

## **INTENTION TO PURCHASE JUNK FOOD AMONG LONG SITTING WORKERS: A STUDY OF BANKING SECTOR IN PAKISTAN**

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**ABSTRACT:** The study was an attempt to investigate the intentions of the workers to purchase junk food while working for long hours in stress environment. Theory of Planned Behavior (TBP) was used to predict the food preferences of the workers working in banking sector of Pakistan. Data was collected from the bank employees of Pakistan through research questionnaire. Convenient sampling was used and sample size was  $n=250$ . Analysis was conducted on model using the structural equation modeling (SEM). The study showed that attitude, and perceived behavioral control of long sitting workers positively influenced their intentions to purchase junk food ( $P$  value  $< 0.05$ ). However, subjective norms & health consciousness negatively influenced their intentions to purchase junk food ( $P$  value  $> 0.05$ ).

**Keywords:** Junk food, Long sitting workers, Health consciousness, Theory of Planned Behavior.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Food production and its consumption is much deliberated topic mostly discussed in behavioral and ethical literature as it is closely related to the health as well as to the environment related issues (Tobler *et al.*, 2011). Now a days, consumers are very much concern about the nutritional value of food as it is directly associated with the health (Gil *et al.*, 2000). There are several inquiries regarding consumption and growth trends of junk food markets but there is a very limited research regarding such food consumption pattern among long sitting workers class among developing nation. Many researchers claimed that frequently eating of fast food is basic causes of many medical issues like obesity, overweight etc.

This study has been designed to identify the consumption behavior of junk food and its acceptance. It is an attempt to investigate the intentions of long sitting workers to purchase junk food.

As per World Health Organization (WHO) announced in his report that in 2014, about 39% population of the world was overweight due to different reasons and about 13% population was suffering from obesity. Similarly the market of chicken meal and food has a decreasing year over year growth rate; on the other hand, overall industry growth with respect to revenue is expected to increase. As per report of Global opportunity analysis and industry forecast 2014-2022 growth is estimated at a CAGR of 5.44% by 2022 (Sneha, 2017). The region of Asia-Pacific and also in American as well as Latin American regions food held leading market share in 2015. Major players which are highly profiled in the report of fast food market include Hardee's, Firehouse

Subs, Domino's Pizza, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, KFC, Subway, Burger king, Dunkin' Donuts, and Auntie Anne's showing 7.61 % negative growth in international markets as per report by USA based company, ZION Market Research, 2018.

The facts and uncertain market trends attracted the market researchers to fill the GAP recently. Because on either side, lot of people feel pleasure while taking junk food daily at office while on work, even they don't think about its adverse effect to their health. But on the other side, one of the syndromes that causes from eating junk food for the long sitting workers are cancer and other diseases which are also very chronic (Jackson *et al.*, 2004). Due to the consumption of junk food, consumers are likely to have low Vitamin, Minerals & other important fatty acids which are very essential part for proper functioning of brain (Lauritzen *et al.*, 2001).

This study investigates the trend and overall effects of junk food in banking sector of Pakistan, where employees have to sit for work even more than twelve hours.

This study is in continuation and recommendations of the latest inquiries and researches on acceptance of junk food. Moreover, the present study also advances the research agenda of researchers to identify the choice of fast food by long sitting workers. Fast food, really it is a delicious and expedient addition to a diet, may cause very serious health and common effects. People should learn about choosing of fast food keeping in view the importance of their health. Today, progressively fast food cafeterias are offering improved options and variety of new items. Keeping in view the growing junk food trends, and major food industry around the globe this study advances the research agenda

to identify the marketing dimensions on junk food consumption behavior.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) can be very successfully used in the field of food choices studies and more specifically where we want to predict the junk food purchase intentions of consumers (Dowd and Burke, 2013).

Attitude defined as “Degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question” (Ajzen, 1991). As defined by Schwartz, (1977) “attitude is the measure of favorable self-evaluations, and it is originate from anticipation of compliance with individual’s principles”.

**H1:** “Attitude towards the junk food positively influence long sitting workers intensions to purchase junk food”. Subjective norms defined as “perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior” (Ajzen, 1985). Further, explained that subjective norms found very useful predictor of purchase intentions. Subjective norms are belief that how much an important person or a group of important persons support to perform a behavior (M Ham *et al.*, 2015). Thus this study hypnotized that subjective norms significantly influences the intentions to buy junk foods.

**H2:** “Subjective norms positively influence the intentions of long sitting workers to purchase junk food”. Perceived behavioral control is defined as “an individual perceived easiness or difficulty to performing the specific behavior” (Ajzen, 1985). As it is easier to eat junk food therefore more workers are intended to purchase junk food. Therefore, we proposed following hypothesis on the basis of above discussion.

**H3:** “Perceived behavioral control significantly increase long sitting worker’s intentions to purchase junk food”. Health consciousness is defined by the Jayanti and Burns, 1998 as “the degree to which health concerns is integrated into person’s daily activities”. Mostly eating of such unhealthy snacks, so called junk food has been lead towards with several health concerns, and chronic diseases such as tooth decay, obesity, and other among young nation (Jackson *et al.*, 2004). As established from literature following hypothesis was proposed.

**H4:** “Health Consciousness negatively influences long sitting worker’s intentions to purchase junk food”. Purchase intentions are the readiness of individual/consumer to purchase something and it is the readiness before the actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

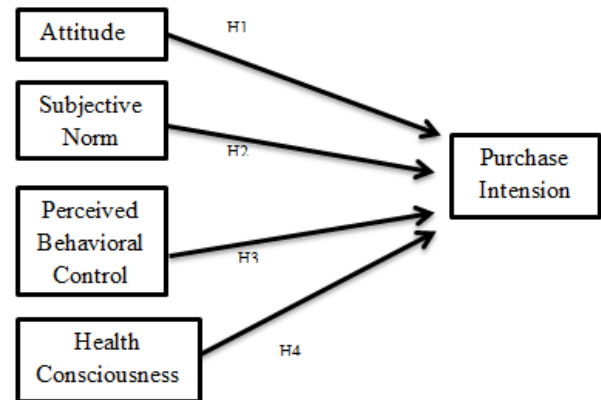


Figure-01 (Based on Theory of Planned Behavior)

Above theoretical model is based on theory of planned behavior in which attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are independent variables. We added one more independent variable health consciousness. Purchase intention is dependent variable in above model.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data collected by using the online as well as personally distributing the questionnaire from five main commercial banks in Lahore. Five main commercial banks of Pakistan having its branches in Lahore were selected for this study. The data collected through questionnaires (n=250) from bank officers for collection of data through convenient sampling approach from Lahore. The cross sectional study conducted. The sample size was appropriate; because it should be more than 150 to apply SEM (Hair *et al.*, 2010), (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Therefore, sample size 250 meets the satisfactory criteria for study.

All measurement scales were based on existing literature and were responded on five point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree. The already established scales was adopted and adapted for all the constructs in this study. For Attitude, the scale of Wang *et al.*, (2013) was used which have four items; for Subjective Norms, the scale of Han *et al.*, (2010) was used which have three items; for perceived behavioral control, the scale of Han *et al.*, (2010) having three items; for health consciousness, the scale of Tarkiainen and Sundqvist, (2005) having three items and for purchase intentions, scale of Chen, (2007) was used.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSION

Quantitative data analysis conducted through SEM. First of all we measured internal consistency among all items through Cronbach's Alpha.

Chronbach's a, of all items is 0.7 and above which acceptable as score should be 0.7 to 0.9 (Hair *et al.*, 1998). We also measured convergent & discriminant validity which includes factor loading, composite reliability and AVE which is the variance. All the constructs meet the recommended criteria of discriminant and convergent validity *i.e.* factor loading 0.6 to 0.9 (Chin *et al.*, 1997), composite reliability 0.69 to 0.89 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) and AVE 0.5 to 0.8 (Hair *et al.*, 1998) which all are acceptable.

The detail of reliability and convergent validity are outlined in the given below table. The square root of AVE of constructs was larger than the correlation between the constructs which ensured the adequate discriminant validity (Chin, 1998). It can be summarized that the theoretical model represents an adequate validity (convergent and discriminant) and reliability.

Given below tables show all the values as discussed above:

**Table-1: Value of Cronbach Alpha of each construct.**

Constructs Name	Cronbach's Alpha
Attitude	0.702
Subjective Norms	0.783
Perceived Behavior Control	0.983
Health Consciousness	0.712
Purchase Intensions	0.835

**Table-2: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value of each construct.**

Constructs	AVE
Attitude	0.69
Subjective Norms	0.58
Perceived Behavior Control	0.53
Health Consciousness	0.61
Purchase Intensions	0.59

Further, the theoretical framework was tested for goodness of fit indices.

The above tables show the results which indicate that above theoretical model represent a good fit, because all the values are between acceptable limits.

Hence hypotheses H1 and H3 were supported, whereas H2 was not supported. Health consciousness was negatively related to consumer's attitude toward buying junk food, which does not support the Hypotheses H4.

**Table-3: Indexes of Model Fit.**

Chi Square	203.145
NFI	0.923
RFI	0.902
IFI	0.969
TLI	0.957
CFI	0.968
RMSEA	0.049

**Table 4: Results supporting or not supporting the hypothesis.**

Hypotheses	Coefficient	T value	P value	Supported or Not
H1	0.198	2.558	P<0.05	Supported
H2	0.045	0.759	P>0.05	Not supported
H3	0.229	3.346	P<0.05	Supported
H4	-0.046	0.739	P>0.05	Not supported

The research investigated the intentions of long sitting workers to purchase the junk food in banking sector of Pakistan. We based our research work on Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and analyzed how attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control of long sitting workers towards junk food influence their purchase intentions. This addresses an important research gap: while some studies (Anita *et al.*, 2007, Nighat *et al.*, 2017 and Joel *et al.*, 2004), investigated food consumption pattern by using TPB, however very limited work and even in the context of banking sector of developing nation no study examined the impact of working hours on food consumption pattern.

Our research extended the prior research and contributed towards literature. The central contribution of research work is the introduction of an independent variable *i.e.* "Health consciousness" which has close relation with food studies (Yaduv *et al.*, 2016). While studying the food consumption pattern of long sitting workers, factor of the health cannot be neglected as previous studies reported severe health related issues in long sitting workers (Booth *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, this study predicted the food consumption pattern by keeping in view the health consciousness of employees which is required to be address in developing nations.

Our research study has practical relevance as consumption of junk food has also been increased significantly in developing countries (Nighat *et al.*, 2017). The junk food industry is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest industry of South Asia (Yaduv *et al.*, 2016). In Pakistan there are

more than 169 million consumer of junk food (Nighat *et al.*, 2017).

**Conclusion:** As due to immediate availability, taste and versatility of junk food, it cannot be avoided and becoming more famous among long sitting worker's class while on working. Therefore, there is a need to provide proper guideline to such long sitting workers about consumption of junk food as per health standards. In addition to it fast food restaurants need to offer improved options and new menu items which are harmless and have positive impact on health. By addressing these issues the industry of junk food can be made more potential and profitable.

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