Influence of Media and Advertisement on Food Choices of College Going Girls

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ABSTRACT

Advertisements play an important role in persuading clients to buy goods and services. The most efficient approach for businesses is to share product information with their intended audience is through advertising. Customers are more likely to remember the advertised brand or product after seeing advertisements that feature celebrity endorsements because they are more likely to connect the brand with the endorser. Advertising is actually a for-profit form of promotion funded by a sponsor and distributed through a variety of modern and conventional media like blogs, websites, community radio ads, television and many more new generations platforms. Adolescents tend to have higher cognitive abilities than younger children. However, there is evidence to suggest that they are still susceptible to highly integrated food marketing through social media. Advertising is seen as a significant and vital component of the marketers and competing businesses economic growth. Additionally, because to technology improvements and developments, advertising has become more extensive and potent in its influence. There are many products available in the markets to meet the needs and desires of the market. These needs, whether they are fundamental, latent or inspirational, have kept marketers alert. The notion that technology is good for marketing is a myth. The benefits of technology include bringing in new customers, automating follow up, helping in online decision-making etc. The use and implementation of technology at the appropriate time to market a product plays a crucial role. Food advertising is the crucial connection between the products manufactured and the demand for those products. Adolescents were more likely to report that their peers consumed more non-core foods than stuffed foods, indicating that food messages through social media may shape normative perceptions and may lead to unhealthy eating in teens. Girls in today's society not only select their identities, but also "shop" for them. Never before in the lives of young people has it been more crucial to choose the best brands, styles, and products to project the ideal appearance. Present study deals with the how media and advertisement influence the food preferences of teen age especially college going girls.

Keywords: Media, Advertisement, Food, College, Girls, Adolescence, Nutrition, Development

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a time of transition when individuals begin to take responsibility of leading a healthy live. More over adolescent girls are currently overly concerned about their body weight as they want to fit in with their peers and are comparing themselves to others (Latzer *et al.,* 2015). According to Kucharczuk *et al.* (2022), over 90% of adolescents have at least one social media account. The "emerging adulthood" years are a potentially exposed and malleable transitional period for young adults between the ages of 18 and 24. During this developmental stage, young adults encounter important life transitions which enable them to gain independence and responsibility, as well as possibly establish long-term health-related behaviors (Nelson *et al.,* 2008). Adolescents engage in a wide range of new forms of media, such as social networks, instant messaging, interactive role-playing games, mobile devices, and 3D environments. This is a key factor in the development of identity, social

interaction, and teaches (Jamieson *et al.,* 2008, Valentine, *et al.,* 2002). This has exposed teenagers to food marketing in a variety of ways, such as through print media, social media, movies, television, and other forms of visual media. At the same time, peer-to-peer social networking platforms are expanding, resulting in what some academics refer to as a potent new type of "mass interpersonal persuasion". Behavior and attitude can be altered dramatically by rapidly shaping and delivering a "convincing experience" to a large number of users (Fogg, 2008). Digital food marketing in this setting presents fresh opportunities as well as fresh difficulties. Additional factors that interact with food advertisements directed at teenagers include peer pressure and peer interactions. The act of "liking" a post has raised concerns that social media advertising is unusually interactive and could influence teens to view brands more as friends than as businesses (Montgomery *et al.,* 2009). Adolescents' desire to "fit in" is frequently what motivates social influences related to snacking and food selection (Karimi-Shahanjarini *et al.,* 2010). It has been observed that eating behavior are variable among adolescents. Some adolescents opt dieting and thereby miss their meals leading to under nutrition while others indulge in overeating leading to obesity. Adolescents' eating habits have been found to be inconsistent. Some adolescent skip meals, which results in under nutrition, while others overeat, which results in obesity. Food advertising has been found to be an important influence on food choices, eating behaviors, and consumption patterns. According to research on food choices, eating habits, and consumption patterns, food advertising has a significant impact (Vukmirovic, 2015). In the digital era, advertising takes place on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter (Shareef *et al.,* 2018-2019). Social media advertising can be defined as the utilization of social media technologies, channels, and software to create, communicate, deliver and exchange offerings that have value (Tuten *et al.,* 2017). Social media is utilized by both food and health industries and they have increased their brand and information through advertising. Most of the college going students is frequently using these types of social media to communicate, gather and share food and health related information. Moreover, using artificial intelligence, advertisements can be created, executed, evaluated, and refined within hours, thereby enabling more profound levels of persuasion than ever before (Ruckenstein *et al.,* 2020). Although young adults may

be less likely than older age groups to have current major health problems, they are still at risk of negative effects of unhealthy lifestyle behaviors which may track into later adulthood, potentially leading to serious health consequences later in life (Nelson, *et al.,* 2008). As adolescent girls watch television more than newspapers and magazines as a source of advertisement, they become the direct target group of television channels food advertisements. Which effect their eating habit and persuade them to eat high calorie high fat containing food products, which can cause metabolic disorders. Therefore, the present study was initiated to find out the influence of media and advertisement on food choices of college girls and to suggest measures to rectify it. In the present study we are intending to study the influence of media and advertisement on food choices of college going girls; the socio economic background, food.

METHODOLOGY

Significance of the study:

College students are in the adolescence stage which is the transition period when they gradually take up responsibilities and are over concerned about their body weight to keep up with the peer group and the society in which they live. More over mass media is promoting fast food in market which leads to development of various unhealthy eating habits like eating fast foods and eating out with friends. Since college students spend fair amount of time in watching media and they are soft target of advertising since they easily swayed to choose advertised food (Freisling *et al.,* 2010). Therefore, the present study is undertaken to assess the Influence of media and advertisement on food choices of college going girls in Kollam district.

Procedure:

Kollam Corporation was purposively chosen for the study because of the concentration of many colleges in and around Kollam corporation. Convenience of data collection motivated the choice of this location. The researcher, being a hosteler could conveniently collect data from the samples chosen for the study. One hundred sample from colleges in and around Kollam corporation was selected as the samples for the study. By using a purposive sampling method 25 students were selected from Sree Narayana College, 25 students from Sree Narayana College for Women, 25 students from SN Law

College and 25 students from VNSS College of Nursing making, a sample size of 100 respondents. In the present study, a survey design was used. A survey is a procedure for gathering and analysing information from a group of participants using a meticulously planned and highly structured questionnaire or interview schedule. To conduct survey for this study, questionnaire was used as the tool. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. Questionnaire is considered as the heart of a survey operation. Primary data was collected by the investigator using a questionnaire. The investigator visited the chosen samples and tried to establish rapport with them to ensure cooperation in eliciting required data. The questionnaire was handed over to them after explaining the purpose. They were asked to fill in the questionnaire and return it the next day. The data collected for the study were edited, coded and tabulated to get a holistic picture of the Influence of media and advertisement on food choices among college girls.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All the 100 respondents were females. Their personal variables such as age, educational status, type of family, place of residence, marital status, monthly income, size of family and kind of studentship covered under this study. The table reveals the age of the respondents. More than one half (55%) of the respondents were in the age group of 22 to 24 years. 45 per cent of the respondents were in the age group of 18 to 21 years.

It is clear from the Table 1 that majority (57%) of the respondents are undergraduate students (B.A/B.Sc./B. Com). 39 per cent of the respondents are post graduate students (M.A, M.Sc., M. Com.) while a minority of 2 per cent of them are doing professional course and diploma, respectively.

Table 1 : Educational status of the respondents

Sr. No.	Educational status of the respondents	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Undergraduate	57	57%
2.	Post graduate	39	39%
3.	Professional	2	2%
4.	Diploma	2	2%

Table 2 reveals the type of family of the respondents. Majority (87%) of the respondents belonged to nuclear family, which is most commonly seen in today's society while 13 per cent of the respondents belonged to joint family.

Table 2 : Types of family

Sr. No.	Type of family	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Nuclear family	87	87%
2.	Joint family	13	13%

It is clear from Table 3 that majority (42 %) of the respondence reside in rural area. 23 per cent of them resided in suburban area. 35 per cent of them from Urban area.

Table 3 : Place of residence

Sr. No.	Place of residence	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Urban	35	35%
2.	Suburban	23	23%
3.	Rural	42	42%

Table 4 reveals that the marital status of the respondents. Majority (83%) of the respondents was unmarried and the remaining 17 per cent of the respondents were married.

Table 4 : Marital status

Sr. No.	Marital status	No. of respondents (N = 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Unmarried	83	83%
2.	Married	17	17%

Table 5 shows the Monthly income of the respondent's family ranged from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 1,20,000 with a mean of Rs. 44,000, it is clear from Table 5 that majority (60%) of the respondents had an income up to Rs. 50,000. 30 per cent of the respondents were in the income bracket of Rs. 50,001- Rs. 100,000. The remaining 10 per cent of them had an income above Rs. 100,000.

Table 5 : Income of the respondent's family per month

Sr. No.	Monthly income	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Up to Rs. 50,000	60	60%
2.	Rs. 50,001 – Rs. 100,000	30	30%
3.	Above Rs. 100,000	10	10%

Table 6 reveals the size of the respondent's family. Size of the family ranged from 3 to 7 members with a mean family size of 4 members. Majority (64%) of the respondents belonged to a family with three to four members and 36 per cent of the respondents belonged to a family with more than 5 members.

Table 6 : Size of the family		
Sr. No.	Size of the family	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Up to 4	64	64%
2.	5and above	36	36%

It is clear from Table 7 that 72 per cent of the respondents were day scholar, 26 per cent of the respondents were hostellers and the remaining 2 per cent of them were paying guests.

Table 7 : Kind of studentship		
Sr. No.	Kind of studentship	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Day scholar	72	72%
2.	Hosteller	26	26%
3.	Paying guest	2	2%

With regard to the type of diet consumed by the respondents, it was revealed from Fig. 1 that majority (70%) of the respondents were non vegetarian. 24 per cent of the respondents were vegetarian and remaining 3 per cent of them were eggetarians and vegans, respectively.
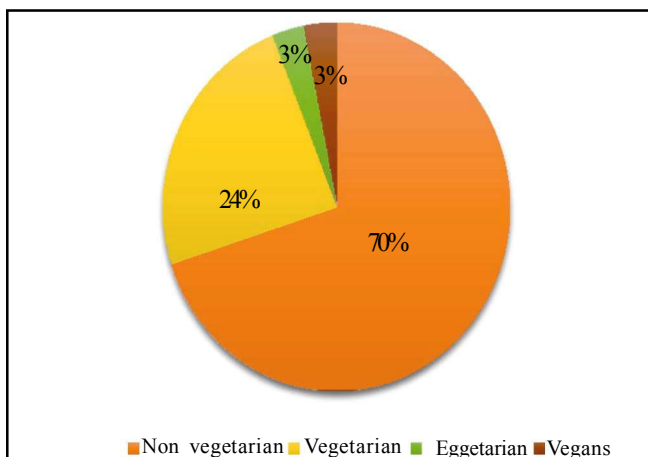

Fig. 1 : Comparative analysis of developed sketches

It was revealed from the Table 8 that majority (61 %) of the respondents ate four times a day. 17 per cent of the respondents ate two times a day. 8 per cent of the

respondents ate three time and many times a day, respectively. Remaining (6%) of the respondents ate five times a day.

Table 8 : How often you consume food daily		
Sr. No	No. of times food consumed/day	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Four	61	61%
2.	Two	17	17%
3.	Three	8	8%
4.	Many	8	8%
5.	Five	6	6%

Table 9 reveals the food products consumed by the respondents. All the respondents in the study consumed cereals. Around three fourth (74%) of the respondents consumed sweets 73 per cent of the respondents consume vegetables. 67 per cent of the respondents consumed beverages. 60 per cent of the respondents consumed fruits. 59 per cent of the respondents consumed pulses and savouries, respectively. 58 per cent of the respondents consume dairy products. 51 per cent of the respondents consumed egg. 47 per cent of the respondents consumed fish. Meat was consumed by 39 per cent respondents and only 9 per cent of the respondent's consumed millets.

Table 9 : Commonly consumed food products		
Sr. No.	Food products consumed mostly	No. of respondents (N=100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Cereals	100	100%
2.	Sweets	74	74%
3.	Vegetables	73	73%
4.	Beverages	67	67%
5.	Fruits	60	60%
6.	Pulses	59	59%
7.	Savories	59	59%
8.	Dairy products	58	58%
9.	Egg	51	51%
10.	Fish	47	47%
11.	Meat products	39	39%
12.	Millets	9	9%

The sources of food advertisement mostly seen by the respondents are revealed in Fig. 2. Friends were the source of food advertisement for 96 per cent respondents. Social media was the source of food advertisement for 92 per cent respondents. Television was the source of advertisement for 87 per cent respondents. Magazines were the source of food advertisement for 78 per cent

respondents. For 28 per cent respondents notices were the source of food advertisement. Relatives were the source of food advertisement for 22 per cent respondents.
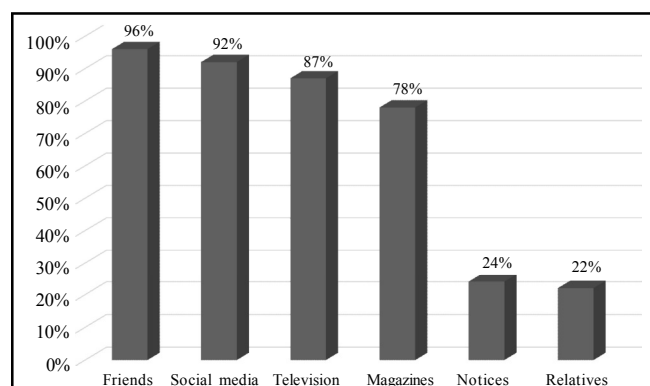

Fig. 2 : Sources of food advertisement

Many food companies advertise their food products for the promotion of the food. Food companies frequently use marketing tactics and strategies to market their food products. Table 10, reveals the food products mostly influenced by advertisement. Soft drink advertisements influenced 87 per cent respondents. Fast food products like pizza, burger, fried chickens etc were influenced by 80 per cent respondents. Chocolates advertisements influenced 76 per cent respondents. Icecream and cakes were influenced by 73 per cent and 61 per cent respondents, respectively. Advertisements on instant noodles and pasta influenced 56 per cent respondents. Forty eight percent of the respondents were influenced by advertisements on Biscuits and Cookies. Advertisements on beverages influenced 31 per cent respondents and 28 per cent of them were influenced by

Table 10 : Food products mostly influenced by advertisement		
Sr. No.	Food products mostly influenced by advertisement	No. of respondents (N=100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Soft drinks	87	87%
2.	Fast food products like pizza, burger, fried chickens, etc.	80	80%
3.	Chocolates	76	76%
4.	Ice creams	73	73%
5.	Cakes	61	61%
6.	Instant noodles and pasta	56	56%
7.	Biscuits Cookies	48	48%
8.	Beverages	31	31%
9.	Health drinks	28	28%

advertisements on health drinks.

The factors that influence food choices excluding advertisement and media is revealed in Table 11. Taste was the factor that influenced 71 per cent respondents other than advertisement. 54 per cent of the respondents were influenced by the name and familiarity with food. Availability was the factor that influenced 53 per cent respondents. Fifty per cent of the respondents were influenced by appearance. Cooking method influenced 41 per cent respondents. 29 per cent of the respondents were influenced by trends. 28 per cent of the respondents were influenced by convenience and 22 per cent of the respondents were influenced by friends.

Table 11 : Factors that influenced food choices excluding advertisement and media		
Sr. No.	Factors	No. of respondents (N=100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Taste	71	71%
2.	Name and familiarity with food	54	54%
3.	Availability	53	53%
4.	Appearance	50	50%
5.	Cooking method	41	41%
6.	Trendy	29	29%
7.	Convenience	29	29%
8.	Friends	22	22%

Fig. 3 reveals the factors in advertisement that influence food choices of adolescent girls. 81 per cent of them were influenced by price. 77 per cent of them were influenced by brand. 40 of them were influenced by appearance. Popularity influenced 39 per cent respondents. 36 per cent of the respondents were
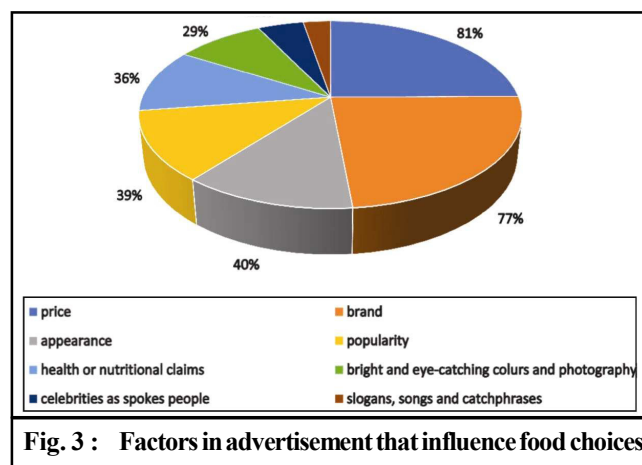

Fig. 3 : Factors in advertisement that influence food choices

influenced by health or nutritional claims. Bright and eye-catching colours and photography influenced 29 per cent respondents. Celebrities as spokes people influenced 15 per cent respondents and only 9 per cent of the respondents were influenced by slogans, songs and catchphrases.

Fig. 4 reveal the influence of popular persons on food choice of adolescent girls. Popularity or social status is the quality of being well liked, admired or well known to a particular group. Majority (68%) of the respondents were influenced by celebrities. 30 of them were influenced by health and fitness models. Fitness model can mean: Fitness model (person), a person who models, with emphasis on their physique. Athletes influenced by 10 per cent of the respondents. 7 per cent of the respondents were influenced by coaches. 5 per cent respondents of the respondents were not influenced by popular persons.
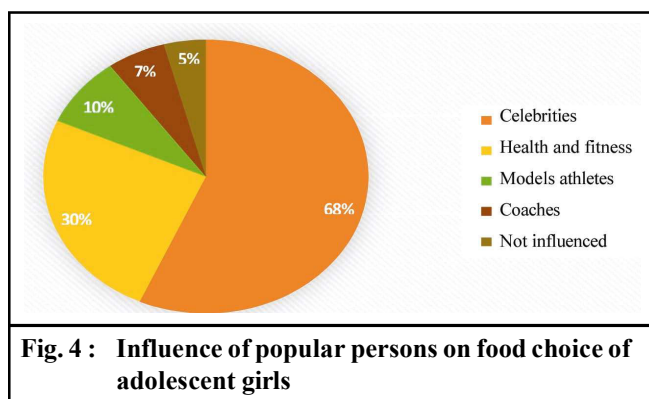

Fig. 4 : Influence of popular persons on food choice of adolescent girls

Table 12 reveals the frequency of Junk food and fast-food consumption per week by the respondents. Majority (69%) of the respondents consumed junk food and fast food once or twice in a week. 23 per cent of the respondents consumed junk food and fast food 3 to 4 times in a week. Whereas 8 per cent of the respondents consumed junk food and fast food 5 times and more in a week.

Instant foods consumed by the respondents is

Table 12 : Frequency of junk food and fast-food consumption per week		
Sr. No.	Frequency of consumption per week	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Up to 2 times	69	69%
2.	3 – 4 times	23	23%
3.	5 times and above	8	8%

revealed in Table 13. Instant noodles were consumed by majority (72%) of the respondents. 43 per cent of the respondents consumed instant pastas. 27 per cent of the respondents consumed instant soups and frozen foods, respectively. Instant meal was consumed by 19 per cent respondents. 11 per cent of the respondents consumed instant cakes. Instant curries and tea/ coffee were consumed by 8 per cent and 6 per cent respondents, respectively.

Table 13 : Instant foods consumed by the respondents		
Sr. No.	Instant foods*	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Noodles	72	72%
2.	Pastas	43	43%
3.	Soup	27	27%
4.	Frozen foods	27	27%
5.	Meal pack	19	19%
6.	Cake	11	11%
7.	Variety curries	8	8%
8.	Tea/coffee	6	6%

Table 14 reveals the average amount of money spend by the respondents on purchase of junk food. Money is any item or verifiable record that is generally accepted as payment for goods and services and repayment of debits, such as taxes, in a particular country or socio-economic context. Majority (40%) of the respondents spent up to Rs. 100 per day on junk/ fast foods. 32 per cent of the respondents spent Rs. 101 to Rs. 200 per day. 14 per cent of the respondents spent less than Rs. 50 and above Rs. 200 per day on fast / junk food, respectively.

Table 14 : Average amount of money spends on buying fast / junk food per day		
Sr. No.	Money spends on buying fast/ junk food per day	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Less than Rs. 50	14	14%
2.	Rs. 50 – Rs.100	40	40%
3.	Rs.101 – Rs. 200	32	32%
4.	Above Rs. 200	14	14%

Media influence is the actual force exerted by a media message, resulting in either a change or reinforcement in audience or individual beliefs. Social media is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts and information through virtual networks and communities. Table 15 and Fig. 5 reveals

that social medias that influenced food choices of adolescents. All the respondents in the study were influenced by You Tube and WhatsApp, respectively. 65 per cent of the respondents were influenced by Face book. 53 per cent of the respondents were influenced by Instagram. Snapchat influenced 11 per cent respondents. Twitter influenced by 8 per cent respondents. Pinterest and LinkedIn influenced by 6 per cent respondents, respectively.

Fig. 5 : Social media that influenced food choices of adolescents
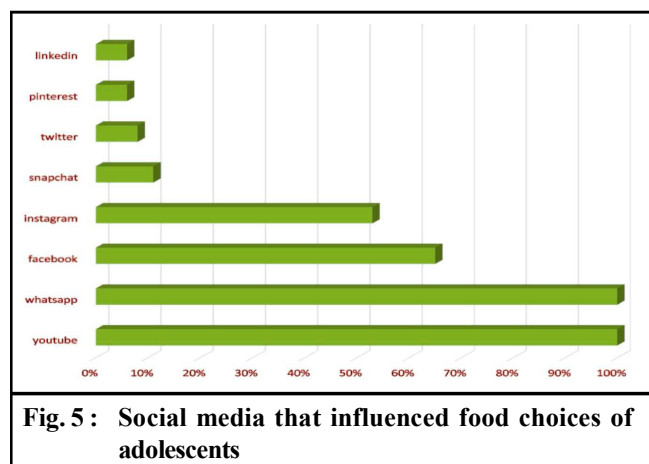
It is clear from the Table 15 and Fig. 6 that majority (30 %) of the respondents watch food videos in social media occasionally. 24 per cent of them watch food videos rarely. Yet another, 17 per cent of them watch food videos often. A notable 13 per cent of them watch food videos always and 16 per cent of the respondents never watch food videos in social media.

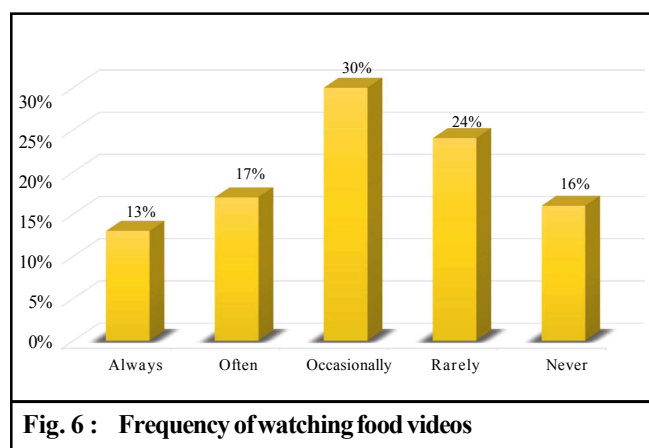**Fig. 6 : Frequency of watching food videos**

Table 15 reveals the frequency of purchase of food online based on media advertisement. Majority (64%) of the respondents purchased food online occasionally. 28 per cent of the respondents never purchased food online

Table 15 : Frequency of purchase of food online based on media advertisement			
Sr. No.	Frequency of purchase	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage (%)
1.	Never	28	28%
2.	Occasionally	64	64%
3.	Often	8	3%

and only 8% of the respondents often purchased food on line.

Table 16 reveals the awareness of ill effects of fast-food consumption among the respondents. Majority (58%) of the respondents were aware about the ill effects of junk-food consumption while 42 per cent of the respondents were not aware about the ill effects of fast-food consumption.

Table 16 : Awareness of ill effects of junk food and fast-food consumption			
Sr. No.	Awareness	No. of respondents (N= 100)	Percentage %
1.	Aware	58	58%
2.	Not aware	42	42%

One half (55%) of the respondents are in the age group of 22 to 24 years followed by 44% were in the age group of 18 to 21 years. Majority (57%) of the respondents are undergraduate students (B.A/B.Sc./B. Com) followed by 39% post graduate (M.A, M. Sc., M. Com) and 2 % are professional and diploma students, respectively. Majority (87%) of the respondents belonged to nuclear family followed by 13 % joint family. Forty-two percent of the respondence resides in rural area followed by 35% urban area and 23% suburban areas. Majority (83%) of the respondents were unmarried followed by 17 % married. Monthly income of the respondent's family ranged from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 1,20,000 with a mean of Rs. 44,000. Majority (60%) of the respondents had an income up to Rs. 50,000 followed by 30% in Rs. 50,001- Rs. 100,000 and 10 % in above Rs. 100,000 slabs. Size of the family ranged from 3 to 7 members with a mean family size of 4 members. Majority (64%) of the respondents belonged to a family with three to four members followed by 36 % family with more than 5 members. Seventy two per cent of the respondents were day scholar, followed by 26 hostellers and 2 % paying guests. Majority (70%) of the respondents were non vegetarian followed by 24 vegetarian and 3% eggetarians and vegans, respectively. Majority (61 %)

of the respondents ate four times a day followed by 17 % two times a day, 8% three time and many times a day, respectively, and (6%) of the respondents ate five time a day. All the respondents in the study consumed cereals, followed by 74% consumed sweets 73% consume vegetable, 67% consumed beverages 60% consumed fruits 59% consumed pulses and savories, respectively, 58% consume dairy products, 51% consumed egg, 47% consumed fish, meat was consumed by 39% and only 9 % consumed millets. Friends were the source of food advertisement for 96% respondents followed by, social media 92%, Television 87%, Magazines 78% respondents, 28% notices and Relatives 22% Soft drink advertisements influenced 87% respondents followed by fast food products like pizza, burger, fried chickens etc. 80%, chocolates 76%, ice cream and cakes 73% and 61%, respectively, instant noodles and pastas 56%, 48% biscuits and cookies, beverages influenced 31% and 28 % health drinks. Taste was the factor that influenced 71% respondents other than advertisement followed by 54% by the name and familiarity with food, availability 53%, 50% appearance, cooking method 41%, 29% trends, 28% convenience and 22% friends. Eighty one per cent of the respondents were influenced by price followed by 77% brand, 40% appearance, Popularity 39%, 36% health or nutritional claims, bright and eye-catching colours and photography 29%, celebrities as spokes people 15% respondents and only 9% slogans, songs and catch phrases. Majority (68%) of the respondents were influenced by celebrities followed by 30% by health and fitness models, athletes 10 %, 7% by coaches and 5% by popular persons. Majority (69%) of the respondents consumed junk food and fast food once or twice in a week followed by 23% 3 to 4 times in a week and 8% 5 times and more in a week. Instant noodles were consumed by majority (72%) of the respondents followed by 43% instant pastas, 27% instant soups and frozen foods, respectively, instant meal 19%, 11% instant cakes and instant curries and tea /coffee 8% and 6% respondents, respectively. Majority (40%) of the respondents spent up to Rs. 100 per day on junk/ fast foods followed by 32% spent Rs. 101 to Rs. 200 per day, 14% spent less than Rs. 50 and above Rs 200 per day on fast / junk food, respectively. All the respondents in the study were influenced by You Tube and WhatsApp, respectively followed by 65% Face book, 53% by Instagram, 11% by Snapchat, 8% by Twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn by 6% respondents, respectively. Majority

(30 %) of the respondents watch food videos in social media occasionally, followed by 24% watch rarely, 17 % watch often, 13% watch always and 16 % never watch food videos in social media. Majority (64%) of the respondents purchased food online occasionally followed by 28% never purchased food online and only 8% often purchased food on line. Majority (58%) of the respondents were aware about the ill effects of junk-food consumption while 42 % of the respondents were not aware about the ill effects of fast-food consumption.

Advertising is a form of communication that is used to persuade mass audience (readers, listeners, and viewers) to change the way they choose their goods, services, and ideas (Keerthana, 2016). Advertising is very important for convincing, educating, and reminding both current and potential customers to choose a company. Advertising also contributes to the formation of top-of-mind awareness of a brand and helps to facilitate brand recall (Bisht, 2013). Today, the younger generation is the one driving the change towards new communication technologies. Similarly, advertisements on Facebook have become popular as businesses continue increasing their use of social media. YouTube as well as in-home advertising like billboards and mobile promotions (Jain, *et al*., 2017). Advertising affects people in various ways by educating the consumer about the products available, explains and demonstrates the product attributes (Rajasekar, 2018). Advertising attention, as compared to exposure was associated more positively with descriptive norms in their specific reference groups *i.e*., families, close friends or students at school and advertising effects were more pronounced in two cases in older adolescents than in younger adolescents (Beaudoin, 2015). According to a study by Sandhir (2007), consumers today are not easily persuaded by celebrity endorsements and instead require comprehensive product information in addition to the brand name, general attractiveness, and music or jingles. Television and advertising are a deadly combination and have become a part of our modern society. It's the easiest way to reach not only the adult consumer but also the adolescent consumer. Advertisements target teenagers by making them believe that the product will change their life. When shopping for food, stationery, cosmetic products and toiletries, adolescent consumers were influenced by the T.V. advertisements (Kotwal *et al*., 2008). In particular, media food marketing promotes the consumption of high-fat, high-sugar, and low- nutrient foods among adolescents (Qutteina *et al*., 2019). Chandra

(2020) opines that, adolescents in urban areas tend to consume more fast foods due to their ease of access and availability. On the other hand, semi-urban and rural areas are said to be less affected and consume fewer fast foods. Media and advertisements about different fast foods, and the resultant demand, have fooled and penetrated into semi urban areas as well. Fast food has also become a way of life in semi urban areas. So far, food advertising has mostly focused on ultra-processed foods and beverages that contain high levels of saturated and trans fats, free sugars, and high levels of sodium linked to poor diet quality (Kraak *et al*., 2019). A study by Qutteina *et al*. (2019) highlighted the influence of influencers on food marketing on social media. The authors found that the focus on social media was on consuming non-healthy foods in large amounts, which was supported by peers, marketers and influencers. Branded non-healthy foods were also promoted through influence rmarketing strategies. According to a study by Amson *et al*. (2021) on digital food and beverages content, the most popular categories of food and beverages promoted were Fast food, Energy drinks and Sweets. Powell *et al.* (2017) demonstrated that exposure to advertisement for soft drinks and sugary drinks was significantly related with a higher frequency of their use among young individuals, but they also pointed out that the link between the consumption of fast food and its advertising was not supported. The emergence of digital marketing channels like search engines, websites, mobile applications, email, digital and display advertising, and social media is another effect of the rising digitalization of food surroundings. In comparison to traditional marketing, digital marketing has a number of advantages, including a potentially much larger audience, material that is always accessible, and the ability to customize campaigns based on online consumer profiles (Carthy *et al.,* 2022). Food access and availability, as well as economic factors like prices and income, have an impact on dietary decisions and food security (Dimitri *et al*., 2014). Adolescents have largely been ignored in global health and social policy despite numerous calls for action over the past three decades, which have prompted academics froma variety of disciplines to develop plans to improve adolescent health (Patton *et al*., 2014). According to changes in the natural environment, biological basis, physical need, lifestyle, and technological development, individual food preferences which are embedded in the pattern of food consumption have evolved

over time (Montanari, 2006). The ability of food and beverage companies to target young people on social media has advanced significantly. While some social media advertisements use techniques that are similar to those used in TV advertising (such as celebrity endorsements), many social media advertisements make use of strategies that are specific to digital platforms. Companies now have the chance to directly interact with, track, and target young people using cutting-edge techniques (like opening up free social media accounts where they can regularly post content specific to their brands). For instance, Instagram enables businesses that sell food and drinks to post pictures with captions. When a social media user decides to "follow" a food or beverage company on platforms like Instagram or Twitter, they can see posts by other usersas well as brand-related images, messages, and captions (Rummo*, et al*., 2020). However, according to Hanna *et al*. (2011), social media websites enable consumers to actively participate in product marketing. Although the kinds of products marketed to children have remained much the same, the buying power of children and adolescents has increased exponentially over time. The affluence of today's children and adolescents has made youth a market eminently worthy of pursuit by businesses. Youths now have influence over billions of dollars in spending each year (Calvert, 2008).

Conclusion:

The study examined how media and advertising impacted college-going girls' food preferences and found that most adolescent girls are heavily influenced by various social media platforms and advertisements. They frequently consume junk food and fast food, and are heavily influenced by advertisements for soft drinks and fast food. Their food choices are primarily influenced by the price and brand of the products; furthermore,

advertisements are reinforced by peer pressure and other influencers. Priority should be given to developing public health regulations that address unhealthy food advertisements on television and, particularly, in the evolving social media landscape .

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