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A study on street food consumption among college students

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Abstract

Street food refers to foods and drinks made and sold by vendors in public spaces like streets and festival grounds and quickly consumed by customers. Rapid urbanization and the numerous challenges it brings. People prefer street foods because of their variety, affordability, and accessibility in many different nations. Therefore, eating these meals is widespread around the world. These dishes are substitutes for home-cooked meals and are more reasonably priced when compared to the cuisine served at restaurants. The aim of the study is to assess attitudes and preferences of street food among college-going boys and girls. A descriptive research design has been used in this study. For data collection, 60 boys and 60 girls were randomly selected who were studying at Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology in Udaipur. A structured questionnaire was prepared for the student in different colleges under MPUAT University in Udaipur City to gather data related to the subject. It was found from the study that a large majority of the respondents belonged to the age group of 19-20 years (70%), while 30% of them were between 21-24yrs. Among these majority of (96%), of girls have higher knowledge about food safety and hygiene than boys. Regarding food safety regulations and laws, girls have higher knowledge than boys. 88.3% of the boys and 90% of the girls agreed that their enthusiasm try out new dishes influences them to buy street food. Street food is preferred by boys and girls due to taste, peer group, fun, mood, less price, easy convenience, stress, loneliness, and menu items. water contamination and unhygienic environment are the major issues faced by the respondents at food stalls. Awareness of health hazards associated with street food use among 80% of boys and 75% of girls was observed in this study.

Keywords: Street food, adolescent, student, attitude, preference, knowledge, consumption pattern

Introduction

Street foods are defined by the Food and Agricultural Organization as 'ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors, especially in streets and other similar public places.'

Benefits of eating street food include

1. Socioeconomically, they make up a significant portion of the informal food distribution sector, aiding small farmers by serving as a market for their rural produce, generating income and employment for a sizable population, particularly African women living in poverty, and offering the chance to learn business skills for very little start-up money.
2. For many persons with low financial resources, they represent the most economical option for having a nutritionally complete meal outside the home. As long as the street foods are safe, this helps to ensure food security and may even supplement micronutrient intake. They are simple to get to. They provide traveller with enticing and unique food.

Approximately 2.5 billion people worldwide consume street food daily (Sualeh Zakir 2020., FAO) ^[1, 2]. Worldwide, street food is a cultural, sociological, and economic phenomenon typical of urbanized places, where people live increasingly sedentary lives and spend much less time cooking at home (Bouafou *et al.* 2021) ^[3]. Another crucial aspect of street food is that it offers millions of people living in urban areas of low- and middle-income nations all over the world a highly convenient and affordable nutritional supply. With increased urbanization, the practice of selling regional delicacies on the streets has gained popularity among individuals of lower and intermediate incomes. The pressure of work, which causes people—not just those with low to middle incomes—to spend most of their time outside their homes, is the primary cause of the problem.

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In India, most people choose to eat outside of various establishments, such as hotels, restaurants, dhabaa's, street food sellers, mobile food vendors, etc., depending on their convenience, desire, and taste.

People prefer street foods because of their variety, affordability, and accessibility in many different nations. Therefore, eating these meals is widespread around the world. Due to street food vendors' lack of awareness about cleanliness and food safety and the high levels of infectious germs found in street food samples, numerous studies have shown the relationship between eating street food and diseases.

An estimated 2 million people every year, many of them children, are thought to die as a result of consuming unsafe food. More than 200 diseases, from diarrhoea to cancer, are brought on by food contaminated with dangerous bacteria, viruses, parasites, or chemical compounds. Food security is different from safe food but is still based on it. Public health initiatives in the field of food safety aim to safeguard consumers from the hazards of acute and/or chronic foodborne illnesses and food poisoning. According to the Codex Alimentarius, a set of international food standards, guidelines, and policies and procedures covering all major foods, the World Health Organization assists and encourages nations to prevent, detect, and respond to foodborne disease outbreaks (WHO 2015) [4].

Materials and Method

The study was undertaken to access the consumption, attitude and preference of street food among college-going students. The primary data collection was done by perceiving the respondents' views by filling out a structured questionnaire. A sample of 120 boys and girls from different colleges of MPUAT University residing in Udaipur City was selected for the present study. The data was then arranged, tabulated, discussed, and presented with the help of tables and figures. The data was further statistically analyzed by presenting the information through frequency, and percentages. An observational study was used to assess general background

information, knowledge regarding food safety and hygiene, the attitudes of the boys and girls towards the habit of consuming street food, and problems faced at the food stalls. Preference towards different categories of street food e.g., Italian, Chinese, south Indian, and common street food were also studied.

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion of the study "Street Food Consumption Attitude and Preferences Among College-Going Students" are discussed under the following heads.

General background information

A total of 120 students were selected for their street food consumption pattern, out of which 50% were girls and 50% were boys. The age distribution of the boys and girls showed that in the age range of 16 to 19 years, 56.6% of boys and 68.3% of girls were found, while in the age range of 19 to 22 years, 43.3% of boys and 31.6% of girls were discovered.

The majority of boys respondents 60% fell into the other backward class, while 21.6% belonged to a general category, 10% to a scheduled caste, and 8.3% to the scheduled tribe. And the majority of girls respondents 50% fell into the other backward class, while 26.6% belonged to a general category, 18.3% to a scheduled caste, and 5% to the scheduled tribe.

53.3% of boys and 50% of girls were in the first year, respectively, 18.3% of boys and 31.6% of girls were in the second year, 10% of boys and 10% of girls were in the third year and 18.3% of boys and 8.3% of girls were in the final year.

Boys from nuclear households made up 40% of the population, compared to boys from joint families who made up 60% whereas girls from nuclear households made up 41.6% of the population, compared to girls from joint families who made up 58.3%.

According to the results, 5% of boys were nonvegetarians and 95% of boys were vegetarians and 21.6% of girls were nonvegetarians and 78.3% of girls were vegetarians.

Table 1: Background information of the respondents (n=120)

S. No.	Information		Boys n=60(%)		Total	Girls n=60(%)		Total
			D Boys n=30	H Boys n=30		D Girls n=30	H Girls n=30	
1.	Age	16-19	16 (53.33)	18 (60)	34 (56.67)	19 (63.33)	22 (73.33)	41 (68.33)
		19-22	14 (46.67)	12 (40)	26 (43.33)	11 (36.66)	8 (26.67)	19 (31.67)
2.	Caste	GEN	4 (13.33)	9 (30)	13 (21.67)	10 (33.33)	6 (20)	16 (26.67)
		OBC	18 (60)	18 (60)	36 (60)	13 (43.33)	17 (56.67)	30 (50)
		SC	4 (13.33)	2 (6.67)	6 (10)	5 (16.67)	6 (20)	11 (18.33)
		ST	4 (13.33)	1 (3.33)	5 (8.33)	2 (6.67)	1 (3.33)	3 (5)
3.	Education qualification	1 year	14 (46.67)	18 (60)	32 (53.33)	14 (46.67)	16 (53.33)	30 (50)
		2 year	5 (16.67)	6 (20)	11 (18.33)	13 (43.33)	6 (20)	19 (31.67)
		3 year	5 (16.67)	1 (3.33)	6 (10)	3 (10)	3 (10)	6 (10)
		4 year	6 (20)	5 (16.67)	11 (18.33)	-	5 (16.67)	5 (8.33)

4.	Family type	Joint	18 (60)	18 (60)	36 (60)	12 (40)	13 (43.33)	25 (41.67)
		Nuclear	12 (40)	12 (40)	24 (40)	18 (60)	17 (56.67)	35 (58.33)
5.	Food preference	Veg	28 (93.33)	29 (96.67)	57 (95)	25 (83.33)	22 (73.33)	47 (78.33)
		Non-veg	2 (6.67)	1 (3.33)	3 (5)	5 (16.67)	8 (26.67)	13 (21.67)

Knowledge regarding food safety and hygiene

A survey of college-going girls and boys revealed that they have more knowledge about food hygiene 86.6% in boys and 93.3% in girls, food contamination that is 61.6% in boys and 70% in girls, and water contamination 60% in boys and 76.6% in girls. The results conform with the results of Adhikari and Sharma (2021) [5] nearly all of the respondents (96.4%) were aware of the symptoms of food poisoning. In this study, 44.6% of respondents reported having appropriate

awareness.

Apart from this, 61.6% of boys and 75% of girls were familiar with the food laws like FSSAI, 53.3% of boys and 60% of girls were familiar with the FDA, and 60% of boys and 56.6% of girls were familiar with the HACCP. According to Wara and Binata (2021) [6], the majority of consumers are aware of food-borne illnesses. Yan *et al.* (2019) [7] reported that consumer knowledge and attitudes about food safety are at a suitable level.

Table 2: Knowledge of the respondent regarding food safety and hygiene (n=120)

S. No.	Statements/ knowledge about food safety		Boys n=60		Total	Girls n=60		Total	
			D Boys n=30	H Boys n=30		D Girls n=30	H Girls n=30		
1.	Preparation of street food with proper safety	Yes	20 (66.67)	21 (70)	41 (68.33)	21 (70)	19 (63.33)	40 (66.67)	
		No	10 (33.33)	9 (30)	19 (31.67)	9 (30)	11 (36.67)	20 (33.33)	
2.	Foodborne illness	Yes	20 (66.67)	12 (40)	32 (53.33)	22 (73.33)	19 (63.33)	41 (68.33)	
		No	10 (33.33)	18 (60)	28 (46.67)	8 (26.67)	11 (36.67)	19 (31.67)	
3.	Hygiene	Yes	25 (83.33)	27 (90)	52 (86.66)	30 (100)	26 (86.67)	56 (93.33)	
		No	5 (16.67)	3 (10)	8 (13.33)	-	4 (13.33)	4 (6.67)	
4.	Food contamination	Yes	18 (60)	19 (63.33)	37 (61.67)	23 (76.67)	19 (63.33)	42 (70)	
		No	12 (40)	11 (36.67)	23 (38.33)	7 (23.33)	11 (36.67)	18 (30)	
5.	Water contamination	Yes	17 (56.67)	19 (63.33)	36 (60)	24 (80)	22 (73.33)	46 (76.67)	
		No	13 (43.33)	11 (36.67)	24 (40)	6 (20)	8 (26.67)	8 (13.33)	
6.	Awareness about these mentioned food laws	FSSAI	Yes	20 (66.67)	17 (56.67)	37 (61.67)	22 (73.33)	23 (76.67)	45 (75)
			No	10 (33.33)	13 (43.33)	23 (38.33)	8 (26.67)	7 (23.33)	15 (25)
		FDA	Yes	15 (50)	17 (56.67)	32 (53.33)	20 (66.67)	16 (53.33)	36 (60)
			No	15 (50)	13 (43.33)	28 (46.67)	10 (33.33)	14 (46.67)	24 (40)
		HACCP	Yes	19 (63.33)	17 (56.67)	36 (60)	14 (46.67)	20 (66.67)	34 (56.67)
			No	11 (36.67)	13 (43.33)	24 (40)	16 (53.33)	10 (33.33)	26 (43.33)

An attitude of the boys and girls toward the habit of consuming street food

It is observed from Table 3 that 81% of the boys and 88.3% of girls agreed that for fun/change, they are buying street food, 88.3% of the boys and 90% of girls agreed that their enthusiasm to try out new dishes influences them to buy street food, 65% of the boys and 81.6% of girls were agreed that

they opt street food for good taste, 63.3% of the boys and 75% of girls were agreed that they opt for street food because of the peer group. Sumaiya *et al.* (2020) [8] found that students, in particular, prefer street food because of its flavour, accessibility, variety, and affordability.

From the table, it is clear that the factors such as mood, less price, easy convenience, stress, loneliness, menu items, and

less time consumption are other influencing factors to buy street food and it was agreed by 71.6%, 58.3%, 68.3%, 51.6%, 56.6%, 63.3% and 66.6% of the boys and 86.6%, 68.3%, 78.3%, 63.3%, 48.3%, 70% and 65% of the girls respectively. It is also noticed that most boys and girls agreed that street food has easily available. The results are similar to the results given in the study by Musaiger and Kalam (2014)^[9] that mental states like despair, boredom, or concern affect

eating habits. Eating during emotional states like boredom (60%), depression (18%), and worry (22%) were other causes of consuming fast food. Wara and Binata (2021)^[6] reported that due to its accessibility, 56.9% choose street food, whereas 13.8% look for excellent cuisine. Convenience and value, perceived benefit variables, are also what have such a positive influence on consumers' sentiments towards street food, claims the factorial study by Gupta *et al.* (2018)^[10].

Table 3: Attitude of respondents toward reasons for preferring street food (n=120)

S. No.	Statement/ reasons for preference	Strongly agree		Agree		Not Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
1.	For fun or change	30 (50)	28 (46.67)	19 (31.67)	25 (41.67)	9 (15)	6 (10)	2 (3.33)	-	-	1 (1.67)
2.	Enthusiasm to try out new dishes	10 (16.67)	18 (30)	43 (71.67)	36 (60)	7 (11.67)	5 (8.33)	-	1 (1.67)	-	-
3.	For taste	17 (28.33)	24 (40)	22 (36.67)	25 (41.67)	19 (31.67)	11 (18.33)	1 (1.67)	-	1 (1.67)	-
4.	Depends on mood	18 (30)	19 (31.67)	25 (41.67)	33 (55)	7 (11.67)	2 (3.33)	10 (16.67)	6 (10)	-	-
5.	Less price	15 (25)	14 (23.33)	20 (33.33)	27 (45)	15 (25)	13 (21.67)	2 (3.33)	-	8 (13.33)	6 (10)
6.	For easy convenience	11 (18.33)	16 (26.67)	30 (50)	31 (51.67)	8 (13.33)	7 (11.67)	9 (15)	5 (8.33)	2 (3.33)	1 (1.67)
7.	To remove stress	11 (18.33)	14 (23.33)	20 (33.33)	24 (40)	18 (30)	19 (31.67)	9 (15)	2 (3.33)	2 (3.33)	1 (1.67)
8.	To remove loneliness	12 (20)	8 (13.33)	22 (36.67)	21 (35)	16 (26.67)	26 (43.33)	7 (11.67)	3 (5)	3 (5)	2 (3.33)
9.	For time-saving	17 (28.33)	21 (35)	26 (43.33)	19 (31.67)	10 (16.67)	12 (20)	6 (10)	8 (13.33)	1 (1.67)	-
10.	Menu items	11 (18.33)	13 (21.67)	25 (41.67)	29 (48.33)	15 (25)	13 (21.67)	6 (10)	3 (5)	3 (5)	2 (3.33)
11.	Pear group	11 (18.33)	18 (30)	27 (45)	27 (45)	17 (28.33)	13 (21.67)	3 (5)	2 (3.33)	2 (3.33)	-
12.	Less time consuming	12 (20)	16 (26.67)	28 (46.67)	23 (38.33)	12 (20)	13 (21.67)	6 (10)	6 (10)	2 (3.33)	2 (3.33)

Problems faced at the food stalls

Table 4 depicts the problems that are generally faced by boys and girls. 80% of boys and 75% of girls agreed that street vended food causes health problems, 56.6% of boys and 65% of girls agreed with the statement that street food stalls are situated in an unhygienic environment, 78.3% of boys and 76.6% of girls agreed that street foods are unhygienic, 56.6% of boys and 76.6% of girls were agreed with the problem of usage of low-quality ingredients and 53.3% of boys and 75% of girls were agreed with the problem of contaminated water. According to Wiatrowski *et al.* (2021)^[11] 'preferences and quality' and 'economic and food safety' played the two most significant roles in deciding the choice of catering services. Quality and "economic and hygiene factors" were the most significant deterring factors.

It is also observed from the table that 63.3% of boys and 66.6% of girls agreed that improper serving facilities at food stalls and 61.6% of boys and 73.3% of girls agreed that street food stalls have no seating arrangement. According to Mishra *et al.* (2012)^[12] poor water quality and cleanliness during

food preparation, improper washing of utensils, poor personal hygiene, preparing food long before consumption, and congested and dusty vending locations are the top causes of food contamination in Allahabad City. The pollution is increased by vending machines situated next to garbage disposal facilities or major roads with high vehicle traffic. If the vendors' hands were not well-cleaned, they could encourage food contamination and the introduction of pathogenic germs if they were seen selling food with bare hands Sualeh and Zakir (2020)^[13].

Thus, it is found that the majority of the boys and girls agreed that street vended foods cause health problems. Hence, it is concluded that the majority of the boys and girls agreed with the list of problems considered in this study. It is suggested to reduce certain problems such as water contamination, unhygienic environment, pollution, use of plastic materials, and low-quality ingredients. Othman (2020)^[14] found that hygiene problems among street food operations remain a severe problem.

Table 4: Attitude of respondents toward problem they faced

S.NO.	Statement/ problems faced at the food stall	Strongly agree		Agree		Not Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
1.	Health-related problem	30 (50)	12 (20)	18 (30)	33 (55)	10 (16.67)	9 (15)	1 (1.67)	4 (6.67)	1 (1.67)	2 (3.33)
2.	Unhygienic food	11 (18.33)	11 (18.33)	36 (60)	35 (58.33)	12 (20)	12 (20)	1 (1.67)	2 (3.33)	-	-
3.	Unhygienic environment	18 (30)	12 (20)	16 (26.67)	27 (45)	25 (41.67)	17 (28.33)	1 (1.67)	3 (5)	-	1 (1.67)
4.	Low-quality ingredients	14 (23.33)	17 (28.33)	20 (33.33)	29 (48.33)	16 (26.67)	7 (11.67)	10 (16.67)	5 (8.33)	-	2 (3.33)
5.	Improper serving facility	15 (25)	7 (11.67)	23 (38.33)	33 (55)	15 (25)	10 (16.67)	-	5 (8.33)	9 (15)	5 (8.33)
6.	Water contamination	13 (21.67)	18 (30)	19 (31.67)	27 (45)	17 (28.33)	8 (13.33)	10 (16.67)	5 (8.33)	1 (1.67)	2 (3.33)
7.	Poor sitting facilities	14 (23.33)	13 (21.67)	23 (38.33)	31 (51.67)	20 (33.33)	8 (13.33)	2 (3.33)	5 (8.33)	1 (1.67)	3 (5)

Preference towards different categories of street food

The data has been given in Table 5 revealed that the majority of 55% of boys and 58.3% of girls strongly preferred pizza and 61.6% of boys and 70% of girls least preferred soup in the Italian foods category, 40% of boys and 40% of girls strongly preferred idli and 56.6% of boys and 58.3% of girls least preferred uttapam in south Indian food category, 53.3% of boys and 45% of girls strongly preferred chow mein. Kumar *et al.* (2021) ^[15] found that a variety of street food products were the most often consumed foods. fritters, south and north Indian chow mein, non-vegetarian, eggs, and dried products. Chaat, bun, samosa, kachauri/khasta, and chaat.

60% of boys and 43.3% of girls least preferred Manchurian in the Chinese food category, 51.6% of boys and 55% of girls strongly preferred pav bhaji, and 50% of boys and 55% of girls least preferred parantha in the common food category. The relationship between eating fast food often and gender was not significantly different. Approximately 8.4% of respondents said they didn't eat burgers, and 68.8% said they preferred regular-sized burgers Z. Bader *et al.* (2011) ^[16]. George *et al.* (2021) ^[17] analyzed that 30% of college students prefer more nutritious breakfast options, 70% of them choose junk food as an alternative.

Table 5: Preferences of food in a different category by respondents

S. No.	Food preference	Strongly preferred		Moderate preferred		Least preferred		
		Boys n=60	Girls n=60	Boys n=60	Girls n=60	Boys n=60	Girls n=60	
1.	Italian	Pizza	33 (55)	35 (58.33)	8 (13.33)	17 (28.33)	19 (31.67)	8 (13.33)
		Pasta	8 (13.33)	14 (23.33)	48 (80)	36 (60)	4 (6.67)	10 (16.67)
		Soup	19 (31.67)	11 (18.33)	4 (6.67)	7 (11.67)	37 (61.67)	42 (70)
2.	South Indian	Idli	24 (40)	24 (40)	18 (30)	17 (28.33)	18 (30)	19 (31.67)
		Dosa	15 (25)	20 (33.33)	37 (61.67)	34 (56.67)	8 (13.33)	6 (10)
		Uttapam	21 (35)	16 (26.67)	5 (8.33)	9 (15)	34 (56.67)	35 (58.33)
3.	Chinese	Chow mein	32 (53.33)	27 (45)	12 (20)	16 (26.67)	16 (26.67)	17 (28.33)
		Momos	11 (18.33)	13 (21.67)	41 (68.33)	30 (50)	8 (13.33)	17 (28.33)
		Manchurian	17 (28.33)	20 (33.33)	7 (11.67)	14 (23.33)	36 (60)	26 (43.33)
4.	Common food	Pav bhaji	31 (51.67)	33 (55)	16 (26.67)	13 (21.67)	13 (21.67)	14 (23.33)
		Vada pav	10 (16.67)	10 (16.67)	33 (55)	37 (61.67)	17 (28.33)	13 (21.67)
		Parantha	19 (31.67)	17 (28.33)	11 (18.33)	10 (16.67)	30 (50)	33 (55)

Conclusion

With all the above-mentioned findings it can be concluded that Equal lifestyle choices are made by boys and girls when it comes to eating street food. Boya and girls have adequate knowledge about food-borne illnesses, and food and water

contamination with this they are also aware of rules and regulations made by the government. In turn, this will help street food vendors become more skilled and will also help reduce food poisoning. Young consumers were found to eat street food primarily for three reasons: fun and change,

enthusiasm to try out new dishes and tastes. Mostly they prefer to go out with friends to eat street food. Boys and girls preferred major street food in different categories such as pizza in Italian food, idli sambhar in south Indian food, chow mein in Chinese food, and pav bhaji in common foods. With this, there are some problems also faced by the boys and girls at the food stalls such as health, hygiene, and contamination related.

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