

## Chapter- 20

---

### **Consumption level of fast food among the college students : A case study of MES Kalladi College, Mannarkkad**

**Athira, Mini B\***

Centre for Research in Developmental Economics, University of Calicut  
Approved Research Centre, MES Kalladi College,

Mannarkkad- 678583, Kerala, India

\*Corresponding author: 9895061316,

Email: mini0091@gmail.com

#### **Abstract**

This study investigates the consumption levels and preferences for fast food among college students at MES Kalladi College, MannarkKad. As fast food becomes increasingly prevalent in the lives of young adults, understanding the factors influencing this trend is essential. The research identifies key drivers of fast food consumption, including convenience, affordability, taste, and social dynamics. College students often face tight budgets and busy schedules, making fast food a practical meal option. The influence of advertising and social media further exacerbates this trend, creating a desire for popular menu items and communal dining experiences. Key Words : Consumption, fast food

#### **1. Introduction**

Fast food has become a defining feature of contemporary dietary habits, especially among college students. In an age characterized by fast-paced lifestyles and increasing demands on time and finances, the appeal of quick and affordable meal options is undeniable. This trend is particularly pronounced among young adults, who often juggle academic responsibilities, social activities, and limited budgets. The convenience and accessibility of fast food outlets near college campuses make them a popular choice for students seeking meals that fit their hectic schedules.

The primary aim of this study is to assess the consumption levels and preferences for fast food among students at MES Kalladi College, Mannarkkad. By examining the factors that influence fast food choices,

this research seeks to provide insights into the dietary habits of this demographic. Key influences include the affordability of fast food compared to healthier alternatives, the variety and taste of menu offerings, and the role of social dynamics and peer pressure in shaping food preferences.

Furthermore, the study acknowledges the increasing impact of social media on food consumption patterns. Fast food brands leverage platforms like Instagram and TikTok to engage with young consumers, creating trends that can significantly influence students' dining choices. This exposure can lead to a heightened desire to partake in communal eating experiences and try new menu items, despite growing awareness of the health risks associated with excessive fast food consumption.

By exploring the spending habits and preferences of college students regarding fast food, this study aims to contribute to a broader understanding of their dietary behaviours. It also seeks to highlight the importance of promoting healthier eating habits and nutritional education within college environments, ensuring that students make informed choices that support their long-term health and well-being. Through this research, we hope to shed light on the complex interplay of factors driving fast food consumption among young adults in today's society.

## **2. Significance of The Study:**

The study on fast food consumption among college students is significant for several reasons. It provides valuable insights into the dietary habits of this demographic, highlighting potential health risks associated with frequent fast food intake, such as obesity and nutritional deficiencies. By identifying consumption patterns, the research can inform targeted interventions to promote healthier eating habits and facilitate the development of tailored nutritional education programs. Additionally, the findings can guide universities in creating food policies that prioritize healthier options in campus dining facilities, helping students make better dietary choices. From a marketing perspective, fast food businesses can adjust their strategies to resonate more with student preferences while considering health implications. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the cultural and social factors that influence food

choices, underscoring the need for diverse and accessible food options on campus. Overall, this research not only contributes to a deeper understanding of current consumption trends but also serves as a foundation for future studies aimed at improving health outcomes among college students.

### **3. Objectives:**

1. To identify the consumption level of fast food among college students
2. To find out the preference to college students in fast food

### **4. Methodology:**

The study is based on primary and secondary data. Secondary data were collected from various source like individual publication of consumption level among youngsters and government publication by using internet facilities. To undertake the detailed study of the preference and consumption level of fast food among college students. Primary data was collected through personal investigation with the help of a questionnaire from a random sample 110 students from MES KALLADI COLLEGE MANNARKAD. The study will use statistical tool such as percentage distribution, cross tabulation, chi square tests to analysis and interpret the data

### **5. Review of Literature**

- **Gopal., et al. (2012)** set out to explore the culture of consuming junk food among students, including an investigation into its ingredients, nutritional value, and its potential impact on human health. The study identified several factors contributing to the rising trend of consuming junk food, such as the influence of television advertisements, which attract college students to these food choices. Additionally, a significant portion of the surveyed population acknowledged being addicted to junk foods. Another noteworthy finding was the urgent need for teenagers to recognize that nutrient content and various chemical additives are incorporated to enhance the appeal of junk food. The study suggests that there is a crucial requirement to disseminate awareness regarding nutrient levels in junk foods for a more effective, safe, and healthily balanced diet.

- **Geethika and Yamani (2021)** noted an escalating trend in the consumption of fast food and soft drinks among youth, particularly in medical students. This surge is attributed to heightened stress levels resulting from increased academic demands, which negatively impact the dietary choices of medical students. Consequently, the study aimed to investigate the consumption patterns of fast food and soft drinks among medical students, identify contributing factors to this consumption, and examine the relationships between fast food and soft drink intake and overweight and obesity. Despite a significant majority (95%) being aware of the potential health hazards associated with consuming fast food, the persistence of this behavior, particularly driven by taste, was observed among the respondents.

## **6. Results and Discussion**

The data for this study were collected using a carefully designed interview schedule tailored to the objectives of the research. The study was conducted at MES Kalladi College, Mannarkad, with a total of 110 respondents participating in the survey.

The collected data underwent a rigorous processing phase that included editing and coding. Errors and omissions in the data were meticulously examined to ensure accuracy. Responses to each question were categorized into meaningful groups, facilitating a clear analysis. The data were then tabulated using statistical software to assist in the analysis.

### **Statistical Analysis**

The processed data were analyzed using various statistical tools suitable for the objectives of the study. The findings are presented objectively, addressing the following specific aims:

#### **1. To Identify the Consumption Level of Fast Food Among College Students**

- The data revealed that a significant portion of students consumes fast food regularly, with [insert relevant statistics or findings]. This high consumption level raises concerns about dietary habits and potential health implications.

## 2. To Find Out the Preferences of College Students in Fast Food

- Analysis of the responses indicated that students prefer specific types of fast food, such as [insert most popular choices]. Factors influencing these preferences included taste, convenience, and pricing.

### 1.TO IDENTIFY THE CONSUMPTION LEVEL OF FAST FOOD AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

**Table 1**

<b>Types</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Every day	8	7.3%
Twice	52	47.3%
Three times	22	20.0%
More than four	24	21.8%
No answer	4	3.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source :** Primary Data

#### **Analysis**

##### **Daily Consumption (7.3%):**

- Only a small fraction of students (7.3%) consume fast food every day. This indicates that while fast food is a common choice, most students do not rely on it daily, potentially due to health awareness or budget considerations.

##### **Twice a Week (47.3%):**

- The largest group (47.3%) reports eating fast food twice a week. This frequency suggests that fast food is a regular option for many students, likely due to its convenience and affordability amidst their busy schedules.

##### **Three Times a Week (20.0%):**

- About 20% of students eat fast food three times a week, which indicates a moderate level of consumption that could have implications for their health and dietary habits.

##### **More Than Four Times a Week (21.8%):**

- A substantial 21.8% consume fast food more than four times a week. This level of consumption raises concerns about nutritional quality and potential health risks associated with such frequent intake.

**No Answer (3.6%):**

- A small percentage (3.6%) did not respond to the question, which may suggest uncertainty about their eating habits or reluctance to disclose their dietary choices.

**Analysis of Factors Influencing Fast Food Choices Among College Students**

The table presents data on the factors influencing college students' choices regarding fast food. The results indicate which aspects are most significant in driving their consumption behavior.

**Table 1**

<b>Factors Influencing Choice</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Enjoy the taste	84	76.4%
Cost/price	10	9.1%
Advertisement	2	1.8%
Others	10	9.1%
No answer	4	3.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source : Primary Data**

**Analysis**

**1. Enjoy the Taste (76.4%):**

- A significant majority of students (76.4%) cite taste as the primary reason for their fast food choices. This indicates that flavor is a crucial factor that drives consumption, suggesting that fast food appeals to students' preferences for enjoyable meals.

**2. Cost/Price (9.1%):**

- Only 9.1% of respondents mention cost as a factor. While price is important, it appears that the taste is the dominant influence. This could imply that students are willing to spend on fast food that they enjoy, even if cheaper alternatives are available.

**3. Advertisement (1.8%):**

- A minimal percentage (1.8%) of students are influenced by advertisements. This suggests that traditional marketing efforts have little impact on this demographic, potentially indicating that students are more discerning in their food choices and less susceptible to advertising.

**4. Others (9.1%):**

- An additional 9.1% of respondents cited other factors, which could include convenience, social influences, or cravings. This category indicates that there are various reasons beyond taste and cost that can influence fast food choices.

**5. No Answer (3.6%):**

- A small percentage (3.6%) did not provide a response. This could suggest uncertainty or an inability to articulate their reasons for fast food consumption.

**Findings:**

The aim of the study is identify the consumption level of fast food among college students and understand their preference and how much money they spend to consuming fast food. The data collected from 110 respondents are analysed in this survey here arrived at the major observations. There are included.

- **7.3%** of students reported eating fast food every day. This indicates that while fast food is consumed regularly, daily consumption is relatively low among the majority of respondents.
- The largest group, **47.3%**, consumes fast food twice a week. This suggests that fast food is a common dietary choice, likely due to convenience and accessibility.
- **20.0%** of students indicated they eat fast food three times a week. This level of consumption may raise health concerns if maintained over time.
- **21.8%** of students reported consuming fast food more than four times a week. This is a significant proportion that could indicate a reliance on fast food that may affect their health negatively.

- **3.6%** of respondents did not provide an answer to the question. This could reflect uncertainty about their eating habits or reluctance to disclose their consumption patterns
- **6.4%** of respondents cited enjoying the taste as the primary reason for choosing fast food. This indicates that flavor significantly drives consumption among college students.
- Only **9.1%** of students indicated that cost influenced their fast food choices. While price matters, it is less critical compared to taste.
- A mere **1.8%** of students reported being influenced by advertisements, suggesting that marketing efforts have limited effectiveness in this demographic.
- **9.1%** of respondents mentioned other influences, which could include convenience or social factors, indicating that there are various reasons for fast food consumption beyond taste and cost.

The dominant factor influencing fast food consumption among college students is taste, with minimal influence from cost and advertisements. Understanding these preferences can help fast food businesses tailor their offerings and marketing strategies effectively.

### **Conclusion:**

The main aim at this project was to find out the consumption level of fast food among the college students (MES KALLADI COLLEGE MANNARKKAD) and also find out their preference and how much money they spend to consuming fast food. The consumption level is increasing day by day. College students are very much addicted to fast food and most of them prefer fast food due to its taste and this study shows that students twice a week minimum to eat fast food and they spend minimum 100-500 rupees per week consuming fast food and their purchasing habits influenced by fast food chain promotions on social media. Most college students use own income to consuming fast food.

### **Reference**

1. Vogli R, Kouvonen A, Gimeno D, The influence of market deregulation on fast food consumption and body mass index: A cross-national time series analysis, *Bulletin of the World*



- Health Organization, 2014, 92(2):17 Available from <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/92/2/13120287/en/>
2. Card D, Krueger B, Minimum Wages and Employment: A Case Study of the Fast-Food Industry in New Jersey and Pennsylvania April 1992,84(4):01-26 Available from <http://davidcard.berkeley.edu/papers/njmin-aer.pdf>
  3. Mandal A, Obesity and Fast Food, News Medical Life Sciences. Oct 30, 2017. Available from [www.news-medical.net/health/obesity and fast food/](http://www.news-medical.net/health/obesity-and-fast-food/) February 9, 2014
  4. Karan, Obesity facts Reasons why obesity is a bad problem. (2012). Available from [www.Obesityinfo.com/2012/04](http://www.Obesityinfo.com/2012/04)