

# Research on Consumer Behavior Analysis and Marketing Strategy of the Fast Food Industry Based on Teenagers

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## Abstract:

This study examines young people's fast food purchasing behaviors and motivations. It discusses what types of advertisements appeal to them and how they eat. The survey demonstrates how important young people are to fast food chains and their eating habits. It also discusses strategies fast food chains can use to attract younger customers, such as leveraging social media and word-of-mouth recommendations. The study concludes that advertisements and the ease of obtaining fast food have a significant impact on young people's lack of knowledge about healthy eating. It recommends that fast food restaurants provide education on healthy eating, promote healthy eating on social media, and make it simpler to make healthy meal selections. The study says that to make the fast food industry grow and help people be healthier, they need to think about how young people live and what they like. This research helps fast food places know how to talk to young people better and get them to eat healthier.

**Keywords:** Fast-Food Industry; Teenage Consumers; Marketing Strategies

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background

Fast food places are growing a lot because the world is becoming more connected and cities are getting bigger [1]. They are very popular because they give fast food and it's not too expensive. People today like to have things fast, and fast food is good for that. Lately, not just in rich countries but also in places that are getting richer, fast food is becoming more popular. Some fast food brands have done really well

by making sure their food and service are the same everywhere and by having good plans for advertising. Also, fast food places are trying new things like healthier food, menus that fit the local taste, and services that make each customer feel special, so more people will want to eat there.

Young people play a unique and important role in the fast food consumption market. They are in a prime time for forming eating habits and developing brand loyalty, and their preference for fast food not only shapes current consumer trends but also foreshadows future market trends. In addition, teenagers

and young adults are not only frequent consumers of fast food but also key influencers shaping industry trends due to their active engagement with social media and digital platforms [2].

Studying the habits and preferences of teens becomes especially crucial because of their prominence in the fast food industry, as well as their power to impact market trends and brand loyalty. A deeper knowledge of how young people think and why they pick quick food places can help the quick food places make better ways to sell their food to these important people who buy a lot and also give them food that is better for their health and better for the world [3].

In conclusion, fast food places are becoming more and more popular because young people really like to eat there. If people want to know why and how they like fast food, it's super important for those fast food companies. It can help them stay on top of what's happening and keep doing well for a long time. This study is all about figuring out how teenagers feel about fast food, what they buy, and how companies can make plans to sell more to them.

## 1.2 Literature Review

Björn Frank looked at how young people and grown-ups think differently when they choose fast food places. Young people, like teenagers, care a lot about how happy other customers are and what others think about the brand. They also look at if the place seems better than others. But grown-ups think more about whether the food is good and what people say about the brand. So, teenagers and adults have different ideas about what makes a fast food place good for them.

Xiao et al. found that service quality, purchase intention, and food industry factors significantly impact Generation Y's purchasing decisions in the fast food sector in Malaysia. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding customer purchase intentions to enhance their experience and achieve high-quality business.

Aysen Bakir analyzed the consumption behavior and marketing strategies in the fast food industry based on the youth demographic. The study suggests that marketing strategies should be tailored to the preferences and values of the youth to enhance brand loyalty and customer satisfaction.

## 1.3 Research Gap

Within the field of research on the fast food industry, scholars have generally focused on exploring the industry's broader impacts on public health, including, but not limited to, the association between fast food consumption and obesity, malnutrition, and other health problems. In

addition, food safety and quality have been hot topics of research, involving hygiene standards during food processing, traceability of ingredients, and consumer perceptions of food quality. However, while these studies have provided valuable insights into understanding multiple aspects of the fast food industry, there is a relative dearth of research in the existing literature on the role and development of adolescents in the fast food industry. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by focusing on the adolescent population to explore the dynamics of the fast food industry and how this industry adapts to and influences the needs and preferences of young consumers. With this study, the author wants to find out new ways to help fast food places with their advertising, making new things to sell, and thinking about what they should do in the future.

## 1.4 Research Framework

This study begins by emphasizing the importance of the teenage group to the fast food industry and identifies a gap area in existing research: the lack of in-depth analysis of teenagers' fast food consumption behavior. Based on this, this study presents the core question of the study, which is to explore the motivations of teenagers in choosing fast food and how fast food brands can influence their consumption choices through their marketing strategies. During the analysis, the essay considered a variety of factors that influence adolescents' fast food consumption behavior, including socio-cultural and economic factors. The study reveals the problems that adolescents may face during fast food consumption, such as nutritional imbalance, consumption impulses, and lack of brand loyalty. Based on the findings, a series of marketing strategy recommendations for fast food brands are proposed to attract and retain teenage consumers more effectively. These suggest making fast food that is better for health, using social media to show ads to people who might like them, and having special prices that make people want to buy more. In addition, the study discusses its practical implications for the fast food industry and makes specific recommendations for action aimed at promoting sustainable industry growth with a focus on the health and well-being of teenage consumers. Finally, the essay also honestly points out the limitations of the study and provides an outlook on future research directions.

## 2. Case Description

The fast food industry has always been an important part of the global food service sector, and in recent years, it has undergone significant growth and transformation. This evolution is driven by a surge in consumer demand for

convenience, speed, and price - all of which are hallmarks of fast food service. Apart from this, the expansion of the industry is further driven by the popularity of urban lifestyles, with the demand for fast food becoming more prevalent under the time constraints of modern living.

In the fast-food world, many companies are trying to get people to look at them. They do this by making new and exciting food, doing lots of ads, and having strong names that people remember. Also, more and more people, especially young ones, are starting to care about being healthy. They are paying attention to what's in the food they eat and how good it is for them [4].

Teenagers are a really big part of why fast food places do well. They buy a lot of food, but also, they help to make new things popular. What they like and how they act can change how the whole fast food world works. Young people like them are the ones who try new ways of eating first. They listen to what their friends say, and they care a lot about what they see on social media [5].

Even though fast food places are doing better, they still have some problems. They need to make food that tastes good but is also healthy. They have to keep the food good while not spending too much money, and they need to change how they do things because people and rules are always changing [6]. Because of these problems, fast food places have to think about new ways to do things so they can still be popular and do well in a world that is always moving and changing.

This research looks at how young people buy fast food and how fast food places try to sell to them. It talks about the problems fast food places have when they want to get young people interested, like how tastes change, people caring about being healthy and the environment, and needing to use new technology. It also shows how fast-food places can grow and reach more people by doing smart marketing and making new products.

This case study wants to see how well fast food places' ways of selling work to get young people interested. It also wants to know how these ways of selling change what young people think and how they buy things. The goal is to give advice on how to make the fast food place's selling plans better and to find good ways for other fast food places to get closer to young customers.

### **3. Analysis of the Problem**

#### **3.1 Problem Identified Analysis**

##### **3.1.1 Consumption patterns**

Teenagers are really big buyers in the fast food world, and they don't always eat the way experts say they should.

Bleich and his friends found out that teenagers eat fast food a lot more than other people. Because of this, they eat more calories, fat, and sugar than they should [7].

When teenagers eat a lot at fast food places, it's not just about getting more calories; and it also changes how they eat in general. Young and Nestle saw that the big meals and good deals at these places made them eat too much. This means they take in a lot of energy from food that isn't very good for them, like fast food with not enough good stuff in it. Larson and his team also said that this way of eating can make it hard for them to get the right amount of important nutrients they need [8,9].

When you put all these things together, it makes teenagers eat in a way that's not good for them. They eat too much fast food that has a lot of calories but not enough good stuff for their body. This can really affect how healthy they are. It's very important to know how they eat so people can come up with plans and ways to sell things that will help them eat better.

##### **3.1.2 Accessibility and convenience**

Fast food places are easy to find, and that's a big reason why teenagers eat there a lot. Dixon and his friends said that these places are showing up more and more in places where people live, work, and travel, making them a handy choice for a quick bite [10]. Because fast food is everywhere, it's really easy for teenagers to go and get what they want when they're hungry, and this makes them go to fast food places more often.

In addition, the convenience of fast food services, such as drive-thru facilities, mobile apps for ordering and delivery, and the simplicity of buying meals, are tailored for teens' busy schedules and active, busy lifestyles. As Bleich and others highlight, these services make fast food an attractive option for a quick bite. [7] The ease and speed of access to fast food is consistent with the time-sensitive and mobile-oriented lifestyles of adolescents, which further encourages frequent visits to fast food restaurants and increases overall consumption.

##### **3.1.3 Nutritional knowledge and awareness**

Larson and his team say that even though teenagers are more careful about being healthy, they still like fast food a lot. They think of it as a special treat or because they can't find other foods that taste as good and are healthier [9]. This shows that knowing about good nutrition doesn't always mean they choose the right foods. Ng and others found out that teenagers know there are healthier choices, but they don't really understand what's in the food and how it can affect their health in the long run [11]. Harris and his team also say that even though teenagers know fast food isn't the best for them, they pick it because it

tastes good, it's easy to get, and their friends like it too [12]. Bragg and others talk about how teaching teenagers more about nutrition can help them make better choices, but fast food ads that focus on taste and how easy it is to get can make it hard for them to choose healthier foods. This means that even if teenagers know a bit about nutrition, they still might not eat in a way that's good for them [13].

### 3.1.4 Cultural and lifestyle factors

The way teenagers decide to eat fast food is a lot about what's normal in their culture and what's popular. Things like what their friends think and do are very important. Fast food is a big part of hanging out with friends, like at school events or sports games [14]. Nowadays, everyone is always in a hurry and likes things that are easy and quick, so fast food is a good choice because it's handy and you can get it fast. This is especially true for teenagers who have a lot to do with school, clubs, or jobs and don't have much time [10]. Social media and what their friends want also make eating fast food seem normal and even something they should do, making it a choice that's liked by everyone [15]. All these things together make fast food really popular with teenagers.

## 3.2 Reasons for Analysis of the Problem

### 3.2.1 Marketing strategies targeting youth

Fast food places use special ways to get young people to like them, like fun commercials, famous people saying they like the food, and things on social media. These things can make teenagers think, and like the food more, so they eat more of it. For example, some research says that in countries like Australia, Canada, Chile, Mexico, the UK, and the US, when teenagers between 10 and 17 years old see a lot of fast food ads, they tend to like the brand and eat more of it [16].

Fast food places are really good at using social media to talk to teenagers because it lets them interact directly and share things that people post. This makes eating fast food seem normal and something that young people want to do. Also, fast food is easy to get, with things like drive-thru, where you don't even have to get out of your car, order food on your phone, and get it delivered, or buy it quickly. This is perfect for teenagers who have a lot going on and don't have much time, so fast food becomes a go-to choice [17].

When looking at why teenagers choose fast food, the way it's marketed to them is really important. People need to think about this when studying how people buy fast food and the special ways fast food companies try to get teenagers to buy their food.

### 3.2.2 Peer influence and social acceptance

Jahan and his team say that teenagers often pick fast food as a special treat or when they can't find healthier foods they like [18]. During the teenage years, friends have a big effect because this is when people figure out who they are with others and are easily influenced by what their friends think and do. This can make eating fast food a way to fit in and be part of the group, not just about what they personally want. Also, seeing fast food as a reward or something nice to eat when they're feeling down can make them eat too much because it's used to celebrate doing well or to feel better [19]. This shows that how they get along with others is a big part of why teenagers eat fast food. Looking at how friends affect them and how they want to be accepted by others tells us that these social things are very important for why teenagers choose fast food.

### 3.2.3 Marketing strategies targeting youth

Economic factors are key when it comes to teenagers choosing fast food. They often think fast food is cheaper than healthier options. Research shows that healthy food tends to cost more than fast food, which can make teens pick fast food [20]. How much things cost can really affect what teens buy, especially if they think fast food gives them more for their money. Even small price changes can make a big difference in what they decide to buy [21]. Even if teens know that healthy food is good for them in the long run, they might still choose fast food because it's cheaper. This balance between cost and health is a big part of how they decide what to spend their money on.

## 4. Suggestions

### 4.1 Develop Strategies to Encourage Healthy Eating

To change how teenagers eat, fast food places should think about ways to help them eat healthier without making the food taste bad or hard to get. They could start by offering more food choices that are good for teenagers' health and what they like. This means having meals that have lots of good stuff in them and not too many calories or bad fats [7]. Also, fast food places can teach teenagers about what's in their food. They can do this with fun activities or stuff they can find online that shows why eating a balanced diet is important and how it's good for their health later on [12]. Another idea is to use social media, which teenagers like a lot, to show that it's cool to eat healthier. They could work with people who are popular on social media or let users share why they choose healthier food [15]. Fast food places could also give people good deals if they pick healthier options, like giving them a discount for choosing a balanced meal. This can help people think that

fast food can be part of a healthy lifestyle [10]. By doing all these things, fast food brands can help teenagers be healthier and fit in with how people are changing the way they eat.

#### 4.2 Improve Accessibility and Convenience

To make it easier for teenagers to get fast food, fast food chains could think about opening more stores in places where lots of teenagers go, like near schools and places to have fun [10]. They could also make it easier to buy food by letting people order and pay with their phones, which teenagers like because it saves time [15]. Fast food places could work with buses or other ways of getting around to help students who don't have their own way of travel [13]. They could also use technology to give teenagers updates on what food they have, any deals, and how long they might have to wait. This can be done through apps or on social media, where teenagers spend a lot of time [12]. By doing these things, fast food places can make it more convenient for young people and also encourage them to choose healthier options by showing them in their ads.

#### 4.3 Raising Health Awareness Among Adolescents

To help young people learn more about nutrition, fast food companies can take steps to teach them. They can put information about nutrition and healthy eating on their packages and in their stores so teenagers can see it and make better choices [10]. Fast food places can also work with doctors and nutrition experts to make programs that teach about eating a balanced diet and how fast food can fit into a healthy way of living [13]. It's also important to use the internet to talk to young people. Fast food brands can do fun things online, like quizzes about nutrition, ideas for healthy meals, and videos that teach about the good things in their food. This way, they can help people learn more and show that they care about health [12].

#### 4.4 Align with Teen Culture and Lifestyle

To make fast food more connected with how teenagers live and what they like, companies should study them closely. They need to find out what they eat, what food they prefer, and what the rules are in their culture. Knowing these things can help create menu items that young people will really like because they match their tastes and lifestyles. For instance, having food on the menu that comes from the area or changing popular dishes to fit local flavors can make fast food more interesting. Also, fast food brands can be part of the community by helping local events or causes, which can make teenagers feel more connected to the brand [10]. By supporting local sports,

festivals, or learning programs, fast food places can show they care about the same things young people do.

## 5. Conclusion

The study examines the eating habits of teenagers at fast-food restaurants and the factors that influence their decision to pick one establishment over another. This essay found out that what their friends think, how easy it is to get the food, and not knowing much about healthy eating all play big parts. The author also saw that social media is really important for teenagers when they decide which fast-food brands they like.

The study is important because it helps us understand how fast-food places can do better with young people. It's like a guide for fast-food places to talk to teenagers in a way that works for them. The study says that if fast-food places work on making their food healthier, use social media to talk to teenagers in a smart way, and make it easy for them to get their food, they can make more teenagers happy and come to their restaurants.

However, this research has some things it can't do. The study only looked at one group of people, so it might not work for everyone. Also, the essay mostly looked at what people want and need, and this could learn more by looking at what fast-food places can offer in the future.

To sum up, this study shows that fast-food places need to think carefully about how they market to young people. If people know what this study can't do and learn from it, they can do even better studies later. This can help us understand more about how people choose what to eat and help fast-food places make better plans for marketing. This study is not just for people who study these things; it can also help people who work in the fast-food business and those who make rules about health and how people live their lives. The study is not without limitations. The analysis is based on a specific demographic and may not be generalizable to all consumers. Additionally, the research primarily focuses on the demand side and could benefit from future studies that explore the supply-side factors.

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