

**DETERMINATION OF JUNK FOOD CONSUMPTION AMONG  
ADOLESCENTS IN GAMPAHA TOWN, SRI LANKA**



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## ABSTRACT

The increasing prevalence of junk food consumption among adolescents poses significant health risks. Therefore adolescents need to have knowledge and practices related to the health risks caused by the consumption of junk food. Hence the present study was carried out to assess junk food consumption among adolescents aged between 13-19 in Gampaha town, Sri Lanka. A cross-sectional study was carried out by taking a total of 379 students according to the described formula and a random sampling technique was adopted. They were interviewed by administering a semi-structured questionnaire. The descriptive analysis was used to study the socio-demographic characteristics and attitudes related to junk food consumption of the participants and Pearson's chi-square was applied to assess the association between variables. Most of the participants were 14-year-old students. Compared to the male students, female students participated more. Most students have a nuclear family environment, and almost all students live with their parents. A higher percentage of parents complete A/L education. Most of the fathers work in the private sector and mothers are housewives. Most of the family's income ranges between Rs. 50000-100000 per month. Most adolescents know about junk food. Students eat 1 to 2-time junk foods per day and spend between Rs 50-100 per day, a majority of students responded that junk food is available at the school canteen. Many students have experienced an energetic feeling after consuming junk food. Many students choose junk food because of their taste. The present study found that there was a significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ) between knowledge about junk food and living status, fathers' education and mothers' occupation. There was a significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ) between money expenditure and age, living status, father's education, father's occupation, and family income. Additionally, there was a significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ) between knowledge about non-communicable diseases due to junk food consumption and some sociodemographic characteristics such as family type, living status, and mother's occupation. The study highlights the need for targeted nutritional education programs and policy interventions to mitigate the adverse health effects associated with junk food consumption among adolescents. By addressing these factors, we can promote healthier dietary habits and improve the overall well-being of this vulnerable population.

**Keywords:** *Adolescents, Disease, Gampaha, Health, Junk food*

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