

Impact of Food Labelling on Consumer Selection of Products among Young Adults

Mirdoddi Gumbeer Rao Naga Jyothi¹
PG Student Department of Food & Nutrition,
University College for Women, Osmania University
Hyderabad, Telangana

Dr. P. Ashlesha²
Asst. professor and Head
Dept of Food & Nutrition, University College for Women,
Osmania University, Hyderabad, Telangana

Abstract:- Nutritional knowledge of the consumer plays an important role in purchase decisions of the products. Food labels of any product show its ingredients, nutritive value, manufacture date, expiry date, allergens, health claims, trademark, brand name etc . Food labels help the consumers to make a decision about a product. The purpose of this study is to assess whether there is impact of food labelling on purchase decisions of consumers. The objective of this study is to assess awareness about food labels and nutritional knowledge of the consumers. The study includes a sample size of 100 young adults (both males and females) belonging to the age group 18-25 years residing at Hyderabad. An offline survey was used to get the data. The findings of this study shows that 65% of the consumers are about food labels and 63% of the consumers have nutritional knowledge. Most of the consumers always check product name, brand name, manufacture date, net quantity and quality of product. About 47% of consumers found that reading food labels is time consuming, 34% of the consumers cannot understand the food label and 45% of consumers agree that the food label is small. It has been found that there is no effect of education on choosing the products. Chi square test was used for analysis of data. The results of the study shows that there is no impact of labelling on consumer selection of products.

Keywords:- Food Labelling, Purchase Decisions, Nutritional Knowledge, Food Label Awareness, Consumers , Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

The legally needed nutritional or consumer safety information regarding the food product is found on the food label. Reading food labels is important, but this is frequently forgotten. Food labelling is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "Any written, printed, or graphic matter that is present on the label, accompanies the food, or is displayed near the food, including that for the purpose of promoting its sale or disposal." Food labels frequently provide information to consumers regarding the ingredients and nature of the items in order to prevent confusion and safeguard the user from misuse, risk, and abuse.

According to the FDA in the USA, a label should be seen as a significant component of the manufacturer's marketing strategy because it acts as the main point of contact between the producer and the consumer. The name

of the product, the net weight, the nutrition facts panel (nutrition label), the name and address of the manufacturer, and the brand name should all be presented on a label in a clear and concise way, according to the FDA (1998).

The opinions of consumers concerning the nutritional value of goods and healthy eating practices are evolving quickly. Consumers are now more focused on maintaining balance and eating healthy foods. They also have higher expectations for food that is both safe and of high quality and for nutritional information. Food product labels, which contain all the necessary information about nutritional composition, safe food, and high-quality food, are very important in this context. In general, labels give details about the ingredients in food goods, their nutritional value, cooking, storage, etc..

Therefore a study was conducted to assess the awareness among the young adults. The objectives of this study include

- To determine the level of awareness of the information about food labels among consumers.
- To assess the nutritional knowledge of the consumers.
- To know up to what extent the food labels play a role in consumer choice of food.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A questionnaire was webized which was well structured and validated. A Descriptive survey was carried out among 100 adults (18-25 years) in Hyderabad. The data was compiled, frequencies and percentages of the data were calculated and subjected to appropriate statistical tests to get the results. Some of the questions were tested by the chi-square test at 5% level of significance ($p= 0.05$) to check if there is any significant impact of food labels in consumer selection of products.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. General Information/ Socio-Demographic Profile

The data showed that out of 100 sample sizes, they belong to the age group 18-25 years and among gender 50 % of them were females and 50 % of them were males. It is also seen that the educational qualification of the respondents was highest, that is 67 % who have completed their graduation, 31 % of them were post graduates, 1% of

the subjects completed matriculation/10th and 1 % of the subjects completed Intermediate. 79 % of the subjects belongs to nuclear family and the rest 21 % belongs to joint family. The Economic status of the subjects showed that, highest percent that is 70 % has an annual income of below 3 lakhs, 23 % has an annual income of 3-5 Lpa and least percent 7 % (n=32) was seen in the subjects who are earning > 5 Lpa.

Table 1 General information/ Demographic profile of the Respondents

General information/socio demographic profile	(%)
Age	
18-25	100
Gender	
Males	50
Females	50
Education	
SSC/Matriculation	01
Intermediate	01
Graduation	67
Post Graduation	31
Type of family	
Nuclear	79
Joint	21
Economic status	
< 3 Lpa	70
3-5 Lpa	23
> 5 Lpa	07

B. Anthropometric Measurements

➤ *BMI*

According to self-reported height and weight, BMI was determined. 25% of the respondents have BMI less than 18.5, about 47% of the respondents BMI falls under category of 18.5-24.9, 20% of respondents have BMI in between 25-29.9 , 7% of respondents have BMI between 30-40 and only 1% of respondents have BMI more than 40.

Table 2 BMI of the Respondents

BMI	PERCENTAGE
<18.5	25
18.5-24.9	47
25-29.9	20
30-40	07
>40	01
TOTAL	100

C. Dietary Pattern

It includes different parameters of the subjects like dietary preference, skipping of meals, food/environmental allergies. As per dietary preference, 82% of subjects were Non-Vegetarian, 15 % were Vegetarian and 3% were ovo vegetarians. It shows about 25% prefer packed foods,14% prefer unpacked foods and 61% prefer both packed and unpacked foods. It shows that about 36% of subjects buy them twice a week ,25% of subjects buy them once a week, 6% of subjects buy them daily, 30% of subjects buy rarely

and 3%of them never buy packed foods. According to the data, roughly 24% of individuals purchase packaged foods twice per week, 14% once per week, 23% everyday, 34% infrequently, and 5% never.

Table 3 Dietary Pattern of the Respondents

Dietary patterns	(%)
Dietary preference	
Vegetarian	15
Non vegetarian	82
Ovo vegetarian	3
Food preference	
Packed foods	25
Unpacked foods	14
Both	61
Frequency of purchasing packed foods	
Daily	6
Twice a week	36
Once a week	25
Rarely	30
Never	3
Frequency of purchasing unpacked foods	
Daily	23
Twice a week	24
Once a week	14
Rarely	34
Never	5

D. Food Label and Consumer Awareness

The pie chart shows whether the subjects are aware of the term food label .The data shows only 65% are aware of food labels and 35% are not aware about food labels.

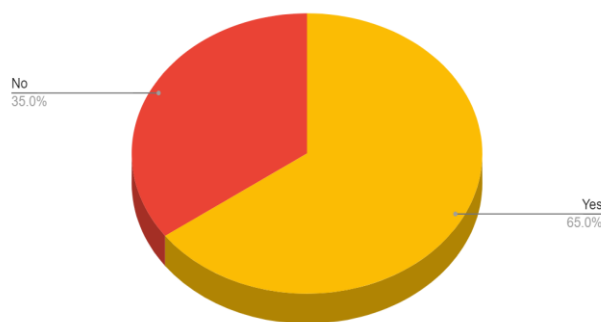


Fig 1 Frequency of Food Label Awareness of the Respondents

E. Nutritional Knowledge of the Consumer

The bar chart shows 63% of the subjects have nutritional knowledge and 37% do not have nutritional knowledge .

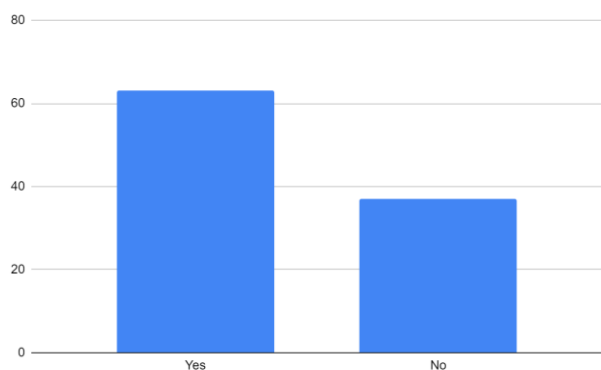


Fig 2 Nutritional Knowledge of the Consumer

F. Checking Food Label

About 31% of the subjects always check the food label, 17% they check quite often, 21% check sometimes, 27% rarely check and 4% will never check the food label.

Table 4 Frequency of Checking Food Labels by Respondents

Frequency of Food label	%
Always	31
Quite often	17
Sometimes	21
Rarely	27
Never	4
Total	100

G. Food labels impact on Purchase Decisions

We found that that calculated value is lower than table value and hence observed values do support expected values. We conclude that there is no impact on selection of products.

Table 5 Influence of Purchase Decisions

PURCHASE DECISIONS			P VALUE	χ^2	NULL HYPOTHESIS
YES	NO	NEUTRAL	0.186	0.412	Insignificant
20	8	37			
5	6	24			
25	14	61			

A Similar study was conducted by Bandara et al (2016) on impact of food labelling information on consumer purchasing decision :with special reference to faculty of agricultural sciences.This study shows that the majority of the respondents tend to examine the labels when making the purchasing decision to evaluate the suitability of the food product for vegetarians, religious reasons, to avoid diseases related to food and to check whether the food is organically grown or not.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Food labeling is a community-based strategy that informs consumers about a food's nutrient composition, empowering them to make better, healthier eating decisions. Food labels are crucial because they include all the information necessary for consumers to make informed food choices, such as nutritional values, manufacture and expiration dates, ingredients, vegetarianism status, and pricing.

The levels of nutrients like fat, salt, and fiber in particular goods are listed on food labels. It offers information about food products to encourage consumers' attempts to make better food choices and to reinforce healthy eating habits. Knowing the nutrition facts is crucial for customers since it can guide them in making healthier food selections.

The way consumers perceive a product is a major factor in their purchasing decisions. One of the most significant elements influencing consumers' purchase decisions is food labeling. Manufacturers should adhere to any laws set by the government of a specific nation when creating labels for food goods. Labels should accurately describe the nature and qualities of food products without deceiving consumers.

To assist customers in making informed decisions about food purchases, raising consumer knowledge and improving access to nutrition information on labels are crucial. From the above study it can be concluded that there is no impact of food labelling on consumer selection of products.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Further studies can be conducted on a wider sample size.
- This study mainly concentrated on the impact of food labelling on consumer purchasing but not the factors which influence purchasing decisions.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Adesina, Evaristus & Ajayi, Boluwatife & Amoo, Emmanuel & Adeyeye, Babatunde & Paula, Ajayi & Tomike, Olawande & Adebake, Olawole-Isaac (2022) Consumers' Knowledge and Use of Nutritional Labelling Information in Lagos, Nigeria. *Sustainability*. 14. 1-16. 10.3390/su14010578.
- [2]. Affram, P.C. & Darkwa, Sarah (2015) Consumers' Knowledge, Understanding and Use of Food Label Information, and How it Affects Purchasing Decision in Ho, Ghana". *Asian Journal of Empirical Research*. 5. 24-39.
- [3]. Annamalai, Sinthiya & Gopichandran, Vijayaprasad (2022) Knowledge, attitudes and utilization of food labels among undergraduate medical students in a medical college in Chennai – A cross sectional survey. *Indian Journal of Community and Family Medicine*. 8. 33. 10.4103/ijcfm.ijcfm_50_21.
- [4]. Bandara, B.E.s & De Silva, Achini & Maduwanthi, B.C.H. & Warunasinghe, W.A.A.I. (2016) Impact of Food Labeling Information on Consumer Purchasing Decision: With Special Reference to Faculty of Agricultural Sciences. *Procedia Food Science*. 6. 309-313. 10.1016/j.profoo.2016.02.061.
- [5]. Bazhan, M., Mirghotbi, M., & Amiri, Z. (2015). Food labels: An analysis of the consumers' reasons for non-use. *Archives of Advances in Biosciences*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.22037/jps.v6i1.8034>
- [6]. Darkwa, Sarah. (2014). Knowledge of nutrition facts on food labels and their impact on food choices on consumers in Koforidua, Ghana: A case study. *South African Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 27. 13-17.. 10.1080/16070658.2014.11734479.
- [7]. Jadapalli, Mahesh & Somavarapu, Silpa (2018) A Survey on Perception of Food Labels Among the Population of Nellore District. 5. 1-16.
- [8]. Masoodi, N., & Mubarak, H. (2019). Nutritional knowledge and consumers use and understanding of food labels. *Int. J. Physiol. Nutr. Phys. Educ*, 4, 1371-1376.
- [9]. Tanveer unisa Hyder, & Avanti Rao. (2021). A Comparative Study to Check Awareness of Food Labeling between Nutrition and Non-Nutrition Undergraduate Students. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development*, 12(4), 391–396. <https://doi.org/10.37506/ijphrd.v12i4.16573>