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MOTHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS CHILDREN FOOD BEHAVIOUR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ERODE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Junk food product are mostly liked by children for various reason though it they are not supplying any health benefits. This article is a study mother's perception on children food behaviour as mothers are considered to be the greatest part in their children food habits. This study explores the reasons behind the children liking towards junk food and their parents reaction towards this issue. The factor influencing to buy junk foods the health issues due to its consumption, parent's awareness about food habits and their preferences are the primary analyses of this article. By revealing these factors, the study brings exact perception of mothers and some guidelines to avoid junk foods in their children's life style.

KEYWORDS

junk foods, parents awareness.

JEL CODES

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INTRODUCTION

Food marketing and advertising to children plays a crucial role in influencing food preferences, choices of food, diets and health of the children. There has been a variety of food marketing strategies like marketing in school, kids club, products with brands and logos, product placement, advertising on television, children targeted promotion and internet, which have a direct impact on children's food choices. Many food and beverage companies spend on these marketing techniques in promoting less healthful foods and drinks to the children. There is also a practice of child-directed marketing by pairing freebies like (tattoos, toys, puzzles etc.) to promote their products and also to reach the maximum number of children in an effective way. Similarly, it has been criticized in many ways in the society for their vulnerable market segment and lurking in the society.

These marketing strategies and advertising in food industry have more greater impact on the developing countries, like India. Higher disposable incomes, changing consumption, patterns and the marketing might of powerful western brands are bringing fast food India's children. Their multiple marketing techniques in India, create a great contradiction between the parents and children in the choices of food for children. The increase consumption of junk foods leads the children to face many health issues. These creates an urge to aware the society about the reality behind these kind of marketing techniques and to guide them in the selection of food as it is not just a matter of taste but reasonable for their physical and mental growth of nourishment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

UDIT MALIK says that "Food is need of every living being. No one can survive without it. But apart from nutrients, the taste and presentation also added value to the food, thus giving an opportunity".

Reports by the world health organization (WHO) reveal that more than 40% of the world's under nourished children live in India. A similar percentage of India children under five years are under weight and a higher percentage stunted due to chronic under nutrition. More than 50% of school children are suffering from nutritional anemia.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the awareness about children's food habits among the mothers.
2. To study the satisfaction level of mother on their children's food behaviour.
3. To understand the mother's attitude towards the food behaviour of the children.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study has been conducted within a short time frame. Thus, the scope of the study is limited to mother's idea in children's behaviour in food in selected areas of Erode.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive in nature.

SOURCES OF DATA

The study includes both primary data and secondary data. Primary data have been collected from the target respondents through structured questionnaire. Secondary data have been collected from different sources such as journals, books and internet.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The sample size for the study is 50. The sample of 50 respondents have been selected using convenient sampling method.

PERIOD OF STUDY AND GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The primary data have been collected from April 2018-July 2018. The present study is defined to Erode district.

TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

The collected data were classified, tabulated and analysed. Percentage analysis has been used for analysis.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has the following limitations:

1. In the busy schedule, some respondents refused to co-operate.
2. Due to time restriction, only 50 respondents could be selected.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Demographic profile of the respondents is shown Table-1 convenient sample of 50 respondents was surveyed. Majority 36% of the respondents were belongs to the age group of 26-30 years. Majority 60 % of the respondents had one child. Majority 36% of the respondents' children were belongs to 3-5 years and 6-8 years. Majority 58% of the respondents were belongs to nuclear family. Majority 40% of the respondents were postgraduates. Majority 48% of the respondents were homemakers. Majority 38% of the respondent's had 4 members in their family. Majority 46% of the respondents' annual incomes were below four lakhs in their family.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Age	20-25 years	17	34
	26-30 years	18	36
	31- 35 years	12	24
	36-40 years	02	04
	Above 40 years	01	02
	Total	50	
No.of.children	1 child	30	60
	2 children	17	34
	3 children	03	06
	Above 3 children	-	-
	Total	50	
Age of child	3-5 years	18	36
	6-8 years	18	36
	9-11 years	11	22
	Above 11 years	03	06
	Total	50	
Nature of the family	Nuclear family	29	58
	Joint family	21	42
	Total	50	
Educational Qualification	Senior secondary	05	10
	Graduation	14	28
	Post-graduation	20	40
	Others	11	22
	Total	50	
Occupation	Home maker	24	48
	Employees	13	26
	Business	08	16
	Others	05	10
	Total	50	
No.Of.Members	2 members	01	02
	3 member	16	32
	4 members	19	38
	Above 4 members	14	28
	Total	50	
Annual income	Below 4 lakhs	23	46
	4 lakhs and above -but below 8 lakhs	20	40
	8 lakhs and above- but below 20 lakhs	07	14
	20 lakhs and above	00	00
	Total	50	

TABLE 2: KIND OF FOOD LIKED BY THE CHILDREN

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Healthy food	17	34
2	Junk food	19	38
3	Traditional food	14	28
	Total	50	100

Majority 38% of the respondents selected junk foods liked by children.

TABLE 3: PARENT'S PREFERENCE ABOUT CHILDREN FOOD

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Healthy food	34	68
2	Junk food	-	-
3	Traditional food	16	32
	Total	50	100

Majority 68% of the respondents preferred healthy food.

TABLE 4: RESPONDENTS PREFERENCE ON RESTAURANT

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Yes	40	80
2	No	10	20
	Total	50	100

Majority 80% of the respondents prefer going to the restaurant.

TABLE 5: NO. OF VISITS TO THE RESTAURANT

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Weekly once	8	20
2	Two week's once	10	25
3	Monthly once	12	30
4	Two month once	10	25
	Total	40	100

Majority 30% of the respondents visit restaurant once in the month.

TABLE 6: THEIR FOOD CHOICES IN RESTAURANT

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Veg	10	25
2	Non-veg	12	30
3	Fruit juice	08	20
4	Ice-cream/ milk shakes	10	25
	Total	40	100

Majority 30% of the respondent's food choice is non-veg.

TABLE 7: FACTOR INFLUENCING JUNK FOOD

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Food presentation	10	20
2	Advertisement	08	16
3	Taste	26	52
4	Freebies (like toys, tattoos, etc.)	05	10
5	Other (if any)	01	02
	Total	50	100

Majority 52% of the respondents select taste as a prominent factor influencing junk food.

TABLE 8: HEALTH ISSUES DUE TO JUNK FOOD

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Hormonal changes	11	22
2	Obesity	14	28
3	Over craving	09	18
4	Nutrition deficiency	08	16
5	All the above	08	16
	Total	50	100

Majority 28% of the respondents select obesity is a prominent health issue for children due to junk food consumption.

TABLE 9: PREVENTING CHILDREN FROM JUNK FOOD

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Natural substitution	11	22
2	Organic food	14	28
3	Preparing tasty & attractive healthy food	17	34
4	Providing basic knowledge of food habits to children	08	16
	Total	50	100

Majority 34% of the respondents prefer preparing tasty & attractive healthy food to prevent children from consuming junk food.

TABLE 10: PARENT AWARENESS ABOUT FOOD HABIT

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Yes	37	74
2	No	13	26
	Total	50	100

Majority 74% of the respondents are aware of wealthy food habits.

TABLE 11: PROVIDING BALANCED DIET TO THE CHILDREN

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Nuclear family	27	54
2	Joint family	23	46
	Total	50	100

Majority 54% of the respondents consider nuclear family provides balanced diet to the children.

SUGGESTION

Home maker: Parents can reduce frequently visiting restaurants. Instead, they can prefer home foods even when they are travelling to some extent.

Preparing tasty foods: Mothers can be innovative in their cooking and also give importance to taste with nutrition as taste is a primary reason for the junk food consumption.

Knowledge of food habits: It is the duty of every parents to teach their children about food habits, balanced diet and the importance of in taking veggies and its nutritious benefits.

Caution against junk foods: Like do's, don't are also important to be known. So, children should also be instructed about the dangerous effects of junk food.

CONCLUSION

Unlike olden days, modern life style is totally different as everyone of us are exposed to varieties of foods and its easy availability. Even children are exploited by the junk food products for its taste, freebies, advertisement, presentation, etc. It is the time to realize the consequence of these junk foods and be cautious of it, so that we can be preventive against the Hormonal changes, Obesity, Over craving, Nutrition deficiency, etc which are the result of consuming junk food. It is the hands of parents to influence the children towards healthy food habits by creating awareness to them, preparing tasty and nutritious food, reducing their visits to

the restaurant, teaching the side effects of unhealthy or junk foods, promoting the intakes of vegetables and other nutritious foods. Because, no one should forget the golden words of our ancestors, "HEALTH IS WEALTH".

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