

HEALTHY FOOD ADVERTISING AFFECTING IRISH YOUNGSTER'S FOOD PREFERENCES:

An exploratory study in the Irish market



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HEALTHY FOOD ADVERTISING AFFECTING IRISH YOUNGSTER'S FOOD PREFERENCES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN THE IRISH MARKET

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ABSTRACT

Background: There has been a significant rise in the “healthy” fast-food outlets giving stiff competition to traditional fast-food restaurants. Food industry has completely changed in the past few years and so has people’s connection to food. Companies are spending millions to market their product as healthy and make consumers aware of the healthier options available in the market. With the motivation towards a healthy lifestyle and constant bombarding of advertisements, people are willing to invest their money on healthy food products available in the market.

Objective: The study aims to find out if advertising impacts the food preferences and decision making of the Irish consumers and if healthy food advertising impacts the food consumption and buying patterns of Irish consumers.

Method: A self-administered online questionnaire(n=100) was developed to find out the effect of healthy food advertising on the consumption pattern of adults aged 16-35 years in Dublin, Ireland. The questionnaire focused on the role that advertising plays in the manipulation of consumer’s decision making and lifestyle, thereby, creating a distinction in the Irish consumer’s preferences and food choices.

Results: The result validates that advertising drives decision making and drives youngsters into buying food products. While youngsters are bombarded with fast-food advertising which persuades them to buy fast-food compared to healthy food options, it is also evident that food marketing on social media is highly influential compared to traditional marketing platforms like television.

Conclusion: The study concludes that food advertising does impact the food preferences of consumers. With the constant exposure of fast food advertising on various media platforms, most Irish youngsters prefer fast food over healthy food options. Hence, to tackle the health issues arising out of this scenario, the health department needs to impose strict regulations on unhealthy food advertising in Ireland.

DECLARATION

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland

Research Students Declaration Form

(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
ASAI	Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland
BMI	Body Mass Index
EDNP	Energy-dense, Nutrient-poor
FSAI	Food Safety Authority of Ireland
HFSS	High-fat, sugar and salt
HSE	Health Service Executive
IHF	Irish Heart Foundation
SD	Standard deviation
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In recent times, changes in lifestyles, and financial resources have led to a shift in eating habits, dietary behavior, breakdown of traditional food patterns and high-energy food sources. As customers become more and more health-conscious, fast-food brands are introducing new products and implementing communication strategies related to health and wellness. According to previous researchers, food advertisements have a significant effect on the consumption habits of the people (Batrinou and Kanellou, 2009). Food companies spend a great deal of funds on marketing to boost their sales and increase their share in the market; with advertising being one of the most important marketing tools (Folkvord *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, the influence of media medics, food bloggers, influencers and fitness icons has raised public understanding of health and the futility of eating packaged food items by educating the people about what they put into their bodies. Advertisements aimed at teenagers by restaurants, food and beverage companies promote almost explicitly high calorie, nutrient-poor commodities, particularly fast food, beverages, sweets, and snacks with high sugar content. Core, one of the largest marketing communications enterprise in Ireland, predicted a rise of around €519.5m in the online advertising market and the overall advertising expenditure to be around €1.044bn in the year 2019 in Ireland (Kennedy, 2019). Increased exposure to advertising tends to increase food consumption and preferences. Despite the fact that youngsters express more skepticism about food ads than young children, they are extremely susceptible to get influenced by food marketing (Fleming-Milici and Harris, 2020).

1.1) IRELAND's OBESITY CONCERN

This brings us to one of the escalating concerns linked with food advertising- obesity and overweight among people. The epidemic of obesity shows us that youngsters eat and consume food recklessly and that the linkage to marketing is reasonably straightforward: relentless promotion of enticing, high-calorie food products that are inexpensive and easy to buy, often causing consumers to consume a large amount of junk food. Diets centered around unhealthy fast foods, processed foods, energy-dense beverages and snacks, as well as food abundance, unhealthy lifestyles, and

reduced physical activity has contributed to severe weight control issues in Ireland. The high, and still rising overweight and obesity levels in not only children but also adults, are a particularly serious epidemics affecting the overall health of people in Ireland and worldwide. Preventing and reversing current trends in obesity is not simply a priority for the public health department but is also significantly seen as a wider societal concern that has become an explicit adaptation target nationwide (Reisch *et al.*, 2017).

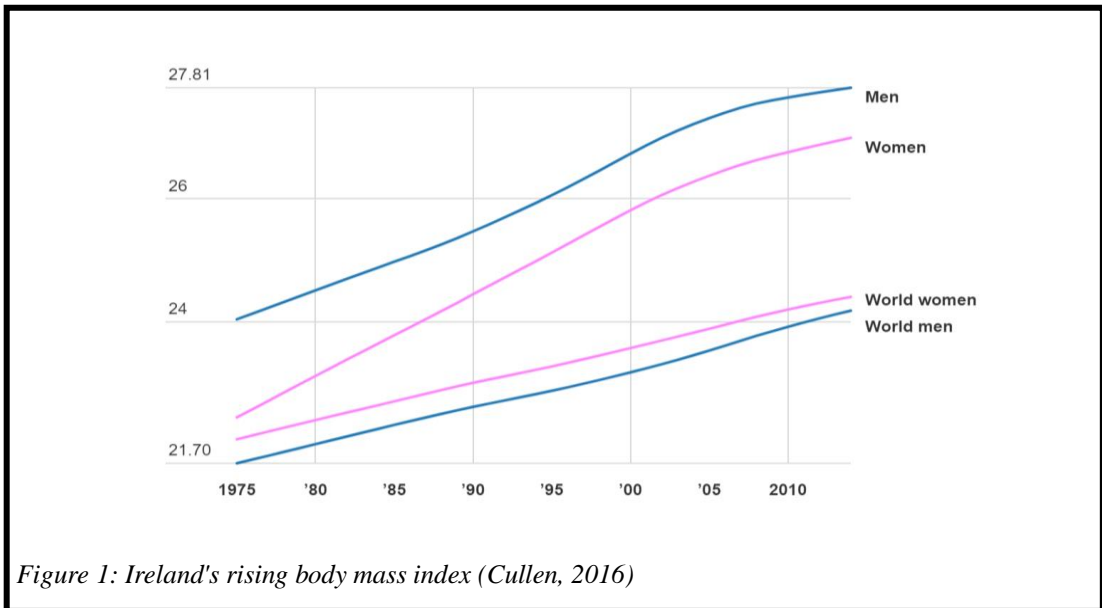


Figure 1: Ireland's rising body mass index (Cullen, 2016)

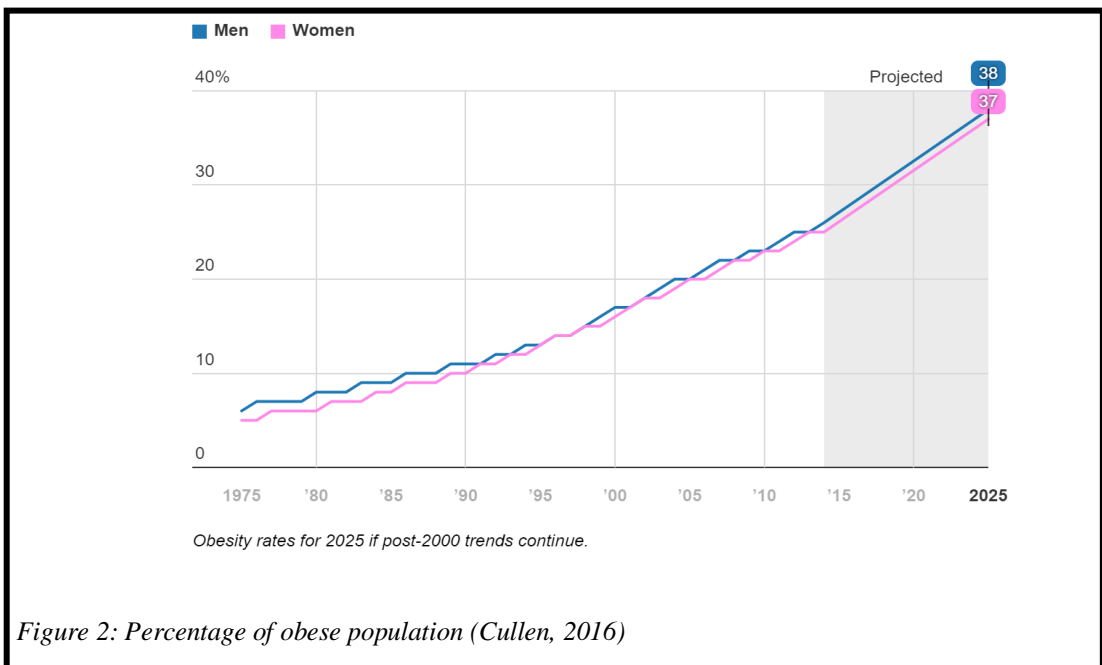


Figure 2: Percentage of obese population (Cullen, 2016)

Ireland is projected to become the most obese nation in Europe, according to the Irish Times. About one-fifth (118 million) of the world's obese people are from Ireland and five other highly educated nations- the United Kingdom, Australia, New

Zealand, US, and Canada. Additionally, the survey also states that around 38 percent of men in the UK and Ireland, and 38 percent of the women in the UK, followed by 37 percent of the Irish women, might suffer from obesity by 2025. Consequently, tackling obesity has become one of the top concerns for public wellbeing in Ireland (Cullen, 2016).

1.2) IRELAND'S HEALTH CODE

Cullen (2017) states that among all the European countries concerning the increasing obesity rates, Ireland has become the first nation worldwide to ban unhealthy food endorsements for schoolchildren after a newly formed practice code that has been adopted. The code developed jointly by the Health Department, the Health Service Executive (HSE), food producers and marketers, aims to reduce people's exposure to high-fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) food and drink ads. Three out of five Irish adults and one out of four children are obese or overweight. The code states that the rates of obesity are increasing at an unprecedented pace and by 2030 Ireland will be on a route to becoming Europe's most obese country. In relation to healthy weight, the food sector plays a crucial role. The aim is to shift from the existing "obesogenic" environment- where junk food is accessible everywhere, to one that encourages healthier food and drinks consumption (Cullen, 2017). The proposed law is aimed at limiting the impact of advertising and marketing in directing people, especially children, towards unhealthy food choices. The code not only covers the marketing of digital, outdoor, online, print and cinema but also product placement and commercial sponsorship (Executive *et al.*, 2017).

1.3) CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND IRELAND'S FOOD INDUSTRY

A major factor linked to food consumption and advertising is consumer behavior. Most researches based on consumer behavior define it as the "art of understanding consumers" that involves observing their actions, attitudes, and consciousness and how the environment impacts their buying choice and decisions. Several key components affecting consumer behavior prevail in the social, physical and media environment surrounding the consumers (Reisch *et al.*, 2013). From ages, the issue of balanced diet has been viewed as a personal problem, and the inability to attain it

as a personal failure. The emphasis steadily moved to environmental factors that influenced the choices made by people- commonly referred to as 'food environments.' This further draws attention to the persuading factors for unhealthy/healthy eating throughout the entire food system and highlights the policies that are essential to ensure healthy food environments in which healthier choices are "widely accessible, reasonably priced, and extensively promoted" (De Schutter et al., 2020). For instance, Healthy Ireland Policies (2019) focus on Ireland's National Obesity Policy and Action Plan that aims on reversing the rise in obesity, health risks, and reducing the overall burden on the people, the health care system, the community and the economy. In 2013, the Healthy Ireland Framework was initiated that articulated objectives for better well-being and health of the people in Ireland.

Newman(1999) highlighted in a report on The Irish Times that Irish people excessively eat high-fat and sugar-containing unhealthy snacks and confectionery products, besides, lack of exercise makes them obese and overweight. According to the market research company, Euromonitor International, Irish citizens compared to 19 other European nations, spend more money per individual on fast food. Euromonitor estimates that the Irish have spent more on fast-food in recent years compared to € 1.5 billion in 2017 (Healy, 2014).

Although, in the current phase of “nutrition transition” as stated by O’Shaughnessy (2017), unhealthy eating habits are surpassing healthy eating behaviors. The food industry keeps on evolving at an unbelievable rate. The last five years have seen more transition in consumer dietary habits than in the previous years. The way we eat, the kind of food we buy, where we get it from and how it is made has become a component of our character and determines how well we function. Increasing awareness of what comprises nutritious food has started to see a difference in typical consumers' eating patterns. Healthy eating has become a top priority than ever before. Consumers are exposed to healthy tips and tricks on food as they turn to the internet for advice.

Bord Bia's Insight Center study (2017), The Thought Room, found that seven out of ten Irish people would want help to eat more healthily. The research centered around Irish people’s attitudes toward food, dining, grocery shopping, and cooking habits.

The study's outcome showed that one-third of the Irish people believe that their food choices are getting healthier. More than half of the Irish people check for calorie and sugar content and almost three-quarters of people are mindful of the sugar consumption of their children. Over the last few years, as highlighted by the Irish Life (2016), Ireland's restaurant culture has evolved to the new trend and demand for healthy eating with veggies, raw and clean food, sugar-free, low-fat, vegan and healthy fast-food restaurants like Sprout & Co kitchen, Freshly Chopped, Counter Culture, POG, The Bare Food Company, The Happy Pear and many more are popping up all around the country.

To conclude, past researches on the impact of food-related advertising for children have received significant attention and indicates that exposure to food-related advertising might be linked to increased intake of food. Several studies have reported the quantity and low nutritional content of foods and drinks that have been advertised majorly towards children. Considering the large percentage of food advertising that can serve as a cue for eating, there is a lack of research looking into the relationship between advertising exposure to food and food intake for youngsters and adults (Wonderlich-Tierney *et al.*, 2013). Hence, this paper attempts to explore the effect of food advertising on youngsters and adults. Experts in public health believe that the issue of a poor diet and teen obesity can not be tackled without substantial improvements in the obesity causing food culture surrounding the youngsters, and to whom food marketing is a key contributing factor (Harris and Graff, 2012). Additionally, although the mainstream press currently has exploded with a response to the on-going pandemic- Covid-19 with articles on a wide range of food issues like food preservation, malnutrition, and food distribution channels, the risk of rising overweight and obesity levels have still remained relatively out of the discussion (Stever, 2020).

1.4) DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

The report is divided into five chapters to accomplish the objective of the study and to answer the research questions: The first chapter gives the background about food advertising in Ireland, the issues caused by the advertising of unhealthy food to children and adults and their buying behavior related to unhealthy and healthy food

purchase. It also highlights the current scenario and certain facts associated with health and advertisement in Ireland, thereby, justifying the objectives and the need for the study. The next chapter presents relevant knowledge, including substantive findings, theoretical and methodological contributions to consumer's behavior, factors contributing to their food-buying patterns, food advertising, theories related to consumer behavior and the effect of food ads on consumers. Further, the methodology chapter is based on the data gathered by the qualitative method; an online survey with a structured questionnaire was designed and conducted to collect information relative to the personal experiences of the desired population. The following chapter presents and discusses the results obtained from the survey. It inspects the significance of the findings and the correlation of the concepts presented in the literature review. Finally, the conclusion sums up the findings of the research and provides recommendations for future research.

1.5) RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Do advertising and media contribute to the decision making of food consumption?

Are the majority of ads related to unhealthy food? Has healthy food advertising persuaded people into buying healthy food?

Is there a major shift from eating junk food to healthy food and how are the decisions related to food getting impacted?

Do people opt for fast-food as it is inexpensive, convenient, and tasty compared to the healthier options available in any food restaurant?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

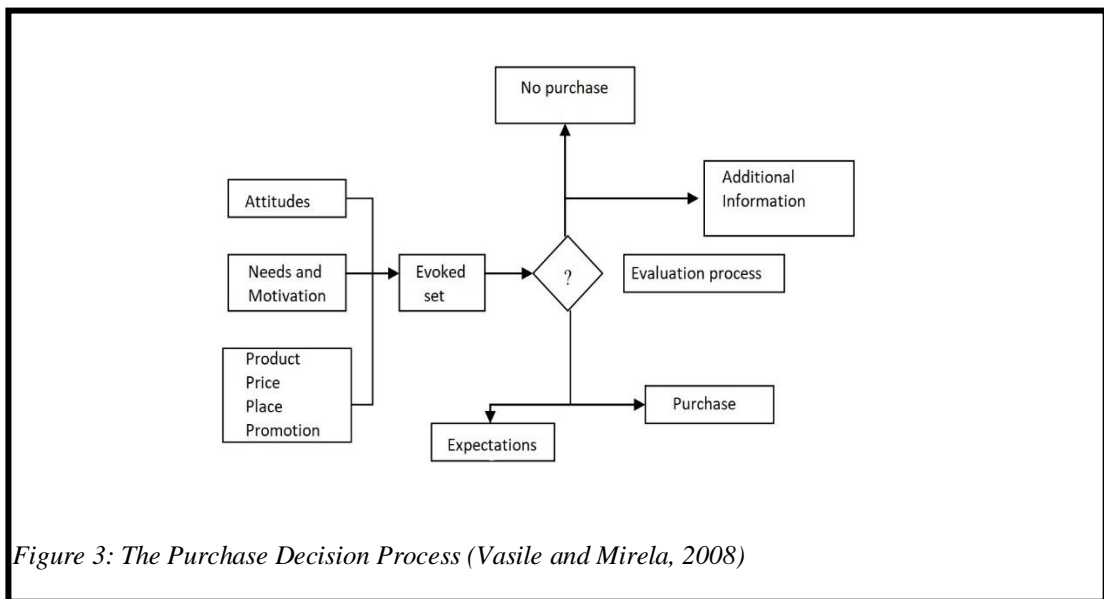
In recent years, the market for healthy products has boomed as customers are becoming constantly aware of their food intake and are eager to know more about it. Organic produce, locally made produce, low carb, high nutrient-rich food, and healthy alternatives are being pushed forward for raising the food retail stakes (Lang, Stanton and Qu, 2014). Throughout Europe, the retail share of organic food has grown from €21.5bn in 2011 to €40.7bn in 2020 and is expected to expand exponentially (Willer et al., 2020). Given the expectations of retailers and growing offers of organic and healthy products, there however remains barriers or issues to the purchase of healthy products by consumers. These barriers are identified as causes for what is referred to as the ‘attitude-behavior gap’ regarding healthy food purchases-that is, the optimistic attitude of consumers towards consumption is not necessarily converted into buying decisions. Several major barriers include consumer preferences, perceptions and expectations, variables driving purchasing behavior, food priming, customer purchasing motives, product and price characteristics, influence and persuasion by food marketing (Anisimova, 2016). With the growing concern for health-related issues, escalating rates of obesity and dietary conditions, the value and preference for healthy food is on a rise. Despite the benefits of healthy food, the correlation between healthism and consumer buying intentions persists to be underresearched at present. Hence, the study tries to explore and find out the link between advertising, which is considered to be one of the key factors that impact food purchase decisions and its effect on consumer’s purchasing behavior with relation to healthy food. This paper aims to determine if the advertising of healthy food in comparison to fast food has an impact on buyers to consume more healthy food instead of fast food or if there is no influence despite being bombarded by healthy food ads on various media platforms.

2.1) CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

2.1.1) PURCHASE DECISION PROCESS

The preference of one product over other products is a method of maximizing the utility of the consumer, also called the decision-making process. Needs and demands are the primary components for taking decisions about purchases. Buyers have to undergo sufficient positive attitudes towards the product for a purchase to occur. If

all of the components of marketing are well planned, the buyer will include the marketed brand in his or her evoked range of products, that is, all of the goods that the buyer intends to purchase. Such effective marketing includes developing a product that the buyer seeks, ensuring the availability of the product in strategically positioned retail stores, and maintaining a fair price for the customers (Vasile and Mirela, 2008). Social scientists create numerous complex consumer behavior theories, although, Vasile and Mirela (2008) have given a simplified outline of consumer's buying decision model:



The model explores the path adopted by consumers in considering various products. This demonstrates the steps that consumers adopt before the purchase of the products and their behavior after the purchase. Since consumers behave differently, people are adopting models of purchasing decision-making behavior in different ways. An advertisement targeting a prospective customer when the customer is looking for product information would have a larger impact as the consumers save their efforts and time required to look for this information by themselves and is less inclined to turn to a rival company to gain the additional information (Vasile and Mirela, 2008). Advertising is a means of communication that enables consumers to make buying choices about a commodity or service by conveying information to them. Marketers have always evolved and adapted to the changing demands of the industry when it comes to developing new content and ads. Advertising's main objective is to affect purchasing behavior by capturing a consumer's attention and making a long-lasting impact. Past researches have always given immense importance to the effectiveness of advertising on consumer's

purchasing behavior. The majority of the time a buyer's purchase behavior relies on the consumer's liking or disdain for the advertisement of the product marketed (Haider and Shakib, 2017).

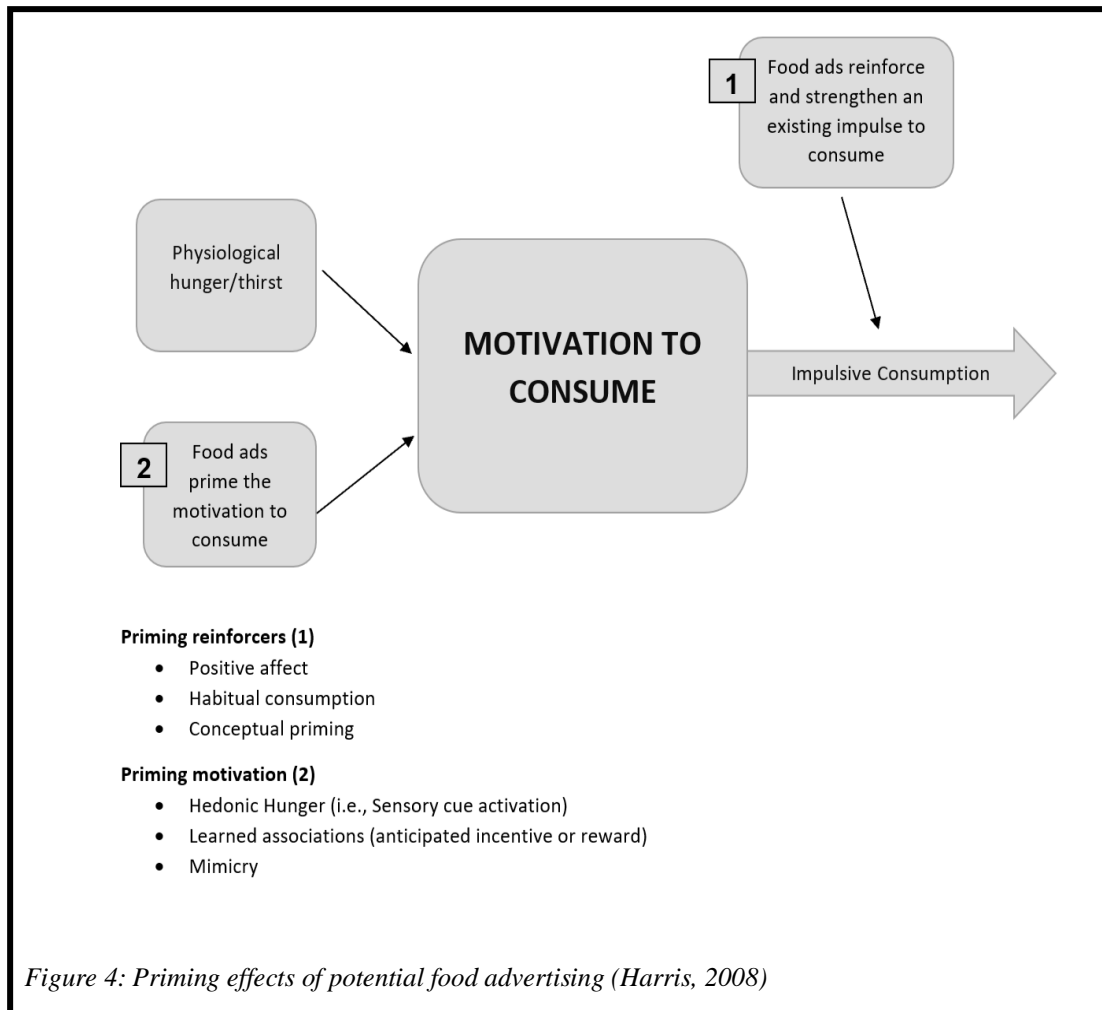
Karimi (2013) states that different products have varying degrees of sophistication. They may add more difficulty to the decision making if they have a broad range of parameters that raise the conflicts between alternatives; if they are costly and purchased less frequently; or if they have a higher degree of associated uncertainty. Taking into account the difficulty of the situation, time limitations and insufficient intellectual processing capacity, the reasoning for the decision is reduced to a state of minimal rationality. Many ideas have also emphasized many facets of decision-making, adopting the principles of bounded rationality. Restricted rationality, for instance, underlines the idea that individuals simplify a decision issue due to the complexity of analyzing all the details and assessing the potential alternatives; contextual rationality stresses the interaction of option actions in a specific scenario with individuals' social and cognitive characteristics. In addition to the influence of the outcome, process rationality stresses the effect that a process of decision has on the decision. Kotler (2003) has identified consumer purchasing behavior (figure 4) into four groups based on consumer participation and brand discrepancies, product value, and purchase frequency. Therefore, it is perceived that both the buyer and the purchasing context influence buying behavior.

Purchase type	Characteristics
Complex Buying Behaviour	High consumer involvement Major differences among brands Expensive product Infrequent purchase More time, information and help required
Dissonance-Reducing Buyer Behaviour	High consumer involvement Little difference among brands Expensive product Infrequent purchase Relatively quick Quick response to a good price
Habitual Buying Behaviour	Low customer involvement Little brand difference Same brand purchase Little search for information about the brand Receive information through media passively
Variety-Seeking Buying Behaviour	Low customer involvement High perceived brand difference A lot of brand switching

Figure 4: Types and characteristics of purchase behavior (Karimi 2013)

2.1.2) PRIMING EFFECT

In the current contemporary markets, there are ample food cues that people are continuously exposed to, like photos and posters of food products— in supermarkets, fast-food joints and restaurants, as well as through ads in newspapers, public transports, on billboards and most importantly on television. Food advertisement triggers people's urge to eat and encourage them to act. Hence, food priming activates food consumption thoughts, or cognitions, that then causes a corresponding motivation for eating (Kemps et al., 2014). Priming is a strategy wherein consumers unintentionally relate to the product through its image, color, sound, or illustrations used in the advertising. A strong ad catches its audience's spirit and leaves a deep impact on them. Considering the kinds of food products and the benefits obtained by the consumption usually advertised in the food advertisements, what is generally primed is munching on junk foods and drinks (Harris et al., 2009). Eating nutritious food is vital for active lifestyles and for addressing the issue of obesity. Researchers have been investigating various related elements in an effort to resolve the issue of obesity. There has been an analysis of social aspects like public policies and food promotion strategies. People typically have a negative association with a product's quality, consistency and taste (the more unhealthy a food product is, the tastier it is), which can lead consumers to eat more and more unhealthy products. Perceived wellbeing is characterized as the expectation of a customer about how much a particular product improves his or her health (Fukawa, 2016). Food advertising can reinforce and solidify the impulse to consume for those who are already motivated to purchase by inducing positive effects, triggering routine consumption patterns, and priming consumption-related notions(1). Nevertheless, food advertising even has the ability to trigger consumer desires that are not related to pre-existing intentions, such as, intrinsic hunger or thirst(2) (Harris, 2008).



2.1.3) CONSUMER CULTURE THEORY (CCT)

CCT is not a straightforward abstract idea nor aspires to any nomothetical assertions. It actually refers to a set of theoretical views addressing the dynamic interrelationships between the environment, consumer behavior, and cultural interpretations. Usage of industry-made commodities and desire-inducing advertisement icons is the key to consumer culture, and yet the persistence and replication of this mechanism ultimately depend on the practice of free personal choice in the daily private sphere of every individual (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). The concept "consumer culture" often describes an integrated network of collectively generated images, texts and items shared by individuals through the creation of overlapping behaviors, ideologies and sometimes contradictory practices — to acquire a common understanding of their world, and to direct the experiences and lives of their members. Therefore, consumer culture represents a tightly interconnected network of international ties and extensions in which the powers of

multinational capital and the international media are systematically interpenetrated by local culture (Kozinets, 2001). The literature points out a variety of behavioral factors correlated with customer behavior. The studies conclude that food choices and food intake are influenced by families, social and religious beliefs, although, other research points to religious beliefs for having a direct/indirect effect on food choices. The model suggests that there are two types of variables that persuade people, namely the environment and individual or personal dynamics. The environmental factors include marketing indicators, economic factors, socio-cultural variables, and situational conditions. Community, social status, family, and psychological interactions are several examples of environmental factors. CCT examines cultural and social factors that influence consumption systematically, such as age, culture, race, and gender. Consumers are seen as proponents of social identities and positions (Otnes et al., 1993).

Additionally, the research explores the connection between food ads, habits, weight and dietary preference depicting consumer behavior. Consumer purchasing behavior promotes the planning and execution of superior market strategies by firms. People today have access to the infinite supply of advertising. However, to some extent, they fancy something unique, exciting and worthy of attracting their attention. Uninteresting ads do not survive long enough in the minds of consumers. Hence, entertainment has been considered an essential promotional tool to improve the impact of ads and to highly encourage people to make a purchase. Familiarity and reflection of the social position, lifestyle and identity of the customer formed by ads demonstrate the ideal role of the consumers, thereby, stimulating action towards buying the product (Haider and Shakib, 2017).

2.1.4) SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY (SCT)

The theoretical framework adopted by Story et al. (2002) focused on the SCT and ecological model to describe food decisions and eating habits among young people. SCT describes behavior in the context of a triadic, reciprocal model that interacts and influences the behavior of a person, personality traits and the environment in which the behavior is conducted. The eating-related factors that SCT constructs include observational learning, strengthening (reactions to an individual's behavior that

decreases or increases their chances of relapse), self-efficacy (confidence in behavior change), and self-control. The ecological model focuses on the relationship between people and their environment. People's behavior is considered to affect and be affected by various levels of influencing factors, including microsystems, macrosystems, exosystems and mesosystem. The microsystem consists of the environment in which the individual lives and communicates with the individuals and entities close to him, such as parents, friends, and education institutes. Although, over the period, the relative value of these interactions is likely to change. The mesosystem consists of the interconnections among the elements of the microsystem. These are the links between the various environments in which people are involved, such as school, peer groups, or family. The exosystem consists of environments that influence the growth of an individual, in which the individual has a large degree of indirect interaction. The most proximal effect is the macrosystem which is comprised of the cultural beliefs, philosophies, laws, values, and ideologies of the society (McLeroy et al., 1988).

Social cognitive theories stipulate a profound and possibly immense impact of food ads on food intake and eating behavior that may happen without the awareness or knowledge of the people (Harris et al., 2009). The correlation between advertisement and obesity can be mediated by more relevant factors, such as widespread marketing campaigns (e.g. ads to consumers, promotions via the Internet or at the point of purchase) or by other socio-economic factors such as food pricing, food quality and availability, cultural preferences and many more that impact lifestyle and consumption patterns of the people (Lobstein and Dobb, 2005). This incorporated theoretical model premised on SCT and an ecological model by Story (2002) has recognized various physical, environmental, individual, social and macrosystem components that interact to control food choices among young adults. These influences include hunger, appetite, food interests, self-efficacy, food quality and appeal, demands, comfort, expense, dietary control, parental food habits, home food supply, peer pressures, school food culture, eating out, food ads, and social and cultural eating traditions. Although some of these influences, such as eating habits are consistent and impact food decisions throughout life, others are evolutionary variables that are specifically associated with being an adult (Story et al., 2002). Despite the various factor influencing at the macro and micro levels that

are described by the theoretical models of CCT and SCT that triggers the purchase decision making of individuals, the study has been focused on advertising, which is a major influencing factor as determined by the above theories, for driving the food choice among the consumers (Reisch et al., 2013).

2.2) FOOD MARKETING IN IRELAND

2.2.1) FOOD ADVERTISING FOCUSED ON UNHEALTHY PRODUCTS

On the individual level, obesity is closely linked with health conditions for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, incompetent academic schooling, and decreased self-esteem. Moreover, obesity is directly connected to the poor socio-economic status (SES) in the developed world, that is, participation in communities for whom accessibility, affordability and availability of healthier food options and physical exercise are scarce. It is also evident that combined access to food advertising which is high in the lower SES category is connected with excessive fast-food intake by adults (Reisch et al., 2017).

There is substantial evidence that marketing for unhealthy food (HFSS), includes ads that lead to obesity and overweight. Advertisers have wide digital marketing coverage, particularly on social and media networking channels where they advertise goods and brands as thrilling, creative and valuable. Over the past decade, with the advent of new media, there has been a shift in the time spent by people from television to the internet (Vandevijvere *et al.*, 2017). Food companies, nowadays, advertise to youth on their smartphones, through word of mouth, on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and through product placements in video games, television shows, Netflix series and movies (Schwartz and Ustjanauskas, 2012). In digital as well as traditional media, most of the food and beverage advertisement is for unhealthy products: estimates show that 65 percent – 80 percent of the food ads online are for HFSS commodities or brands linked with these products. Since food and beverage companies have immense online followings, particularly among adolescents, their campaigns reach a wide audience. However, the food brands with the greatest potential among adolescents are generally brands mostly selling unhealthy items. Adolescents are at a high risk of being exposed to fast-food ads due to their high internet and social media use (Murphy et

al., 2020). Analysis of convincing campaign tactics, such as the usage of promotional characters and discounts in national television ads, showed them to be rooted in advertisements for unhealthy food items (Kelly *et al.*, 2010).

Advertisers have broad digital marketing reach particularly on social and content sharing platforms where they advertise innovative and engaging goods and brands. In fact, because food and drink businesses have large-scale followings on the internet, including teenagers, their campaigns reach broad audiences. The food brands with the highest possible impact among adolescents are mostly brands selling numerous or predominantly unhealthy products (Potvin Kent *et al.*, 2019)

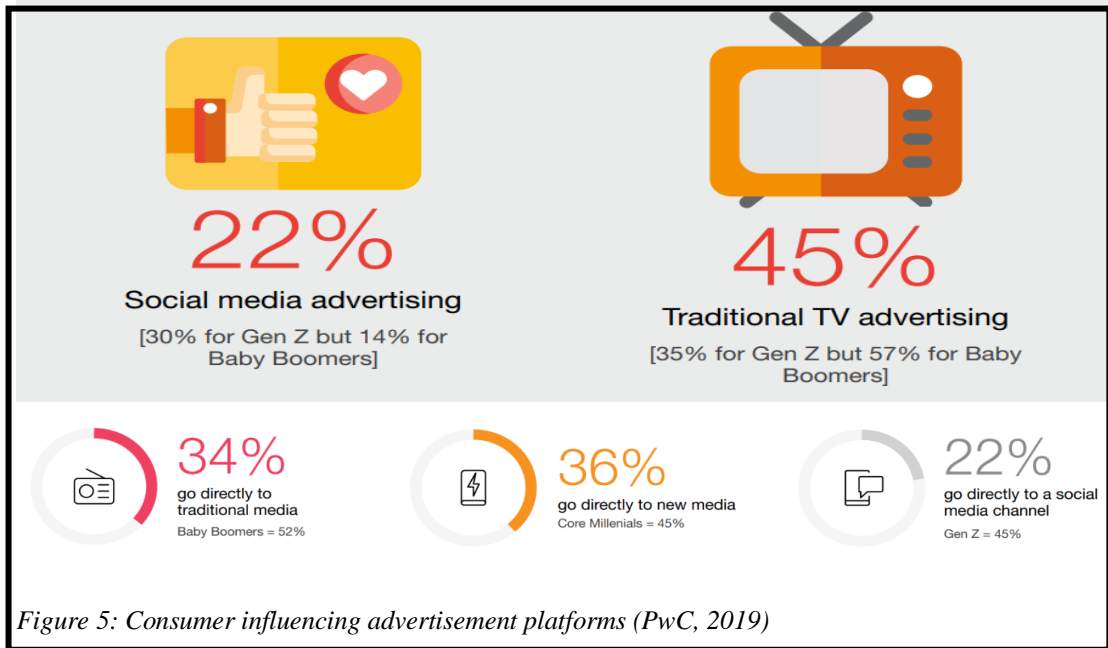
Excess weight and obesity in people are huge public health issues globally. While the exact rate of obesity differs between countries to countries, the level of obesity is rising worldwide. Food advertising has been identified as the major factor contributing to the obesity stimulating environment and is considered a significant sector for action in obesity prevention (Kelly *et al.*, 2010).

2.2.2) FOOD MARKETING INFLUENCE AND TREND

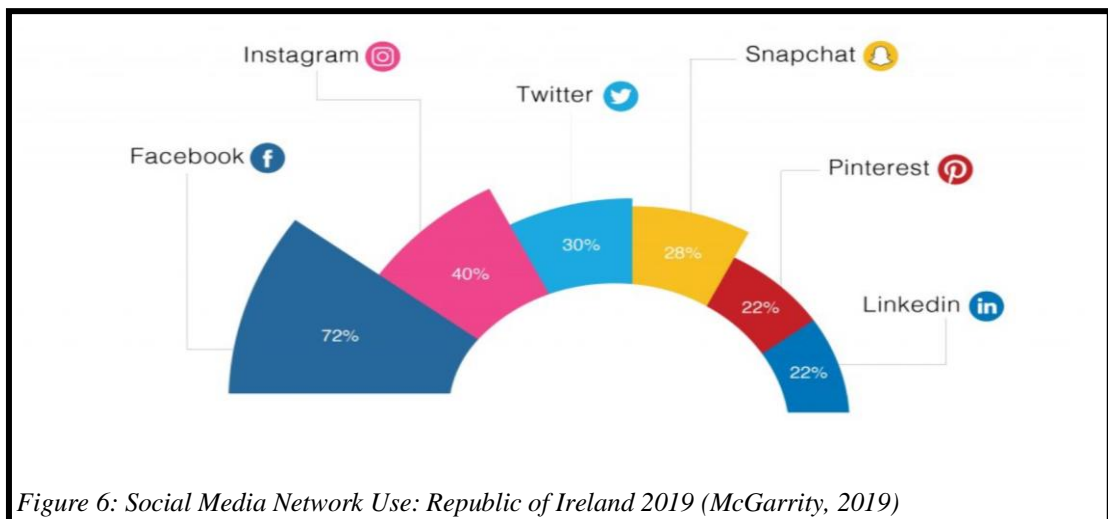
The research by Boyland *et al.* (2016) addressed food marketing and consumption in Europe with two approaches. First, digital marketing is getting successful in capturing a large audience and consumer attention compared to conventional media, specifically television. Businesses these days are investing more for advertising online. Facebook, YouTube and Instagram are some of the channels that put forward effective advertising and gives exposure to the food brands. Second is the rise in the customized ads where the advertisement content is personalized to each customer profile.

Previous studies have compared the pattern of food advertising globally. The results have shown that drinks and food were the most commonly marketed items and that more than half of all the food ads were for cakes, instant cereals, fast-food outlets, and confectionaries. Analysis of persuasive marketing strategies, like utilizing promotional figures and premiums in television ads have been observed to be focused majorly on advertising for unhealthy foods and beverages and mostly telecasted during the popular broadcast time slots (Kelly *et al.*, 2010).

With media viewing patterns "being fully upside down," acceleration in the coming years will be almost entirely due to the continuing proliferation of online advertising. Television advertisement expenditures were expected to rise just 1.7 percent following an approximate growth of 2.3 percent in 2018 – a year in which banks, retailers and consumer product companies, however, drastically raised their social media advertising expenditure to deal with the stiff competition in the market (Slattery, 2018).



With social media becoming more popular, marketers are using this medium to target a global audience, using a range of effective marketing tactics. Importantly, social media enables ads to be customized, which increases the receptivity of advertisements to customers as it is personalized to their particular wants and preferences.



Users on social media may also interact about a brand or company with their peers and followers by tagging a friend, sharing the product information, reposting contests, or mentioning brands in their social media content (Vassallo et al., 2018). Due to the discretionary income, purchasing capacity, ease in the use of technology, and position in creating and pursuing patterns, adults are used as the main targets for advertising on digital platforms. Advertisers and food marketers also claim that their advertisement is meant to produce information regarding their brands and commodities, including their healthy alternatives, to allow customers to make better buying and eating decisions. Therefore, it is important to develop a deeper understanding of how energy-dense, nutrient-poor (EDNP) food products and drinks are marketed on common social media sites, and whether the claims regarding the intention of ads are reasonable (Jolly, 2011).

Additionally, Souza (2018) identifies four marketing factors that are responsible for shaping the food preferences of the consumers: social media, television advertising, word-of-mouth and endorsement by celebrities. Social networking like Facebook and Instagram can affect an individual's decisions. It is noticed that people keep checking their feed quite often. The author also notes that "most of the purchase choices on what meal to eat occurs around two hours prior to the meal time." As a consequence, our preference for fast food may be in response to advertisements we're subjected to. Another one is Word-of-Mouth. We continue to rely on advice and recommendation from the people we know, who have some effect on our decisions to some extent. The next one is television advertising, which can affect the opinions of the people, including what they consume. A report in the Irish Mirror by Surve (2019) has indicated that Irish people generally spend two hours a day on social media, investing much of their time on WhatsApp (17%), Facebook (37%), and YouTube (10%). The last factor is the endorsement by celebrities. Consumers generally are not aware of how often celebrities can affect their food choice and buying decisions. With consistency, the connection between a famous person and brand generates value in the mind of the consumer creating reliability and establishing trust and brand loyalty.

Harris et al. (2012) argue that in the marketplace, buyers observe closely and sensibly analyze information conveyed in the promotional ads. They can use this acquired knowledge to make an informed judgment on purchasing food items. Given

the information is not inaccurate, deceptive, or misleading, unregulated exposure to product details should make a positive contribution to the market. Unfortunately, these principles do not represent advertising of food nowadays in at least three major ways:

- 1) several advertisements are structured to indirectly and explicitly bypass reasonable assessment of information of the products,
- 2) information and messages portrayed in nutrient-deficient food ads supply information on the commodities and the advantages of eating them that could deceive people, and,
- 3) teenagers and adults have no cognitive capability to analyze commercial messages logically and to disregard those that are not towards their long-term benefit, including the self-regulatory ability to avoid the acute lure of the extremely appetizing food products usually marketed.

Overall, studies have found that most major social media platforms have limitations on the marketing of harmful products like tobacco and alcohol but there are hardly any restrictions for unhealthy food products marketing. This calls for strict policies against junk food advertising on various platforms for the social welfare of the people.

2.3) RESTRICTING FOOD MARKETING

In the media environment, particularly commercial advertising has been evident to directly or indirectly influence food associated awareness, behaviors, expectations, knowledge and practices. The Audiovisual Media Guideline in the EU restricts the positioning of goods and corporate advertising during children's shows, thus allowing member states ample leniency in audiovisual media policy; however, in some EU countries, restrictions are tighter than in others (Reisch et al.,2017). Nutrition Insight (2017) states that Ireland became the first country to ban unhealthy food endorsements for children. It became the first nation to even restrict celebrity sponsorship for unhealthy products in advertising and a specific code applies for violation of the law. Regulatory authorities are looking to create a 9 pm threshold for advertising unhealthy food on TV and radio. Furthermore, while advertising in adult media, ads should not allow "licensed characters" or kids-popular celebrities to

advertise unhealthy products. HFSS food advertisements and contests are banned as well.

In Ireland, advertisement and marketing is regulated by the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland (ASAI). The ASAI is a self-regulatory, independent entity responsible for ensuring that commercial advertising messages are 'safe, legal, respectable, truthful and factual' and conform with the guidelines laid down in the Code of Conduct for Marketing and Advertising Communications in Ireland. While evaluating conformity with Section 8 of the Code of Standards, which is concerned with the promotion of non-alcoholic drinks and food, ASAI follows the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) Guidance No. 29 on advertising terms (FSAI, 2017).

The Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) has struck out ads of junk food such as pizza and donuts on social and digital media, alleging that the commercials promote unhealthy eating issues. In order to address this issue, the activist groups even lodged a set of complaints against pizza businesses, donut producers and several other fast-food chains (Halpin, 2019). Halpin (2019) have highlighted the instances of IHF's concerns surrounding various ads released by the ASAI:

ASAI upheld an IHF lawsuit over an advertisement on social media for Apache Pizza. The commercial showed a pizza slice containing cheese, pepperoni and peppers with tags that displayed 'dairy', 'meat' and 'veggies,' aiming to each topping correspondingly. The message read: "Don't let anyone tell you that pizza is not healthy. It has meat, milk and vegetables ... #Fitfam". The IHF raised objections to the post on the reasons that they considered it was mocking the food hierarchy taught to people by implying that pizza was nutritious because it contains veggies and dairy. Following the issuance of the lawsuit, Apache Pizza removed the message from all their social media accounts and website.

Similarly, IHF also found an issue with an Instagram post shared by Offbeat Donuts. The post showcased a box of 12 different types of Offbeat Donuts. The top of the box displayed "Dear Santa" and the bottom stated, "ONE DOZEN PLEASE!". The box also featured a cartoon-like illustration of Santa Claus in the lower right corner, and the word "HO HO HO" in the lower-left corner. The text that preceded the

illustration was as follows: "Offbeatdonuts Final requests for Santa on the lead up to the big day... we know what we want!!!"

IHF claimed that these posts by the fast-food joints persuaded youngsters to excessively consume the products and promoted unhealthy eating habits.

As part of the national obesity strategy, the Department of Health is actively working on a revised code of conduct for the promotion of food and drink advertisements and sponsorship. One of the reports published by IHF in 2016 states that voluntary measures to limit food promotions are "relatively weak and less successful than mandatory regulations." Researchers have also found that users in Ireland were advertised online using "subtle, complex, and abrupt strategies." According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Ireland is on the path of becoming Europe's most obese country if effective steps are not put into effect. By the year 2030, nearly half of the Irish population is projected to be identified as clinically overweight and obese. The Irish Broadcasting Authority imposed bans on the advertisement of junk foods across television and radio shows. Although, marketing on digital media remains unsupervised and unregulated (Burrows, 2017).

2.4) THE CURRENT MARKET SITUATION IN IRELAND

As in the most developed nations, Ireland's economically deprived people and families have poorer eating habits than Irish society's wealthier people. Food deprivation is multi-faceted, contributing not just to the lack of availability to a nutritious diet but even to the associated cultural and health influence, and social participation (Friel and Conlon, 2004). The social status of an individual gives him/her the opportunity or even to make healthier diet choices, and this is highly impacted by material, structural and behavioral elements that also affect the choices made. Certainly on the market of most developed countries, including Ireland, a much wider variety of food has become available, largely determined by international and national trade in the production and manufacturing of food.

Throughout adolescence, nutritional intake is essential for development, long-term health elevation and lifelong consumption behavior. Due to the accelerated growth and development, overall nutritional demands are greater in puberty than at any other stage in the life cycle. Over this stage, food consumption can have long-term

consequences for wellbeing. In fact, as adolescents grow more independent, interpersonal behaviors developed during this time are likely to adversely affect long-term behavior (Schutter et al., 1999). In the past years, numerous national and international programs aimed at encouraging healthier eating have recognized the value of food choices for young people for the short and long term wellbeing of the people (BMA, 2003). A revised code introduced by Ireland's Health Department is voluntary but not mandatory. The code includes a potentially beneficial new clause which states that "The promotion of HFSS food by advertising via social media shall not be addressed to kids below the age of 15." This is a major improvement on previous prohibitions on online junk food ads, as it extends to all social platforms rather than just for children-targeted sites (Golden et al., 2018).

With the growth of sustainable and fresh food products, many Irish customers are ready to pay more. It includes food grown locally (68%), organic food (56%), and environmentally sustainable packaging (49%). For non-food products, Irish customers display a greater degree of understanding about how a commodity is manufactured, with more than 40 percent ready to spend more for both sustainably and ethically generated goods (PwC, 2019). Increased opinions linked to buying Irish produce are showing promising changes. It appears that Irish retailers are relying more on how they supply and market Irish local goods. The Irish Retail and Consumer Report (2019) also highlights that the conventional route to buy is replaced by an extremely customized customer experience, facilitated by digital assistants, smartphones and other personal gadgets, integrated into modern logistics models such as Click & Collect and delivery on the same day. In this new digital era, many commodities and brands are easily accessible, knowledge is boundless, choices are limitless and distribution is almost swift.

Over the past couple of years, health and wellbeing developments of food and drinks have gained prominence as customers are moving to less processed, more natural, and healthy alternatives to their normal foods. The foodservice market in Ireland is now rated at a record €7.8 billion. The latest report from Bord Bia (2017) shows that the food industry, which includes more than 33,000 outlets, keeps expanding with significant growth and demand for take-out and convenience services. Foodservice specialists from food industries have highlighted the Irish consumer's interest in healthy food options to be increased exponentially.

Superfoods, organic cuisine and trendy eateries are popular these days within affluent social circles. The article in *The Irish Times* confirms that health-food followers are controlling a modern and new café scene in Ireland where freshly harvested vegetables thrive and unpleasant additives, contaminants or allergens are prohibited. Fitter diet regimes are evolving over fast food regimes as outlets such as Sprout, The good food stores, Póg, Balfes, Freshly Chopped and many more are satisfying the demands of consumers with an informed attitude and behavior who are influencing the counter-culture. Influencers, food bloggers and fitness icons like Dr. Donal O'Shea, Rachel Allen, Rob Lipsett, Rozanna Purcell etc., have enhanced public understanding of nutrition and the futility of consuming carbs and calories, thereby, making people aware of what they are consuming and putting in their body (O'Callaghan, 2017).

To conclude, it is evident that the recent trend in the demand for food shows that the concept of food and food marketing has undergone a dramatic transformation to the point that, in addition to its nutritious and cognitive properties, maintenance of health, physical and psychological wellbeing and prevention of health-related diseases is given significant importance. Consumers are taking responsibility for their health and keeping a track of what kind of food they are consuming. In the past few years, healthy food goods have swiftly acquired an exponential market share. The food industry has therefore acknowledged this trend by launching a wide range of new products, including functional and organic foods that customers choose for their health-promoting attributes with health-related representations and pictures by marketing extensively through advertisements. Currently, the healthy food and drink industry is doing quite well in terms of creativity and gaining a huge market share. Numerous studies show that clear knowledge of consumer perceptions of healthy food and its influential factors are crucial for successful market orientation, growth and negotiation of market opportunities. Although, the growth of many healthy food outlets might pose a threat to the traditional fast food industry. Food and beverage companies are striving to distinguish themselves by experimenting and upgrading their ingredients and products with healthier alternatives. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged the world's food industry as governments shut down restaurants and bars to combat the virus dissemination. The average traffic of

restaurants worldwide dropped sharply compared to the same time in 2019. Restaurant closures have sparked a ripple effect among associated industries as well. The worldwide demand for food and drink facilities has decreased largely due to the country-wide economic recession due to the COVID-19 outbreak. However, the impact of COVID-19 on the food industry and the changes in the way how food is consumed post-COVID can be used for future research purposes.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1) BACKGROUND

The literature proposed in the previous chapter will be tested by conducting a survey and gathering primary data. Surveys may suffer from reliability and validity if not well planned. Hence, a comprehensive validation technique is used to determine the validity of the data. Errors might arise from the interviewers conducting a questionnaire and likely lead towards the respondents who are filling out the survey, thereby, causing respondent errors, wrong wording, questionnaire design, sample errors etc. Using the internet to administer surveys and questionnaires removes the bias that an interviewer can cause. However, with no interviewer to clarify queries, there is a potential for greater error on the part of the respondent. Additionally, the survey design is crucial as well, which is why the survey is designed in a concise and understandable format. It is also tested and run through pilot to be certain about the structure of the questionnaire and to rectify any possible errors.

The data was collected by conducting an online survey through Google forms with a Non-probability sample of 100 people aged 16-35 years in Dublin, Ireland. Online surveys allow data to be collected promptly, and analysis of the data can be done rapidly and effortlessly. Non-probability sampling was adopted as the sampling method since, unlike probability sampling, where every member has a defined probability of being chosen in the overall population., not all segments of the population in non-probability sampling have equal opportunity to participate in the sample. This study preferred non-probability sampling, as it would be most suitable for exploratory research such as a pilot survey (implementing a survey to a smaller sample relative to the preordained sample size) (Berndt, 2020). Participants made their contribution based on their personal experience and the factors leading to their food purchase behavior.

3.2) RESEARCH APPROACH

A quantitative approach has been implemented in this research by gathering primary data from the respondents in Dublin, Ireland.

3.3) RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

An online questionnaire was developed to collect data from the respondents by using convenience sampling method. Pilot test was conducted before the final survey, on a sample of 10 respondents to test the validity and usefulness of the data for the research. The survey was conducted from 15th June to 15th July in 2020. It was clearly defined to the respondents that data was being collected for the research purpose. To collect accurate and true information, the researcher explained to the respondents about the research objective and got their consent to respond to the questionnaire by responding precisely based on their personal observation and experience.

3.4) SAMPLE SIZE AND DEMOGRAPHICS

A size of 100 respondents aged 16-35 years, residing in Dublin, was taken into consideration that represented the total population.

3.5) STATISTICAL TOOLS AND ANALYSIS

The data was gathered over a period of 30 days and responses were then transferred to IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistics version 25 for analysis and evaluation. To analyze the variables from the primary data, Friedman's test, Simple percentage analysis, and weighted mean from descriptive statistics were implemented.

3.6) WEIGHT LEVEL MEASURE

A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the perceived weight level where the consumers self-evaluated the weight level according to their observations: 1) Strongly Disagree, 2) Disagree, 3) Neutral, 4) Agree, 5) Strongly Agree

3.7) LIMITATION

The background of this study is limited to Ireland, specifically Dublin city. Various political, cultural, economic and dynamic geographical conditions give rise to

diverse accessibility of foods and different behaviors in different people from various counties. Therefore, the findings of this analysis should be carefully interpreted for research in other counties.

The research was conducted based on the general observation of ‘healthy food’ and ‘fast-food’ ads by the respondents, which may not be sufficient for the accurate distinction between what people might consider ‘healthy’, a ‘healthy alternative’ or just fast-food disguised and claimed to be ‘healthy’.

The sample size could have been larger if there was access to a larger population from different counties all over Ireland. Further, it would have been ideal if the views of people from different age groups, especially people above 40 years of age and the older age group were taken into account. It would have been interesting to know their thoughts on contemporary ads, modern advertising, and its impact.

3.8) RESEARCH OVERVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

The research aims to examine the advertising of healthy and junk food on traditional, digital and social media to answer the research question and verify the following hypothesis:

RESEARCH QUESTION: Does healthy food advertising affect Irish youngster’s food preferences and persuade them to buy healthy food?

The objectives of the research to find out if advertising influences consumer’s decision making, which mode of marketing is more influential, and if advertising persuades Irish youngsters to buy healthy food, are as follows:

1) MODE OF MARKETING

H0: We hypothesize that advertising on television does not have a huge impact on consumers compared to social media marketing

H1: We hypothesize that advertising on television has a huge impact on consumers compared to social media marketing

Studies in the above literature have shown that television marketing has been leading since ages in persuading people to buy products. Although, with the development of social media and online marketing, along with celebrity endorsements and word-of-

mouth marketing, marketers are able to target a global audience with a wide range of effective marketing tactics, thereby, impacting a person's food decision making and intake (Vassallo et al., 2018).

2) ADVERTISING INFLUENCE

H0: We hypothesize that advertising does not drive decision making and does not persuade youngsters into buying food products

H2: We hypothesize that advertising drives decision making and persuades youngsters into buying food products

Previous research has found that food promotion can be highly effective in stimulating people to make poor food choices; it seeks to use human subconscious reactions to the ultimate benefit by presenting food items in ads as tempting and palatable to be consumed (Nestle *et al.*, 1998). The theories mentioned in the literature collectively point out that the environment surrounding an individual exerts a huge influence on a consumer's purchasing decision and food buying behavior. The food cues and food priming in the form of advertising through various marketing platforms triggers people's urge to eat depending on their needs and wants (Kemps et al., 2014).

Previous findings have also confirmed that ads depicting food in such a way creates a trend of active appetite processing and more favorable attitudes towards food products. Thus, susceptibility to such food representations in advertising can not only affect dietary tastes but also food intake eventually (Bailey, 2016).

3) PRODUCTS ADVERTISED AND PURCHASED

H0: We hypothesize that people are not inclined towards buying advertised healthy food products compared to fast food

H3: We hypothesize that advertising makes people buy healthy food products often compared to fast food

The 'unhealthy food' mentioned in the hypothesis includes burger, pizza, sweet desserts, sugary carbonated drinks, and other fried fast-food whereas the 'healthy food' products include salad, organic food, low-calorie, leafy veggies, nutritional, low-fat content, functional additives and ingredients. As it had been evident from

previous studies that advertising has a direct or indirect impact on the food associated behavior and consumption. Although, there have been certain policies imposed for the ban of HFSS food ads addressing children, amid concerns over its role in contribution towards Ireland's childhood obesity crisis (Nutrition Insight, 2017). Over recent years, the value for eating healthy and consumption of locally grown food products has gained importance among Irish consumers (PwC, 2019). On the contrary, various studies emphasize the high price and taste of healthy food as an excuse to opt for fast food. The greatest excuse people give for choosing fast food over healthy food is that it is comparatively cheaper and tasty (Haws et al., 2017).

To find out the result for the above mentioned hypotheses, an online survey was conducted and filled by the respondents in Dublin. The respondents weighed the statements/questions asked in the questionnaire on a scale from 1-Strongly disagree to 5-Strongly agree based on their personal experiences. The next chapter examines the findings obtained from the survey and analyses the results, thereby, providing justice to the hypothesis and the objectives laid out in the methodology.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter explores the findings from the survey conducted to justify the research question and hypothesis mentioned in Chapter 3: Methodology. The research was carried out in the Irish market and approached consumers who consumed healthy food and fast food. They were surveyed on their preference of food while dining out, healthy eating habits and how they reacted and were impacted by healthy and fast food ads. The findings of the survey are as follows:

4.1) RESPONDENT'S PROFILE

Table 1: Profile of respondents

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	48	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Male	52	52.0	52.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	
Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-20	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
	21-25	58	58.0	58.0	63.0
	26-30	32	32.0	32.0	95.0
	31-35	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	
Occupation					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Student	48	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Self employed	17	17.0	17.0	65.0
	Service	31	31.0	31.0	96.0
	Unemployed	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	
Income					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 10000	8	8.0	8.0	8.0
	10001-20000	76	76.0	76.0	84.0
	20001-30000	11	11.0	11.0	95.0
	Above 30001	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2020)

As of 2019, Ireland had an overall population of 4,921,500, consisting of over 4,298,800 Irish Nationals (87.3%) according to the Central Statistics Office (2019).

There are around 1,173,179 residents in Dublin city and its suburbs. Provided that this market study already represents a broad population, it is planned to address a sample to represent the total population for the survey. As the main focus of this analysis was on teenage and adult consumers, the target demographic was both males and females, aged 16 and over and under 35 years, residing in Dublin, Ireland. Since no sampling frame was available, the non-probability data collection method was used. The estimated sample size was around 100 participants, as the researcher found it reasonable to manage the questionnaire survey. Since this research was undertaken by only one person, it was performed in Dublin City, as it is the largest city in Ireland and concentrates a vast number of food outlets.

The above table (Table 1) shows that the population constituted 48 females and 52 males. Out of which, the majority of them (around 58%) belong to the age group of 21-25 years, followed by 32% of the age group of 26-30 years (Mean=2.37, Standard deviation (SD)=0.66). Since majority of the previous studies targeted children below the age of 15 years, this research targeted youngsters and adults. Conversely, the income disparity in this study has not interfered with the buying behavior of the people since the majority of the people, that is, around 79% of the population are either students or work in the service industry earning income between 10k to 20k euros per annum. Future research can be done with people falling under different income categories to identify patterns among consumers with varying annual incomes to find out if income plays a significant role in the buying decisions of the consumers.

4.2) MODE OF MARKETING

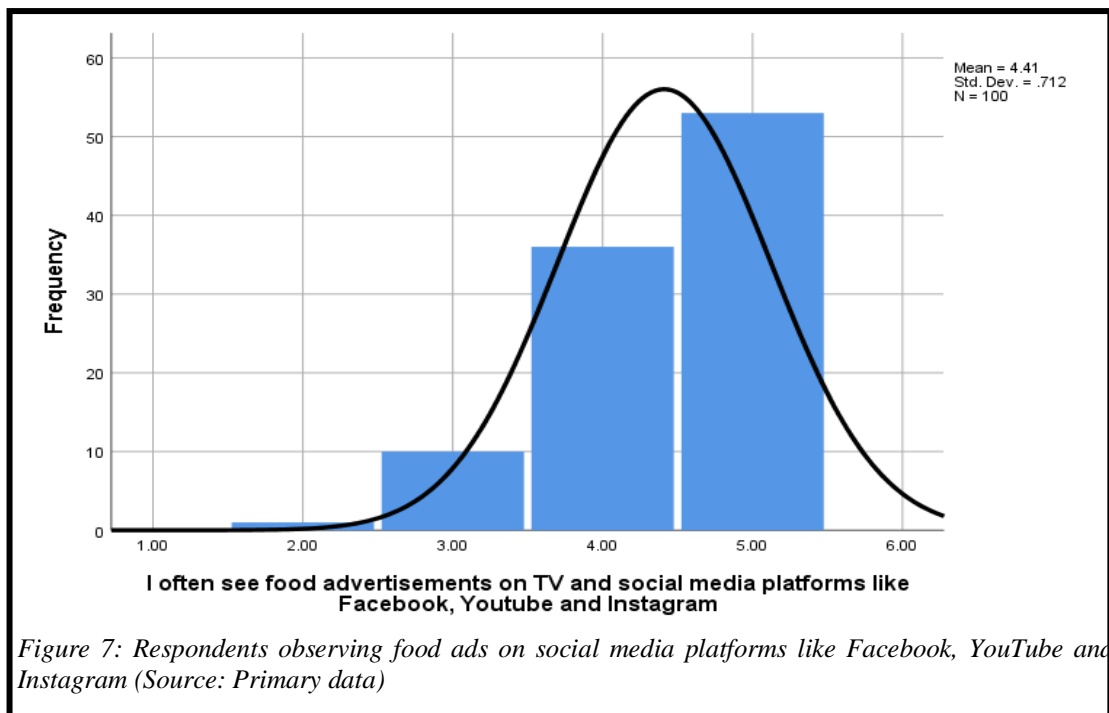
The result of this part shows which media platform was more influential, which was done with the comparison between Television and Social media advertising. These modes of marketing are considered as vital tools to create value and communicate to a vast market audience (Proulx, 2012). Respondents (n=100) rated their exposure to food advertisements and their influence on various platforms. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the population analyzed for the modes of marketing section based on 5 Likert scale.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the mode of marketing (SPSS analysis)

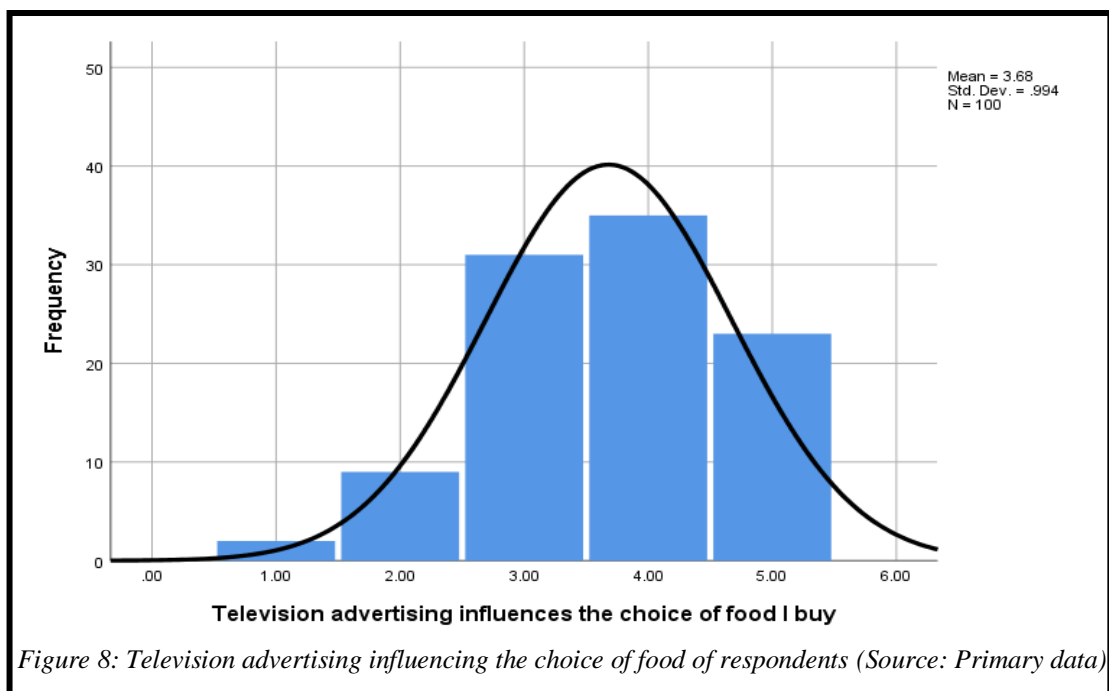
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I often see food advertisements on TV and social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Instagram	100	2.00	5.00	4.4100	.71202
Television advertising influences the choice of food I buy	100	1.00	5.00	3.6800	.99372
When I go shopping I prefer to read food labels instead of believing in advertisements	100	1.00	5.00	3.6500	.93609
Social media marketing is more influential than television advertising	100	1.00	5.00	3.9200	.88398
I get more information about a product and launch of new products on social media	100	2.00	5.00	4.0400	.82780
I make purchase decisions after reading product reviews and feedback on social media platforms	100	1.00	5.00	3.8300	1.05462
Valid N (listwise)	100				

The study previously mentioned in the literature states that advertising enables consumers to make choices about purchasing a commodity or service and to pass on information to them (Haider and Shakib, 2017). When it comes to creating new products and advertising, marketers have always grown and adapted to the industry's changing demands, thereby, targeting consumers through various social media platforms, with its widespread population involvement, high return on investment (Pradiptarini, 2011) and popularity among the youth (Vassallo et al., 2018).



As can be seen from Figure 7, 53% of the population agrees on getting exposed to food advertisements on television and social media platforms ($n= 53$, $M= 4.41$, $SD= 0.712$).



Numerous studies have suggested that television is one of the well established and influencing channels affecting brand preferences and food intake of the consumers. Despite regulations surrounding the growing health concerns, consumers have been constantly exposed to innumerable food adverts (Boyland and Halford, 2013). Figure 8 shows that 58% of the population ($n=100$, $M= 3.68$, $SD=0.99$) believes that

television advertising affects the choice of food they buy which proves that television does influence the attitudes and behavior of the viewers.

Further, Friedman's test was conducted to find the association between people from various age groups and if television advertising has more impact on them in comparison to advertising on social media (**H1: We hypothesize that advertising on television has a huge impact on consumers compared to social media marketing**). The results confirm that around 70% of the total population believes that social media is highly persuasive and effective. Pradiptarini (2011) highlights in her research that the use of social media requires substantial human interaction (reviews, feedback, word-of-mouth, etc.) and that the approach to marketing has seen to be changed drastically. For a long time, it was about encouraging people to purchase products by bombarding consumers with numerous ads. Marketing is primarily about building partnerships and confidence through constructive two-way communication and developing product offerings that help to meet the requirements of customers.

Table 3: Comparison of mean between social media advertising and television advertising influence (SPSS test)

	Mean Rank
Television advertising influences the choice of food I buy	1.43
Social media marketing is more influential than television advertising	1.57

Table 4: Friedman's test for social media advertising and television advertising influence (SPSS test)

Test Statistics ^a	
N	100
Chi-Square	2.649
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.104

a. Friedman Test

With the increasing use of social media, it is evident by the study that it is widely used as a source of information by buyers in comparison to other sources (Social media: M=1.57, Television: M=1.43). Table 4 shows the result of Friedman's test performed to examine the relation between the influence of social media advertising and television advertising on people. The test shows that there is an overall statistical

difference between the mean ranks of the two variables: social media and television influence on people, $X^2(1)=2.649$, $p=.104$, since $p>.05$, which indicates strong evidence for the null hypothesis. This means that we retain the null hypothesis (**H0: We hypothesize that advertising on television does not have a huge impact on consumers compared to social media marketing**) and reject the alternative hypothesis. Thereby, concluding that television advertising exerts less influence on consumer's buying choices compared to social media marketing.

4.2) ADVERTISING INFLUENCE

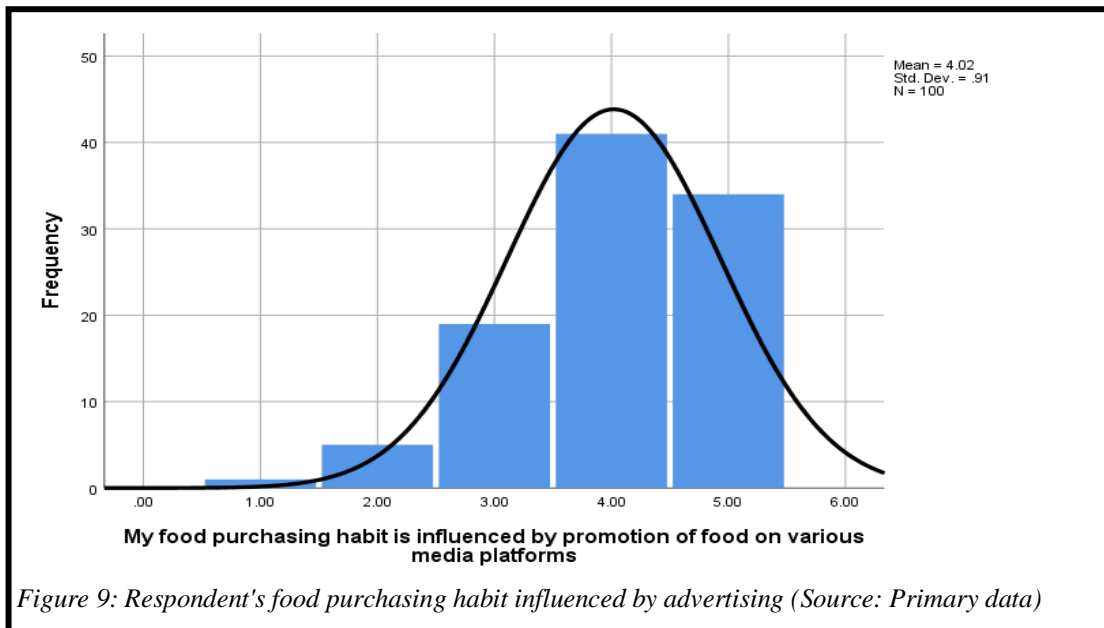
This section examines if advertising exerts influence on consumer's buying decisions and food choices. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics of the population ($n=100$) analyzed for the influence of advertising on their food purchasing habit ($M=4.02$, $SD=.90$), food choices ($M=3.91$, $SD=.95$) and buying behavior ($M=3.39$, $SD=1.02$).

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for Advertising Influence (SPSS analysis)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My food purchasing habit is influenced by promotion of food on various media platforms	100	1.00	5.00	4.0200	.90988
Advertising manipulates the choices that we make in picking our meals	100	1.00	5.00	3.9100	.95447
I definitely purchase healthy food after seeing or watching an ad	100	1.00	5.00	2.8900	1.16250
Advertising of fast food disguised as healthy provokes or convinces you to buy and consume it	100	1.00	5.00	3.6900	1.08892
Advertising impacts your buying habits and food intake trends	100	1.00	5.00	3.3900	1.02391
Advertising makes you confident and helps you to make a purchase decision	100	1.00	5.00	3.2600	.97047
Valid N (listwise)	100				

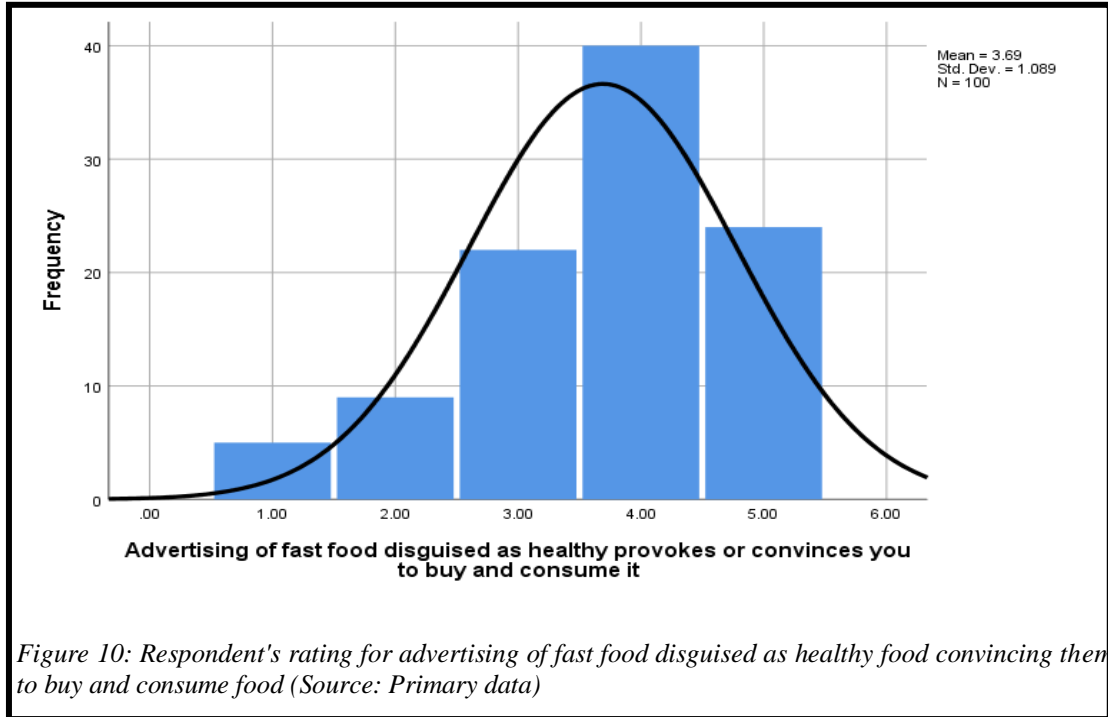
Of the total population, 75% of the respondents ($M= 4.02$, $SD=.91$) experienced an influence on their attitude and behavior due to the effect of promotions on their food purchase patterns. The findings from the report by Kraak and Vivica (1998) also

showed that attitudes and behavior had a positive association with advertising exposure and food consumption where food advertisement content was identified to be influential on the consumers.



Advertisers try to design their marketing approach that will appeal to their target audience. The food and beverage industry has seen young people and adolescents as a significant business force. As a result, the focus of intensive and targeted food promotion and advertisement activities are now young people and adolescents. Food advertisers are interested in the youth as customers due to their buying power, purchasing ability and active decision-making. Various strategies and platforms are used to target the youth, starting right from when they are children, to promote brand building and to influence the food purchasing attitude and behaviors. These food marketing platforms and techniques include tv ads, advertisement in universities or public places, product placements, sports clubs, association with images, symbols or role models, the Internet, branded goods and gadgets, social media, youth-oriented advertisements and food priming that triggers people for food purchase and consumption (Story and French, 2004). As mentioned earlier in the literature, the food predominantly marketed is for HFSS or fast food products (Vandevijvere *et al.*, 2017). Further, with concern to the exposure to food advertising, the results also show that respondents are inclined to purchase food with the influence of the strategies implemented by the marketers towards them. In this case, respondents were asked if they are provoked by the advertisements of junk food disguised as healthy, for instance, processed “organic”, ‘low-fat’ or ‘fat-free’ products which are

actually loaded with sugar, salad dressing containing unhealthy ingredients like sugar, trans fats and various artificial chemicals, low carb junk food comprised of chemicals and highly refined components (Khan and Hatanaka, 2020). Figure 10 shows that over 64% of the people agreed on purchasing “healthy” fast food over the influence of advertising on them, whereas, around 22% of the people feel it might or might not direct them into buying “healthy” fast food ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.089$).



Numerous research in the past has looked into the efficacy of ads. The common advertisement effectiveness factors include ad recognition and recall, ad knowledge, market familiarity, click through rates, attitude, and preference towards brands and purchases. As a marketing technique, an advertisement is an important tool for building product awareness and preparing a potential consumer's mind to take the final purchasing decision, since the advertiser's primary objective is to reach prospective buyers and affect their perception, behavior and purchase intent (Kumar, 2013). The survey showed that advertising had a similar effect on consumer's buying behavior ($M = 2.18$), choices ($M = 2.81$), preferences ($M = 2.93$) and purchase decisions ($M = 2.09$). Eating habits and food choices are often affected by the immediate environment of a person, specifically food accessibility, familiarity, exposure, and role models. Nevertheless, according to scientific literature, food ads can affect the consumer's dietary habits- whether healthy decisions are made or unhealthy. Additionally, Friedman's test conducted for investigating the influence of food

advertising on consumers backup the literature and indicates that irrespective of what the advertising platform is, advertising has a significant impact on consumer's minds (**H2: We hypothesize that advertising drives decision making and persuades youngsters into buying food products**). The test in Table 7 shows that it is statistically significant as the p-value is less than .05 ($p < .05$), $X^2(3) = 42.019$, $p = .001$, which indicates strong evidence against the null hypothesis (**H0: We hypothesize that advertising does not drive decision making and does not persuade youngsters into buying food products**). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, thereby, establishing a relation between advertising and its impact on consumers.

Table 6: Comparison of mean between various advertisement elements based on the respondent's experience (SPSS analysis)

	Mean Rank
Advertising manipulates the choices that we make in picking our meals (Choice)	2.81
Advertising impacts your buying habits and food intake trends (Buying behavior)	2.18
Advertising makes you confident and helps you to make a purchase decision (Purchase decisions)	2.09
My food purchasing habit is influenced by promotion of food on various media platforms (Purchase preferences)	2.93

Table 7: Friedman's test for advertising influence on consumer's decision making and buying behavior (SPSS test)

Test Statistics ^a	
N	100
Chi-Square	42.019
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Friedman Test

4.3) PRODUCTS ADVERTISED AND PURCHASED

This section examines food advertisements on Irish media and its influence on the choice of food purchased by the youngsters. Poor eating habits and associated obesity among adolescents pose the issue of whether access to food ads may be a major contributor to these outcomes. Numerous studies that presented a thorough

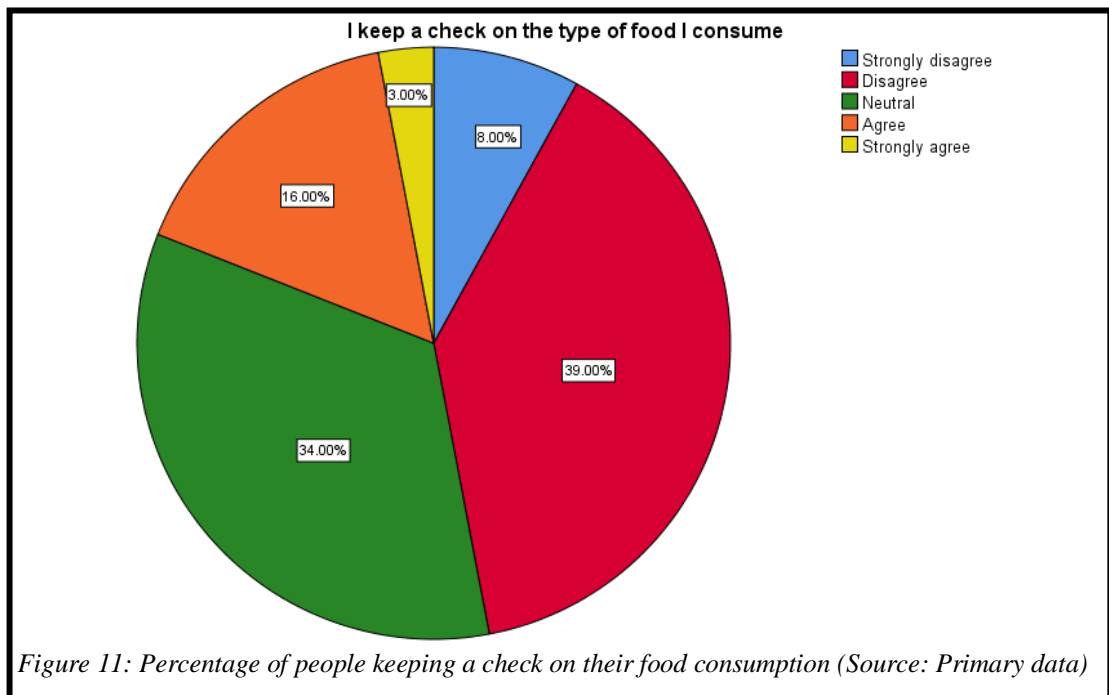
analysis of food ads towards children and youth concluded that there is ample evidence that advertising exposure impacted the trends of food consumption and dietary intake among them. In relation to health, the studies also agreed that there was significant evidence for both adolescents and young children for obesity being strongly connected with exposure to advertisements (Powell et al., 2007). Table 8 shows the descriptive analysis of the findings on products advertised and purchased (healthy versus fast food) rated by the respondents.

Table 8: Descriptive analysis of products advertised and purchased by the respondents (SPSS analysis)

Descriptive Statistics

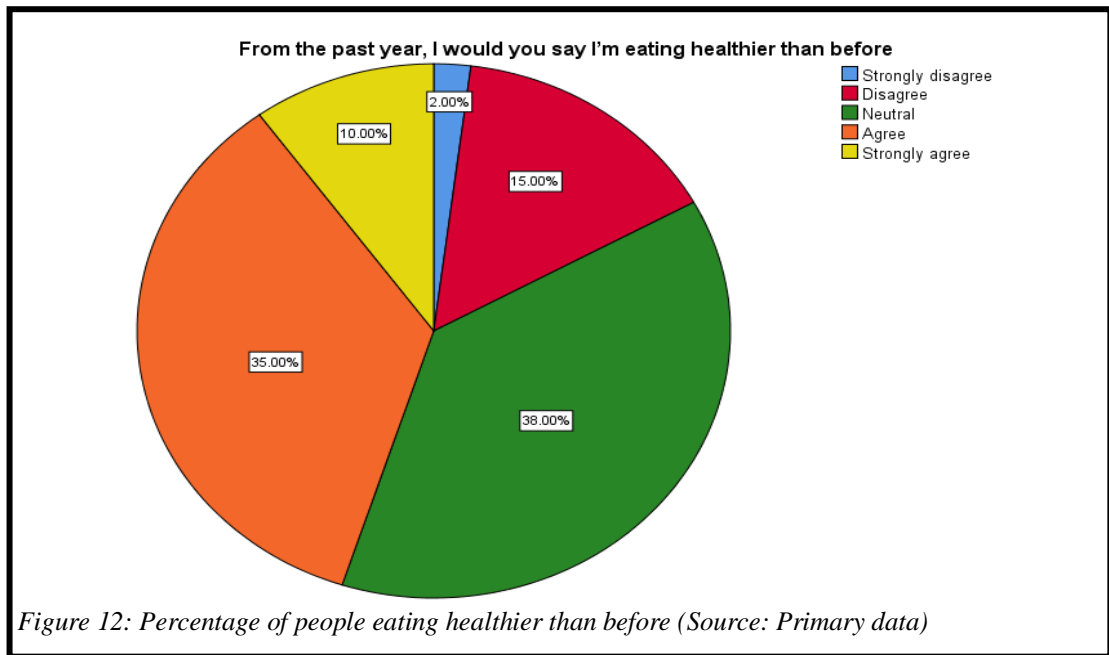
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I keep a check on the type of food I consume	100	1.00	5.00	2.6700	.94340
From the past year, I would you say I'm eating healthier than before	100	1.00	5.00	3.3600	.92682
I prefer burger, fries, pizza over salad	100	1.00	5.00	3.4100	.94383
I frequently see fast food advertisements on various media platforms	100	2.00	5.00	3.7700	.85108
I see healthy food advertisements more often compare to advertisements for fast food	100	1.00	5.00	2.5300	.89279
Fast food is inexpensive, convenient and tasty	100	2.00	5.00	4.0700	.79462
Valid N (listwise)	100				

A research conducted by a globally known company, NDP group highlighted that most people are conscious that they have to modify their diets to improve their health. When people want to change their food habits they either add more to their daily food intake or try to cut-off their food consumption. Researchers also considered that some consumers tend to overvalue the quality of their diets and that in many cases they consume much more junk food than they are consuming healthy. Over the past years, studies have proved that the consumer's understanding of their food habits has become more pragmatic; yet, obesity continues to remain a major concern (Health, 2012).



As it can be observed in Figure 11, a larger part (39%) of the population do not track the kind of food they eat. With the obesity figures soaring in Ireland, six out of ten people are considered to be overweight (37%) and obese (23%), as per the Healthy Ireland Survey (2019). The foundation of the eating habits starts in early childhood. Initial eating habits pave the way for the current choices but don't have to necessarily stay tied to those foundations, particularly if the individual's health depends on the shift. People seek alternative diets or change their food patterns but are overwhelmed by the contradictory nutrition and food information in the media. It's hard to understand what the right or healthiest dietary habits are when multiple food ads are marketed as the best means to get healthy. People prefer fast food or microwave meals that are sold as 'healthy' rather than high in calories, even though they lack nutrition, minerals, macronutrients, and vitamins. Consumer health consciousness is continuing to grow as the rising availability of health information has been observed to be falling in line with the growing maturity of the population and increased risk of lifestyle diseases. Policies aimed at promoting habits of healthy food intake needs to give significance to the role of consumers driving food production, as they have a notable impact on the demand for different types of food products in the market (Kearney, 2010). Although, females are less overweight and obese than males (55% and 66% respectively), HSE (2019) highlights that the percentage of men who are overweight or obese has decreased (from 70% in 2017 to 66% in 2019). The result (Figure 12) also showed that despite

55% of the people being ignorant towards their health, around 40% of the population is acknowledging and demanding healthy food and cutting out junk food with the increasing health consciousness.



As the literature states that the Department of Health in Ireland launched a Code of practice against the advertising and marketing of HFSS and junk food with the concern towards growing obesity rates and threat to the health of the public in Ireland. It is evident that health and wellness is shaping and bringing drastic changes in the food industry, further contributing to the rising number of healthy food restaurants and food outlets providing healthier alternatives like Freshly chopped, Pog, Eathos, the Happy Pear, Sprout and many more.

This section aims at finding out if the enforcement of the code led to the changes in the advertising of junk food alongside the evolving healthy food trends and if it is impacting people's choice for the food that they consume.

Therefore, Friedman's test was conducted to testify the hypothesis for products advertised and purchased: **H3: We hypothesize that people are not inclined towards buying advertised healthy food products compared to fast food.**

Table 9: Comparison of mean between food advertisement and respondent's food preference (SPSS analysis)

Ranks

	Mean Rank
I prefer burger, fries, pizza over salad	1.43
I frequently see fast food advertisements on various media platforms	1.58

Table 10: Friedman's test for products advertised and purchased (SPSS test)

Test Statistics^a

N	100
Chi-Square	3.169
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.075

a. Friedman Test

The result of the Friedman's test (Table 10) shows that it is nonsignificant since the p-value is higher than .05 ($p > .05$), $X^2(1) = 3.169$, $p = .075$ and indicates strong evidence for the null hypothesis (**H0: We hypothesize that people are not inclined towards buying advertised healthy food products compared to fast food**). Hence, we retain the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis, thus, stating that people are not influenced by advertising of healthy food and choose to buy fast food like burger, pizza and fries over salad. It can also be seen that this can be majorly due to the exposure of fast-food advertising compared to healthy food advertising on various media platforms.

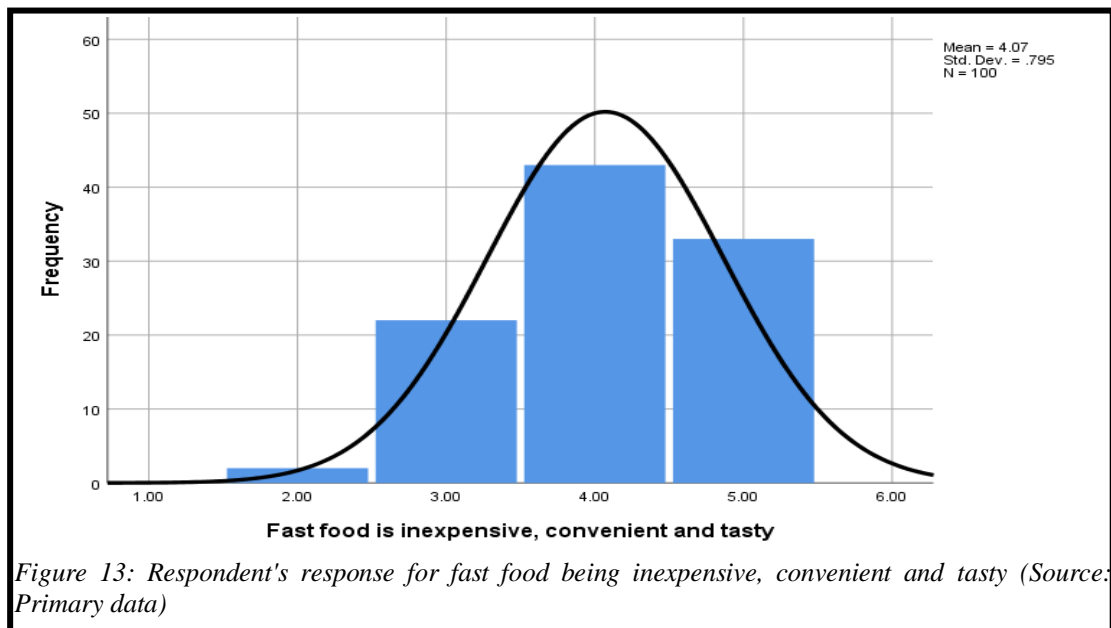


Figure 13: Respondent's response for fast food being inexpensive, convenient and tasty (Source: Primary data)

As per the survey, 75% of the people who form the majority of the population agreed that fast food is inexpensive, accessible everywhere, tasty, and offers a variety of choices ($M=4.07$, $SD=.795$). This can be the major reason for buyers to go for fast food despite the increase in the associated health issues and concerns proliferating all over the world.

In conclusion, the findings of the study paved the way to answer the research objective of whether **healthy food advertising affects Irish youngster's food preferences and persuade them to buy healthy food**. The findings confirm that food advertising does impact and influence the purchasing behavior of the people. Although, when it comes to eating outside, Irish consumers prefer fast food over salads and expensive healthy food products, which shows that compared to the fast-food advertising, healthy food advertising is ineffective in driving people to buy healthy food. The results show the impact of factors like price, availability and exposure to junk food advertisements on people. At its root, advertising's impact on daily life is the ability to change what people perceive and feel. A good ad cultivates interest within the audience and makes them eager to purchase a product while eliminating any doubts about the product that they might have. It is also evident that a big part of the success of the fast-food industry is its marketing. High visibility and global recognition is the ultimate characteristic of fast-food outlets. To be able to compete with the successful fast-food industry, marketers in the healthy food industry need to form effective strategies that direct the promotion of their products and persuade people to buy healthy food by providing them more information about healthy food alternatives and how it is beneficial for a healthy lifestyle. Healthy food businesses need to grow their presence on social media platforms since consumers are moving away from the traditional media platforms, and are increasingly utilizing social media to look out for information. They consider social media as a more trustworthy source of information than the conventional marketing communications tools used by businesses. Marketers need to adapt to the transition of consumers towards online communication and adopt social media along with influencers, word of mouth and role models as the new form for advertising healthy food to a larger audience in the Irish market.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The overall objective of this research was to analyze food advertising in relation to the impact on consumer's food choices along with the growing health consciousness and concern for health-related issues among youngsters and adolescents. The research question was specifically "If healthy food advertising influences Irish youngster's food preferences". The findings from the previous chapter show that people are more inclined towards buying fast food compared to healthy alternatives which can be due to factors like price, availability, taste, affordability and more. There is a scope for further research to explore the factors that might be responsible for the buyer's preference for fast food over healthy alternatives in the Irish market.

While fast food has a reputation for having high fats and calories, this is changing gradually with the growth of health-conscious consumers, which has increased the demand for healthy food choices. Whether it's grilled chicken burgers, wraps or salads, every fast food restaurant is providing some kind of healthier alternatives nowadays. One thing to note is that however, healthy choices usually tend to be costly.

The modern world is a testimony to the radical shift in marketing patterns. Online marketing, specifically social media is the medium that saves consumers time and money and provides a wide range of goods. Since the products are not accessible for physical inspection, publicity itself is a source of influence and it affects and attracts the attention of buyers. Advertisement's role is critical in shaping consumer purchasing behavior. The ads should be genuine, reasonable, and should meet the consumer's information requirement.

It has also been confirmed that food marketing impacts the knowledge related to food: advertisements for unhealthy products are closely linked to lower dietary knowledge levels. Consequently, advertising seems to circumvent information already gained from several other sources that encourage healthy eating choices. As a matter of fact, constructive advertising communication, instead of requiring active processing and ability to understand, inspire positive associations in the mind of the consumer that can be triggered while making decisions. Empirical market analysis also indicates that consumer awareness will not inherently contribute to healthy food habits, and even though if those preferences emerge, it will not always inevitably

direct their behavior (Reisch et. al, 2013). Thus, while most youngsters and their families usually know what a healthy diet entails, this understanding is often not reflected in their food choices.

Additionally, to limit the advertising exposure, the Health department in Ireland has proposed a code, although, it can be seen from various reports from previous studies that the existing rules generally only aim to protect children up to a certain age (usually 12 or 13 years old). Although, a growing body of evidence indicates that adolescents are also adversely affected by HFSS food advertising. To protect every individual, the scope of the rules should be outstretched. Most current actions focus only on television broadcast advertising, despite clear evidence that people are subjected to advertising through several other platforms: in the digital world, through product display, packaging, and HFSS food sponsorship. The health department needs to take a more rigorous approach to regulate HFSS food marketing. Current laws usually limit their reach to child-oriented services and concentrate mainly on advertisements, leaving a broad variety of initiatives, media, and communication tactics to which people are exposed without any supervision. Lastly, overturning the pattern towards increased obesity will require both strong actions by policymakers to limit consumer's exposure to junk food advertising on all forms of media.

To sum up, the influence of food advertising on the food choices made by Irish youth is multifaceted; it supports previous research into food choices and calls for further inquiry to establish proper interventions tailored to the health benefits of the youth in Ireland.

FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the pervasive impact of advertising on the buying power, purchasing behavior, and preferences of young adults and adolescents, researchers conclude that developing market knowledge and processing skills are essential if informed decisions and purchases are to be made in the marketplace. An understanding of consumer information management is crucial for interpreting the mechanism by which young people and adolescents make buying choices. By following a broad approach to developing the overall food knowledge of the consumers, companies can collaborate with nutritionists who are also involved in serving as informed buyers on the marketplace. The desired outcome is to significantly affect the general eating

behavior of consumers, particularly their behavior in relation to food and wellness. Consumer information management can be a valuable framework for future research and practice (Kraak and Pelletier, 1998)

It seems that newer forms of food marketing usually embed promotional messages more deeply within media content than conventional advertisements. Further studies can examine how such interactive types of food advertisements have a larger impact on the eating habits of consumers relative to conventional food ads. Such a study may involve examining the exact effects of cognitive processing levels of food cues in advertising based on reactivity and the consequent consumption of food. Indeed, fast-food, snacks, and beverage products as evident from the findings of the paper making up most of the food advertising exposed to adolescents are products that are acceptably within the reach of their buying power. To provide decision-makers with adequate data to determine the degree to which food advertisement influences eating habits and weight outcomes of adolescents, more work is required to explore disparities in the access to television and social media advertising content by tracking TV viewing time, views on social media platforms and other related factors.

With the topic of affordability of food, it brings the focus to one of the key elements that can be focused on in future research: health inequalities and the factors contributing to it. It is to a certain extent related to the buying pattern and food preferences of the consumers which eventually leads to obesity and other health issues. Wellness and health is not spread uniformly in the Irish society. There are health disparities whenever a subset of the people suffer from a huge burden of health issues and early death particularly in comparison to the society as a whole. Several of the risk factors for chronic diseases, such as obesity and smoking, are highly widespread in low socio-economic groups, and among individuals living in far more deprived regions (HSE, 2019). These health inequalities are driven by social and other health determinants, including access to employment and education. There are many other differences around the rural/urban divisions like: among citizens of various races, gender, ethnic backgrounds, age, and power. Few other facts laid down by the Healthy Ireland Survey (2019) are:

- Compared to the one in twenty (5%) in higher socio-economic groups, nearly one in ten (9%) of 3-year-olds in lower socio-economic groups are obese

- Body mass index (BMI), cholesterol levels, and blood pressure among the lower socio-economic groups are relatively higher.
- The highest level of obesity rates are found in the financially deprived people and those with lower education levels

Through the survey, it is seen that people have a strong assumption that healthy food is more costly than fast food, particularly for those making a basic income. From the results, it can be concluded that income might affect the choice of food. Hence, it is recommended that an analysis can be carried out for future studies by taking into account the population with distinct earnings. In fact, this approach could also benefit international fast-food firms for forming effective market strategies.

The Irish Times (2020) has highlighted that the food industry is the largest indigenous industry in Ireland which forms the backbone of many communities across Ireland. Further, they pointed out that advertising spending has "dropped considerably" because of the uncertainty that incapacitates consumer spending. It is difficult to know how serious an impact Covid-19 is having on advertising in any industry. Many of the advertisers have evidently stopped spending. In the longer term, it may be financially sound to maintain the expenditure during a recession. Many companies are not advertising right now because they are preserving whatever funds they have and taking measures to ensure that they remain in the business. Coronavirus is something that has not only had an impact on the food industry but has also majorly affected the consumer eating and drinking habits, especially since issues related to COVID-19 are broad and contain financial and health concerns. This shows that consumers are giving importance and wanting to be more informed of their health. Furthermore, as the consequence of COVID-19, people are becoming more responsible towards the environment and searching for opportunities for comfort, both of which influence their eating patterns. Consumers are looking to enhance their health by eating healthy, to boost their immune system and reduce sickness and susceptibility to diseases (Hughes, 2020). There is a huge scope for the impact of COVID-19 on the food industry, changes in the food eating pattern, advertising of food, consumer behavior, and the adverse effect on the lifestyle of the people due to the pandemic as the prospective subject for future studies.

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APPENDIX I

HEALTHY FOOD ADVERTISING QUESTIONNAIRE

The study aims at investigating food choices and underlying factors that might influence food choices among Irish adults in Dublin. The questionnaire is voluntary, anonymous, and takes approximately 5 minutes to answer. To participate you need to be in the age group of 16-35 years and be a resident in Ireland. The data will be used for a Master thesis performed at the National College of Ireland. Your answers are valuable.

The following page contains a number of statements that people might agree or disagree with. Please rate the following by how much they reflect on how you feel or think personally. Use the following scale:

- 1) Strongly Disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Neutral
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly Agree

Thank you for participating!

Best regards,

Priyanka Nikam

For questions regarding the thesis or the questionnaire you can reach me by mail: priyankanikam56@yahoo.com

Supervisor: Danielle McCartan-Quinn

e-mail: Danielle.Mccartan-Quinn@ncirl.ie

GENDER

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

OCCUPATION

- ☐ Student

- Self-employed
- Service
- Unemployed

AGE

- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35

INCOME

- Below 10000
- 10001-20000
- 20001-30000
- Above 30001

1) MODE OF MARKETING

A) I often see food advertisements often on social media platforms like Facebook, Youtube and Instagram

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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B) Television advertising influences the choice of food I buy

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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C) When I go shopping I prefer to read food labels instead of believing in advertisements

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

D) Social media marketing is more influential than television advertising

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

E) I get more information about a product and launch of new products on social media

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

F) I make purchase decisions after reading product reviews and feedback on social media platforms

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

2) ADVERTISING INFLUENCE

A) My purchasing habit is influenced by promotions of food on various media platforms

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

B) Advertising manipulates the choices that we make in picking our meals

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

C) I definitely purchase healthy food after seeing or watching an ad

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

D) Advertising of fast food disguised as healthy provokes or convinces you to buy and consume it

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

E) Advertising impacts your buying habits and food intake trends

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

F) Advertising makes you confident and helps you to make a purchase decision

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

3) PRODUCTS ADVERTISED AND PURCHASED

A) I keep a check on the type of food I consume

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

B) From the past year, I would you say I'm eating healthier than before

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

C) I prefer burger, fries, pizza over salad

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

D) I frequently see fast food advertisements on various media platforms

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

E) I see healthy food advertisements more often compare to advertisements for fast food

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

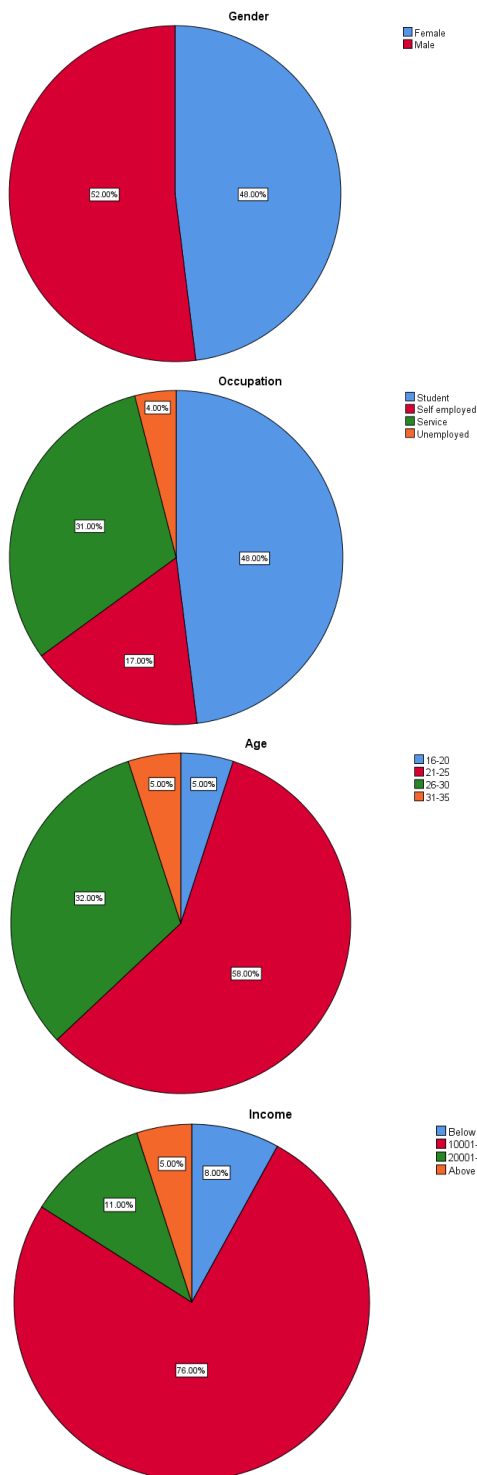
F) Fast food is inexpensive, convenient and tasty

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

4) Do you think COVID has had any impact on the advertising of healthy food and the choice of food you buy and consume? If so, how? (Please provide as much detail as you can)

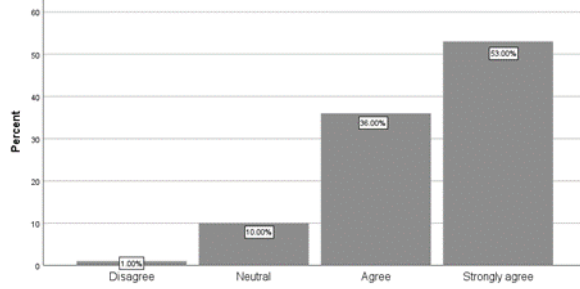
APPENDIX II SURVEY RESULT

1) Respondent's profile

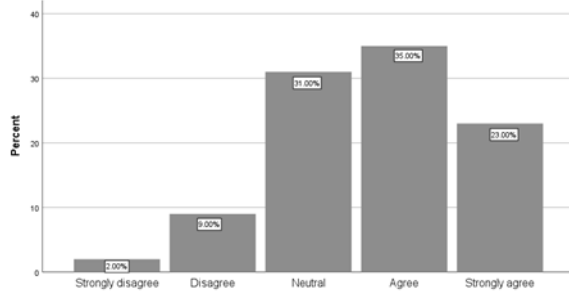


2) Mode of marketing

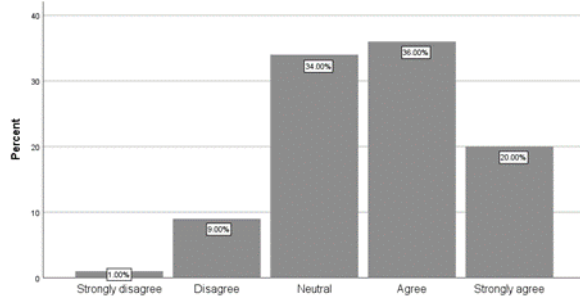
I often see food advertisements on TV and social media platforms like Facebook, Youtube and Instagram



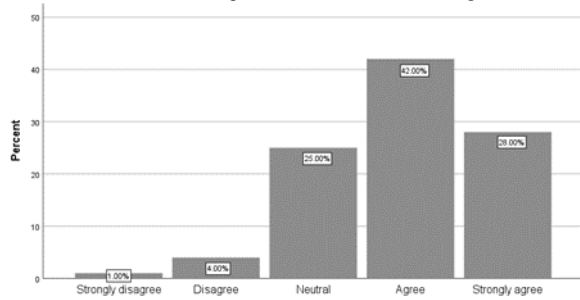
Television advertising influences the choice of food I buy



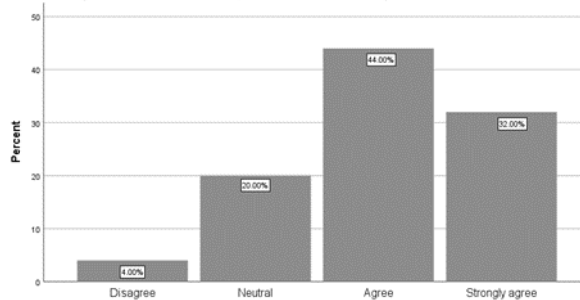
When I go shopping I prefer to read food labels instead of believing in advertisements

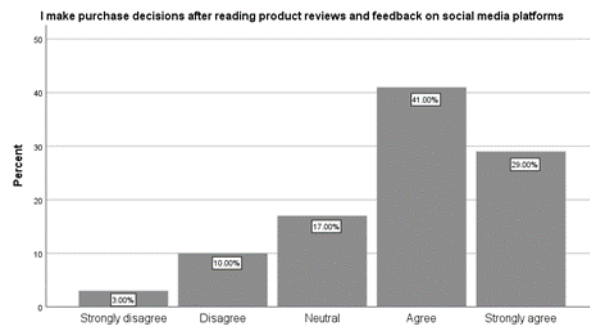


Social media marketing is more influential than television advertising

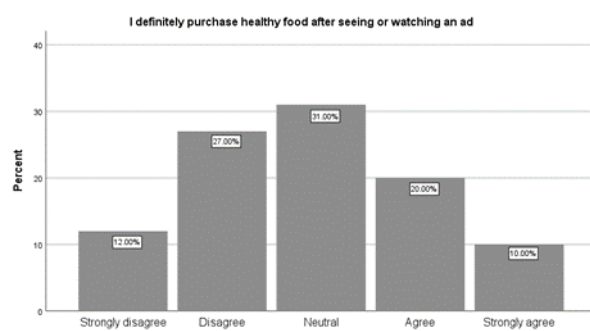
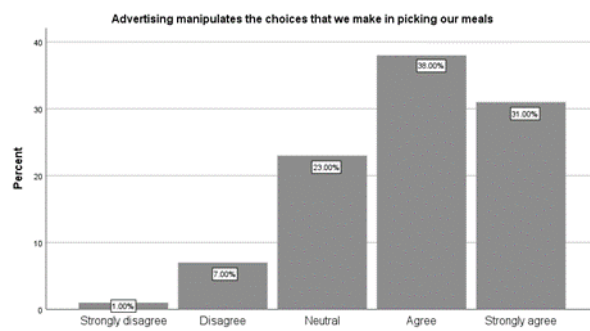
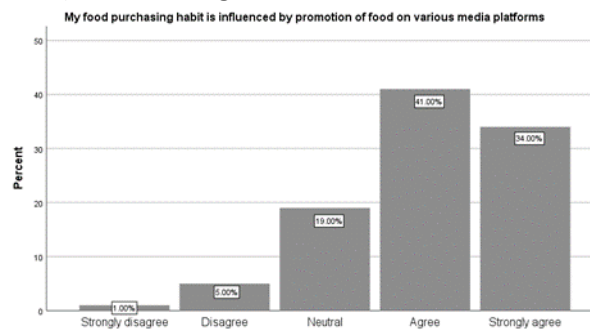


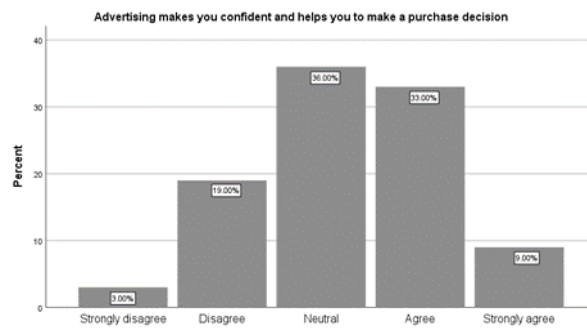
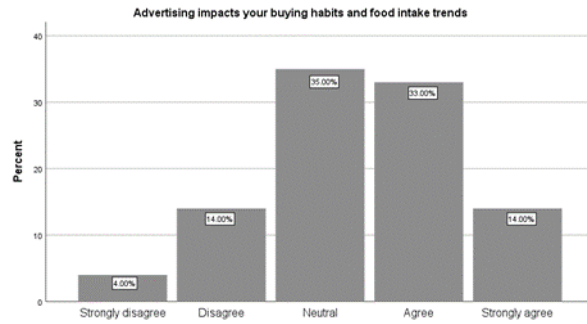
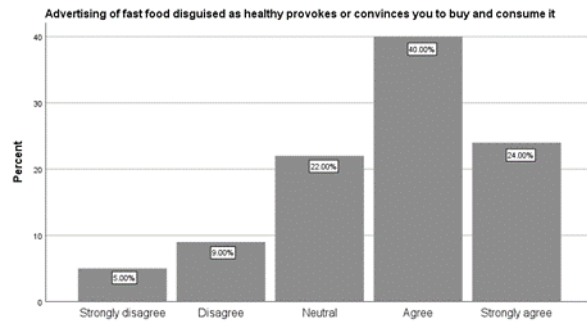
I get more information about a product and launch of new products on social media





3) Advertising influence





4) Products advertised and purchased

