

Food preferences by the youth, a comparison between traditional and fast food

[Nutrition](#), [Fast Food](#)



Changing living patterns have brought some serious changes in the tendencies for the food preferences. Earlier, the food was just used to fulfill the body needs. Due to improved living conditions, people tend to prefer delicious, tasty and innovative food. This behavioral shift has a global impact on food choices. The food, on the basis of preference, can be categorized as traditional and fast food respectively. This is an attempt to have a comparison between fast food and traditional food to know the food preferences by the youth.

Food, since the beginning of civilization, has been integral part of life. It satisfies the basic needs of human body; provides energy. Earlier the food was just limited to satisfy the basic needs due to limited resources. With the advent of civilization, living pattern dramatically changed, due to this shift, life style tended to be the luxurious; basic needs (necessity) were replaced by the taste (accessories). Food can be categorized as traditional food and fast food respectively. Traditional foods are foods and dishes that are passed through generations or which have been consumed many generations. Traditional foods and dishes are traditional in nature, and may have a historic precedent in a national dish, regional cuisine or local cuisine.

Traditional foods and beverages may be produced as homemade, by restaurants and small manufacturers, and by large food processing plant facilities. This category includes biryani, vegetables, nihari, qorma & pulses. Mostly this kind of food is prepared at homes. Due to cultural affiliation the intake of traditional food is on large scale. Taste, easy availability and reliability are the key factors that seem to be triggering force for the intake.

This kind of food is full of natural ingredients; enriched with minerals and has a deep positive impact on health. There are no side effects on health. But the addition of extra spices has negative impact on human health.

Fast food is a mass-produced food that is prepared and served very quickly. The food is typically less nutritionally valuable compared to other foods and dishes. While any meal with low preparation time can be considered fast food, typically the term refers to food sold in a restaurant or store with frozen, preheated or precooked ingredients, and served to the customer in a packaged form for take-out/take-away.

Fast food restaurants are traditionally distinguished by their ability to serve food via a drive-through. Outlets may be stands or kiosks, which may provide no shelter or seating,[1] or fast food restaurants (also known as quick service restaurants). Franchise operations that are part of restaurant chains have standardized foodstuffs shipped to each restaurant from central locations. Fast food began with the first fish and chip shops in Britain in the 1860s. Drive-through restaurants were first popularized in the 1950s in the United States. The term “ fast food” was recognized in a dictionary by Merriam-Webster in 1951.

Fast food poses threats to human health; Junk food is not health friendly. It has severe health issues caused due to excessive consumption. The traditional family dinner is increasingly being replaced by the consumption of takeaway, or eating “ on the run”. As a result, the time invested on food preparation is getting lower and lower, with an average couple in the United

States spending 47 minutes and 19 seconds per day on food preparation in 2013. Traditional food is mostly culture-based. People who are Desi-nature mostly prefer desi-dishes. Where as, those who are influenced by western culture opt to go for this kind of food.

Fast food consumers prefer good taste, spices, availability & uniqueness. Though the hostellers & the ones having their private accommodation are well-aware of the disadvantages of the fast food intake, they are forced to go for this, because of the poor quality. Being provided in the mess canteen. Over all traditional food was rated 8.6/10. The fast food had 5/10 rating. The trend of tasty food intake is increasing very rapidly because of increased standards of living. The youth are mostly attracted towards taste rather than nutritious food. The fast food is consumed less because of the spoilage and its harmful consequences on health. There is a great variety offered in the traditional food category, which seems to be the triggering force for traditional food consumption.