

Government regulation of fast food argumentative essays

[Education](#), [Discipline](#)



Obesity is becoming an epidemic in America, with more than 30 per cent childhood diabetes cases today are of Type 2, a condition that is as a result of poor diet and unhealthy lifestyle (Zinczenko 154). The American fast food culture contributes to this level of obesity, as the combination of affordability, taste and convenience makes it easier for families and individuals of any income level to feed themselves on fast food. However, it should be the responsibility of the individual to regulate their diet intake. Given that the current statistics regarding cases of Obesity in America, self-regulation of diet is an option for many individuals. The principal argument is that fast food outlets are not helping in combating the epidemic; rather, they are accelerating the epidemic. Despite the fact it would be ideal for fast food businesses to operate independently, government regulation is necessary owing to the fact that people have proven that they cannot manage their diet effectively. The paper outlines the core reasons why government regulation of the fast food business in America is needed, in order to foster healthy lifestyles among the Americans.

Current plans for government regulation of fast food business include mandates on food quality, portion control, and healthier options for the various fast food outlets, as appropriated in a \$ 200 million budget (Balko 158). Carbonated soft drinks being retailed in vending machines will be banned. In addition, potato chips and fatty snacks will be banned in American schools. Among the effective strategies that government is currently undertaking in regulating fast food consumption is a proposal of imposing high tax rates on high food calories, the outcome of this measure is that fast food companies will be compelled to pay more in order to conduct

their businesses. This implies that there will be a reduction of fast food businesses, and alternatively, those that will remain in business will be forced to raise the prices. Higher fast food prices imply that Americans will seek cheaper alternatives compared to the fast food. This in itself is a lifestyle regulation strategy that is bound to produce positive results, in the sense that the frequency of visiting the fast food chain for food supplies will be significantly reduced. On a similar account, entrants to the business will be significantly reduced (Balko 158).

Currently, many people are eating from the fast food more than once in a day (Zinczenko 155). As a result, fast food outlets are exploiting this high demand to offer foods that are readily available and good tasting at an affordable price, with most of the popular fast food establishments offering meals for only a dollar. The low prices of foods in such outlets is due to the fact that the core ingredients required in making fast foods are available at subsidized prices. For instance, sweeteners are a key requirement in fast foods, the corn subsidies facilitates their availability at cheap prices for the fast food outlets. This translates to the outlets offering fast food at a cheaper price, which draws people from across the economic divide to rely on fast food supplies. The increasingly fast pace American lifestyles is also a significant contributor to reliance on fast foods, this is due to the fact that there is less time for cooking healthier meals, this leaves the fast food as the only convenient and cost effective approach to feeding oneself.

While health and physical fitness is a concept that most Americans are tangentially aware of, a significant fraction of them are not implementing

proper diet and appropriate physical exercise methods. This is due to various factors, with the availability of fast foods in the urban set up also contributing to poor lifestyles among the American population. Fast food outlets usually market themselves intensively, making it easier to come across a hamburger rather than fresh fruit and vegetables (Zinczenko 154). In addition, there is also the American cultural tie to hamburgers, hot dogs and other foods that are associated with holidays. The relative affluence of American citizens implies that there are lifestyle adjustments that make the fatty foods appropriate for their lifestyle. Affluence implies that people's lifestyle changes in terms of regular spending, and the fast food businesses are one of the beneficiaries of these changes in lifestyle. The American lifestyle perceives healthy organic foods as expensive compared to the junk foods served in fast food outlets. The underlying observation is that for a typical American citizen, it is much cheaper and convenient to rely on readily available fast foods compared to relying on diet that requires organic compounds which are time consuming during preparation.

There are a people who consent that government regulation of fast food is unnecessary, and is a form of direct infringement of personal liberty, especially with respect to what people dietary and lifestyle choice. The opponents of government regulation claim that the government has no obligation of keeping in check what its citizens consume given to the fact that fast foods are classified as foods under the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA). The idea of controlling food options and lifestyles can be perceived as intruding in people's private business, owing to the fact that consumers of

this food are aware of the implications of such dietary. It would be appropriate if the government would embark on an awareness campaign and leave the consumption decision to the consumer. However, a significant constraint of this approach is that consumers have failed on their role to observe the dietary and lifestyles. As such it is appropriate for the government to deploy appropriate control strategies in order to help the consumer from the adverse effects associated with persistent consumption of fast foods.

An inference that can be made from the worrying trend of obesity statistics in America is that most of the American citizens are not exercising their personal liberty to intake healthier food and avoid sedentary lifestyles. This implies that Americans have not taken heed of the health and fitness awareness campaign by the government in order to foster healthy lifestyles. It can be inferred that the health and fitness awareness programs are not bearing any fruits, as such, there is not for more control strategies by the government in fast food business. The fundamental argument is that the government must intervene in order to counter the ignorance of the American citizens towards the fitness and health awareness.

One thing that must be put into consideration is the fact that American citizens do not take time to analyze the nutritional content of the food that they are consuming. As a result, they are not adequately educated on what the food intakes contains in terms of nutritional composition. Government regulation of fast foods in America could include fostering the packaging of such foods with accurate nutritional information. There are some nutritional

information provided currently, but it mostly inaccurate fudging, that makes use of deceptive language in order to omit ingredients and shrink the serving sizes in order to make the food more nutritious than its actual nutritional content (Zinczenko 155). This makes the consumers to perceive that what they are eating is nutritional, yet the fact is that they are not. Greater awareness of the nutritional values of fast foods is required in order to foster healthy lifestyles. The fast food outlets have significantly failed in this role, leaving no option but the government to intervene by forcing them to accurately indicate the nutritional content of their food supplies.

A unique way to view the intervention of government in the dietary lifestyle of Americans is to perceive their health as a future investment. In order to have economic stimulation, and a functioning government, it is imperative that American citizens must be physically healthy in order to facilitate their optimum operation. With government involvement in the regulation of fast food, individuals can be more aware of better lifestyle choices and dietary options; which is a core requirement for their productivity.

Opponents of government intervention in regulating fast food claim that fast food outlet are already implementing healthier foods such as apple slices and salads. However, fast foods is still the primary focus of their business, this is evident with intense display of the fast food compared to healthier alternatives in the outlets. In most fast food chain advertisements, there is little emphasis on the healthier food alternatives. This implies that there is still need for government regulation of the fast foods.

The justice system has placed a cold shoulder on the cases that have been levied against the fast food outlets. This can be perceived as lack of responsibility by both the involved parties, with the plaintiff failing to make precise decision on consumption of such foods and the fast food outlets failing to provide the much needed nutritional information. This leaves no other option but the government to intervene in order to facilitate regulation compliance by the fast food outlets. This will protect them litigious customers; therefore, the fast food industry should welcome this intervention.

In conclusion, public health is key government concern, in the sense that the needs of its citizens must be put into consideration, and if the consumers and the industry players are not willing to take appropriate steps to eliminate unhealthy lifestyles, then the government has no option but to implement regulative measures in the fast food industry.