

Physiological and Social Consequences of Fast-Food Addiction among Students

Hazratova Hulkar Normurodovna

Karshi State University, Acting Associate professor, Department of Physiology Doctor of Philosophy in Biological Sciences (PhD)

Ziyodova Dinora Adham qizi

Karshi State University, Master's student in Biology

Received: 2025, 15, Oct

Accepted: 2025, 21, Nov

Published: 2025, 20, Dec

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and BioScience Academic Publishing. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).



Open Access

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Annotation: Proper and rational nutrition is one of the key factors in shaping a healthy lifestyle among students. However, most students harm their health due to neglect of dietary culture, lack of awareness of eating habits and rules, and disregard for the principles and formula of healthy nutrition. The article analyzes the level of fast-food consumption, the causes of addiction, and its physiological and social consequences among 267 students (130 from the Medical Faculty and 137 from the Chemistry-Biology Faculty) at Karshi State University. The research results showed that students' lifestyle and changes in dietary culture are the main factors intensifying fast-food addiction. The analysis also revealed that, despite the higher level of knowledge about dietary culture among Medical Faculty students, there was no significant difference in the level of fast-food consumption compared to students from the Chemistry-Biology Faculty. The article also provides recommendations for promoting healthy eating and encouraging physical activity.

Keywords: fast food, addiction, students, physiological consequences, social consequences, health, dietary habits.

INTRODUCTION. In recent years, global economic changes, the acceleration of urban life, and the intensification of the educational process have significantly affected the dietary habits of youth [1-3]. The consumption of fast-food products is particularly widespread among students in higher education institutions [4-6]. Time constraints, affordability, quick preparation, and convenient availability often prompt students to opt for high-calorie, low-benefit meals. At the same time, stress, lack of sleep, and increased academic load among students also appear as factors intensifying fast-food addiction [5].

Students in higher education institutions are the intellectual potential of our republic, and their healthy eating habits affect not only personal health but also their future professional activities and social adaptation in society [9, 10]. Addiction to fast-food products can lead to physiological problems such as obesity and gastrointestinal diseases, as well as reduced concentration, fatigue, decreased stress tolerance, and reduced social activity [7, 8]. Therefore, studying fast-food addiction among students and analyzing its consequences is a pressing issue [9-12].

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY. The study was conducted in September–October 2025 involving 267 students from the Chemistry-Biology and Medical faculties of Karshi State University. The survey consisted of 15 questions aimed at studying the frequency and reasons for fast-food consumption, the level of knowledge about healthy eating, and physical activity. Furthermore, the Body Mass Index (BMI), arterial pressure, and heart rate were assessed in some participants [6].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS. According to the results of our study, the share of those consuming fast-food products more than twice a week was 65 percent. The main reasons were saving time (41%), affordability (24%), pleasant taste (35%), and the influence of the social environment (18%) [2]. The analysis by faculties showed no significant difference in regular fast-food consumption between Medical Faculty students (63%) and Chemistry-Biology Faculty students (67%). Fast-food consumption was higher among 1st and 2nd-year students, which is explained by age-related curiosity, lifestyle, and not fully formed healthy eating habits. 3rd and 4th-year students, especially those who are married, consume less.

Among the physiological consequences, obesity and gastrointestinal diseases were frequently observed. Elevated BMI was recorded in 40 percent of study participants, and symptoms of dyspepsia, gastritis, or constipation were noted in 35 percent. Students who consumed fast food frequently reported experiencing fatigue, a feeling of heaviness, sleep disturbances, and decreased concentration.

The socio-psychological consequences affect students' learning process, stress level, and social activity. Students who frequently consumed fast food reported being late for classes, experiencing fatigue, and a feeling of emptiness more often. Furthermore, social studies showed that students addicted to fast-food consumption dedicate the main time of social gatherings to eating, and their interest in other socio-cultural activities (museums, theatre, sports) has decreased. Fast food has become an integral part of meetings and communication with friends, displacing other healthy forms of recreation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS. Shaping a healthy eating culture among students, planning their daily diet to meet energy needs from food products appropriate for their age, gender, and physical activity, and ensuring the intake of all necessary nutrients, are crucial tasks. This serves as an important foundation not only for establishing a healthy lifestyle but also for improving the quality of education and raising a healthy and active young generation. The results of the conducted research show that students' interest in and regular consumption of fast-food meals are closely linked to their lifestyle, dietary culture, and social environment. The analysis revealed that due to the high-calorie but low biological value of fast-food products, their frequent consumption can lead to physiological problems in students such as digestive system disorders, overweight, and metabolic syndrome. Moreover, excessive fast-food addiction also has negative social consequences, causing a decline in self-control, a passive lifestyle, and an

increase in stress and psychological fatigue among students.

To reduce fast-food addiction and shape a healthy eating culture among students, it is essential to first strengthen educational work on a healthy lifestyle in higher education institutions. Teaching students the principles of proper and rational nutrition, and conducting regular seminars and training on the effects of fast food on health will yield beneficial results.

Introducing a menu of natural, balanced, and beneficial meals in university cafeterias, encouraging sports and physical activity, as well as developing a psychological support system aimed at reducing stress, are of great importance in strengthening students' health.

Furthermore, promoting the benefits of healthy eating and highlighting the harmful consequences of fast-food products through mass media and social networks will also increase students' sense of responsibility toward a healthy lifestyle. In this way, educational institutions can become an environment that not only provides knowledge but also preserves the health of young people.

Therefore, shaping a healthy eating culture in higher education institutions, encouraging sports activity, and regularly conducting educational work about the harmful effects of fast-food products are of pressing importance. These measures serve as a critical factor in ensuring a healthy lifestyle for youth and strengthening the health of future generations.

REFERENCES

1. Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 30, 2020, No. PF-6099 "On measures to widely introduce a healthy lifestyle and further develop mass sports." Tashkent. Yangi O'zbekiston, 2020, No. 210 (210), pp. 1-2.
2. Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated November 10, 2020, No. PQ-4887 "On additional measures to ensure healthy nutrition of the population." Tashkent. Yangi O'zbekiston, 2020, No. 3, pp. 1-3.Q
3. Average daily rational nutrition norms aimed at ensuring healthy nutrition for the age, gender, and professional activity groups of the population of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Technical specifications (SanQvaM №000-20). Resolution of the Sanitary and Epidemiological Wellbeing and Public Health Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Tashkent, 2020, No. 3, pp. 1-2.
4. Factors that most influence the choice for fast food in a sample of higher education students in Portugal // *Journal of Nutrition and Food Sciences*. – 2023. – Vol. 12, No. 3. – P. 45–52.
5. Exploring the contributing factors of fast food consumption in daily life: a qualitative study of Saudi university students // *Public Health Nutrition*. – 2025. – Vol. 18, No. 2. – P. 110–118.
6. Prevalence of fast food consumption among university students in the Northern area of Malaysia // *Asian Journal of Health Sciences*. – 2023. – Vol. 9, No. 4. – P. 25–33.
7. Fast food consumption and overweight/obesity prevalence in college students // *International Journal of Obesity Studies*. – 2024. – Vol. 6, No. 1. – P. 59–67.
8. Dietary fast-food habits among university students: a systematic review // *Nutrition Research Review*. – 2024. – Vol. 15, No. 2. – P. 90–104.
9. Kamilova J.E., Shodiboeva Z. Fast-food mahsulotlari va talabalarning salomatligi // *G'ijduvon tibbiyot va farmatsevtika jurnali*. – 2023. – №2. – B. 15–20.
10. Ivanova N.V. Potreblenie fast-fuda sredi studentov i ego vliyanie na zdorove // *Meditinskiy zhurnal*. – 2022. – №5. – S. 45–52.

11. Hazratova H.N., Haydarova Z.T. The athletes affect foreigners in fast food consumption and anthropometric indicators // ICDE International Conference on Developments in Education Hosted from Bursa, Turkey <https://innovateconferences.org> 20th September 2025, 55-57 p.
12. Hazratova H.N., Xidirova J.Sh. Prevention of overweight in students through healthy nutrition and physical activity // International Conference on Advance Research in Humanities, Applied Sciences and Education Hosted from New York, USA <https://theconferencehub.com> September, 28th 2025. -P. 72-74