



THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOD LITERACY AMONG ADOLESCENTS BETWEEN JUNK FOOD AND REAL FOOD

Muhammad Refly Batu Bara

mhd.refly@gmail.com

Universitas Negeri Medan

Farrel Simanjourang

simanjourangfarel@gmail.com

Universitas Negeri Medan

Rita Hartati

ritahartati@unimed.ac.id

English Literature, Universitas Negeri Medan

Korespondensi penulis : *mhd.refly@gmail.com*

Abstract *Adolescents is a person who is in between the ages of 10 and 19. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Health Number 25 of 2014, adolescents are Age group 10 years to age 18 years old. Literally, junk food is interpreted as garbage food or non-nutritious food. The term means indicating foods that are considered to have no nutritional value for the body In this study, the research design used is qualitative descriptive and the power used is secondary cross-sectional analysis The sample is only 30 people, namely students from Medan State University and random Senior High Schools, aged 18-23. From field data with a total of 30 respondents, 25 (82%) teenagers like fast food or junk food and 5 (18%) teenagers do not like junk food. This systematic review investigated the relationship between food literacy and junk food consumption. Existing survey results of the 30 adolescents, 60% were female and 40% were male. With an age range of 18-20, there are 22 people, 73.3% and ages 21-23, there are 8 people, 26.7%. Things that influence adolescent habits are adolescent behavior in eating junk food as follows, Knowledge (40%), Influence of peers (30%), Place (13,3%), Fast and practical (10%), Taste (6,7%) Many teenagers do not understand this food literacy, of course, it must be done correctly. Food literacy is the intelligence of teenagers in choosing to process and serve food that is in accordance with the needs of their bodies or in this case in accordance with the existing nutrition so that what is needed is truly in accordance with what is needed*

Keywords: *Food Literacy, Junk Food, Real Food*

INTRODUCTION

A. Background Information

Adolescents is a person who is in between the ages of 10 and 19. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Health Number 25 of 2014, adolescents are Age group 10 years to age 18 years old. Adolescence begins at age 12 years and ending around the age of 17 or 18 years. Teenagers have needs Special Nutrition Compared other age groups. This is because at the time of adolescence growth occurs rapid and changing maturity physiological with respect to time Puberty.

In Indonesia, currently 61% of teenagers often consume junk food or fast food (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022). This bad eating behavior is worrying, because it can cause obesity,

malnutrition, and long-term health consequences (Melo et al., 2020; Lipsky & Iannotti, 2012).

The importance of food literacy in adolescents is in the potential where adolescents are currently encouraged to become daily habits and this can prevent chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. awareness of the importance of food literacy for individuals is by choosing foods that suit daily needs so that they can reduce the burden of this disease and improve overall health outcomes. the importance of food literacy in adolescents so that in this study the topic is only limited to the scope of food literacy with the object being today's adolescents Silva, P. (2023).

This study that has been studied connects and identifies knowledge of food literacy among adolescents to junk food consumption among adolescents. in this case of course this study was studied among students The sample is only 30 people, namely students from Medan State University, aged 18-23 Data collection was carried out using questionnaires about food nutrition and junk food to students or adolescents and interviews were also carried out in accordance with the guidelines. The questionnaire was shared by Google Form and the interview was conducted by direct contact the results of previous studies are connecting food literacy and junk food is by using google form. the thing discussed in previous studies is to see how the nutritional intake received by adolescents so that what is eaten is in accordance with what is needed. Similar findings were observed in a longitudinal cohort which revealed that food preparation behavior changes over time. Adolescents with more pocket money (19–23 years) are more likely to buy fast food because it is more practical. Food is a basic need for growth and development, including for teenagers. If teenagers do not consume enough food, both in terms of quantity and quality, it will disrupt the body's metabolic processes, which can lead to the risk of developing diseases. In addition, if teenagers consume too much food without being balanced with sufficient physical activity, they will experience body disorders, such as being at risk of developing degenerative diseases.

Nowadays, many teenagers like fast food. Teenagers who have high social activities tend to show interaction with friends. peers. In big cities, there are often groups of teenagers who eat together at eateries that provide fast food. Fast food comes from western countries which generally have high fat and calorie content. If consumed in large

quantities every day, it can cause obesity. This obesity or overweight can cause other nutritional problem. Fast food or fast food is also known to the public as junk food.

Preliminary Data

Literally, junk food is interpreted as garbage food or non-nutritious food. The term means indicating foods that are considered to have no nutritional value for the body. Eating junk food is not only in vain, but can also damage health. Health problems due to eating junk food such as obesity or overweight, diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, and so on. with this food literacy of course can provide knowledge about the dangers of fast food only so that what needs to be done is how these teenagers understand the food literacy of the food. based on the study that has been done that teenagers who often consume junk food will get diabetes faster than those who do not eat junk food as many as 54.40% of students like fast food and more than 60% of students are not aware of the fact that fast food is unhealthy food.

Effects of Junk Food

The prevalence of obesity worldwide continues to increase and has become a global epidemic. At least 2.8 million people die each year due to obesity. The results of the 2018 Riskesdas data show that the prevalence of overweight and obesity in Indonesian people aged 18 and over is 13.6% and 21.8%. Meanwhile, in the population aged over 15 years, the prevalence of central obesity reaches 31.0%.

Research Problem

1. How do teenagers understand fast food or junk food and its impact on health?
2. How do teenagers understand food literacy knowledge?

Significance of the research

Because today's teenagers who consume fast food ≥ 2 days per week are at risk of 2.2 times obesity. In addition, other studies show that 90% of teenagers who consume fast food, 22.45% are pre-obese and 9.52% are obese. As many as 54.40% of students like fast food and more than 60% of students are not aware of the fact that fast food is unhealthy food. This study is used as a reference for how the influence of food literacy has an influence on adolescent consumption of junk food so that this study can be used as a reference in further research

LITETARURE REVIEW

A. Overview of relevant literature

Diversification of staple foods is not yet optimal. This is due to the lack of introduction of local food to residents and the weak implementation of food diversification policies. Therefore, the food literacy movement needs to be encouraged to initiate the sustainability of cultural advancement objects related to local food as the basis for food policy. therefore, many teenagers do not understand this food literacy, of course, it must be done correctly. Food literacy is the intelligence of teenagers in choosing to process and serve food that is in accordance with the needs of their bodies or in this case in accordance with the existing nutrition so that what is needed is truly in accordance with what is needed. This study that has been studied connects and identifies knowledge of food literacy among adolescents to junk food consumption among adolescents. in this case of course this study was studied among students The sample is only 30 people, namely students from Medan State University, aged 18-23 Data collection was carried out using questionnaires about food nutrition and junk food to students or adolescents and interviews were also carried out in accordance with the guidelines. The questionnaire was shared by Google From and the interview was conducted by direct contact the results of previous studies are connecting food literacy and junk food is by using google form. the thing discussed in previous studies is to see how the nutritional intake received by adolescents so that what is eaten is in accordance with what is needed. Similar findings were observed in a longitudinal which revealed that food preparation behavior changes over time. Adolescents with more pocket money (19–23 years) are more likely to buy fast food because it is more practical.

B. Key theories or concepts

Behavior is a habit that will later be values and which will be believed to become a habit that will later be one of them is a human activity that will later be as a behavior and attitude of an action based on belief in oneself, things that are done rationally are something that is an attitude that arises from a collection of active or passive forms so that they can respond to what is in one of the existing ones so that what is done is one of the things that will later become active behavior (Adventus, et al., 2019).

Based on the study that has been done that teenagers who often consume junk food will get diabetes faster than those who do not eat junk food qs many as 54.40% of students

like fast food and more than 60% of students are not aware of the fact that fast food is unhealthy food.

C. Gaps or controversies in the literature

Research on food literacy is currently certainly one of the interesting topics, some of the studies that have been developed are research on food and nutrition literacy. so that food literacy in adolescents about junk food is one of the new things developed in this study. Seeing the behavior of adolescents who are currently more fond of eating junk food, of course, it must be studied more deeply so that what is studied can produce good goals. knowledge of food literacy must of course be aligned with parental supervision of food or nutrition, which is currently very rare to find parents supervising their children in terms of food. so that currently many teenagers in this case prefer junk food to home-cooked food which has better nutritional value and nutrition.

METHODOLOGY

A. Research design

In this study, the research design used is qualitative descriptive and the power used is secondary cross-sectional analysis. In this study, a control experiment was conducted on each result obtained (Moher, 2009).

B. Data collection methods

Data collection was carried out using questionnaires about food nutrition and junk food to students or adolescents and interviews were also carried out in accordance with the guidelines. The questionnaire was shared by Google Form and the interview was conducted by direct contact (Nicholas, 2023).

C. Sample selection

The sample is only 30 people, namely students from Medan State University and random Senior High Schools, aged 18-23.

D. Data analysis techniques

Qualitative research methods according to (Combs, Crook, & Rauch, 2019) Qualitative research is research that prioritizes research with observation, interviews and the findings in this case are in accordance with the existing literature so that what can later be used as reference material can be done by reviewing all events in the field and the results of literature observations

1. Data Reduction

After obtaining the data, the next stage is to analyze the data through data reduction, reducing data means summarizing, selecting and sorting the main points, focusing on important things, looking for themes and patterns.

2. Data Display

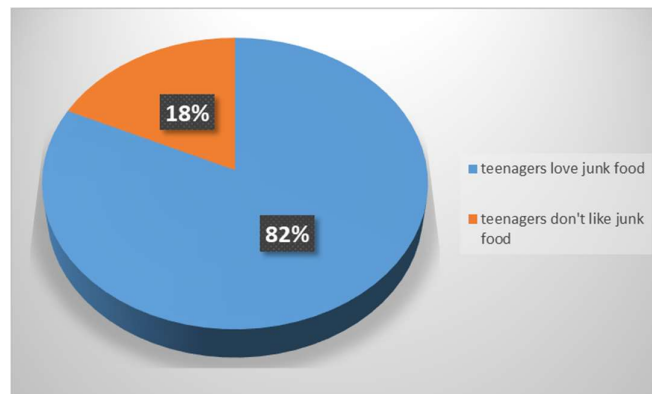
In presenting data that is most often used in qualitative research is with narrative text/words and easy to understand.

3. Conclusion Drawing or Verification

Next, the researcher makes a conclusion based on the data that has been processed through data reduction and data presentation.

RESULTS

A. Presentation of Findings



From field data with a total of 30 respondents, 25 (82%) teenagers like fast food or junk food and 5 (18%) teenagers do not like junk food. From the findings in the field with the results of existing journal literacy, the results of this study are: A full article review was conducted on the remaining ten studies, after which an additional thirty-eight were excluded. Of those thirty-eight studies, eight were found not to be a study (i.e. describing an education intervention process or did not have evaluation measures) and three did not include a measure of food literacy.

This systematic review investigated the relationship between food literacy and junk food consumption. Overall, the evidence from this review suggests that the relationship can be seen below. Fast food and junk food are popular because they are fast to serve, widely available, easy to obtain, and taste good. However, the habit of eating fast food or

junk food in excess will have a negative impact on health, both in children, adolescents, and adults. Fast food can increase the risk of several diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and blood fat disorders or dyslipidemia. In addition, fast food in the long term will also affect dental health. Fast food that has a high sugar content can cause tooth decay or cavities.

B. Data Analysis and interpretation

Existing survey results of the 30 adolescents, 60% were female and 40% were male. With an age range of 18-20, there are 22 people, 73.3% and ages 21-23, there are 8 people, 26.7%. Teenagers who have food literacy knowledge are 56.7% with a monthly pocket money of Rp. 3.000.000. Of the 30 respondents, 25 people (83.3%) teenagers like fast food or junk food and 5 people (16.7%) don't like junk food or prefer real food. There were no significant differences in demographic characteristics such as parental education level, employment status, and family income for all participants ($P > .01$).

C. Support For research Question or Hypothesis

This study that has been studied connects and identifies knowledge of food literacy among adolescents to junk food consumption among adolescents. in this case of course this study was studied among students The sample is only 30 people, namely students from Medan State University, aged 18-23 Data collection was carried out using questionnaires about food nutrition and junk food to students or adolescents and interviews were also carried out in accordance with the guidelines. The questionnaire was shared by Google Form and the interview was conducted by direct contact the results of previous studies are connecting food literacy and junk food is by using google form. the thing discussed in previous studies is to see how the nutritional intake received by adolescents so that what is eaten is in accordance with what is needed. Similar findings were observed in a longitudinal cohort study by Laska et al., which revealed that food preparation behavior changes over time. Adolescents with more pocket money (19–23 years) are more likely to buy fast food because it is more practical.

Things that influence adolescent habits are adolescent behavior in eating junk food as follows:

1. Knowledge (40%)
2. Influence of peers (30%)
3. Place (13,3%)

4. Fast and practical (10%)
5. Taste (6,7%)

DISCUSSION

A. Interpretation of results

Many teenagers do not understand this food literacy, of course, it must be done correctly. Food literacy is the intelligence of teenagers in choosing to process and serve food that is in accordance with the needs of their bodies or in this case in accordance with the existing nutrition so that what is needed is truly in accordance with what is needed. This study that has been studied connects and identifies knowledge of food literacy among adolescents to junk food consumption among adolescents. in this case of course this study was studied among students The sample is only 30 people, namely students from Medan State University, aged 18-23 Data collection was carried out using questionnaires about food nutrition and junk food to students or adolescents and interviews were also carried out in accordance with the guidelines. The questionnaire was shared by Google Form and the interview was conducted by direct contact the results of previous studies are connecting food literacy and junk food is by using google form. the thing discussed in previous studies is to see how the nutritional intake received by adolescents so that what is eaten is in accordance with what is needed. Similar findings were observed in a longitudinal cohort study by Laska et al., which revealed that food preparation behavior changes over time. Adolescents with more pocket money (19–23 years) are more likely to buy fast food because it is more practical.

Fast service and presentation also affect the people's practicality in consuming fast food. For students, consuming fast food is an option because of the limited time they have. In addition, fast food is an option for parents who are very busy. Many parents now also invite their children to gather with their families at fast food restaurants. Food at fast food restaurants is always available because it is made using machines, so the manufacturing process is fast and looks clean. The reason for consuming fast food is because of its fast presentation. At this time, people want everything to be fast. Therefore, most people, especially teenagers, want everything to be fast, such as choosing instant food, both during the serving process and when eaten. Teenagers only need a few minutes to wait for the food they ordered to arrive and be ready to eat. One of the reasons for

consuming fast food is because it tastes good. Teenagers who are used to consuming fast food think that fast food is food that tastes good, is easy to get and can stimulate appetite. Fast food and junk food are generally liked by the public, including teenagers because they have a good taste delicious. Factors that cause fast food to taste good are the high content of oil, salt and sugar. Fast food restaurants generally compete to create new variations of food with delicious tastes so that they suit the tastes of the community. The first reason for consuming fast food among teenagers in Yogyakarta is because fast food tastes good. The food tastes good because of the content of monosodium glutamate (MSG), sodium salt, sugar, fat and addictive substances that cause addiction to the delicious and savory taste.

The results obtained from a family are one of them in this case can also affect what is obtained by the family lifestyle and food consumption the higher the income of a family of course the food that is often consumed is junk food in this case because it is a habit that is often done. this increasingly high income is because the busyness of each family member which causes what later time to pay attention to children will be less so parents believe that fast food is better and of course this understanding of food literacy will not be considered. People's eating patterns are changing towards unhealthy ones such as consuming fast food. Parents' income will also affect the pocket money received by teenagers. The availability of pocket money received by teenagers will affect fast food consumption patterns. The more pocket money teenagers have, the more teenagers will consume fast food.

B. Comparison with existing literature

From this study directly on the Importance of Food Literacy among Adolescents Between Junk Food and Real Food, there are no journals that discuss this, several journals Assessing food and nutrition literacy in children and adolescents: a systematic review of existing tools. The results of this study are from this study directly on the Importance of Food Literacy among Adolescents Between Junk Food and Real Food, there are no journals that discuss this, several journals Assessing food and nutrition literacy in children and adolescents: a systematic review of existing tools (Carrol, 2021). The results of this study are from this study directly on the Importance of Food Literacy among Adolescents Between Junk Food and Real Food, there are no journals that discuss this, several journals

Assessing food and nutrition literacy in children and adolescents: a systematic review of existing tools.

C. Implications and limitations of the study

The limitation of this study is that journals that discuss The Importance of Food Literacy Among Adolescents Between Junk Food and Real Food directly are very few and not all journals can be used. In addition, the limitation of the study is that the respondents who were interviewed were very difficult to do because there was no knowledge about food literacy.

CONCLUSION

A. Summary of key findings

From the results of this study, knowledge about food literacy among teenagers is currently considered quite lacking, in addition, the knowledge factor about food literacy is taboo for teenagers. Knowledge about food literacy is not provided by schools but should be provided by parents because the important role of parents is very important in determining knowledge in food literacy. In addition, eating junk food that is fast and delicious is one of the things that teenagers really like, this is of course because of the habits or behavior of teenagers who want everything to be instant in doing something.

B. Contribution to the field

This research can be a reference as material for implementing food literacy among teenagers and be a reference that knowledge about this literacy is very important and the role of schools and family environments is very important in terms of food literacy. In addition, behavioral habits are also very important so that they do not become daily habits and must be closely monitored.

C. Recommendations for future research

This research can be used as a reference for further research on The Importance of Food Literacy Among Adolescents Between Junk Food and Real Food.

REFERENCES

Carroll, N., Perreault, M., Ma, D. W., & Haines, J. (2022). Assessing food and nutrition literacy in children and adolescents: a systematic review of existing tools. *Public Health Nutrition*, 25(4), 850–865. [doi:10.1017/S1368980021004389](https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980021004389)

- Bailey, C. J., Drummond, M. J., & Ward, P. R. (2019). Food literacy programmes in secondary schools: A systematic literature review and narrative synthesis of quantitative and qualitative evidence. *Public Health Nutrition*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980019001666>
- Brown, R., Seabrook, J. A., Stranges, S., Clark, A. F., Haines, J., O'Connor, C., Doherty, S., & Gilliland, J. A. (2021). Examining the Correlates of Adolescent Food and Nutrition Knowledge. *Nutrients*, 13(6), 2044. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13062044>
- Community Information Database. (2011). Metropolitan Influenced Zones (MIZ) typology.
- Chapman, P., Toma, R. B., & Jacob, M. (1997). Nutrition knowledge among adolescent high school female athletes. *Adolescence*, 32(126), 437–437.
- Dwijayanti I, Chien YW, Poda GG, Chao JCJ. (2021). Defining food literacy and dietary patterns among senior high school students in Malang City, East Java. *Jurnal Gizi Indonesia (The Indonesian Journal of Nutrition)*, 10(1), 45-53. <https://doi.org/10.14710/jgi.10.1.45-53>.
- Krause, C., Sommerhalder, K., Beer-Borst, S., & Abel, T. (2018). Just a subtle difference? Findings from a systematic review on definitions of nutrition literacy and food literacy. *Health promotion international*, 33(3), 378-389.
- LeBlanc, J., Ward, S., & LeBlanc, C. P. (2022). The Association Between Adolescents' Food Literacy, Vegetable and Fruit Consumption, and Other Eating Behaviors. *Health education & behavior: the official publication of the Society for Public Health Education*, 49(4), 603–612. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10901981221086943>
- Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., Altman, D. G., & PRISMA Group*, T. (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *Annals of internal medicine*, 151(4), 264-269.
- Nicholas, J. (2023). Snap Surveys. 12 Questions for your Hybrid Working Employee Survey. Retrieved from Snap Surveys Ltd.:
- O'Brien, K., MacDonald-Wicks, L., & Heaney, S. E. (2024). A Scoping Review of Food Literacy Interventions. *Nutrients*, 16(18), 3171. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu16183171>
- Truman, E., Lane, D., & Elliott, C. (2017). Defining food literacy: A scoping review. *Appetite*, 116, 365–371. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2017.05.007>
- Silva, P. (2023). Food and Nutrition Literacy: Exploring the Divide between Research and Practice. *Foods*, 12(14), 2751. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods12142751>