which based on all types of fast foods which contains excessive amount of sodium and calories.

Data Collection

All the 400 respondents were inclusively approaches by the researcher. By personal contact, all the respondents were contacted with the help of the structured schedule developed for the study. The statistical analysis was performed to calculate percentage, t-test, Arithmetic Mean and Standard⁸.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the adolescents

S.NO.	Area	Number of Adolescents					
		Boys		Girls		Grand Total	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1.	Gwalior	80	55.17	65	44.83	145	100
2.	Laskhar	70	44.30	88	55.69	158	100
3.	Morar	50	51.55	47	48.45	97	100
	Total	200	151.02	200	148.97	400	100

Table 2 Analysis of adolescents according to type of family

S. NO.	Type of family	Age Group							
		Boys				Girls			
		13-15 yrs		16-18 yrs		13-15 yrs		16-18 yrs	
		NF	FF	NF	FF	NF	FF	NF	FF
1.	Single	14	13	10	2	3	17	4	14
2.	Joint	2	2	2	8	11	3	12	2
3.	Single parent	10	6	9	5	2	10	2	9
4.	Single mother	3	15	1	12	5	12	7	2
5.	Single Father	10	2	9	13	7	6	5	11
6.	FWMC	2	8	1	10	2	6	1	3
7.	FWLC	1	10	5	8	4	5	1	12
8.	OC	-	2	1	2	6	2	1	2
9.	AC	-	-	1	1	6	3		2
	Total	42	58	39	61	46	64	33	57

FWMC: denotes Family with many children; FWLC: denotes Family with fewer children. AC: Adopted child, OC: only child.

Table 3 Statistical Analysis of Adolescents of 13-15 years on the basis type of family

S. No	Adolescent	Age Group				t value	df	Significance
		13-15yrs						
		Nutritional food		Fast Food				
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation			
1.	Boys	6.00	5.19	7.25	5.14	1.19	98	NS
2.	Girls	5.11	2.85	7.23	5.26	2.48	108	HS

HS: denote highly significant at 0.01 level, NS: denote non-significant at 0.05 level

Table 4 Statistical Analysis of Adolescents of 16-18 years on the basis of type of family

S. No	Adolescent	Age Group				t value	df	Significance
		16-18 yrs						
		Nutritional food		Fast Food				
		Mean		Mean				
1.	Boys	4.33	3.96	6.78	4.49	2.78	98	HS
2.	Girls	4.13	3.87	6.33	5.07	2.15	88	HS

HS: denote highly significant at 0.01 level

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The differences in food habits of adolescents (boys and girls) were noticed among adolescents in in diverse families (Table2).

Food habits in Adolescent Boys

In age group of 13-15 and 16-18 yrs, single family boy’s adolescents had highest nutritious food habits and fast food habits. Interestingly, fast food consumption/intake was lower in age (16-18 yrs) group. In single parents (either mother or father) in both age group (13-15 and 16-18 yrs)) nutritious food habits were predominant than fast food. Interestingly, in single mother families, fast food intake were predominant than nutritious food. Whereas, in single father family; nutritious food consumption was more (13-15 yrs) than fast food. On the other hand, opposite pattern was found in age group of 16-18 yrs.

In a family with many children/fewer children, adopted and only child the fast food intake was more than nutritious food.

Food habits in Adolescent Girls

In both age group 13-15 and 16-18 yrs, in single family, predominant fast food consumption was observed than nutritious food. Whereas, opposite trend was observed in joint families. Whereas, opposite trend was observed in joint family. In general single parent families, fast food intake was more than nutritious food. Interestingly, single mother families, boys of 13-15 yrs age intake of fast food was more than the age group of 16-18 age group.

In families of single parent (father), both habits of food intake i.e. fast food and nutritional were identical. Whereas, the fast food consumption; in age group of 16-18 yrs, were more than nutritious food. This trend was observed in FWMC and FWLC family. In families having, adopted child and only child in age of 13-15 yrs, the nutritious food intake was more than fast food. Whereas, opposite trend was observed in 16-18 yrs age adolescents. Saibaba *et al.* (2002) supported the effect of information, education and communication on the nutritional level and its knowledge in girls adolescent. They found that adolescent girls were aware about the nutritional foods and they had changed the way of cooking. Consequently, incorporation of nutritional foods was increased in their diet. On the other hand, socioeconomic trends, such as longer work hours, more women employed outside the home, and a high number of single-parent households have changed the way families obtain their meals (Bowers *et al.*, 2000; Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2004 and Rydell *et al.*, 2008). This supports the present findings. Kumar *et al.* (1996) reported that the majority of fast food consumers belonged to age group 15-18 years. The t-test

indicates non-significant differences between nutritional and fast food habits in boys adolescent (13-15 yrs) with mean and SD 6.00 ± 5.19 and 7.25 ± 5.14 ; whereas, highly significant difference was found for nutritional and fast food habits in girls adolescent with mean and SD 5.11 ± 2.85 and 7.23 ± 5.26 (Table 3). Interestingly, highly significant differences were found in both boys and girls for nutritional and fast food habits at 16-18 yrs age (Table 4).

In the developing world, the fast food habit in the daily diet of boys and girls adolescent becomes popular in all class of families. Despite the fact that, they are facing so many problems in early or later stage of their life. Therefore are other contributing factors namely: poor purchasing power, faulty feeding habits, large family size, frequent infections, poor health care, inadequate sanitation and low agricultural production leads to fast food consumption. Population living in the backward and drought-prone rural areas and urban slums, and those belonging to the socially backward groups are highly inclined to eat fast food.

CONCLUSION

The kind of food selection is largely depends on type of family in which adolescents; whether boys or girls are living. Parents may act as an inhibitory influence on imbalanced eating style.

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