

Title: Fast Food Perception among Adolescents in Jordan by Gender and Weight Status

Authors: Sabika S. Allehdan, MS¹, Reema F. Tayyem, PhD^{1*}, Hiba A. Bawadi, PhD², Narmeen Al-Awwad, PhD¹, Lana M. Agraib, MS¹, Mariam Al-Mannai, PhD³, and AbdulRahman O. Musaiger, PhD⁴

¹Faculty of Allied Health, Science, Department of Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics, Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan

²Health Sciences Department, College of Arts and Sciences, Qatar University, Qatar.

³College of Science, University of Bahrain, Bahrain

⁴Arab Center for Nutrition, Bahrain

*Corresponding author: Reema Tayyem, PhD, Professor of Nutrition The Hashemite University, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics Dept. PO Box 150459, Zarqa 13115, Jordan. Mob: +962 (7) 95885663. Tel. +962 (5) 3903333 Ext. 5356 Fax. +962 (5) 3903350. Email: rtayyem@hu.edu.jo

Abstract

Background: The frequency of fast foods intake is relatively high among adolescents and it was found to be positively associated with total energy intake and obesity in adolescents. **Objective:** This study aimed to examine the perception of Jordanian adolescents towards fast foods relative to gender and obesity. **Methods:** A Cross-sectional survey was conducted on 400 boys and 395 girls, aged 15-18 years. The adolescents completed a validated questionnaire to measure the perception of adolescents towards fast foods during the year 2013-2014. Weight and height were measured. Non-overweight, overweight and obesity were calculated for each age and sex using the International Obesity Task Force standard (IOTF). **Results:** The majority of participants perceived foods which are eaten as sandwich as fast foods. A significant difference ($P<0.02$) between boy and girl adolescents was reported regarding perception of French fries, fried chicken, fattayer, fowl (boiled broad beans) sandwich, falafel sandwich and fried eggs sandwich as fast foods. Girl were significantly ($P<0.01$) more enthusiastic than boy to consider cuscusi plate ($P<0.001$), rice dishes, Chinese foods, Indian foods Mexican foods, and Italian foods as non-fast foods. The difference between obese and non-obese regarding the perception of fast foods was only significant among boy participants. Western or non-Arab foods, food prepared fast and eaten fast in selfservice outlets and food rich in calories were significantly perceived as fast food by Jordanian adolescents ($P<0.05$). **Conclusions:** The perception of foods as fast foods or non- fast foods was significantly difference between both genders as well as in obese and non-obese boy Jordanian adolescents.

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