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A descriptive study to assess the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food among college going students in selected colleges of Pune city

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Abstract

Junk food has no or negligible nutritional value. They are low in fibers, high in fat, sugar in liquid form and palatability. It can lead to various health problems like increased obesity, memory loss, learning problems and worsens digestion. All age groups like to eat fast food and like to have everyday due to their busy life schedule. Junk food includes wafers, chips, pizza, French fries, noodles, Chinese dishes, soft drinks and other fast food.

According to the study done in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition in 2011 healthy people who consumes junk food for 5 days shows poor performance in cognitive tests that includes attention, mood and speed. It concludes that consuming junk food for just 5 days may deteriorate memory. Too much consumption of calories may inhibit the healthy production and functioning of the synapses.

A Non-experimental study was performed to assess the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food. The study was conducted among college going students in selected colleges of Pune city using non – probability sampling technique. The tool developed which includes Section I (the demographic profile) and Section II (self-structured questionnaires) consist of knowledge regarding harmful effect of junk food among college going students in selected colleges. The tool was validated and found reliable and feasible. The results showing majority of the samples i.e. 69% of students having average knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food, 23% of students possess good knowledge and the rest 8% has poor knowledge.

There is significant association between Age, Education, Sources of information about harmful effect of junk food and reason why people prefer junk food with knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food.

Keywords: Junk food, negligible nutritional, Pune

Introduction

The term junk food was coined by the director of centre of science, Michael Jacobson in 1972. Junk food is easy to carry and buy. There is an increase in percentage of overweight and obese of school children in India from 9.7% to 13.9% between 001 and 2010 [6].

In India, the fast foods are prepared by deep frying in fats, especially in saturated fat and Tran's fat. The content of Tran's fat is relatively higher in Indian foods than Western foods. For example, the Trans-fat content in bhatura, paratha and puris is 9.5%, 7.8% and 7.6% respectively as compared to 4.2 in regular French fries. Fast food including bakery products, burgers and sausages, candy, salty and oily snacks or soft drinks can be categorized under junk food. They contain high content of calorie, salts and fats. Junk foods are filled with refined carbohydrates which may vary the blood sugar levels and leads to confusion, anxiety and weakness. Fast food may increase hyperactivity because of artificial flavorings and preservatives like sodium benzoate. Fast foods are specially added with addictives like salts and sugar which make our brain to crave them even we are not hungry.

Consumption of junk food continuously in a week may raise the cholesterol levels and leads to diabetes along with obesity and other health problems. People eating junk food are more prone to have heart attack because of increasing blood pressure. This may also lead to breathing problems, constipation, heart problems and even social embarrassment.

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Junk food containing sugar like ice creams, sweets and soft drinks increase blood sugar level and poor insulin production. Kidney find it difficult to eliminate them causing dysfunction of the kidney.

Need of the study
- Health is wealth. Good health is necessary for living healthy life which includes balanced healthy diet and habits. Junk food contains high content of sugar, fat and nitrates. It is less nutritional and cause various damage to the body. Junk foods are more popular due to their taste and easy to cook. The intake of junk food all over the world is increasing which is not healthy for future. There is a rapid increase in the percentage of obese and overweight in school going children in India from 9.7% to 13.9% from the year 2001 to 2010 due to the increase intake of junk food.
- A study depicted that consumption of junk food in rural areas has been scant as compared to urban areas.
- A study held in Baroda concluded that there is a higher consumption of junk food items (56%) such as pastries, sweets, soft drinks (39%) by school going children.
- Another study held in Lucknow reported that there is daily consumption of bakery items, ice-cream and chocolates by 14%, 35% and 28% of school going children respectively.

- It was also reported that 30% children daily consume soft drinks from the age group of 16 to 21.
- 70% school going and college going students residing in New Delhi consume soft drink once in 2days the study reported. The percentages of obese adults are raised step by step according to a survey in urban areas of New Delhi.
- India is next to China and United States in the global hazard list of top 10 countries with maximum number of obese people revealed by a study published in the journal Lancet.
- According to a study conducted at Tamil Nadu reported that majority (75%) age was between 19-20 years, mainly (66%) residing in urban area. Among 60% of adolescents 32% of them eat 1 or 2 times in a week, 8% eat 3 or 4 in a week.

Objective of study
1. To assess the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk foods among college going students in selected colleges of Pune city.
2. To associate the research findings with selected demographic variables**.**

Research Methodology

Research approach
Quantitative approach was used in this study
↓
Research design
Non- Experimental descriptive research design
↓
Settings
study was conducted in selected senior colleges of Pune City
↓
Target population
the population of the present study comprises selected senior colleges of Pune City
↓
Sample
Selected senior colleges of Pune City
↓
Sampling technique – non- probability convenient sampling technique
↓
Sample size is 100
↓
Tool for data collection

Informed Consent form

Section: -I It includes demographic data that consist age, gender, education, source of information about harmful effect of junk food, availability of junk food and dietary habits.

Section: -II It includes self-structured questionnaires that consist of 20 items.
↓
Analysis of the data
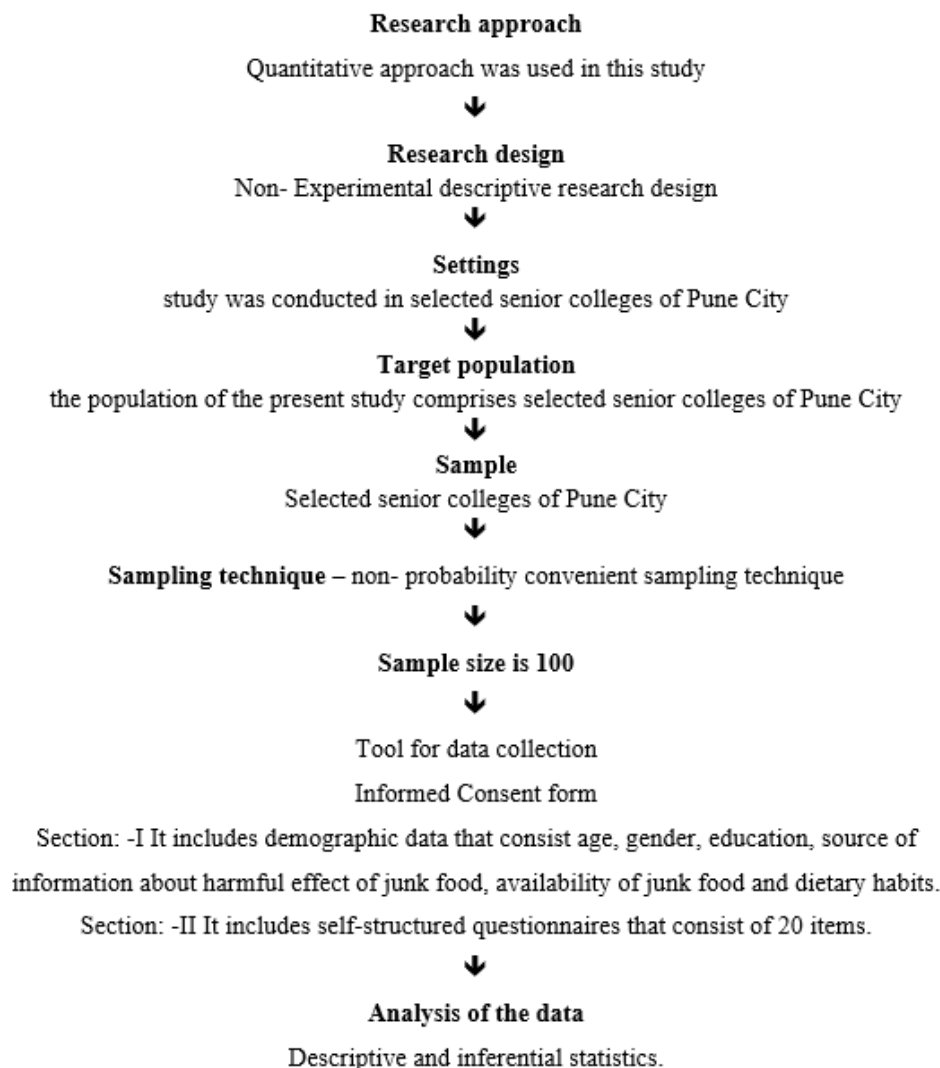
Descriptive and inferential statistics.

Fig 1: Schematic representation of the Research methodology

Data collecting process
- The permission was granted by the Principal of the college.
- The sample was selected according to the criteria.
- The consent was taken from the selected samples.
- Tool was distributed among the selected samples.
- The sample size was 100.
- The instructions were given to the selected samples.
- After 15-20 minutes, the questionnaires were collected back.
- The knowledge of the sample was assessed using answer key.
- Documentation and analysis.

Data analysis
Analysis is the process of categories, ordering, manipulation, and summarizing of data to be obtain answer to research question. The purpose of the analysis is to reduce data to an intelligible and interpretable form so that the relation of research problem be studied and tested.

Table 1: Above table shows that, majority of the samples i.e. 69% of students having average knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food, 23% of students possess good knowledge and the rest 8% has poor knowledge.

Score Interpretation	Frequency(F)	Percentage (%)
Poor Knowledge (0-7)	8	08%
Average Knowledge (8-13)	69	69%
Good Knowledge (14-20)	23	23%

n=100

Conclusion
The researcher conducted a descriptive study to assess the knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food among college going students in selected colleges of Pune city.
 The result of data analysis specified that majority of the samples i.e. 69% of students having average knowledge regarding harmful effects of junk food, 23% of students possess good knowledge and the rest 8% has poor knowledge.

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