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## Soft drinks and snacks usage among adolescent girls

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### Abstract

Adolescence is a period when a particular life style is acquired and in his process many youngsters adopt health compromising behaviors (Devadas, R.P. and Jaya, N., 1985) [1]. The change in the consumption pattern in the recent years has created a high demand for food products in processed and preserved form to suit the changing life style. Many of the adolescents exhibit peculiar food habits. Peer influence is found to be the cause of faulty eating habits of most of the adolescents. Generally this becomes a habit resulting in a host of malnutrition related problem. Soft drinks consumption had a dramatic increase among all groups, especially among the adolescents. Adolescents are at risk for overweight, obesity, and chronic non communicable diseases - particularly diabetes - due to inadequate eating habits. Habits acquired during adolescence may persist into adulthood, as may overweight and obesity present during this stage. The study on soft drinks and snacks usage among adolescent girls was conducted among 50 adolescent girls in Morning Star Home Science College Hostel, Angamaly, revealed that majority of the students that consumed soft drinks, because of its more tasty and they ate just for an enjoyment. The taste of fast foods and the ease of availability were the main reason for adolescent preference towards bakeries and cool bars.

**Keywords:** Adolescence, overweight, obesity, and chronic non communicable diseases

### 1. Introduction

Many of the adolescents exhibit peculiar food habits. Peer influence is found to be the cause of faulty eating habits of most of the adolescents. Generally this becomes a habit resulting in a host of malnutrition related problem.

Adolescents are eating away from home now, than did in the late 1970's. They are also consuming more beverages and grain-based snack foods and combination foods, such as pizzas and hamburgers, and they are eating less food and drinking less milk.

Soft drinks consumption had a dramatic increase among all groups, especially among the adolescents.

Adolescents are at risk for overweight, obesity, and chronic no communicable diseases - particularly diabetes - due to inadequate eating habits. Habits acquired during adolescence may persist into adulthood, as may overweight and obesity present during this stage.

Adolescents' dietary habits are characterized by consumption of fatty, high-calorie foods, fast foods and junk foods, soft drinks, and low intake of fruits, vegetables, and dairy products. Furthermore, inadequate dietary practices, such as skipping meals and substituting snacks for traditional meals such as lunch and dinner, are commonplace.

### 2. Materials and Methods

The area selected for the study was Angamaly. The sample selected for the study was adolescent girls of age 18 to 20 years. The sample consisted of 50 girls between this age group each from this area. Random sampling was done to select the sample. According to Kothari (1985) [2] the tool used to collect information was questionnaire. It is a set of questions constructed which are asked and recorded in writing by interviewer. The tool was formulated to find out the consumption pattern of fast foods, soft drinks and snacks of adolescents. Height and weight assessment tools to be included.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Results on the study on "Soft drinks and snacks consumption pattern among adolescent girls" are discussed under the following tables and figures.

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**Table 1:** Area of Residence

No.	Area of Residence	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
1.	Rural	41	82%
2.	Urban	9	18%

Above table shows that the number of girls from urban and rural areas and their percentage, 82% of girls are from rural areas while 18% from urban areas.

**Table 2:** Type of Food Consumed

No.	Type of food	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
1.	Vegetarian	14	28%
2.	Non-vegetarian	28	56%
3	ovo-vegetarian	3	6%
4	lacto-vegetarian	5	10%

The above table shows the food pattern of the girls, whether they are vegetarian, non-vegetarian, ovo-vegetarian and lacto vegetarian. The table shows that vegetarians are 28%. More than half of the girls are non-vegetarian (56%) less number of girls are ovo vegetarian (23) and least of them were lacto

**Table 3:** Consumption of Snacks\*

No.	Items	Consumption		Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely
		Yes	No			
1.	Samosa	35(70.0)	15(30.0)	5(12.0)	20(40.0)	10(20.0)
2.	Dal Vadai	23(46.0)	27(54.0)	6(12.0)	9(18.0)	8(16.0)
3	Medhu Vadai	10(20.0)	40(80.0)	2(4.0)	4(8.0)	4(8.0)
4	Baji	36(72.0)	14(28.0)	13(26.0)	15(30.0)	8(16.0)
5	Bonda	34(68.0)	16(32.0)	12(24.0)	10(20.0)	12(24.0)
6	Banana Fry	35(70.0)	15(30.0)	16(32.0)	20(40.0)	14(28.0)
7	Kozhukkatta	31(62.0)	19(38.0)	4(8.0)	15(30.0)	12(24.0)
8	Puffs	41(82.0)	9(18.0)	15(30.0)	17(34.0)	9(18.0)
9	Vattayappam	27(54.0)	23(46.0)	4(8.0)	13(26.0)	10(20.0)

\*Multiple responses

The snacks usage among adolescents was different. Different types of snacks are available in the market. Those are Samosa, Dal; Vadai, Madhu Vadai, Baji, Bonda, Banana Fry, Kozhukkatta, Puffs, Vattayappam...etc. Consumption of Puffs (90.0%), Baji (72.0%), Samosa (70.0%), Bonda (68.0%) and Kozhukkatta (62.0%).

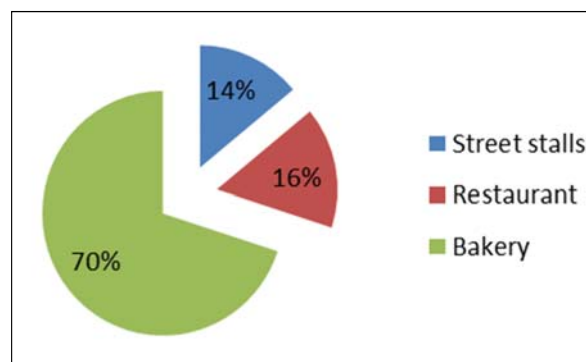
**Table 4:** Reasons for Eating Snacks

No.	Reason for eating snacks	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
1.	To celebrate occasions	4	8%
2.	Treat for friends	8	16%
3.	Just for enjoyment	17	34%
4.	Within Budget	1	2%
5.	Because of hunger	20	40%

Many of them have different reasons for eating snacks. Tastes and interest of the individual is totally different from other. The table shows that 20% of the girls take snacks, when they feel hunger. About 17% of girls eat snacks just for an enjoyment 4% of the adolescent girls eat snacks to celebrate occasions and 8% of girls use snacks to treat friends.

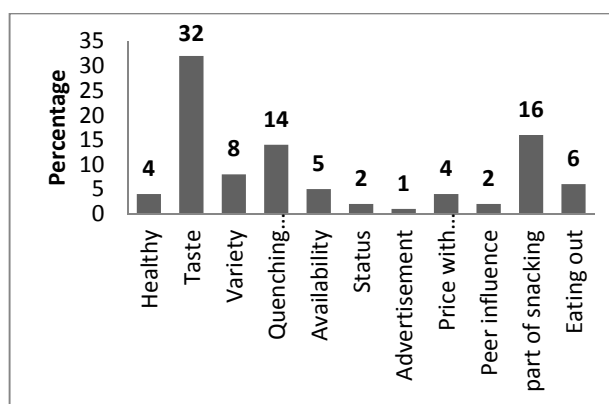
vegetarian (5 number).

**Consumption of snacks**



**Fig 1:** Snacks Purchasing Outlets

The figure shows that majority of the girls prefer bakery for purchasing snacks, 70% of girls are preferring bakery and 16% of girls prefer restaurant and 14% of girls prefer street stall.



**Fig 2:** Reasons for Consumption of Soft Drinks

Adolescent girls consume different type of drinks. They like to have drinks, because they are more tasty and variety. Soft drinks are easy to available for adolescents. 16 percentage of girls are consume this type of soft drinks considered along with snacking. About 32 percentage of girls consumed soft drinks, because it is tasty, 14% of girls for quenching thirst. Peer influence and advertisement influence affects only 1-2% of girls.

**Table 5:** Type of Preferred Soft Drinks

No.	Preference	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
1.	Flavoured drinks	10	20%
2.	Coloured	3	6%
3.	Carbonated water	13	26%
4.	Fruit drink	24	48%

Above table shows that flavoured drinks are preferred by 20% girls, 48 percentage of girls preferred fruit drinks. Only 6% of girls preferred coloured drinks, while 26% girls preferred carbonated water.

**Table 6:** Type of Preferred Beverages

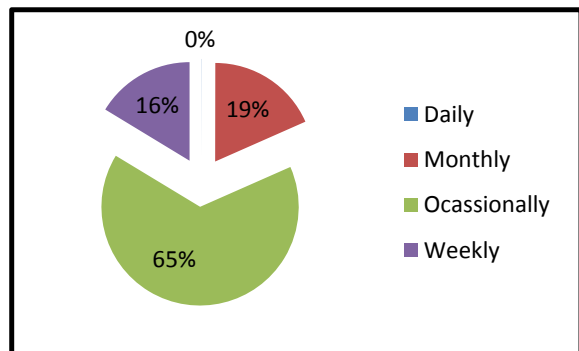
No.	Type of beverages	Frequency(n=50)	Percentage
1.	Milk	6	12%
2.	Tea	6	12%
3.	Coffee	11	22%
4	Plain water	7	14%
5.	Milk shakes	10	20%
6.	Juices	10	20%

Majority of the girls like to have coffee (22%). Milk shakes and juices are likely preferred by 20%.milk and tea was preferred by 12%. Only 14 percent of girls preferred plain water.

**Table 7:** Instance of Soft Drink Consumption

No.	Preference	Frequency(n=50)	Percentage
1.	With normal food	2	4%
2.	After meals	1	2%
3.	After playing	5	10%
4.	While smoking	0	0%
5.	During meeting	3	6%
6.	while travelling	16	32%
7.	To quench thirst	9	18%
8.	In a party	14	28%
9.	Others	4	8%

Instance of soft drink consumption means that the interest of individual to have the soft drinks after playing (10%), during meeting (6%), after meals (2%) or while travelling (32%). Above table shows that, most of the girls are likely to have the soft drinks while travelling. Some of them have the drinks (6%) during the meeting, 28% percent in parties.



**Fig 3:** Frequency of Consumption of Soft Drinks

The above diagram shows that the frequency of consumption of soft drinks by the adolescent girls. Most of girls (64%) are occasionally having the soft drinks; only 2% of girls consume soft drinks daily.

The frequency of consumption pattern of soft drinks showed that 19% monthly, and 16% of girls are consumed soft drinks weekly.

**Table 10:** Preference for Different Brands

No.	Preference of soft drinks	Frequency(n=50)	Percent
1.	Coca-cola	4	8
2.	Thumps up	1	2
3	Pepsi	6	12
4	Seven up	14	28
5	Sprite	16	32
6	Mirinda	12	24
7	Slice	15	30
8	Lime soda	17	34
9	Appyfiz	5	10
10	Mountain dew	1	2
11	Any other	1	2

Above table shows that the preference of soft drinks of the adolescent girls. Different types of soft drinks are available in the market, coca-cola, Thumps- up, pepsi, seven-up, sprite, Mirinda, slie, etc. choices of soft drinks of one adolescent girls are completely different. Here, majority of the girls preference is lime soda (34%) most of the girls preferred seven-up (28%), sprite (32%), Mirinda (24%), slice (30%). Very small number of girls are preferred other items such as coca-cola, Thumps up, Pepsi, Appyfiz, Mountain dew etc.

A recent study by IMA shows the pesticide level, Thumps up (15.2%), coke (13.4%), Seven up (12.5%), Mirinda (10.7%) Pepsi (10.9%) and Fanta (9.1%).

**4. Conclusion**

Generally eating daily from outside was not observed among girls. On the whole, the data analysed showed the snacks and soft drinks was now an inseparable component in the dietary pattern of our adolescent girls. They were not ready to give up the habit even after realizing the truth that they are buying life endangering diseases.

**5. Reference**

1. Rajammal P Devadas, Jaya N. Text book on child Development Macmillan Press Limited, 1985.
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