

Buying Attitudes of the College Studentstoward Fast Foods In Lunglei Town, Mizoram

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Abstract: Fast foods have become more popular today due to accessibility, taste, low price, convenience, variety of items, busy working schedule and so on. Fast food refers to food that can be served ready to eat. Fast foods are popular among young generation due to modernisation and globalisation. This article is aimed at understanding the buying attitudes of fast foods among college students in Lunglei town in Mizoram, a small state in North East India. The data were collected by administering a structured questionnaire from the sample of 150 college students. The sample was drawn equally from three colleges in Lunglei town. The study found significant differences among the male and the female respondents in respect of consumption habits of fast foods. More number of female respondents were in the habit of eating fast foods compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, the female respondents were found to be spending more money on average.

Keywords: Buying attitudes, College students, Fast foods, Junk foods, Instant foods.

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I. Introduction

In consumer behaviour context, an attitude is a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way with respect to given object. Consumer attitudes play a vital role for a marketer because individual attitudes whether positive or negative towards a product/service is more likely to influence a purchase decision. Schiffman defined attitude as, —An expression of inner feelings that reflects whether a person is favourably or unfavourably predisposed to some object (such as, a brand, a service, or a retail establishment).

Fast foods are quick, reasonably priced, and readily available alternatives to home cooked food. Fast food is defined as a pre-packed meal, ready to eat food/convenience food (Harrison and Marske, 2005; Periera et al, 2005). The primary characteristic of fast food is that it is ready made in nature and easy to eat. Fast foods are mostly designed for ready availability, use and consumption. The fast food products are distinguished from others in function of the following characteristics: being low priced, served quickly, usually eaten with the hands, easily packaged, and having a short shelf life (Price,1997). The terms fast food and junk food are often used interchangeably. Most of the junk foods are fast foods as they are prepared and served fast, but not all fast foods are junk foods, especially when they are prepared with nutritious contents (Kaushik et al, 2011). The concept of fast foods has different meanings depending on the context, situation and culture. It has many definitions in the literature.

Fast food culture is an emerging trend among the younger generation. The ready availability, taste, low cost, marketing strategies and peer pressure make them popular with children and adolescents (Kaushik et al, 2011). Consuming fast foods has become a recent trend among upper society, teenagers and youth have also increased and the fast food has won the palate of those groups (Ahmed et al, 2008). Brown et al. (2000) also observed that the fast food preference of Indian students is prompted by the food habits of their peer and reference groups. Eating out has become common among the families, especially where both the parents are working.

According to Indian Fast Food Market Report, the Indian fast food market is expected to grow at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 18% by 2020 due to changing consumer behaviour and demography. Fast food market in India is expected to be worth US\$ 27.57 billion by 2020. Millions of people eat ethnic fast food every-day from *pani-puri* to *vada pav* to *dosa*. To leverage the growth of ethnic fast food market many players are entering this market in an organised way. Ethnic fast food market in India is projected to grow at a CAGR of 31.95% by 2019-20 (Fast Food Market Report, 2015).

II. Literature Review

Some important studies concerning buying attitudes of fast foods are reviewed here as under to highlight their findings.

Ya-Li Huang et al (1994) highlighted in the study that 22%, 8%, and 5% of the students skipped breakfast, lunch, and dinner, respectively; 80% of the students snacked at least once a day. There were no significant differences in frequency of meals skipped and snacks consumed among seasons, or between men and women. Forty foods consumed most frequently for meals and snacks included various carbonated beverages but few vegetables and fruits. Skimmed milk, 2% milk and chicken or turkey was among the top 40 foods selected by both genders whereas whole milk and higher-fat meats were not. Men consumed higher calorie and high fat foods, more fast foods but fewer vegetables than women.

Lee (2007) revealed that 41.5% of the elementary group, 40.5% of the high school group, 24.1% of the 30's, 35.0% of the 40's and 18.1% of the 50's took fast foods over once a week. 72.5 % of the elementary group, 61.5% of the high school group, 16.8% of the 30's group, 10.0% of the 40's, and 14.6% of the 50's preferred fast foods. There was a significant difference in the basis for selecting menus among the groups. The most important basis for selecting menus was 'price' in the elementary group and the high school group, but was 'preference' in the adult groups. As their age increased, they spend more money for fast food. 46% of the elementary group and 49.5% of the high school group, 32.1% of the 30's, 36.5% of the 40's, 34.7% of the 50's thought that fast food can substitute for a meal. The age affected significantly the substitutability for the meal of the fast food ($p < 0.001$).

Oyedunni and Owolabi (2011) conducted a study on fast food consumption pattern among undergraduates of the Ibadan University, Nigeria: Implications for Nutrition Education. The study revealed that majority (99.5%) were aware of fast foods and 54.6% perceived them to be meals with minimal processing time. Perception of time when fast foods could be taken was at breakfast (69.5%); lunch (69.5%) and dinner (69.5%). Main types of fast food consumed were flour -based products only (81.1%) and flour-based products together with carbonated drinks (17.7%). Frequency of consumption included once in a week (19.1%), twice a week (15.6%), thrice a week (10.3%) and every day (8.0%). Only 6.5% of respondents preferred fast foods to home-made meals and reasons for preference included being readily available and stress free (66.6%) and being more delicious and nutritious (19.1%).

El-Ansari et al (2012) found in the study that students' food consumption patterns differed across the countries. Frequent consumption of unhealthy items was common. Bulgarian students reported most often frequent consumption of sweets and cakes and snacks (e.g. chips and fast food). Polish students reported the least frequent consumption of vegetables and a low consumption of fruits. Across all countries except Bulgaria, men reported substantially more often frequent consumption of snacks than women. Students living at parental home consumed more fruit, vegetables, and meat than those who resided outside of their family home in all studied countries. There was more variation with regard to cakes and salads with more frequent consumption of cakes among Bulgarian female students and Danish male students and more frequent consumption of salads among Danish female students not living at parental home, compared to students from other countries.

Singh and Mishra (2014) conducted a study on Fast Food Consumption Pattern and Obesity among School Going (9-13Years) in Lucknow District. The study revealed that 40% of respondent were eat pizza once per week, 39% of respondent were eat burger 2-4 time per week, 29% of respondent were eat chocolate 2-4 time per week, 35% of respondent were eat ice cream daily, 33% of respondent were eat cookies/ cake 5-6 time per week, 31% of respondent were eat chowmein 2-4 time per week, 31% of respondent were eat pasta once per week, 42% of respondent were eat *maggi* 5-6 time per week. 98% of respondents were like to eat fast food and 2% of respondents were not like to eat fast food so the school going children give more preferences for fast food.

Monika et al. (2015) conducted a study to assess nutritional status and consumption pattern of fast food among female students living in a post graduate hostel involving 104 girls aged 20-26 years. Fast foods consumption frequency was two to three times in a week. Interestingly Golgappa (38%), Chowmein (34%), Chole Bhatura (36%), Pav Bhaji(42%), Pizza(27%) and Patties (27%) were enjoyed by maximum number of respondents.

III. Objective And Methodology

This article is aimed at understanding the buying attitudes of the college students toward fast foods in Lunglei town in Mizoram, a small state in North East India. Mizoram has a total area of 21,078 square kilometres. It is situated between Myanmar and Bangladesh and has a strategic significance geographically and politically. For the purpose of the study, primary data were collected by administering a structured questionnaire among the sample students of the three colleges in Lunglei town, in Mizoram. The survey was conducted during July–August, 2016 which was confined to the college students in Lunglei town who consume fast foods at least four times in a week. For the purpose of the study, fast foods include fast foods available from college canteen

and other restaurants, junk foods and instant foods. The sample consisted of a total of 150 college students. The sample was drawn equally from three colleges in Lunglei town, by selecting 50 students from each of the colleges. The equal number of male (25) and female (25) respondents were selected from each of the colleges by using the quota sampling method. Quota sampling was used to give equal representation to each gender from each of the colleges. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the college campus. Secondary data were collected from journals, newspapers, books, and websites.

IV. Results And Discussion

It is attempted to know the attitudes of the respondents toward the consumption of fast foods. To be more specific, the generic term fast foods has been classified into three categories namely, fast foods available in restaurants, junk foods, and instant foods. At the time of field survey, the respondents were made clear about the conceptual difference among the three types of fast foods.

Frequency of consuming fast foods in a week

Table 1 shows the frequency of consuming fast foods by the respondents in college canteen and other restaurants in a week.

Table 1: Frequency of consuming fast foods in a week

Gender	Once	Twice	Thrice	Four times	More than four times	Everyday	Never	Total
Male	7 (9.33)	4 (5.33)	17 (22.67)	12 (16.00)	20 (26.67)	15 (20.00)	-	75
Female	4 (5.33)	11 (14.67)	17 (22.67)	17 (22.67)	5 (6.67)	20 (26.67)	1 (1.33)	74
Total	11 (7.33)	15 (10.00)	34 (22.67)	29 (19.33)	25 (16.67)	35 (23.33)	1 (0.67)	150

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages

Source: Field study

In Mizoram, the schools, colleges, and government establishments have a 5 day week. Sunday is a strict holiday even for shops and establishments. Out of 75 male respondents, over 20% consume fast foods every day in a week. Over 26% male respondents consume fast foods more than four times in a week, and 16% consume four times in a week. Out of 75 female respondents, over 26% consume fast foods every day, followed by over 6% consume more than four times in a week, and over 22% consume four times in a week. Overall, around 23% of the total respondents who consume fast foods every day within a week constitute the highest percentage of the respondents. Around 16% of the total respondents consume fast foods more than four times in a week and around 19% consume four times in a week. Interestingly, one female respondent is not in a habit of consuming fast foods, though she likes to consume junk foods and instant foods.

Number of years of consuming fast foods

Table 2 shows how long the respondents have been consuming fast foods. Over 46% of the respondents have been consuming fast foods for more than three years. Over 16% of the respondents have been consuming fast foods for three years, and over 15% for two years. Over 21% of the respondents have been consuming fast foods for one year only.

Table 2: Number of years of consuming fast foods

Gender	One year	Two years	Three years	More than three years	Total
Male	24 (32.00)	12 (16.00)	7 (9.33)	32 (42.67)	75
Female	8 (10.81)	11 (14.86)	18 (24.32)	37 (50.00)	74
Total	32 (21.47)	23 (15.44)	25 (16.78)	69 (46.31)	149

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages

Source: Field study

Gender-wise, over 42% of male respondents have been consuming fast foods for more than three years. Over 9% of male respondents have been consuming fast foods for three years, and 16% of male respondents for two years. Among female respondents, 50% have been consuming fast foods for more than three years, followed by over 24% for three years, and over 14% for two years. Interestingly, over 75% of female respondents have

been consuming fast foods at least three years while over 51% of male respondents have been consuming for at least three years.

Time of consuming fast foods in a day

Table 3 indicates the time of consuming fast foods by the respondents in a day. Among male respondents, 56% normally consume fast foods in the afternoon and around 26% consume in the forenoon mostly. Among female respondents, around 62% consume fast foods mostly in the afternoon and around 21% consume in forenoon normally.

Table 3: Time of consuming fast foods in a day

Gender	Forenoon	Afternoon	Evening	No specific time	Total
Male	20 (26.67)	42 (56.00)	3 (4.00)	10 (13.33)	75
Female	16 (21.62)	46 (62.16)	-	12 (16.21)	74
Total	36 (24.16)	88 (59.06)	3 (2.01)	22 (14.77)	149

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages

Source: Field study

Overall, around 59% of the total respondents mostly consume fast foods in the afternoon while around 24% consume normally in forenoon. In Mizoram, there is a tradition of having lunch normally after 12:00 (noon) time and even the students studying in schools and colleges follow this tradition. The Mizos prefer to have dinner in the evening normally during 5:00pm – 6:00pm. Therefore, there exists a business opportunity for entrepreneurs involved in canteens and restaurants to explore it by providing a variety of food items to the needy customers.

Amount normally spent on fast foods in a week

Table 4 shows the amount normally spent by the respondents on fast foods in a week.

Table 4: Amount normally spent on fast foods in a week

Gender	Below Rs. 100	Rs. 100-200	Rs. 200-300	Rs. 300-400	Above Rs.400	Total
Male	36 (48.00)	28 (37.33)	7 (9.33)	4 (5.33)	-	75
Female	34 (45.95)	19 (25.68)	15 (20.27)	3 (4.05)	3 (4.05)	74
Total	70 (46.98)	47 (31.54)	22 (14.77)	7 (4.70)	3 (2.01)	149

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages

Source: Field study

Out of the total respondents, over 46% normally spend below Rs. 100 for fast foods in a week. Over 31% respondents spend Rs. 100-200, and over 14% respondents spend Rs. 200 – 300 normally in a week for fast foods. Only 2% of the respondents spend more than Rs. 400. Out of male respondents, 48% usually spend below Rs. 100 to consume fast foods in a week. 37.33% of male respondents spend Rs. 100 –200, and 9.33% spend Rs. 200- 300 in a week. Among female respondents, 45.95% normally spend below Rs. 100, followed by 25.68% spend Rs. 100 – Rs. 200, and 9.33% spend Rs. 200 – Rs. 300 within a week. Among the female respondents, those who are spending Rs. 300-400 a week, constitute 20.27% while their male counterparts constitute only 9.33%.

Junk Foods

Junk foods are energy dense foods with high sugar/fat/salt content and low nutrient value in terms of protein, fibre, vitamin and mineral content (Kaushik et al., 2011). In other words, junk foods include chips, chocolate, ice cream, soft drinks, burgers, pizzas.

Frequency of consuming junk foods in a week

Table 5 indicates the frequency of consuming junk foods by the respondents. Over 17% of the respondents consume junk foods every day in a week. Over 31% of the respondents consume junk foods more than four times and 22% consume four times in a week.

Table 5: Frequency of consuming junk foods in a week

Gender	Once	Twice	Thrice	Four times	More than four times	Everyday	Never	Total
Male	3 (4.00)	7 (9.33)	16 (21.33)	11 (14.67)	24 (32.00)	13 (17.33)	1 (1.33)	75
Female	3 (4.00)	6 (8.00)	8 (10.67)	22 (29.33)	23 (30.67)	13 (17.33)	-	75
Total	6 (4.00)	13 (8.67)	24 (16.00)	33 (22.00)	47 (31.33)	26 (17.33)	1 (0.67)	150

Source: Field study.

Among male respondents, 16% consume junk foods every day in a week. 32% of male respondents consume junk foods more than four times in a week and over 14% consume four times. Among female respondents, over 17% consume junk foods every day in a week. Over 30% of female respondents consume more than four times in a week and over 29% consume four times in a week. One male respondent is not in a habit of taking junk foods even though he likes to consume fast foods and instant foods. Overall analysis indicates that over 70% of the respondents consume junk foods at least four times in a week. Gender-wise, over 77% of female respondents and over 62% of male respondents consume junk foods at least four times in a week. It may be noted that female respondents were more habitual in consuming junk foods than their male counterparts.

Number of years of consuming junk foods

Table 6 shows how long the respondents have been consuming junk foods. More than two-third of the respondents have been consuming junk foods for more than three years. Around 9% of the respondents have been consuming junk foods from the last three years.

Table 6: Number of years of consuming junk foods

Gender	From the last one year	From the last two years	From the last three years	More than three years	Total
Male	9 (12.16)	8 (10.18)	5 (6.76)	52 (70.27)	74
Female	5 (6.67)	10 (13.33)	9 (12.00)	51 (68.00)	75
Total	14 (9.40)	18 (12.08)	14 (9.40)	103 (69.13)	149

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Source: Field study.

Among male respondents, around 70% have been consuming junk for more than three years. Around 6% of male respondents have been consuming junk foods from the last three years and around 10% have been consuming from the last two years. Among female respondents, 68% have been consuming junk foods for more than three years. 12% of female respondents have been consuming junk foods from the last three years and around 13% from the last two years.

Time of consuming junk foods in a day

Table 7 indicates the time of consuming junk foods in a day by the respondents.

Table 7: Time of consuming junk foods in a day

Gender	Forenoon	Afternoon	Evening	No Specific time	Total
Male	7 (9.46)	20 (27.03)	7 (9.46)	40 (54.05)	74
Female	5 (6.67)	16 (21.33)	8 (10.67)	46 (61.33)	75
Total	12 (8.05)	36 (24.16)	15 (10.07)	86 (57.72)	149

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentage

Source: Field study

Over 57% of the respondents stated that they do not have specific time for consuming junk foods. Over 24% of the respondents consume junk foods normally in the afternoon and over 10% of the respondents consume mostly in the evening. No significant difference is found between the male students and the female students in this regard. The *Mizos* normally have morning meal, lunch, and evening meal in a day. Therefore, the college students in Mizoram mostly consume junk foods between the three mentioned timings of meals and lunch. Obviously, there is no proper specific time to consume junk foods for the college students even though

some students consume normally in forenoon, afternoon and evening. Besides, the time gap between lunch and evening meal is longer than the time gap between morning meal and lunch in *Mizo* society. Therefore, the college students who consume junk foods in the afternoon are more than the college students who consume in the forenoon in this present study.

It can also be observed from table 7 that over 54% of male respondents consume junk foods in no specific time. Over 27% of male respondents consume junk foods normally in the afternoon and over 9% of male respondents consume normally in the forenoon and evening each. Among female respondents, over 57% consume junk foods in no specific time. Over 24% of female respondents consume junk foods mostly in the afternoon and over 10% of female respondents consume mostly in the evening. No significant difference is found between the male students and the female students in this regard.

Amount normally spent on junk foods in a week

Table 8 shows the amount normally spent by the respondents on junk foods in a week.

Table 8: Amount normally spent on junk foods in a week

Gender	Below Rs. 100	Rs. 100- 200	Rs.200-300	Rs. 300-400	Above Rs. 400	Total
Male	42 (56.76)	28 (37.84)	2 (2.70)	2 (2.70)	0 (0.00)	74
Female	41 (54.67)	21 (28.00)	9 (12.00)	3 (4.00)	1 (1.33)	75
Total	83 (55.70)	49 (32.89)	11 (7.38)	5 (3.35)	1 (0.67)	149

Source: Field study

Over 55% of the respondents spend normally below Rs. 100 on junk foods in a week. Over 32% of the respondents normally spend Rs. 100- 200 in a week on junk foods. Only about 7% of the respondents spend normally Rs. 200-300.

Overall analysis shows that over 17% of female respondents spend more than Rs.200 a week on junk foods. However, in case of male respondents, only 5% of them spend that amount. Comparing junk foods and fast foods, over 88% of the respondents normally spend upto Rs. 200 and below on junk foods in a week. Over 78% of the respondents normally spend upto Rs. 200 and below on fast foods in a week.

Preferences regarding Indian or foreign junk foods

Mizoram being located in the remote corner of North East India (NEI) is sharing its borders with Bangladesh on its west and Myanmar on its east. In addition, North East Region has many neighbouring countries namely China, Bhutan, and Nepal. Therefore, it is quite common to find a good number of branded and unbranded products, including food products, in the market place of different states in NEI. In this context, it is attempted to know the preferences of the respondents toward such foreign food products in respect of junk foods. Table 9 shows the preference of the respondents in respect of Indian or Foreign junk food items.

Table 9: Do you prefer the Indian or foreign junk foods?

Gender	Respondents Preference				Total
	Only Indian	Only Foreign	Both Indian and Foreign	Can't say	
Male	3 (4.00)	-	48 (64.00)	23 (31.08)	74
Female	5 (6.67)	-	54 (72.00)	16 (21.33)	75
Total	8 (5.33)	-	102 (68.00)	39 (26.00)	150

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Source: Field Study.

Quite interestingly, nearly 6% of the respondents prefer only Indian junk foods. However, the foreign junk food items were more popular among the 68% of the respondents along with the Indian items. 26% of the respondents were not sure of it. It may be noted that there is no significant difference in this regard.

Reasonsfor consuming foreign junk food items

Table 10 shows the reasons for consuming foreign junk food items by the respondents. Over 45% of the respondents consume foreign junk foods products due to easy availability. Over 38% of the respondents consume due to habit. Nearly 13% of the respondents consume these items due to taste. Only about 5% of the respondents felt they are cheaper than Indian products. Gender wise, 58% of male and over 33% of female respondents consume foreign junk foods due to easy availability. Over 20% of male and over 51% of female consume these items due to their habit.

Table 10: Reasons for consuming foreign junk food items

Gender	More tasty than Indian junk foods	Cheaper than Indian junk foods	Just a habit	Easy availability	Total
Male	7 (14.58)	3 (6.25)	10 (20.83)	28 (58.33)	48
Female	6 (11.11)	2 (3.70)	28 (51.85)	18 (33.33)	54
Total	13 (12.74)	5 (4.90)	39 (38.23)	46 (45.10)	102

Note: 102 respondents consumed foreign junk foods

Source: Field Study.

Instant Foods

Instant foods are foods that are ready to be served once dissolved or dispersed in a liquid with low cooking time (Kaushik et al., 2011). In other words, instant foods include noodles, corn flakes, and soup powder.

Frequency of consuming instant foods in a week

Table 11 indicates the frequency of consuming instant foods by the respondents in a week. Of the 150 respondents, over 11% consume instant foods every day in a week. Over 27% of the respondents consume instant foods more than four times in a week and over 14% of the respondents consume four times in a week. Over 4% of the respondents are not in a habit of consuming instant foods.

Table 11: Frequency of consuming instant foods in a week

Gender	Once	Twice	Thrice	Four times	More than four times	Everyday	Never	Total
Male	2 (2.66)	11 (14.67)	23 (30.67)	12 (16.00)	18 (24.00)	6 (8.00)	3 (4.00)	75
Female	4 (5.33)	6 (8.00)	21 (28.00)	10 (13.33)	23 (30.67)	11 (14.67)	0 (0.00)	75
Total	6 (4.00)	17 (11.33)	44 (29.33)	22 (14.67)	41 (27.33)	17 (11.33)	3 (2.00)	150

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Source: Field study.

Among male respondents, 8% consume instant foods every day in a week. 24% of male respondents consume instant foods more than four times in a week and 16% of male respondents consume four times. Among female respondents, over 14% of female respondents consume instant foods every day in a week. Over 30% of female respondents consume instant foods more than four times in a week and over 13% of female respondents consume four times.

Number of years of consuming instant foods

Table 12 shows the number of years of consumption of instant foods by the respondents. Over 70% of the respondents have been consuming instant foods more than three years. Over 12% of the respondents have been consuming instant foods from the last three years and over 10% of the respondents from last two years. Gender-wise, over 65% of male respondents have been consuming instant foods for more than three years. Over 15% of male respondents have been consuming instant foods from last two years and over 9% from the last three years. Among female respondents, 76% have been consuming instant foods for more than three years. Over 14% of female respondents have been consuming instant foods from last three years and over 6% of female respondents from last two years.

Table 12: Number of years of consuming instant foods

Gender	From last one year	From last two years	From last three years	More than three years	Total
Male	7 (9.72)	11 (15.28)	7 (9.72)	47 (65.28)	72
Female	2 (2.67)	5 (6.67)	11 (14.67)	57 (76.00)	75
Total	9 (6.12)	16 (10.89)	18 (12.24)	104 (70.75)	147

Note: 1. Figures in parentheses are percentages.

2. Three male respondents were not in the habit of consuming instant foods, hence they were not covered

Source: Field study.

Comparing fast foods, junk foods and instant foods, over 70% of the respondents have been consuming instant foods for more than three years. Over 69% of the respondents have been consuming junk foods for more than three years. However, in case of fast foods, only 46% of the respondents have been consuming fast foods for more than three year

Amount normally spent by the respondent’s family on instant foods in a week

Table 13 indicates amount normally spent by the respondent’s family on instant foods in a week.

Table 13: Amount normally spent on instant foods in a week

Gender	Below 200	Rs. 200-500	Rs. 500-800	Rs. 800-1,100	Above 1,100	Total
Male	53 (73.61)	18 (25.00)	-	1 (1.39)	-	72
Female	43 (57.33)	28 (37.33)	4 (5.33)	-	-	75
Total	96 (65.31)	46 (31.29)	4 (2.72)	1 (0.68)	-	147

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Source: Field study.

Overall, over 65% of the total respondents’ families spend below Rs. 200 normally on instant foods in a week. Over 31% of the respondents’ families spend Rs. 200-500 on instant foods normally in a week. Only 2% of the respondents’ families spend Rs.500-Rs.800.

Gender-wise, over 73% of male respondents’ families normally spend below Rs. 200 on instant foods in a week. Over 25% of male respondents’ families normally spend Rs. 200-500 on instant foods in a week and one male respondent’s family spends Rs.800-1,100. From female respondents, over 57% of female respondents’ families normally spend below Rs. 200 on instant foods in a week. Over 37% of female respondents’ families normally spend Rs. 200-500. Over 5% of female respondents’ families normally spend Rs. 500-800 on instant foods in a week.

Overall analysis indicates that over 42% of female respondents’ families normally spend at least Rs. 200 in a week on instant food items while over 26% of male respondents’ families normally spend the same amount.

V. Conclusion

The Mizo people follow Christianity as their religion. The religion and the culture of Mizos have an impact on their food habits. Mizo traditional food culture dictates two meals a day, morning meal at around 8 a.m., and evening meal (dinner) at around 5 p.m. Before morning meal, the mizos take tea and snacks which is simple and light. During lunch time at noon, having tea and snacks is the traditional practice of Mizo people. The traditional way of preparing food in Mizoram is steaming and frying by which the vegetables and meat are prepared. Mizo people love to eat fish, chicken, beef, and pork along with vegetables. Steaming vegetables is popular in Mizo dish which can be considered as tradition. Fast food restaurants have been increasing in number in Mizoram. Different varieties of fast foods are available in these restaurants. KFC was started in 2015. The local restaurants provide fast foods of different kinds such as chow, rice, soup, rolls, beverages and burgers. Mizo people consume junk foods and instant foods which are available from shops. Some of the popular brands of junk foods which are very commonly available in Mizoram include *Lays, Kurkure, Coca Cola, Fanta, Sprite, Frooti and Appy*. Among children and youth of Mizo, it is a habit of consuming instant foods especially noodles such as *Maggi, Wai Wai and Rum Pum*. Junk foods and instant foods are available in nook and corner all over the state.

This study reveals that over 59% of the respondents consume fast foods at least four times in a week, over 70% of the respondents consume junk foods at least four times in a week, and over 53% of the respondents consume instant foods at least four times in a week. There is a marketing opportunity for the marketers running the restaurants and the retail outlets to harness the market demand. Furthermore, this study found significant differences among the male and the female respondents in respect of consumption habits of fast foods. Interestingly, more numbers of female respondents were in a habit of eating fast foods compared to their male counterparts and spent more money on average. To elaborate, one-fifth of the female respondents were spending Rs. 300-400 a week, however, only less than 10% of the male were spending the same amount. The study also reveals that more numbers of female respondents were in the habit of consuming junk foods and instant foods compared to their male counterparts. In case of junk foods, there is no significant difference between the male and female respondents in respect the amount normally spent. However, female respondents were found to be spending more money on an average for buying instant foods. There are some certain studies (e.g. Brown et al, 1998; Paeratakull et al, 2003; Stefanik, 2013) that highlight the contents and ill-effects of fast foods to human

health. In this context, the marketers are suggested to provide healthy menu of fast foods in order to prevent the ill-effects of fast foods on consumers' health. In overall analysis, the present study indicates that more female respondents were in a habit of consuming fast foods and spending more money for fast foods than their male counterparts. Therefore, female education in this regard is more important as they tend to cook fast foods as part of their daily habits. Eventually, that would affect their health as well as the health of other family members.

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