

Effect of Digital Food Environment on Dietary Choices in Adults of Delhi NCR: A Quantitative Survey

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The digital food environment, which includes online platforms such as social media, food delivery apps, and e-commerce sites, is a key determinant of dietary choices. These platforms influence consumer behaviors by promoting both healthier eating habits and increased consumption of calorie-dense, processed foods.

Aim: The study aims to assess the impact of digital food environments on dietary choices in the Indian context. It explores their association with demographic factors, health outcomes, and Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs). Additionally, the research seeks to address gaps related to the role of digital literacy and the prevalence of misinformation in shaping food-related decisions.

Methodology: Cross-sectional study will be conducted among 250 adults aged 18-60 years in Delhi NCR. Participants are selected based on inclusion criteria such as regular use of online food platforms and basic digital literacy. Surveys and interviews are being

used to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. Key outcome measures include food availability, affordability, accessibility, marketing strategies, behavioural nudges (e.g., discounts, visuals, and loyalty points), and the role of nutritional information.

Results: Preliminary findings suggest that digital food environments significantly influence dietary choices, particularly among younger and digitally literate demographics. Behavioural nudges and targeted advertising increase the consumption of calorie-dense foods, while limited digital literacy contributes to the spread of misinformation.

Conclusion: The digital food environment has a profound impact on dietary behaviour from the evidence collected so far with socio-demographic differences playing a crucial role especially among the young people, while it offers opportunities for promoting healthy eating, it also poses risks such as increased consumption of unhealthy foods and the spread of misinformation.

Keywords: Digital Food Environment, Quantitative Survey, Dietary choices

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