

Original Research Article

Fast-Food Consumption Intention among High School Students in Bangladesh

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Abstract: Background: Fast-food consumption among children and adolescents is a growing global health concern due to changing dietary habits and lifestyles. The study aimed to examine the relationship among attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and intention to fast-food consumption among high school students in Bangladesh. **Methods:** A correlational design using the Theory of Planned Behavior assessed attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in relation to fast-food consumption intention. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. **Results:** Using the Theory of Planned Behavior, the study found that Attitude ($r=.487$, $p<.001$), subjective norm ($r=.177$, $p<.05$), and perceived behavioral control ($r=.594$, $p<.001$) were significantly positively correlated with students' intention toward fast-food consumption. **Conclusion:** Improved nursing practices and policymaker strategies can support effective health education to change adolescents' and families' attitudes toward fast food consumption. The study's findings may guide government and private sectors in appointing child health nurses in schools and colleges.

Keywords: Attitude, Subjective norms, Perceived behavioral control, Fast-food consumption, Adolescents, Bangladesh.

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INTRODUCTION

Fast food is an easily accessible form of processed food that is prepared quickly and served to the customer easily in a packaged form for take-out or take-away (Parikh *et al.*, 2020). Foods made with lower nutritional value are classified as such by (Seo *et al.*, 2011). Fast-food consumption is linked to poor nutrient intake and unhealthy dietary patterns, contributing to rising non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, and kidney stones, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (Alamnia *et al.*, 2023; Didarloo *et al.*, 2022). With globalization and urbanization, radical trends have had an effect on adolescent's consumption of unhealthy foods. (AlTamimi *et al.*, 2023; Banik *et al.*, 2020; Shetu, 2024; Shori *et al.*, 2017) A study in the United States among adolescents aged 13–17 reported a significant link between processed food consumption and overweight status (Didarloo *et al.*, 2022). In Bangladesh, about 20.5% of adolescents consume fast food, mainly

due to taste, pleasure, and convenience (Banik *et al.*, 2020). Recent evidence indicates a rising prevalence of overweight and obesity among children and adolescents in South Asia, with estimates reaching approximately 20–25% (M. T. Ahmed *et al.*, 2022; Kerr *et al.*, 2025). Frequent fast-food intake, especially more than twice per week, is linked to higher body weight and negative health outcomes. (AlKalbani, 2023) In Bangladesh, a high prevalence of overweight among school-aged boys has been reported, driven by dietary transition, increased availability of energy-dense fast food, and changing lifestyles. (Hossain *et al.*, 2020)

Fast food consumption is influenced by various factors, including its good taste, easy availability, affordable cost, local production of packaged food, choices, flavor, peer pressure, family and friends, relative to more traditional home-style foods. (Banik *et al.*, 2020; Lestari *et al.*, 2021; Seo *et al.*, 2011) Multiple studies (Jahan *et al.*, 2020; Mukoru *et al.*, 2023; Seo *et al.*, 2011) have shown an increased frequency of

takeaway and fast-food consumption among adolescents. In a study of Seo *et al.*, (2011), it was found that Fast-Food Consumption Intention represents the amount of effort one is willing to exert to consume fast food as a future goal and action. The performance or non-performance of fast-food consumption behavior by an individual is a function of several factors based on the theory of planned behavior (Didarloo *et al.*, 2022). Another study demonstrated that fast-food consumption intention was affected by subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. At a 95% confidence level, subjective norms and behavioral intention were identified as predictors of fast-food consumption behavior (Ebadi *et al.*, 2018; Mirkarimi *et al.*, 2016).

In developing countries like Bangladesh, there is a notable synchronicity of under nutrition and over nutrition, often referred to as the "double burden of malnutrition" (Rahman *et al.*, 2019). To our knowledge, studies on Fast-Food Consumption Intention using TPB, are predominantly conducted in developed countries. Most of the studies were conducted in different cultural contexts using several constructs of TPB (Banik *et al.*, 2020; Shetu, 2024). While several international studies have explored fast food consumption behavior using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), there is a significant gap in localized, age-specific research in Bangladesh, especially among secondary school students in rural or semi-urban settings like Jamalpur. Therefore, it is important to examine the relationships among attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and intention toward fast-food consumption among high school students in Bangladesh.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Study Design

A correlational study was conducted from January 2023 to December 2023. The population of this study comprised all high school students studying at Hazrat Shahjamal (R:) School and College in Pathalia, Jamalpur, and Banga- bandhu Ideal School and College in Dewanpara, Jamalpur, Bangladesh. The sample for this study was drawn from 9th and 10th-grade high school students in two selected schools using the convenient sampling technique. Adolescents are defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as individuals aged 10–19 years, representing the transitional period between childhood and adulthood (World Health Organization [WHO], 2024). The present study included middle adolescents aged 15–16 years who were enrolled in grades 9 and 10. Exclusion criteria encompassed students with any severe illness during data collection.

Sample Size and Power

The required sample size was determined using G*Power (Version 3.1.9.4) analysis. The correlation-based sample size, with a priori $-r$ and a medium effect size (γ) of 0.25, a significance level (α) of 0.05, and an expected power of 0.80 ($1-\beta$), resulted in an estimated

sample size of 120. Considering an attrition rate of 20%, the final estimated sample size was 144.

Instruments with Validity and Reliability

Data were collected using the following five sets of questionnaires. The author (Seo *et al.*, 2011) developed a tool that used a 4-point Likert scale, which is a forced-choice format for respondents. The revised tools used a 5-point Likert scale to improve data quality and reliability, reduce response bias, and ensure contextual contexts by including a middle (neutral) option:

Socio- Demographic Data Questionnaire of Students:

The Socio- Demographic Data Questionnaire of the study was developed by the researcher based on the literature review. A total of 11 items such as age, height-weight, gender, parents' education, parents' working status, family financial status, consume fast food regularly, take fast food for what, and place for fast food consumption.

Attitude Questionnaire toward Fast-Food Consumption:

Attitude Questionnaire toward Fast-Food Consumption was used to measure students' attitudes regarding fast food consumption. The modified tools consisted of 12 items, ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The total score ranged from 12 to 60, with a higher score indicating a more positive attitude toward fast-food consumption.

Subjective Norm Questionnaire toward Fast-Food Consumption:

Subjective Norm Questionnaire (SNQ) toward Fast-Food Consumption was used to measure students' subjective norms regarding fast food consumption. The tools comprised of 6 items, ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with a total score ranging from 6 to 30. A higher score indicated stronger subjective norms toward fast-food consumption.

Perceived Behavioral Control Questionnaire toward Fast-Food Consumption:

Perceived Behavioral Control Questionnaires (PBCQ) toward Fast-Food Consumption was used to measure the student's perceived behavioral control regarding fast food consumption. The modified tools consisted of 14 items from 1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree. The total score was 14 to 70. The higher score indicated lower perceived behavioral control toward fast food consumption.

Intention Questionnaire toward Fast-Food Consumption:

Intention to consume fast food was used to measure the student's intention regarding fast food consumption. The modified tools consisted of 5 items regarding structural attributes of Fast-Food Consumption based on their cultural perspectives (Mirkarimi *et al.*,

2016; Seo *et al.*, 2011). One item —hamburger is unrelated to the Bangladeshi cultural context. As a result, the researcher adjusted —hamburger as —cheeseburger and developed three new items about the intention to consume fast food. There were 8 items from 1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree. The total score was 8 to 40. Higher score indicated higher intention toward fast food consumption. In this study, content validity of the instruments was checked and verified by three experts from NIANER who are knowledgeable and experienced in the field of conducting nursing research. The reliability of the instruments (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and intention) was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a score of .75. The original instruments were developed in the English language and then translated into Bengali using the bilingual translation method (Brislin, 1970).

Data Collection Methods

The data collection process consisted of two phases: In the first phase, the preparation phase, approval of the research proposal was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB No. Exp. NIA-S-226) of NIANER. Informed consent was obtained prior to the interview from study participants. Privacy and confidentiality of the participants were maintained.

In the implementation phase (2nd phase), data were collected using the following five sets of questionnaires. Data collection was carried out by the researcher with the assistance of teachers from the participating school. The total number of questions was 51, and it took approximately 20-25 minutes to complete the interview session.

Data Analysis

After completing the data collection, the data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation (SD), were utilized to describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the students and inferential statistics such as t-test and ANOVA. Additionally, a Pearson correlation test was used to explore the relationships among the concepts of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) regarding intention to fast-food consumption.

Ethical considerations

The Study approval was taken from Institutional Review Board (IRB No. Exp. NIA-S-226; 21st September, 2023) of NIANER, Mugda, Dhaka. The participants elected to voluntarily participate in the study after the researcher explained the study's details, including its purpose and data anonymity. The legal guardians of all participants and authorities of selected schools provided either written or oral informed consent. Privacy and confidentiality of the participants were maintained.

RESULTS

The Table 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the students (N=144). The results found that the mean age of schools' students was 15 years (SD=.468) old. Among them, more than half of students (54.2%) were male and remaining were female.

Table 1: Distribution of Socio- Demographic Characteristics of the Students (N=144)

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD
Age (in years)			15.32 $\pm$.47 (Min=15, Max=16)
Gender			
Male	78	54.2	
Female	66	45.8	
Body Mass Index (BMI)			21.31 $\pm$ 3.05 (Min=15, Max=32)
Father's Education			
Primary	56	38.9	
Secondary	42	29.2	
Higher Secondary	31	21.5	
Honors	15	10.4	
Mother's Education			
Primary	61	42.5	
Secondary	48	33.3	
Higher Secondary	30	20.7	
Honors	5	3.5	
Father's Occupation			
Farmer	33	22.9	
Business	65	45.1	
Service Holder	23	16.0	
Others	23	16.0	
Mother's Occupation			
Housewife	109	75.7	

Business	13	9.0	
Service Holder	18	12.5	
Others	4	2.8	
Monthly family income (in taka)		18888.89±8143.05 (Min=5000, Max=50000)	
Take fast food regularly			
Yes	117	81.3	
No	27	18.7	
Fast-Food consumption			
As a meal	60	51.3	
As a snack	57	48.7	
Place for Fast-Food consumption			
Home	29	24.8	
School Canteen	25	21.4	
Hotel & Restaurants	63	53.8	

The table 2 shows the total mean score of attitudes was 41.89 (SD= 13.80) on a 5- point Likert Scale (Table 2). The table 3 shows the total mean score of subjective norms was 21.54 (SD= 6.62) on a 5- point Likert Scale (Table 3). The table 4 shows the total mean

score of perceived behavioral control was 44.14 (SD= 16.91) on a 5- point Likert Scale (Table 4). The table 5 shows the total mean score of intention was 24.83 (SD= 9.69) on a 5- point Likert Scale (Table 5).

Table 2: Distribution of Attitude of the Students toward Fast Food Consumption (N=144)

S/N	Items	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Mean± SD
1.	Fast food is familiar to me	7(4.9)	10(6.9)	18(12.5)	52(36.1)	57(39.6)	3.99±1.12
2.	I think that fast food is not good for health	8(5.6)	15(10.4)	24(16.7)	41(28.5)	56(38.8)	3.85±1.21
3.	I think that fast food can provide all necessary nutrients of a meal	34(23.6)	30(20.8)	55(38.2)	16(11.1)	9(6.3)	2.56±1.15
4.	I think that fast food is delicious	6(4.2)	8(5.6)	22(15.2)	59(41.0)	49(34.0)	3.95±1.05
5.	I think that fast food stores provide an attractive environment	4(2.7)	26(18.1)	44(30.6)	42(29.2)	28(19.4)	3.44±1.08
6.	I think that fast food stores are clean	8(5.6)	11(7.6)	65(45.1)	51(35.4)	9(6.3)	3.29±.91
7.	I think that fast food is clean and safe	15(10.4)	28(19.4)	51(35.5)	40(27.8)	10(6.9)	3.01±1.08
8.	I think that fast food portions are large enough to feel full	19(13.2)	18(12.5)	47(32.6)	44(30.6)	16(11.1)	3.14±1.18
9.	I think that fast food has a lot of salt	22(15.3)	23(16.0)	41(28.5)	27(18.8)	31(21.4)	3.15±1.35
10.	I think that fast food has a lot of fat	9(6.3)	7(4.9)	11(7.6)	52(36.1)	65(45.1)	4.09±1.13
11.	I think that consuming fast food will make me fat	7(4.9)	13(9.0)	10(6.9)	41(28.5)	73(50.7)	4.11±1.17
12.	I think that fast food has a lot of calories	20(13.8)	23(16.0)	36(25.0)	23(16.0)	42(29.2)	3.31±1.40
Total Mean							41.89±13.80

Table 3: Distribution of Subjective Norm of the Students toward Fast Food Consumption (N=144)

S/N	Items	Strongly disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly agree n (%)	Mean± SD
01.	I follow my family's beliefs	3(2.1)	13(9.0)	22(15.3)	45(31.3)	61(42.3)	4.03±1.06
02.	I follow my teacher's beliefs	3(2.1)	14(9.7)	32(22.2)	30(20.8)	65(45.2)	3.97±1.12
03.	I follow my friend's beliefs	7(4.9)	7(4.9)	59(41.0)	45(31.2)	26(18.0)	3.53±1.00
04.	I think that my family members (parents, siblings) would	15(10.4)	23(16.0)	54(37.5)	31(21.5)	21(14.6)	3.14±1.17
05.	like to consume fast-food I think that my teachers would like to consume fast-food	13(9.0)	31(21.5)	51(35.4)	24(16.7)	25(17.4)	3.12±1.19
06.	I think that my friends would like to consume fast-food	6(4.2)	6(4.2)	49(34.0)	40(27.8)	43(29.8)	3.75±1.06
Total Mean							21.54±6.62

Table 4: Distribution of Perceived Behavioral Control of the Students toward Fast Food Consumption (N=144)

S/N	Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean± SD
		n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
1.	I can eat fast food even if fewer fast-food stores are	15(10.4)	21(14.6)	51(35.4)	42(29.2)	15(10.4)	3.15±1.12
2.	I can eat fast food even while I am on diet	19(13.2)	26(18.1)	56(38.9)	28(19.4)	15(10.4)	2.96±1.15
3.	I can eat fast food even if I have to wait for a long time	17(11.8)	15(10.4)	54(37.5)	44(30.6)	14(9.7)	3.16±1.12
4.	I can eat fast food even if fewer advertisement of fast food is on TV, internet and etc.	13(9.0)	11(7.6)	57(39.6)	49(34.0)	14(9.8)	3.28±1.05
5.	I can eat fast food even if they offer few sale promotions.	13(9.0)	26(18.1)	50(34.7)	46(31.9)	9(6.3)	3.08±1.05
6.	I think that changing my fast-food consumption behaviors for health would be difficult.	13(9.0)	17(11.9)	46(31.9)	46(31.9)	22(15.3)	3.33±1.15
7.	I think that meeting friends at places other than fast food stores would be difficult.	26(18.1)	23(16.0)	37(25.7)	37(25.7)	21(14.5)	3.03±1.32
8.	I think that using places other than fast food stores for special occasions such as birthday would be difficult.	15(10.4)	21(14.6)	39(27.1)	41(28.5)	28(19.4)	3.32±1.24
9.	I think that changing my fast-food consumption behavior is difficult because I have eaten them from very young ages	17(11.8)	26(18.1)	33(22.9)	38(26.4)	30(20.8)	3.26±1.30
10.	I can eat fast food even if i get nutrition education using multimedia.	9(6.3)	23(16.0)	44(30.5)	43(29.8)	25(17.4)	3.36±1.13
11.	I can eat fast food even if I get continued nutrition education.	23(16.0)	26(18.1)	29(20.1)	30(20.8)	36(25.0)	3.21±1.41
12.	I can eat fast food even if I learn how to quickly prepare a simple meal.	21(14.6)	32(22.2)	48(33.3)	26(18.1)	17(11.8)	2.90±1.21
13.	I can eat fast food even if I get nutrition education about impact of fast food on health (e.g. calories, nu- trient content)	13(9.0)	33(22.9)	40(27.8)	44(30.6)	14(9.7)	3.09±1.13
14.	I can eat fast food even while I have less money in my pocket.	35(24.3)	24(16.6)	26(18.1)	23(16.0)	36(25.0)	3.01±1.52
	Total Mean						44.14±16.91

Table 5: Distribution of Intention of the Students toward Fast Food Consumption (N=144)

S/N	Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean± SD
		n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
1.	I intend to consume a fried chicken in the next week	36(25.0)	44(30.6)	30(20.8)	14(9.7)	20(13.9)	2.57±1.34
2.	I intend to consume a fried fish in the next week	6(4.2)	23(16.0)	57(39.6)	38(26.4)	20(13.8)	3.30±1.03
3.	I intend to consume a pizza in the next week	27(18.8)	19(13.2)	57(39.6)	33(22.8)	8(5.6)	2.83±1.15
4.	I intend to consume a sandwich in the next week	10(6.9)	17(11.8)	64(44.5)	42(29.2)	11(7.6)	3.19±.98
5.	I intend to consume a French fry/fried potatoes in the next week	10(6.9)	17(11.8)	50(34.7)	42(29.2)	25(17.4)	3.38±1.12
6.	I intend to consume a doughnut in the next week	13(9.0)	14(9.7)	44(30.6)	45(31.3)	28(19.4)	3.42±1.17
7.	I intend to consume a hotdog in the next week	28(19.4)	28(19.4)	30(20.9)	30(20.9)	28(19.4)	3.01±1.40
8.	I intend to consume a cheeseburger in the next week	29(20.1)	26(18.1)	27(18.8)	21(14.6)	41(28.4)	3.13±1.51
	Total Mean						24.83±9.69

Table 6 showed that there was a statistically significant negative results between students age and intention to fast food consumption ($r=-.281$, $p<.001$);

gender and intention to fast food consumption ($t=-5.386$, $p<.001$); mothers' education and intention to fast food consumption ($F=2.907$, $p=.037$); fathers' occupation and

intention to fast food consumption ($F = 2.785$, $p = .043$) and monthly family income and intention to fast food consumption ($r = .173$, $p = .038$) respectively.

Table 6: The Relationship between Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Intention to Fast Food Consumption (N=144)

Items	Mean $\pm$ SD	r/t/F	p
Age (in years)		-.281	<.001
Gender			
Male	23.32 $\pm$ 3.81	-5.386	<.001
Female	26.64 $\pm$ 3.52		
Body Mass Index (BMI)		.148	.076
Father's Education			
Primary	23.77 $\pm$ 3.64	2.537	.059
Secondary	25.21 $\pm$ 4.72		
Above	25.67 $\pm$ 3.48		
Mother's Education			
Primary a	23.89 $\pm$ 3.97	2.907	.037 (b > c & a)
Secondary b	25.83 $\pm$ 4.55		
Above c	25.14 $\pm$ 2.92		
Father's Occupation			
Farmer a	23.76 $\pm$ 4.78	2.785	.043 (b > c, d & a)
Business b	25.88 $\pm$ 3.66		
Service Holder c	24.22 $\pm$ 3.54		
Others d	24.09 $\pm$ 3.84		
Mother's Occupation			
Housewife	24.53 $\pm$ 4.22	2.220	.088
Business	27.15 $\pm$ 3.56		
Others	24.14 $\pm$ 1.68		
Monthly family income (in taka)		.173	.038
Take fast food regularly			
Yes	24.97 $\pm$ 3.93	.778	.438
No	24.30 $\pm$ 4.47		
Fast-Food consumption			
As a meal	24.58 $\pm$ 3.774	-1.082	.282
As a snack	25.39 $\pm$ 4.074		
Place for Fast-Food consumption			
Home	24.10 $\pm$ 4.169	.731	.536
School Canteen	25.61 $\pm$ 5.050		
Hotel & Restaurants	25.10 $\pm$ 3.453		

Table 7 showed the attitude toward fast food consumption was significantly correlated with: Subjective norm ($r = .292$, $p < .01$); Perceived behavioral control ($r = .419$, $p < .01$); Intention to fast food consumption ($r = .487$, $p < .01$). The subjective norm was

significantly correlated with: Perceived behavioral control ($r = .259$, $p < .01$); Intention to fast food consumption ($r = .177$, $p < .05$). Finally, the perceived behavioral control was strongly correlated with: Intention to fast food consumption ($r = .594$, $p < .01$).

Table 7: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation between Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioral Control and Intention to Fast Food Consumption (N=144)

Variable Pair	Correlation (r)
Attitude toward Fast Food $\times$ Subjective Norm	.292**
Attitude toward Fast Food $\times$ Perceived Behavioral Control	.419**
Attitude toward Fast Food $\times$ Intention to Fast Food	.487**
Subjective Norm $\times$ Perceived Behavioral Control	.259**
Subjective Norm $\times$ Intention to Fast Food	.177*
Perceived Behavioral Control $\times$ Intention to Fast Food	.594**
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$	

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the relationships among attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and intention toward fast-food consumption among Bangladeshi high school students using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The findings demonstrated that all three TPB constructs were significantly and positively associated with intention to consume fast food, and are consistent with previous TPB-based studies conducted among adolescents and young adults in different countries (Mirkarimi *et al.*, 2016; Rouhani-Tonekaboni *et al.*, 2018; Sajjad *et al.*, 2023; Seo *et al.*, 2011).

Attitude and Intention toward Fast-Food Consumption

The present study found that attitude was significantly and positively associated with intention to consume fast food. This finding is consistent with previous studies reporting that high school students and young adults with more favorable attitudes toward fast food are more likely to intend to consume it (Didarloo *et al.*, 2022; Mirkarimi *et al.*, 2016; Sajjad *et al.*, 2023; Seo *et al.*, 2011). Positive attitudes may arise because adolescents commonly perceive fast food as tasty, convenient, affordable, enjoyable, and suitable for social occasions (Fazelpour *et al.*, 2019; Mirkarimi *et al.*, 2016). Although many adolescents are aware of the potential health consequences of excessive fast-food consumption, immediate gratification often outweighs concerns about future health risks. Similar patterns have been reported in Bangladesh and other countries where rapid urbanization, greater availability of fast-food outlets, and changing dietary habits contribute to increasingly favorable perceptions of fast food (Ahmed, 2023; Banik *et al.*, 2020; Lestari *et al.*, 2021; Nipun *et al.*, 2017).

Subjective Norm and Intention toward Fast-Food Consumption

The study findings also demonstrated a significant positive relationship between subjective norm and intention to consume fast food, indicating that perceived expectations from parents, family members, and peers may influence adolescents' food choices. This finding agrees with previous TPB studies showing that social influence is an important determinant of adolescents' dietary behaviors (Didarloo *et al.*, 2022; Mirkarimi *et al.*, 2016; Seo *et al.*, 2011). During adolescence, food consumption frequently occurs within social settings, and eating fast food is often considered a shared activity with friends and family (Jayawickrama *et al.*, 2020; Ngozika & Obeagu, 2018). In Bangladesh, increasing urbanization and the growing availability of fast-food restaurants may further reinforce these social norms by making fast food a common choice during family outings and peer gatherings (Ahmed, 2023; Banik *et al.*, 2020; Shori *et al.*, 2017).

Perceived Behavioral Control and Intention toward Fast-Food Consumption

Among the TPB constructs, perceived behavioral control showed the strongest positive relationship with intention toward fast-food consumption. This finding is consistent with studies by Mirkarimi *et al.*, (2016), Sajjad *et al.*, (2023), and Seo *et al.*, (2011), which also identified perceived behavioral control as an important determinant of fast-food consumption intention. Adolescents who perceive few barriers to obtaining fast food are more likely to intend to consume it because fast food is widely available, relatively inexpensive, convenient, and easily accessible through restaurants and food delivery services. In Bangladesh, increased pocket money, expanding commercial food environments, and limited healthy alternatives around schools may further strengthen adolescents' perceived ability to purchase fast food whenever desired (Ahmed, 2023; Banik *et al.*, 2020). Although Didarloo *et al.*, (2022) reported different findings, variations in food environments, cultural contexts, and socioeconomic conditions may explain these inconsistencies.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Intention toward Fast-Food Consumption

Although the primary objective of this study was to examine the relationships between TPB constructs and intention toward fast-food consumption, several socio-demographic characteristics were also significantly associated with intention. Age, gender, maternal education, paternal occupation, and monthly family income showed significant associations with fast-food consumption intention. These findings are generally consistent with previous studies reporting that adolescents' dietary behaviors are influenced by socioeconomic characteristics and parental factors (AlTamimi *et al.*, 2023; Banik *et al.*, 2020; Didarloo *et al.*, 2022; Mirkarimi *et al.*, 2016; Singh *et al.*, 2020). Higher household income may increase adolescents' purchasing opportunities, while parental education and occupation may influence food environments, nutrition knowledge, and eating practices within the family (Ahmed, 2023; Hidaka *et al.*, 2018; Nahar & Zahangir, 2024). Nevertheless, these socio-demographic variables should be interpreted as contextual influences because they were secondary analyses and not the primary focus of the present study.

Overall, the findings suggest that the Theory of Planned Behavior provides a useful framework for understanding fast-food consumption intention among Bangladeshi high school students. Among the TPB constructs, perceived behavioral control showed the strongest association with intention, followed by attitude and subjective norm. These findings indicate that future school-based nutrition interventions should address adolescents' beliefs about fast food, promote supportive family and peer environments, and improve opportunities for healthier food choices. Such theory-

informed interventions may contribute to reducing unhealthy dietary behaviors among Bangladeshi adolescents.

Study Limitations

The study employed a descriptive correlational design, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships among the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) constructs. The study was also limited to two urban schools, which reduces the generalizability of the findings to rural adolescents, madrasa students, and government school students in Bangladesh. In addition, self-reported data may be influenced by response bias.

CONCLUSION

The study found significant positive relationships among attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and intention toward fast-food consumption among high school students in Bangladesh. These findings support the usefulness of the Theory of Planned Behavior in understanding adolescents' intentions toward fast-food consumption.

Recommendations

The study suggests implementing school-based interventions focusing on changing attitudes and social influences, expanding nutritious midday meal programs to provide healthy alternatives, recruiting child health nurses for regular health guidance, launching media campaigns to raise awareness about healthy eating, and developing community strategies to prevent obesity among Bangladeshi adolescents.

What is New Here?

- This study provides context-specific evidence on psychosocial factors associated with fast-food consumption intention among Bangladeshi high school students.
- The findings demonstrate that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are positively associated with fast-food consumption intention, supporting the usefulness of the Theory of Planned Behavior in this population.
- The study provides evidence that can inform theory-based school nutrition education and adolescent health promotion strategies in Bangladesh.

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Availability of Data and Materials

The original dataset analyzed in this study are not publicly available in accordance with participants' privacy. The dataset of the current study is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Consent Statement

Participants were informed about the study's purpose, risks, benefits, and their right to withdraw. Written informed consent was obtained from legal guardians and college authorities, and confidentiality of personal data was strictly maintained for research purposes only.

Conflict of Interest Statement: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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