

AN EFFECT OF FOOD EATING HABITS ON STUDENTS' BEHAVIORAL CHANGES OF GRADE 5 STUDENTS

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Abstract:

Food habits have a direct impact on the physical, emotional, and behavior development of children. In recent years, students have increasingly adopted unhealthy eating patterns such as junk food, sugary snacks, and irregular meals. This study focuses on understanding how food habits affect students' behaviour, concentration, emotional stability, and overall classroom performance. A descriptive research method was used in this study. A sample of 40 Grade 5 students was selected from a primary school through random sampling. Data was collected using student questionnaires, teacher observation checklists, and parent responses. The findings indicate that students with unhealthy eating habits showed signs of irritability, lack of concentration, restlessness, and mood swings. In contrast, students with healthy eating habits were found to be more attentive, emotionally stable, and active in class.

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Introduction:

Food is not just a source of energy—it directly influences brain function, mood, and behavior. Among students, eating habits play a crucial role in shaping concentration levels, emotional stability, academic performance, and social behavior. Food plays a vital role in shaping the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of students. In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in students' eating habits, with an increased preference for fast food, irregular meal patterns, and reduced consumption of nutritious foods. These changes have raised concerns about their impact not only on physical health but also on behavioral patterns. Eating habits directly influence brain function, energy levels, and mood, all of which are closely linked to behavior. A balanced diet provides essential nutrients that support cognitive development, emotional stability, and concentration. In contrast, unhealthy eating habits—such as skipping meals, consuming excessive junk food, or high sugar intake—can lead to behavioral issues like irritability, lack of focus, anxiety, and reduced academic performance. Students are in a critical stage of growth and development, where proper nutrition is essential for both learning and behavior regulation. Poor dietary choices can negatively affect their attention span, memory, classroom participation, and social interactions. Therefore, understanding the relationship between food habits and behavioral changes is important for promoting healthier lifestyles and improving overall student performance. This study aims to analyze how different eating habits influence students' behavior and to highlight the importance of adopting healthy dietary practices for better mental, emotional, and academic outcome.

Need and Importance of the Study:

Need of the Study

In recent times, there has been a significant change in students' eating habits, with a growing inclination toward fast food, irregular meals, and low nutritional intake. These unhealthy patterns are affecting not only their physical health but also their behavior, concentration, and emotional stability. There is a need to systematically study how food habits influence students' behavior to understand the underlying causes of issues like lack of attention, mood swings, stress, and poor academic performance. This study is necessary to create awareness about the connection between diet and behavior and to identify ways to improve students' overall well-being

Importance of the Study:

1. Helps in Understanding the Diet–Behavior Relationship

The study highlights how different types of food intake affect students' mental and emotional behavior.

2. Encourages Healthy Lifestyle Choices

It promotes awareness among students about the importance of balanced diets and regular

3. Supports Physical and Mental Development

Good nutrition is essential for overall growth, energy levels, and emotional stability.

4. Guidance for Parents and Teachers

The study provides useful insights to parents and educators to monitor and improve students' overall well being.

Research Statement:

This study is to analyze the impact of food eating habits on the behavior of Grade 5 students and to suggest practical measures for promoting healthy dietary habits.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the food habits of students
- To analyze the behavior changes among students
- To suggest healthy dietary practices for maintaining positive behavior among students

Hypothesis of the Study:

A hypothesis is a tentative statement that predicts the relationship between variables—in this case, food eating habits and students' behavioral changes.

Research Questions:

1. Do you eat breakfast daily?
2. How often do you consume junk/fast food?
3. How many meals do you eat per day?
4. Do you feel tired or inactive during classes?
5. How often do you feel stressed or irritated?
6. Do you consume fruits and vegetables regularly?
7. How much water do you drink daily?

8. Do you think you're eating habits affect your studies?
9. How often do you skip meals?
10. Do you feel difficulty concentrating in class?

Literature Review: Several studies highlight the relationship between food habits and children's behavior:

- Research indicates that diets high in sugar and processed foods are linked with hyperactivity, emotional imbalance, and poor concentration.
- Balanced diets rich in fruits, vegetables, and proteins improve attention span and emotional stability.
- Poor nutrition can affect hormones and brain functioning, leading to behavioral issues. This study helps fill the gap by focusing specifically on Grade 5 students in a school setting.

Methodology:

Type of Research: Descriptive and analytical research

Research Method: Survey method

Sample: 30-35 Grade 5 students

Sampling Technique: Simple random sampling

Area of Study: English Prep School

Duration: 20-26 days

Data Analysis: Manually tallying and visual representation

Scope of the Study: The study specifically targets students in English Prep School to analyze the effect of their eating habits on behavior. The study examines behavioral changes such as concentration, mood, energy levels and irritability. It considers both healthy eating (balanced diet, fruits, vegetables) and unhealthy eating (junk food, irregular meals, skipping meals).

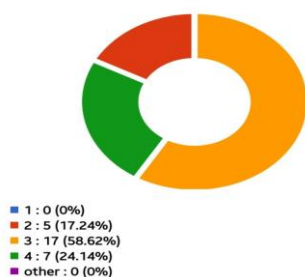
Limitations of the Study: The research is conducted on a limited number of students, which may not fully represent the entire population. The study relies on students' responses in questionnaires or interviews, which may be subjective or biased.

Tools for Analysis:

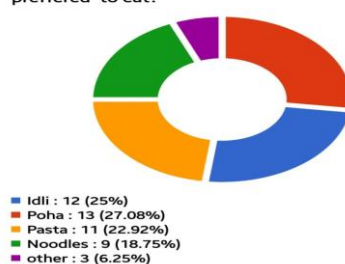
- Percentage method
- Pie Chart
- Teachers Checklist

Data Collection and Analysis:

Q1.How many times do you eat daily?



Q2.Do you eat breakfast daily, if yes select the mention options which you preferred to eat?



Q3.Do you like to eat junk food?



■ Yes : 25 (86.21%)
■ No : 4 (13.79%)

Q4.Which type of junk food do you eat?



■ Burger : 14 (20.59%)
■ Pizza : 19 (27.94%)
■ Noodles : 15 (22.06%)
■ Chips : 19 (27.94%)
■ other : 1 (1.47%)

Q5.How often do you eat junk food



■ Daily : 8 (26.67%)
■ Weekly : 16 (53.33%)
■ Rarely : 6 (20%)

Q6.Do you like soft drinks



■ Yes : 26 (86.67%)
■ No : 4 (13.33%)

Q7.How often do you drink soft drink



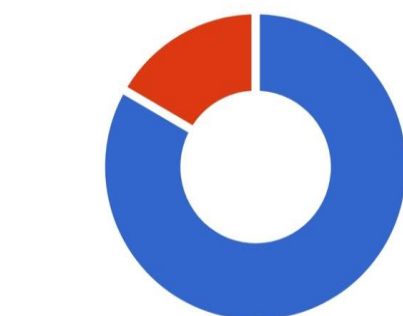
■ Daily : 7 (23.33%)
■ Rarely : 8 (26.67%)
■ Sometimes : 15 (50%)

Q8.Do you like vegetables?If no answer the below question



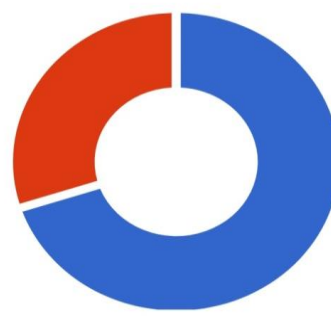
■ Yes : 16 (53.33%)
■ No : 14 (46.67%)

Q10.Do you like to eat chocolates



■ Yes : 25 (83.33%)
■ No : 5 (16.67%)

Q11.Do you watch Cartoon while eating



■ Yes : 21 (70%)
■ No : 9 (30%)

Q12.How often dlo you drink milk



■ Daily : 11 (36.67%)
■ Weekly : 6 (20%)
■ Often : 9 (30%)
■ Very rarely : 4 (13.33%)

Q13.Do you feel angry or irritated quickly



■ Yes : 20 (66.67%)
■ No : 10 (33.33%)

Q14.Do you find it difficult to concentrate in class



■ Yes : 12 (40%)
■ No : 6 (20%)
■ Always : 1 (3.33%)
■ Sometimes : 11 (36.67%)

Q15.Do you ever feel restless



■ Yes : 15 (50%)
■ No : 7 (23.33%)
■ Sometimes : 8 (26.67%)

Q16. Do you feel sad or low without reason



■ Yes : 11 (36.67%)
■ No : 7 (23.33%)
■ Sometimes : 12 (40%)
■ Always : 0 (0%)

Q17. Does your teachers are parents complaint about your behaviour



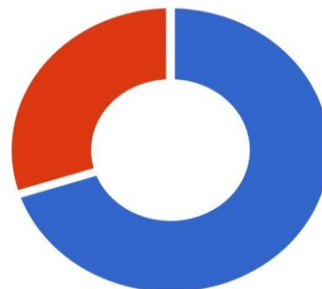
■ Yes : 11 (36.67%)
■ No : 5 (16.67%)
■ Sometimes : 14 (46.67%)
■ Always : 0 (0%)

Q18.How often do you exercise



■ Daily : 4 (13.33%)
■ Weekly : 17 (56.67%)
■ Rarely : 9 (30%)

Q19.Do you feel sleepy during your lectures



■ Yes : 21 (70%)
■ No : 9 (30%)

Data Collection:





Findings:

- Unhealthy food habits are common among Grade 5 students.
- Junk food consumption affects concentration and mood.
- Students with balanced diets show better behaviour.
- Teachers observed improved participation in healthy eaters.
- Food habits influence emotional stability and classroom learning.

Recommendations:

- Conduct nutrition awareness programs in schools.
- Encourage healthy Tiffin practices.
- Involve parents in healthy food planning.
- Reduce availability of junk food near schools.
- Promote regular meal timings and water intake.

Conclusion:

This study shows that food eating habits have a strong impact on students' behaviour, concentration, and emotional well-being. Healthy eating supports better classroom behaviour, learning, and overall development. Schools and parents should work together to create awareness and encourage balanced diets among children for their holistic growth.

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