

CHILDREN'S PREFERENCES OF FAST FOOD

by

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SHORT DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER COMERCII



BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

in the

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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OCTOBER 2008

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on children's preferences for fast food. In examining these preferences, the study hones in on a determination of the fast food outlet mostly preferred by children as well as an identification of the drivers, motives and reasons for the popularity of particular fast food outlets. The study also seeks to determine what the most sought after meal is and to what extent preference for a particular meal and fast food outlet are determined by the background of the child, price, the nature of the product, service levels of staff and how convenient it is to buy from the fast food outlet. The study also hones in on the influence of advertising on children's preferences for fast food.

The study makes use of a positivist (quantitative) research design. Samples were collected from four schools which composed a sample size of 301 respondents. Primary data was collected through a structured self administered questionnaire. Secondary data was collected through a literature review. Data was captured by the specialist Statistical Services Consultancy (Statscon) Department of the University of Johannesburg through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was analysed and the findings were presented in the form of narrative reports as well as bar graphs, pie charts and cross tabulations to facilitate the ease of understanding and user friendliness.

The literature review section of the study highlights the rise of the fast food phenomenon worldwide. It also indicates that South Africa has been unable to escape this trend. The rapid growth in fast foods outlets over the past few years bears stark testimony to this fact. It also shows that this trend has mirrored by a sharp increase in life style, diseases such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension and coronary heart diseases.

The empirical aspect of this research found that McDonald's was the most preferred fast food outlet with the most sought after meal being a burger and chips, followed closely by chicken. Children also indicated that soda will always form part of their

most sought after meal. The research was also able to determine that background in terms of Level of Standard of Living (LSM), especially in so far as it impacted on affordability was an influencing factor and that advertising played an important role in influencing preferences for fast foods. The study did however not determine the extent to which advertising played a role. The study thus reinforces the widely held view that children's preferences for fast food are determined by a multiplicity of factors which have bearing on branding, the influence of advertising, the nature of the product and other attended issues.

The study identifies a number of opportunities for further research and offers a set of recommendations which if implemented can help arrest the development of the unhealthy winds of change which are sweeping across the South African food landscape.



DECLARATION

I, Ruth Cynthia Mkatoko Mboweni-de Klerk, declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. Any assistance that I have received has been duly acknowledged in the dissertation. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Commerce at the University of Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or at any other university.

Ruth Cynthia Mkatoko Mboweni-de Klerk

30 October 2008



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my promoter Professor CJ Jooste for his assistance with the theoretical aspects of this work. I am grateful for his many suggestions and unlimited patience throughout.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people, to whom I am greatly indebted:

Dr. Rietta Eislen from Statscon whose ideas permeate this work especially in the designing of the questionnaire. Her constructive criticism and suggestions are appreciated mostly.

Professor Adele Bernt for her suggestions and guidance in searching for the relevant literature on fast food franchisees

My colleagues, Boris Urban and Stephan Naude whose insightful minds added to my understanding of Marketing Research.

To Rebekah Kim, Esther Masetlha and Lulama Mboweni your assistance in getting me the relevant literature from Wits, Unisa and UJ is highly appreciated.

Emmanuel Mufunda for the statistical analysis of the results. Your assistance in helping with the interpretation of the results is highly appreciated

The schools that allowed me to administer the questionnaires to the children; Bishop Bavin, St Mary's for Girls, Feed my Lambs and Phineas Xulu.

To the persons that facilitated my meetings with the schools' authorities, Annette Joubert, Zenzi Mtshetweni, Chris de Klerk and Nonjebo Beauchamp – you understood immediately what this project was all about and helped make it happen with amazing speed and astonishing minimum fuss.

Mrs. Rika Venter, the Department of Business Management's Secretary, whose positive spirit and help throughout my period of study kept me going and made me

confident that this mission will be accomplished one day. Phone calls from her were always to try and assist

The Statcon department for data capturing and analysis of the responses from the questionnaires

To my brother Hopi Mboweni from University of Limpopo for the proof reading of this dissertation

My IT Manager- Lindumuzi Dube for his understanding and support during the period of compiling this dissertation

The selflessness and instrumental support of a number of persons have been critical in the past and present – my parents, my parents–in-law, my two brothers and two sisters.

I know my family loves me or else they would never have tolerated the disruption this work brought into our lives. To my daughter Khensani – her warm character and enquiring mind, always making suggestions to this work and made it part of herself. My life partner Stan – I can only say once again how fortunate I feel to have discovered you in my life. Your contribution and proof reading of this work made me feel much more valuable.

And to God be the Glory.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my dearest daughter Khensani for her warm searching heart.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

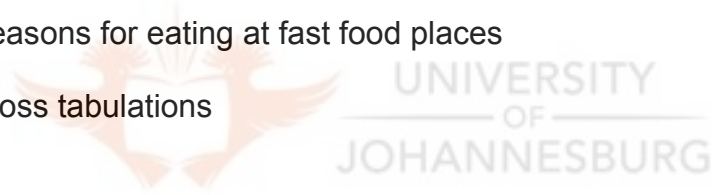
Abstract.....	i
Declaration.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Dedication.....	vi
Table of contents.....	vii
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures.....	xi
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations.....	xii
Chapter ONE	1
INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF STUDY	1
1.1 BACKGROUND	1
1.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.2.1 Overall Objective	7
1.2.2 Specific Objectives	7
1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY	8
1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	8
1.5 BENEFITS OF THE STUDY	9
1.6 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	9
1.7 CLOSURE.....	10
Chapter TWO	12
OVERVIEW OF THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY	12
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	12
2.2 THE RISE OF THE FAST FOOD PHENOMENON.....	13
2.3 OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN FAST FOOD INDUSTRY.....	14
2.4 PROFILE OF THE MAJOR FAST FOOD CHAINS	19
2.4.1 Profile of McDonald’s	19
2.4.2 Profile of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC).....	20

2.4.3	Profile of Wimpy.....	22
2.4.4	Profile of Steers	23
2.5	FAST FOOD BRANDING.....	24
2.5.1	A cursory overview.....	24
2.5.2	Branding strategies of the four major fast food groups	26
2.6	CLOSURE.....	28
Chapter THREE.....		29
MARKETING OF FAST FOOD TO CHILDREN.....		29
3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	29
3.2	CHILDREN AS TARGET MARKET.....	30
3.3	CHILDREN AS DECISION MAKERS.....	32
3.4	FAST FOOD ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN	34
3.4.1	Television advertising	37
3.4.2	In- school marketing.....	38
3.4.3	Product placements	38
3.4.4	Internet.....	39
3.4.5	Toys and products with brand logos	39
3.4.6	Youth targeted promotions.....	39
3.5	ADVERTISING AUTHORITY ROLE	40
3.5.1	Television.....	40
3.5.2	Internet.....	41
3.5.3	Schools	42
3.5.4	Regulations in other Countries.....	43
3.5.5	Regulations in South Africa.....	43
3.6	TORWARD A CRITIQUE OF MARKETING TO CHILDREN.....	45
3.7	CLOSURE.....	47
Chapter FOUR		48
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		48
4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	48
4.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	50

4.3	RESEARCH POPULATION	52
4.4	SAMPLING	52
4.4.1	Sampling design	52
4.4.2	Sampling size.....	53
4.5	DATA COLLECTION.....	54
4.5.1	Primary data collection.....	54
4.5.2	Secondary data collection.....	55
4.5.3	The research instrument.....	55
4.6	DATA ANALYSIS	56
4.7	CLOSURE.....	56
Chapter FIVE		57
REPORTING AND FINDINGS		57
5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	57
5.2	PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS.....	57
5.3	CROSS TABULATION ANALYSIS	67
5.4	CLOSURE.....	69
Chapter SIX		70
SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....		70
6.1	INTRODUCTION.....	71
6.2	SUMMARY.....	71
6.2.1	The fast food outlet mostly preferred by children	71
6.2.2	The drivers, motives, reasons and factors determining the popularity of the fast foods outlets	72
6.2.3	The most sought after fast food meal.....	72
6.2.4	Background of the child and the preference for certain fast foods	73
6.2.5	The influence of advertisements on children’s preferences for fast foods.....	73
6.3	RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	74
6.4	CONCLUSION	76
LIST OF REFERENCES		77
ANNEXURE A		
THE QUESTIONNAIRE		84

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Title	Page
Table 4.1	Demographics of the schools under the study	51
Table 4.2	Number of respondents per school	53
Table 5.1	Illustration of percentage responses	58
Table 5.2	Siblings frequency distribution	59
Table 5.3	Reasons for choice of favourite food outlet	61
Table 5.4	Effects of seeing advertisements of favourite fast food outlet	66
Table 5.5	Reasons for eating at fast food places	66
Table 5.6	Cross tabulations	67



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Title	Page
Figure 2.1	Comparison of 2006 and 2007 scores on brand awareness	26
Figure 5.1	Pie chart for participating schools	57
Figure 5.2	Distribution of respondents by gender	58
Figure 5.3	Distribution of respondents by age group	59
Figure 5.4	Frequency of participants visiting fast food outlets	60
Figure 5.5	Participants favourite fast food outlet	61
Figure 5.6	Frequency of ordering favourite fast food	62
Figure 5.7	Awareness of TV advertisements on fast food outlets	63
Figure 5.8	Awareness of billboards advertisements on fast food outlets	63
Figure 5.9	Awareness of advertisements in magazines/ newspapers of fast food outlets	64
Figure 5.10	Awareness of internet advertisements on fast food outlets	65
Figure 5.11	Awareness of radio advertisements on fast food outlets	65

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	- Action for Children's Television
ASASA	- Advertising Standard Authority of South Africa
BEE	- Black Economic Empowerment
CARU	- Children's Advertising Review Unit
COPPA	- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act
KFC	- Kentucky Fried Chicken
STATSCON	- Statistics Consultancy Services
SPSS	- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
FASA	- Franchising Association of South Africa
FCC	- Federal Communications Commission
FMCG	- Fast Moving Consumer Goods
FSR	- Full Service Restaurant
FTC	- Federal Trade Commission
LSM	- Living Standard Measurement
PHAA	- Public Health Association of Australia
TV	- Television
UK	- United Kingdom
USA	- United States of America

Chapter ONE

INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND

Over the last three decades, the fast foods industry has infiltrated every nook and cranny of the American society. An industry that began with a handful of modest hot dog and hamburger stands in Southern California has spread to every corner of the nation, selling a broad range of foods wherever paying customers could be found (Schlosser, 2002: 3).

Schlosser (2003: 5) elaborates on this trend by succinctly capturing pervasive influence of rise of the fast food industry, when he states that:

“Fast food is now served at restaurants and drive-throughs, stadiums, airports, zoos, high schools, elementary schools and universities, on cruise ships, trains and aeroplanes, K-marts, gas stations and even hospital cafeterias.”

This trend is sustained by the innovative ways in which marketers target the lucrative and ever growing sector of the food market. Twenty five years ago, only a handful of American companies directed their marketing at children. Today children are being targeted by phone companies, oil companies, clothing stores and restaurant chains as well. The growth in children’s advertising has been driven by efforts to increase not just current but also future consumption (Schlosser, 2002: 42).

The above trends have not left the landscape of the South African food market unscathed. In South Africa these trends have emerged strongly over the last two decades. The ever growing large number of fast food restaurants, has become a way of life for many consumers – young and old. This development has been created and reinforced by the now well established marketing strategies of fast food companies that aggressively target children (Fredericks & Davids, 2006: 17).

It is not surprising that the resultant thereof, is a barrage of commercial advertisements that inundate the South African billboards, print and electronic media. The advertisements have had a profound impact on the end-users of the advertised products, to the extent that some consumers have been overwhelmed by the power of modern-day advertisements. Consumers, particularly children, find it tough to resist the temptation not to hanker for these advertised products as a result of the persuasiveness of the advertising (Keytel, 2005: 65).

Advertisements on television (TV) are favoured by fast food retailers because of the effect on the viewer. This medium of advertising has allowed major food companies to plant persuasive images and themes within children's collective consciousness (Donahoe, 2005: 4).

Donahoe (2005: 4) opines on this issue by stating that:

“The countless fast food promotions linked with familiar and lovable cartoons characters, with popular children's movies or sport cars and the ad-emblazoned happy meal containing a benevolent gift inside, whether promotional cartoon character or action hero, coincidentally always in a series so the child is urged to return again and again, to “collect all ten...” are effective tactics fast food companies employ to get young children conditioned to believe in, and desire, their product.”

Fast food advertisements appeal to children due to the associated benefits such as toys whenever a meal is bought. The trick with associated benefits is that the more they buy, the more the collection of toys increases. Commentators have argued that the behaviour of these children can be explained in terms of Skinner's Operant Conditioning theory and Bandura's Social Learning theory (Anon, <http://www.websapce.ship.edu/cgboer/skinner.html>).

Operant conditioning refers to the process whereby people encounter a stimulus that triggers a certain type of behaviour. The behaviour is followed by a consequence. If the consequence has positive outcomes, the behaviour tends to be reinforced when

the same stimulus is encountered. This consequence thus modifies the organism's tendency to repeat the behaviour in the future. (Anon,<http://www.websapce.ship.edu/cgboer/skinner.html>).

According to Skinner's theory, an organism thus gets rewarded for acting in a positive and desirable way (Hall & Lindzey, 1978: 639 – 642). The reward for buying certain products (primary stimulus) for example, from McDonald's, is to get a toy (reinforcer). The more hamburgers the child buys the more rewards (toys) the child acquires. For example, an advert would be flashed on TV saying "*Collect all 10 you will win a prize of your life time*". These are examples of some of the effective tactics fast-food companies make use of, to get children enticed to believe in and desire their product (Anon,[http:// www.lclark.edu/~soan221/96/foodtrend.html](http://www.lclark.edu/~soan221/96/foodtrend.html)).

Bandura's social learning theory emphasizes the importance of observing and modelling the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. It encompasses attention, memory and motivation. Social learning theory spans both cognitive and behavioural frameworks (Anon,[http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert Bandura](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Bandura)).

The most common and persuasive examples of social learning situations are television commercials. Commonly, these commercials for example, suggest that drinking a certain beverage or using a particular hair shampoo will make people popular and win the admiration of attractive people. Television is undoubtedly the most powerful source for sending, high impact and vivid messages about food/meals (Anon,<http://www.lclark.edu/~soan221/96/foodtrend.html>).

This view is reinforced by the researcher's own experiences of this phenomenon at work. As the researcher was piloting the research schedule on family members' children, the researcher's thirteen year old nephew recalled a KFC advert that said: "*You do not have to work like a slave to eat like a king*" (Interview: 2005). He even remembered and referred to the R13.95 price tag for that particular KFC meal. To him, this was irresistible.

The increase in the consumption of fast food has contributed to an increase in child obesity in South Africa (Keytel, 2005: 69). This obesity is a combined result of poor eating habits and lack of physical activity. According to Bartlett (2003:2), South Africa is experiencing the same increase in obesity as the rest of the world since modern day's fast paced lifestyle frequently translates into the convenience of fast foods.

South African children now eat more frequently in restaurants and at fast food outlets and rely less on nutritious, home-cooked foods than 10 years ago. A frightening fact is that children's clothing sizes in South Africa are no longer appropriate for the bulging generation and have to be redesigned to accommodate their bodies (Bartlett, 2003: 2)

A study done recently bears testimony to the fact that fast food is becoming increasingly popular in South Africa. The study found out that local teens' appetite for junk food exceeds that of children in the United States of America. South African children are scoffing more junk food a week than even US kids who are infamous for their fast food lifestyles putting their long term health at risk and fuelling an obesity epidemic (Naidoo, 2008).

These trends have been exacerbated by recent advertising trends. In Australia, advertisements for foods directed to children are most frequently for breakfast cereals, snacks, soft drinks and fast foods. They are mainly fatty, salty and sugary foods (Young Media Australia, 1997). The 1995 National Nutrition Survey (Young Media Australia, 1997) found an alarming proportion of children consuming non-nutritious foods and not enough children consuming healthy foods.

The non-nutritious foods consumed by children, such as hamburgers, pizza, confectionery and soft drinks, are precisely those that are promoted heavily during children's TV viewing times (Australian Bureau of Statistics & Department of Health & Family Services, Commonwealth of Australia, 1999). This is indicative of a clear marketing strategy of segmentation and target marketing that hones in on psycho-social aspects. This is in part a result of a comprehensive strategy encompassing demographic, psychographic and behavioural segmentation (Australian Bureau of

Statistics & Department of Health & Family Services, Commonwealth of Australia, 1999).

Many products advertised on TV are strategically displayed in the supermarket at the child's eye level. Sweets for example are put at the pay points at the child's eye level. Techniques used by television food advertisers also include prizes, giveaways, animation, special effects, story vignettes, jingles, and popular personalities. The predominant messages directed to children are related to having fun, being 'cool' and the food being tasty (Hill & Radimer, 1997).

Studies have shown that young children under the age of eight years are very susceptible to advertisements even though they do not understand the persuasive intent of advertising. If an advertisement for a product attracts their interest, they will ask for it even if it is a product for which they have no need or use (Reuters Health, 2007).

Television food advertisements during children's viewing times promote foods/meals of low nutritional value, foods high in fat, sugar or salt. The largest categories of foods advertised tend to be chocolate, confectionery, fast food restaurants and sweetened breakfast cereals (Hill & Radimer, 1997: 174-180). Children get the message to eat fatty, salty, sugary and fast foods.

The advertisements encourage children to pressure their parents ('pester power') to buy the advertised products like confectionery, soft drinks, sweetened cereals and fast-foods (Baron,2000:289-295). Even brief exposures to television advertising have been found to influence pre-school children's preferences (Borzekowski & Robinson, 2001:42-46). This bears testimony to the effectiveness of the vigorous marketing campaigns for these low nutritional value foods. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that television also deprives children of physical exercise time.

Television advertising is thus an important influence on eating and physical activity behaviours in childhood behaviours. Studies show an association between the amount of television watched and the consumption of food high in fat, kilojoules and sugar such as ice cream, soft drinks, hamburgers, pies, pastries, potato chips and

other snack foods. Studies also indicate that the children who watch a lot of television are more likely to request these items from their parents (Borzekowski & Robinson, 2001:42-46).

Food advertising has also been shown to take advantage of children's vulnerability through persuading appeals made especially on TV (Young Media, 1998). This advertising tendency has the potential to cultivate poor eating habits in children that can adversely impact their long-term health. Small wonder then, that excessive TV viewing is now cited as a significant factor in the development of childhood obesity. There are very few advertisements promoting the consumption of rice, pasta, breads, unsweetened cereals, vegetables, fruits, unsweetened dairy products, meat, fish or chicken (Jeffrey & French 1998:227).

A study on 11, 000 children, thought to be the largest of its kind conducted in Britain, has found out that the risk of adult obesity increases for every additional hour of weekend television watched by children. Parents who allow small children to watch more than two hours of television a day on weekends are putting them at significant greater risk of becoming obese as adults. The study found out that there was a clear link between television watching and risk of obesity (Sunday Times 2005).

Dietary patterns that result in high intakes of fats, low intakes of fruit and vegetables are linked to increased risks of coronary heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and obesity. Although these diseases typically manifest themselves in midlife and later, diet influenced physiological variables associated with chronic illnesses can be traced through childhood to adulthood (Coon, Goldberg, Rogers & Tucker, 2001).

Food advertisements are promoted as fun and exciting and entice children with premium offers (give-aways and prizes). The promotion of premium offers is often the dominant appeal in advertisements, in direct contravention to the Australian Broadcasting Authority standard requiring that, "any reference to a premium offer should be incidental to the main product being advertised" (Hill & Radimer, 1997:174-180).

Many public health, education and consumer groups have expressed concern that young children are at risk of being negatively influenced by the vigorous marketing strategies employed by television food advertisers (Hill & Radimer, 1997:174 -180). In Australia, both national and state health policies have identified the need to address food advertising in the context of promoting children's health (Common Wealth Department, 1995).

In South Africa, new draft regulations on the labelling and advertising of foodstuffs published by the Minister of Health are likely to have a significant impact on the health of South Africans, particularly children. The draft lists those food items that are not essential for a healthy lifestyle and prohibits the advertising of these foods to children (Anon,<http://www.sagoodnews.co.za>; 2007).

1.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 Overall Objective

The overall objective of this study is to determine children's preferences for fast foods and their opinions related to fast food advertisements.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

In order to investigate the research problem, the following specific objectives were formulated: addressed.

- To determine the fast food outlet mostly preferred by children
- To identify drivers, motives, reasons and factors determining the popularity of the fast food outlets
- To determine the most sought after fast food meal
- To determine if the background of the child is an issue towards the preference for certain fast foods
- To determine the influences of advertisements on children's preferences for fast foods
- To determine whether the price, place, product and people have an influence on children's preferences for the fast foods that they buy

1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

The study made use of a positivist research design within the Quantitative research approach. The key elements of the design are the following:

- Sampling – identification of four schools from which structured interviews were drawn
- Collection of primary data – this was collected by using a self-administered questionnaires
- Collection of secondary data - this was done by conducting a literature survey consisting of reviews of books, journals, magazines, newspapers and internet based sources
- Data analysis – data were captured by Statscon (a specialist research support services of the University of Johannesburg). Analysis was done by the writer with statistical analysis support provided by Statscon
- Reporting – data were reported on after detailed analysis

This approach is in keeping with the guidelines provided by numerous writers on the subject of research methodology. A more detailed discussion on the Research Methodology is provided in Chapter four of the study.

1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Generally, any study which seeks to explore an issue as wide ranging as children's fast food preferences should have at least national spread coverage. However, financial and time constraints have had a bearing on the design and implementation of the research. This has resulted in the limitation of the study due to the small sample (limited number of schools was selected in one province).

This limitation is however, mitigated by a sampling design that encapsulates accepted standards of random sampling design, reinforced by an interview process that allows for some depth in terms of data being elicited. The time perspective also

presented another limitation. It is a popular view that targeted marketing approaches that focus on as complex and pervasive an element as fast food preferences of children, often require an in-depth longitudinal study taking place over a protracted period of time.

Despite these limitations, the study is capable of providing useful insights into children's fast food preferences and how these preferences emanate and manifest themselves. The study is also useful for highlighting some of the elements that influence children's preferences for particular fast food brands

1.5 BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

The study has a potential to make a useful contribution to the body of knowledge on children's fast food preferences. This is as a result of the fact that the study unearthed useful insights with regard to:

- The fast food outlets (brands) children prefer
 - The children's preference of certain brands to other brands
 - The role of marketing and advertising with regard to creating or promoting these preferences
- The harmful effects of the fast foods preferences of children

In the light of the above insights, the study will be beneficial to schools and parents. This information can be disseminated to the society through user-friendly-easy-to-read pamphlets and perhaps through radio and TV talk shows.

1.6 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The dissertation is made up of six chapters. A synopsis of the six chapters is as follows:

Chapter ONE

This chapter provides a general introduction and orientation of the study. The chapter covers the purpose of the study, the research objectives and raises the questions

which the study seeks to answer. A brief overview of the methodology to be followed in the research is discussed. The outline of this dissertation is also highlighted.

Chapter TWO

This chapter discusses the overview of the fast food industry in general and South Africa in particular. The profiles of the fast food outlets chosen in this study are also discussed.

Chapter THREE

Chapter three discusses fast food advertising in some detail. The discussion, explores advertising to children as a target market, tactics used by marketers to reach children and the role of children in family purchasing decision making. The chapter is concluded by a critique towards fast foods.

Chapter FOUR

The research design and methodology followed in undertaking this study is discussed. The questionnaire used in this research is explained in this chapter.

Chapter FIVE

The results are discussed in this chapter. Analysis and interpretation of results are presented through the use of tables and graphs. This is done to ensure readability and comprehension of the contents. The analysis is structured to flow according to the questions raised in the questionnaire.

Chapter SIX

The summary, inclusive of suggestions for future studies are dealt with in this chapter. The conclusion and recommendations are also discussed.

1.7 CLOSURE

This chapter started out by providing an introductory overview of the fast food phenomenon. It does this by briefly describing origins, growth and pervasive impact of this phenomenon. The chapter then proceeded to describe the research objectives

of the study. These research objectives are underpinned by a set of research questions which guided the researcher in order to ensure that the research objectives are met. Both the research objectives and the research explored the issue of children's preference for fast food.

These preferences are explored in terms of a research design which whilst being introduced in this chapter is discussed more fully in Chapter 4. The limitations, benefits and outline of the study have also been presented in this introductory chapter. As such the chapter orientates the reader by setting the agenda and tone for subsequent discussions.



Chapter TWO

OVERVIEW OF THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Fast foods have become an omnipresent part of the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector in most developed and developing countries around the world. This development is a relatively new phenomenon that has occurred mainly over the past three to four decades (Anon, 2007, www.faqs.org/nutrition).

Fast food is defined as ready-to-eat dishes sold by commercial establishment that may or may not have on-site dining accommodation. (Özcelik, Akan & Sürücüoğlu, 2007:43). According to the Institute of Medicine, (2006) fast foods can also be described as foods and meals designed for ready availability, use or consumption. These foods are sold at eating establishments focusing on quick availability or “take aways”. These foods tend to be high in saturated fats and carbohydrates (Institute of Medicine, 2006). Most fast foods are high in fat and sodium and low in fibre, vitamins and some minerals (Anon, <http://faqs.org/nutrition/erg-foo/fast-foods>).

Characteristically fast food refers to food cooked in advance, kept warm and reheated to order. Fast food outlets are “take away” or “take out” providers who often have a “drive thru” service which allows customers to order and pick up food from their cars. These outlets generally also have a seating area in which customers can eat the food on the premises. Many fast food outlets are part of a restaurant chain or franchised operations and standardised foodstuffs are shipped to each restaurant from a central location (Anon, 2007, <http://faqs.org/nutrition/erg-foo/fast-foods>).

Modern commercial fast food typically includes foods such as fish and chips, sandwiches, pitas, hamburgers, fried chicken, French fries, pizza, ice-cream and chicken nuggets. These foods are often highly processed and prepared in an industrial setting, i.e. on a scale with standard ingredients and standardised cooking and production methods. Fast food is usually rapidly served in cartons or bags or in a

plastic wrapping in a manner which minimises costs (Anon, 2007, <http://faqs.org/nutrition/erg-foo/fast-foods>).

As has been mentioned earlier in most fast food operations, menu items are generally made from processed ingredients prepared at a central facility and then dispatched to individual outlets where they are reheated, cooked (usually by microwave or deep frying) or prepared in a short space of time. This process ensures a consistent level of product quality and is key to being able to deliver the order quickly to the customer and eliminate labour and equipment costs in the individual outlet (Anon, 2007, <http://faqs.or/nutrition/erg-foo/fast-foods>).

Children, as it is well known, are generally impatient hence, they cannot wait for long for meals to be prepared. Over time children have become the primary consumers of certain fast food products. This has come about largely as a result of the ways in which some of these fast food chains have positioned themselves in the market, coupled to their approach of targeting children through aggressive, nuanced advertising (Holden, Star 15 December 2005).

2.2 THE RISE OF THE FAST FOOD PHENOMENON

It is often said that the concept “ready cooked food to go” is as old as cities themselves and that unique variations of these are historical in various cultures. For example, ancient Roman cities had bread and olive stands, East Asian cultures feature noodle shops whilst flat bread and falafel are ubiquitous in the Middle East (Anon, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/fast_food).

Although fast food in some form of other has been around from time immemorial, the current fast food phenomenon beyond these contexts is relatively recent. It began in the USA in July 1912 with the opening of a fast food restaurant called Automat in New York. This restaurant caused such a stir and became so popular that numerous other Automat restaurants were soon built around the country. This popularity lasted through the 1920’s well into the 1930’s (Schlosser, 2002:15).

This success was soon duplicated by the White Castle group of restaurants which were established in 1921 in Witchita, Kansas in the USA. The White Castle restaurants specialised in the preparation and sale of burgers. White Castle was successful since its inception and as a result spawned many competitors. Many other fast food establishments tried to emulate the success of both Automat and White Castle. These included McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) and Burger King (Schlosser, 2002:23).

McDonald's the largest fast food chain in the world initially offered a simple menu of hamburgers, french-fries, shakes, coffee and Coca Cola served in disposable paper wrapping (Schlosser, 2002:23) .

In the wake of this success came other fast food chains such as Burger King, KFC and Pizza Hut. After entrenching themselves in the USA, some of these businesses globalised and became household names in countries all across the world. They in turn spawned local competitors such as Steers, Wimpy and Nandos in South Africa, and other local competitors in other parts of the world.

2.3 OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN FAST FOOD INDUSTRY

The modernisation of the South African economy, which has led to changes in eating habits and food trends, boosted the fast food sector over the review period, which saw the number of fast food outlets increase by 47%. Transactions were up by 80% and value rose by 122% to stand at R8 billion in 2004. Commentators are of the opinion that this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future (Euromonitor International, 2005).

The healthy outlook for the South African economy, rapid changes in working habits, the continued expansion of outlets through franchising and the expected increase in the number of tourists will all contribute towards boosting foodservice transactions and sales over the forecast period. The number of foodservice units is expected to increase by over 6% while the number of transactions is estimated to grow by more

than 10%. Value sales are predicted to exceed 17% to reach nearly R51 billion in 2009 (Euromonitor International, 2005).

Consumer spending on food and catering increased by 34% in 2004, to stand at R149, 552 million. Total consumer expenditure on catering increased from R9, 269 million in 1999 to R13, 793 million in 2004. South Africa's economy enjoyed healthy growth and development during the review period (Euromonitor International, 2005).

The fast food sector had the highest value sales in the South African foodservice industry over the review period. Units increased by 9% over the 2003/2004 period. Transactions were up by 15% and value rose by 19% to stand at R8 billion in 2004. Average sales per outlet in 2004 reached R1.3 million, an increase of 9% on the previous year (Euromonitor International, 2005).

The highest value sales were in fast food, followed by cafés/bars, full-service restaurants, street stalls/kiosks and 100% home delivery/takeaways. Fast food outlets with strong branding have been successful in South Africa and as a result have benefited from expansion strategies through franchising, for example KFC, Steers and Nandos. McDonald's has struggled to dominate the fast food sector due to the fact that South Africans tend to be loyal to local brands like Steers and Bimbos, while McDonald's tends to appeal more to the younger generation. In addition, the slow penetration of fast food into previously disadvantaged parts of the population has contributed to a rise in consumer foodservice transactions in line with the opening of new units in these areas and in the overall sales of fast food (Euromonitor International, 2005).

In terms of average sales per outlet, chicken fast food was the leader, representing R2.7 million per outlet per month. This was closely followed by burger fast food, representing R2.4 million per outlet per month. Both chicken fast food and burger fast food sectors were dominated by chained brands, representing 68% and 78% of value share respectively in 2004. This is due to the fact that they use effective branding strategies and franchising to increase loyalty and volume (Euromonitor International, 2005).

Leading consumer foodservice operators in South Africa are mainly domestic companies, and franchising is the most successful expansion model in South Africa for chained units. According to Franchising Association of South Africa (FASA), the largest franchise sector in South Africa is fast food, representing approximately 29% of the franchise industry (Euromonitor International, 2005).

Full Service Restaurant (FSR) continued to be dominated by independent operators in unit terms in 2004, with chained units accounting for 15% of total units. Wimpy and Spur Steak Ranches were the main players in this sector in 2004, with 368 and 245 units respectively. Wimpy has become a trusted brand across South Africa, due to its strong branding and innovation in keeping up with contemporary trends like shifts in food tastes, décor and lifestyle changes, as well as its family friendly attitude (Euromonitor International, 2005).

The dominant global player in fast food in South Africa is the Yum! Brand Inc-owned KFC, which had a total of 403 units in South Africa in 2004. This is mainly due to the fact that KFC has developed its brand over 33 years and has used franchising to achieve this. Furthermore, chicken is the most popular choice when it comes to fast food in South Africa (Euromonitor International, 2005).

KFC has also played an active role in supporting Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) in South Africa. At present Black South Africans now own around 25% of local KFC franchise outlets, with a major programme under way to increase the number in order to tap into the growing consumer market within this sector of society. The number of chicken fast food units increased by 42% during the review period, to stand at 1, 286 in 2004. Transactions grew by 105%, while value sales rose by 165% over the same period. Chicken is the most popular fast food item in South Africa, accounting for 43% of fast food value sales in 2004, representing R3.5 billion (Euromonitor International,2005).

In line with trends in other parts of the world (the USA and the UK) in particular, the growth in popularity of fast foods in South Africa has been rapid (FASA Newsletter, 2007). As is the case in the USA and The UK, a September 2007 study by Euromonitor found that as South Africans are becoming increasingly “cash rich”, they

are also becoming “time short”. Trends such as the growing number of women entering the workplace and the breakdown of the nuclear family mean that it is becoming harder for South Africans to find the time to prepare meals at home. This has resulted in an increased opportunity for fast food restaurants to serve time strapped families (Hartford, 2007).

Busier lifestyles have led to an increasing number of consumers buying fast food as it is convenient and time saving, while higher disposable incomes means that fast food is more accessible to the general population. In addition, the steady penetration of the fast food sector into previously disadvantaged parts of the population has contributed to a rise in consumer foodservice transactions in line with the opening of new units in these areas and in the overall sales of fast food (Euromonitor International, 2005).

According to Gordon (2007), Famous Brands, the company that owns brands like Wimpy, Steers, Debonaires and Fisherways is growing at an alarming rate. Exploding growth in the quick-service restaurant market has been a function of convenience, the availability of disposable incomes, good service and new stores openings (Hedderwick, Financial Mail, 2007). In 2006 interim earnings for Famous Brands were R45.4m, in 2005 R36.8m on turnover of R406.3m (Hedderwick, Financial Mail, 2007)

The South African brand Steers, continued to dominate the burger sector, representing 53% of value sales in 2004. The brand’s strength is based on its product offerings, for which it has won numerous awards, as well as strong marketing strategies which have resulted in steady growth, particularly through franchising, an attractive option for entrepreneurs. McDonald’s has struggled to dominate the fast food sector due to the fact that South Africans tend to be loyal to local brands like Steers and Bimbos, while McDonald’s tends to appeal more to the younger generation (Euromonitor International, 2005).

A recent survey commissioned by the Standard Bank and conducted by Franchise Directions focused specifically on franchised fast food and restaurant categories substantiated this view. The results of this survey revealed a total of 64 fast food

franchised operations and 68 restaurant chains (Gordon, 2007). Other factors emerging from the survey were the:

- increased consumer spending which has provided the impetus for rapid growth turnover of 34% for the past two years compared to previous turnover growth of 16% annually.
- consumer trends moving towards a healthier lifestyle as is evident from an increase in fish restaurants with pub and grill concepts showing a lesser peaked consumer demand.

Increase in employment levels are at the highest levels compared to other franchised businesses due to a strong production element to the business. Fast food franchise chains employ approximately 63 000 staff and restaurants approximately 60 000 people. This represents a combined 28% of the total employment in the franchise industry of 412 000 people. In March 2007, total income at take-aways/fast foods restaurants was up by more than 18% over the previous years (Euromonitor International, 2005).

Gordon (2007) argues that these trends have made restaurants franchises bullish about their status and plans to increase the numbers of new outlets. In this regard Gordon also states that:

“today the fast food industry reflects recent consumer trends and increased spending on quicker and more readily available food options”

In South Africa the dominant fast food chains and restaurants are McDonald's, KFC, Steers and Wimpy. The Government's commitment to stimulating the small business sector, and franchising in particular, has also helped the South African foodservice industry. The government teamed up with the Franchise Association of South Africa (FASA) and financial institutions in order to promote entrepreneurship and franchising in the country, especially amongst previously disadvantaged people. (Euromonitor International,2005).

The growth in fast food has been exacerbated by new consumer trends. Black South Africans, or what is termed the 'ethnic consumer group', make up around 70% of the

population and are the largest racial group among South Africa's middle class. The number of black South Africans in the middle class increased over the review period, which allowed these consumers to spend more on eating out (Euromonitor International, 2005).

This change in the middle class has, and will have, an influence on product offerings and marketing campaigns within the foodservice industry. For example, KFC has been proactive in supporting black franchisees in order to gain access to this important client base. As the majority of black South Africans have low incomes, strong branding campaigns are important in capturing this consumer group, while entry into previously disadvantaged areas will allow fast food to establish itself in a previously untapped area. McDonald's has been active in targeting this group through promotional campaigns, one of which shows a newly married young black couple stopping at a McDonald's before heading off on their honeymoon (Euromonitor International, 2005).

2.4 PROFILE OF THE MAJOR FAST FOOD CHAINS

As has been mentioned earlier, in South Africa, the fast food market is dominated by four main fast foods chains namely; McDonald's, KFC, Wimpy and Steers. These four chains account for 70% of the fast food revenue in the country (FASA Newsletter, 2007). In the ensuing discussion these four fast food chains are briefly profiled.

2.4.1 Profile of McDonald's



McDonald's was established in 1995 in South Africa. According to the Executive Director of McDonald's – South Africa, Greg Solomons, the operation aimed to expand outlets by 15% - 25% a year for the next few years. There are over 30 000

fast food outlets in 121 different countries around the globe (Mawson, Consumer Industries Correspondence, 2007). McDonald's, the largest fast food chain in the world and the brand most associated with the term 'fast food' was founded as a barbecued drive-in, in 1940 by Richard and Mac McDonald (Schlosser, 2002:19). After discovering that most of the profits came from hamburgers, the brothers closed their restaurant and reopened it in 1948 as a walk-up stand offering a simple menu of hamburgers, french-fries, shakes, coffee and Coca Cola (Schlosser, 2002:19).

Ray Kroc bought the franchising licence from the McDonald's brothers and in 1955 he opened his first McDonald's drive-in restaurant in Des Plaines Ill, paying the brothers a percentage of the receipts. He soon began selling franchises for new restaurants and instituted a training program for owner managers that emphasised automation and standardisation (Schlosser, 2002:19).

Ray Kroc also introduced uniform products, identical in all respects at each outlet and insisted on cutting food costs as much as possible. McDonald's soon enjoyed phenomenal success in its home country. This led it to explore the possibility of turning itself into a global fast food restaurant chain (Schlosser, 2002:20).

During the 1980s and 1990s and into the present decade, McDonald's was able to position itself as a global player. Its logo of the "two golden arches has become one of the most recognised brand identities in the world. McDonald's menu consists mainly of burgers, chips, soda, ice cream and salad (Anon, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/fast_food:2007).

2.4.2 Profile of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC)



Harland Sanders created KFC, the "Finger Lickin' Good" meal which became a fast-food sensation in the 1960s. The first KFC restaurant opened in 1952 near Salt Lake City, Utah.. Lacking money to promote the new chain, Sanders dressed up like a

Kentucky Colonel, sporting a white suit and a black string tie which became the trademark of KFC (Schlosser, 2002:23).

Sanders was already 40 years old when he began cooking chicken for customers at his service station in Corbin, Kentucky. Sanders became well-known in his home state, but it took another 20 years before he began franchising KFC restaurants around the country. By 1964, when he sold his stake in the company, the Colonel's chicken was being sold in the company's popular paper buckets at over 600 outlets nationwide. Sanders continued to appear as the company's spokesman for more than a decade, with his white suit, string tie and cane projected the look of the archetypical courtly Southern gentleman (<http://www.answers.com/topic/harland-sanders>)

Sanders' title of 'Colonel' was an honorary one. He was made a member of the Honourable Order of Kentucky Colonels in 1935 by Kentucky Governor Ruby Laffoon. "It's Finger Lickin' Good" was the KFC advertising tag line for many years. In 1991, the company changed its name from Kentucky Fried Chicken to KFC, apparently in an effort to disassociate itself from the term "fried"(Anon,<http://www.answers.com/topic/harland-sanders>)

To this day, the Colonel's secret recipe of 11 herbs and spices remains one of the best-kept trade secrets in business. According to a profile of KFC done by the Food Network television show –unwrapped portions of the secret spice mix are made at different locations in the United States, and the only copy of the recipe is kept in a vault in corporate headquarters (Anon,<http://www.answers.com/topic/unwrapped>)

KFC was established in South Africa since 1971. Presently KFC is operating over 450 franchised stores throughout the Southern Africa. KFC won franchise of the year in 1990 (www.fasa.symphonysoftware.co.za).

KFC like its great rival McDonald's has also become a global fast food chain operating in many parts of the world. Its logo featuring a picture of the "Colonel" is instantly recognisable. KFC's menu consists mainly of Chicken pieces, Chicken Burgers, Chips, Soda, Ice cream and salads.

2.4.3 Profile of Wimpy



ENJOY EVERY MOMENT.

A member of the famous Brands Limited Group, Wimpy has been established in South Africa since 1967. South Africans had their very first taste of a Wimpy burger in Murchie's Passage, Durban in 1967. Wimpy was developed as a franchised fast food chain by Lyons and Company. Wimpy was subsequently sold to Bakers SA Ltd in the late 1970s and in 1987 the success of Wimpy and fast food franchising led to the formation of Pleasure Foods - a franchise holding company for Wimpy and Juicy Lucy (Anon, <http://www.hotelrestuarants.co.za/news/2005>).

Milky Lane and Whistle Stop were later added to the Pleasure Food Group. Wimpy was subsequently sold to the Steers group and is now part of a diversified and prolific group of food companies. Wimpy has over four hundred and eighty (480) franchised outlets in Southern Africa (Anon, <http://fasa.symphonysoftware.co.za>).

The year 1985 was another milestone year for Wimpy, and for the progress of racial harmony. Wimpy officially welcomed all races inside its stores, making it a destination that every South African could enjoy (Anon, <http://www.hotelrestuarants.co.za/news/2005>).

Wimpy caters for both the quick "take-away" and the "sit-down" markets although its focus is more skewed towards the latter. Wimpy has also positioned itself as a family restaurant. Wimpy's menu consists mainly of burgers, chips, soda, ice cream, salads and coffee.

2.4.4 Profile of Steers



From humble beginnings, in the 1960's, Steers has evolved from a small number of steakhouses to become one of South Africa's leading quick service restaurant brands. The seed was sown in the United States in 1960, whilst George Halamandaris, the founder of the group was on holiday there. He decided that he would bring back to South Africa the then prevalent concept of fast food restaurants (Anon, <http://www.hotelrestuarants.co.za/news/2005>).

This resulted in the first true steakhouse in the country, and the start of a chain that was dedicated to serving great food in immaculate surroundings. Today Steers is a multinational brand and is a key player in the South African fast food market with outlets throughout Africa. With more than 350 restaurants in operation, Steers is renowned as South Africa's leading burger franchise (Anon, <http://www.hotelrestuarants.co.za/news/2005>).

Steers operated by Famous Brands Franchise Company was established in South Africa since 1962. Steers is presently operating over 450 outlets in South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Swaziland, Mozambique, Uganda and Tanzania (Anon, <http://fasa.symphonysoftware.co.za>).

The Steers success story rests on providing an excellent range of flame grilled and value-for-money hamburgers to the consumer. Steers' burger range consists of 90 percent beef burgers (made from 100 percent beef patties) and ten percent chicken burgers, all prepared in Steers' inimitable flame-grilled style. Steers' menu consists mainly of Chicken and hamburgers, chips, soda, ice cream and salads (Anon, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steers>).

"Real food made real good" is the Steers belief, which underpins Steers' non-negotiable concept of quality food being freshly prepared on the premises. The latest

slogan is *“Flame grilled, it just tastes better”* Steers has become a very successful fast food chain especially over the past 10 years. It has ventured into countries in Africa where it has quickly established itself. It has also succeeded in becoming a very recognisable and well established brand. (Anon, <http://www.hotelrestuarants.co.za/news/2005>).

2.5 FAST FOOD BRANDING

2.5.1 A cursory overview

Branding is a fundamental aspect of fast food marketing. It is also a key component of marketing fast foods especially to children because it plays such an important role in ensuring customer retention based on loyalty (Terblanche, n.d 5). Terblanche substantiates this notion by stating the view that brand loyalty is the source of long time commitment to a product or service since brands are not evaluated in isolation but are usually compared to rival brands.

It is within this context that the ensuing brief discussion on the nature, purpose and use of branding in the fast food is discussed. The ensuing discussion also serves as a platform from which to launch a subsequent brief discussion on the branding strategies of the four major fast food chains.

According to Terblanche, brands are not evaluated in isolation. They are usually compared against rival brands. When brand choice is not important to the consumer, it is hard to achieve commitment. For commitment to be present, the product category and the brand choice have to be fairly important in the consumer’s life.

Terblanche uses the Conversion Model that employs four dimensions to measure a consumer’s commitment to a particular brand:

- Need satisfaction
- Involvement in the category
- Attitude to alternatives
- Intensity of ambivalence

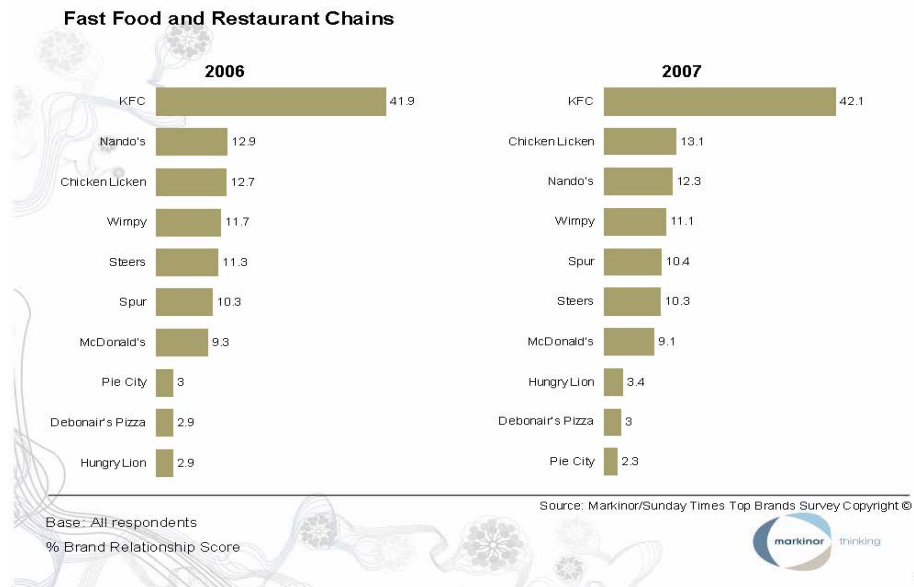
Du Plessis, Jooste and Strydom (2001:445) define branding as the use of a name, term, symbol, design or a combination of these to identify a product or a service. This view is supported by Shrimp and Babin (2007: 20) who state a brand represents a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of these to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition.

Without a recognisable brand a product is but a mere commodity. A brand is everything that one company's particular offering stands for in comparison to other brands in a category of competitive products (Shrimp & Babin, 2007: 20).

Brand awareness is when a consumer thinks about a product category and a brand name comes to mind. Awareness is the basic dimension of brand equity and has three dimension viz, recognition, recall and top of mind awareness (Shrimp & Babin, 2007: 21). Key to developing a brand is the issue of brand awareness.

Brand recognition is when the consumers are able to identify a brand if it is presented to them on a list or if hints or cues are provided. Brand recall is when consumers can retrieve a brand name from memory without any reminders, and top-of-mind – awareness is when a consumer thinks of a brand first when asked about a product category (Shrimp & Babin, 2007:21).

A recent survey by Markinor/ Sunday Times Top Brands Survey (2007:15) which profiled fast food chains in South Africa, the following brands scored the highest on brand awareness and brand relationship are KFC – 42, 1%, Chicken Licken – 13.1%, Nandos 12.3%, Wimpy – 11.1%, Steer – 10.3% , McDonald's 9.1%. This is illustrated in Figure 2.1 .



15

Fig 2.1 Comparison of 2006 and 2007 scores on brand awareness
Courtesy of Markinor Report

Given this backdrop it is not surprising that the four major fast food companies devote a considerable amount of energy and resources on the formulation and implementation of their branding strategies. The ensuing section briefly showcases the branding strategies of the four major fast food groups.

2.5.2 Branding strategies of the four major fast food groups

As has been pointed out earlier all four of the major fast food groups place a huge emphasis on their brand.

2.5.2.1 McDonald's branding Strategy

McDonald's has used a very focused yet complex branding strategy. It has developed the McDonald's brand into a highly familiar, well differentiated and sustainably relevant brand. It has done this by using its marketing strategy to position and brand itself. McDonald's approach to branding is focused on customer needs and wants, sometimes even putting their ideas into a consumer's mind before they even know what they want or expect (Anon, <http://www.essaysample.com/essay/001900.htm>).

In focusing on customer needs, McDonald's makes extensive use of market analysis and product development based on a thorough understanding of the market segments it wants to operate in. McDonald's then uses its brand to differentiate itself from its competitors. McDonald's is one of the world's best known brands. A key part of McDonald's brand is its M logo known as the "The Golden Arches" (The Times 100, <http://www.thetimes100.co.uk>)

Fast food branding influences children's choices. This is according to Child Health News (7 August 2007). In an August issue of Archives of Paediatrics & Adolescent Medicine a report was presented in which preschool children preferred the taste of foods and drinks in McDonald's packaging to the same foods and drinks in unbranded packaging (Child Health News, 2007).

In another study conducted by Robinson, Borzekowski, Matheson and Kraemer (2007) where the effects of fast food branding on young children was investigated, it was concluded that children preferred the taste of carrots and milk if they thought they were from McDonald's. Conger (2007) also found that preschool children preferred the taste of foods and drinks in McDonald's packaging to the same foods and drinks unbranded packaging.

2.5.2.2 KFC branding strategy

The KFC brand is built around the iconic symbol of Colonel Harland Sanders. The Colonel has remained the central tenet of the brand and even when the brand has undergone some "face-lifts", the Colonel has remained as its cornerstone. The KFC brand is very familiar, enjoys esteem and finds relevance with both adults and children. The brand differentiates itself primarily on the basis of its product (chicken products) (Anon, www.kfc.com/about/secret.asp).

2.5.2.3 Wimpy's branding strategy

The Wimpy brand's essence lies in its distinctively South African friendly home style restaurant atmosphere. The brand has over time also become iconic in South Africa

because of its careful and successful positioning of its offering. It has differentiated itself from its competitors by offering a substantially wider product and service range and a more relaxed and family orientated approach (Anon,<http://www.essaysample.com/essay/001900.htm>).

2.5.2.4 Steers' branding strategy

The Steers brand pride itself on the fact that it only acquires brands that are leaders in their class or have the potential to be so. The Steers brand is epitomised by positioning the offering as a unique premium quality fast food product. The brand also positions itself as a uniquely South African brand, capable of maintaining international performance and quality standards especially on the African continent. (Anon,<http://www.essaysample.com/essay/001900.htm>).

2.6 CLOSURE

This chapter reviewed the fast food phenomenon. It has done this by examining the origins of phenomenon from its earliest days up until the current period. The chapter reviewed the rise of the fast food phenomenon and identified the reasons for this rapid growth. The chapter examines the fast food phenomenon briefly both in South Africa and other parts of the world. Using this as backdrop it focuses on briefly profiling the four fast food chains that form the basis of this research namely; McDonald's, KFC, Wimpy and Steers.

Chapter THREE

MARKETING OF FAST FOOD TO CHILDREN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the food and beverage industry has viewed children and adolescents as a major market force. As a result, children and adolescents are now the target of intense and specialised food marketing and advertising efforts. Food marketers are interested in youth as consumers because of their spending power and purchasing influence. Multiple techniques and channels are used to reach youth, beginning when they are toddlers to foster brand building and influence food product purchase behaviour (Story & French, 2004).

The heavy marketing directed towards youth, especially young children, appears to be driven largely by the desire to develop and build brand awareness/recognition, brand preference and brand loyalty. Marketers believe that brand preference begins before purchase behaviour does. Brand preference in children appears to be related to two major factors namely; children's positive experiences with a brand, and parents liking the brand (Story & French, 2004).

Thus, marketers intensify their efforts to develop brand relationships with young consumers during the early childhood development stage. Marketers know that toddlers and preschool children have considerable purchase power and can successfully negotiate purchases through what marketers term the "nag factor" or "pester power" (Story & French, 2004).

As a result of this, food advertisers spend large amounts of money targeting children, in an attempt to build brand loyalty and to persuade them to desire a particular food product, starting when they are toddlers (Story & French, 2004). The child market offers advertisers an incredible opportunity. In size alone it offers a desirable market. According to the 2000 Census Bureau survey, there are 80 million Americans under the age of 18, and 39 million kids ages 5 – 14. By 2003, the 5 - 14 bracket will grow

3.6%, according to ACNielsen's Report on Consumer & Market Trends. James McNeal, who has spent over 35 years studying kids and spending, estimates that children influence over US\$300 billion in their parent's spending annually. Households with school-aged children outspend households without children by at least one-third. Teenagers- - i.e., kids between the ages of eight and fourteen, are the largest demographic group among children today. (Maria Bailey, n.d)

Marketers are attracted to the child market because it offers the opportunity to gain what is called "a customer for life." Companies see children as a customer today and in the future. Many child marketers call it the "cradle-to-grave" market. They win the child's admiration as a youngster when he can influence his parent's buying decisions; later he becomes a customer when he is spending his own money and when he purchases the product for his own family (Maria Bailey, n.d)

3.2 CHILDREN AS TARGET MARKET

The Marketing Association defines marketing as "the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational objectives. Marketers use an assortment of strategies to guide how, when and where product information is presented to consumers (Anon,<http://www.faqs.org/nutrition/Kwa-men/Marketing-Strategies.html>)

Successful marketing strategies create a desire for a product. A marketer needs to understand what the consumer likes and dislikes. In addition, marketers must know which information to tell consumers to buy their product and whom consumers perceive as a credible source of information. Some marketing strategies use fictional characters, celebrities or experts to sell products, while other strategies use specific statement of health claim that state the benefits of using a particular product or eating a particular food (Anon,<http://www.faqs.org/nutrition/Kwa-men/Marketing-Strategies.html>).

Commonly used marketing strategies by fast food companies include the following:

- Corporations research kids' fantasies, artwork and behaviour to understand what techniques will best affect them
- Children like to collect things. Fast food companies have capitalised on this by making a variety of products and then convincing kids that they have to obtain them all
- Clubs for kids are a great way of gaining brand loyalty because children enjoy feeling like they belong
- Fast food chains target children by having playgrounds, clubs, games, toys, contests and merchandise related to movies, TV shows and sports teams (Anon, <http://www.focusonyourchild.com>)

Soft drink companies for example, use every trick in the book to hook children on their high sugar, caffeinated products. Coca Cola and Pepsi have been especially effective in marketing to children. Coca Cola paid Warner Bros an estimated \$150 million for global marketing rights for the film Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (Ruskin, 2003: 5). The merger and blending of McDonald's and Disney was another corporate intention to get the children hooked whilst they are still young. What else could entice a child more than a message he/she receives from a gigantic corporate root – "McDisney ad"? (Donahoe, 2005: 5).

McDonald's has been masterful in its use of beloved characters to sell its high calorie fast foods (Ruskin, 2003:4). Among others McDonald's has employed Winnie – the – Pooh, 101 Dalmations, Nemo, Furby, Tarzan and Beance Barbus to sell its happy meals.

Strategic positioning of foods at supermarkets is another way of marketing and advertising by fast food companies. Most supermarkets and shops keep sweets, crisp, soda and other unhealthy foods near the check out and within easy reach of toddlers and children. So even though a parent may have successfully diverted the child's attention to other things while shopping, it all fails when it comes to the check out where it requires some time to pay for the items, this is usually enough for the child to pick sweets / crisps from the shelves (Anon, <http://www.netmums.com/foodrepcombined.htm>).

3.3 CHILDREN AS DECISION MAKERS

The tremendous spending power and influence of children on parental purchases has attracted marketers and as a result marketing strategies aimed at children have increased. (The American Marketing Association, (<http://www.faqs.org/nutrition/kwamen/Marketing-Strategies.html>)).

According to Emerson (2004) children have a huge influence on their parents' purchasing decisions and they also often determine what to buy on their own. The food industry in America, has determined that children between ages 5 and 14 have considerable influence over \$30 billion spent on food and beverages each year (Anon,<http://directmag.com/exclusive/specialreports>). This trend has been supported by changes in the traditional family structures.

According to Labrecque & Ricard (2001: 177) the family has undergone radical structural change since the early 1980's. The transformation includes a decrease in family size, an increase in the women labour force participation and a proliferation of single-parent families and reconstituted families. This has resulted in children having increased decision making power.

Since 1968, several studies have examined how children's influence varies by a number of variables, including type of product, decision- making stages, parental attitudes and characteristics of the child and the family unit. The studies were published in the 1970s and 1980s making the accumulated knowledge of child purchase influence patterns heavily depended on studies conducted over two decades ago. Little attention has been given to determine how current changes in the social environment may have affected these findings (Flurry, 2007:322).

A study by North, Birkenbach and Slimmon (2007,17) found that children can influence their parents on four different product categories namely, minor products for the child, major products for the child, minor products for the family and major products for the family. They further elaborate on by stating that children's relative influence varies by product user which suggest that children tend to have greater influence involving products for their own use.

Karur and Singh (2006) further elaborates by stating that children enjoyed greater discretion not only in making routine consumption decision for the family, but also in pestering their parents to buy products desired by them. The amount of influence exerted by children varied by product category and stage of decision making process. For certain products children are instrumental in initiating a purchase while for others they make the final selection themselves (Karur & Singh, 2000).

It is widely accepted that in the new family, children encounter decision-making at an earlier age and are taking on greater roles and responsibilities in family purchases. Recent research indicates that children's influence extends far beyond what is traditionally thought to only include areas where children were primary product consumers. Children have even been found to have strong influence on non traditional areas such as home decor, automobiles and home electronics (Flurry, 2001: 322)

The percentage of children living in homes where both parents are working has doubled over the past 25 years. Children are also faced with an unprecedented technological environment. The marked pace of technological change and educational development has left many children more knowledgeable than their parents (Flurry, 2001:323)

Today's trends indicate that parents are less child-centred and less willing to make sacrifices for their children than their parents were. Parents are less controlling of their children and are investing less time with their children. This change in socialisation implies that children may have more control over their own market place decision and the freedom to exercise their preferences in purchase decision making (Flurry, 2001: 323)

Although the number of children is steadily declining, their importance as consumers is not. Apart from the direct purchases of things that children need, they definitely influence decision making to a large extent (Blythe, 2008:238). Blythe elaborates on this by giving the following reasons for the increased decision making power of children:

- Children often do the shopping because both parents are working and the children have the available time to go to the shops
- Children watch more TV, so they are more influenced and more knowledgeable about products (Blythe, 2008:239).

A study conducted by Tilley (2000: 89) concluded that children can determine parental spending in two ways namely, directly and indirectly.

- Directly - refers to the child's requests, demands and hints. It might also refer to joint decisions where the child actively participates with other members in the family decision making process.
- Indirectly – also known as passive influence as parents are aware of the products and brands that their children prefer without having being asked or told. Children may also display indirect influences when they make suggestions on their preferred outlet.

This view is supported by a recent study by McGinnis, Gootman and Kraak (2006:5), children and youth collectively spent more than \$200 billion annually and they influence many food and beverage purchases beyond those they made directly. Children influence the choices and purchasing decision of their parents.

3.4 FAST FOOD ADVERTISING TO CHILDREN

Advertising is central to the marketing of the food supply. Advertising is also the key type of marketing activity when it comes to marketing of food. This can be partly attributed to the fact that food captures 12.5% of the U.S consumer spending (Story & French, 2004:1).

Advertising spend on U.S products was \$7.3 billion dollars in 1999. In addition to this another 4.5 billion was spent on sampling, coupons, contents and sweepstakes. Most of the food advertising was directed towards the enhancement of brand awareness, recognition, preference and loyalty (Story & French, 2004:2).

This situation is probably not dissimilar from that which prevails in Europe, Australia and South Africa although comparative figures for these countries were not readily available at the time that this literature review was being done.

Children are bombarded by advertising messages and images for junk food and fast food everywhere they turn. Older children with cell phones are even more exposed. When they buy candy or chips, they get offers for text based messages, free music downloads and fanciful wallpaper for their cell phones. They are usually routed to a website where they are hit even more with junk food advertising (Common Sense Media, 2007).

McDonald's first national advertising campaign in 1967 was an unexpectedly huge success. In America ten million children wrote in to pick floats for Macy's thanksgiving Day Parade. From then on it was off to the races. McDonald's advertising director put this battle cry on his wall "early to bed/ early to rise/advertise/advertise/advertise (Schlosser, 2002:43).

A recent study commissioned by the Henry Kaiser Family Foundation and conducted by Gantz, Schwartz, Angelini and Rideout (2007:3) has found the following with regard to children's exposure to food advertising:

- Children aged between 2 and 7 years see an average of more than 4.400 food adverts , i.e., nearly 30 hours of food advertisings. Over the course of the year this translates into an average of more than 7 000 food advertisements , i.e. over 50 hours of food advertising
- Teenagers aged 13 to 17 see an average of 17 food advertisements a day on TV. Over the course of a year this translates into an average of more than 6 000 food adverts i.e. over 40 hours of food advertising
- Half (50%) of all advertising time on children shows is for food
- Among all adverts seen by children, food is the largest product category for all ages (32% for 2-7 years, 25% for 8-12 years and 22% for 13-17 year olds)

The report (Gantz et al, 2007:4) also states that with regard to the types of advertisements targeting children and teens, the prevailing situation is as follows:

- 34% are for candy and snacks

- 28% are for cereal
- 10% for fast foods
- 4% for dairy products
- 1% for fruit juices
- Less than 1% for fruits and vegetables

It is also significant that in appeals used in food targeting children or teens, taste (34% of all adverts) is the most common. This is followed by appeals to children's sense of fun (18%), premiums or contests (16%), newness or the novelty of a product (1%) (Gantz et al, 2003:3)

It is just as significant to note that only 2% of food advertisements targeting children or teens use claims about health or nutrition as a primary or secondary appeal in the advertisement whilst 5% use pep or energy as a primary or secondary appeal (Gantz et al, 2003: 3)

Multiple channels are used to reach children and youth to foster brand building and influence food product purchases. These include television advertising, in school marketing, product placements, kids clubs, the internet, toys and promotions (Story & French, 2004:3)

Of critical importance is whether youth-targeted marketing and advertising of food products has any impact on children's food behaviours or body weight. Almost all of the studies on the impact of food advertising on children's food preferences and behaviours were conducted in the mid 1970s and the 1980s. These studies focused on the relationship between children's exposure to television advertising and their food preferences, food choices, food intake or purchase requests.

A recent review (French & Story, 2004:6) on the effects of television food advertising on preschool and school-age children's food behaviour concluded that:

- Studies of food preferences using experimental designs have consistently shown that children exposed to advertising will choose advertised food products at significantly higher rates than children who were not exposed

- Findings from food purchase request studies based on surveys, diaries, experimental trials, and direct observation of mother-child pairs shopping have consistently shown that children's exposure to food television advertising increases the number of attempts children make to influence food purchases their parents buy
- Purchase requests for specific brands or categories of food products also reflect product advertising frequencies
- Fewer studies have been conducted on food advertising effects on actual food intake, in part due to difficulty in controlling children's exposure to advertising or to foods outside experimental settings.

3.4.1 Television advertising

The single largest source of media messages about food to children is television. Ninety five percent (95%) of the U.S fast food budgets are allocated to television (Story & French, 2004:3). These trends were also detected in an international comparative survey of television advertisements aimed at children, carried out in 13 countries including Australia, Belgium, the UK, Sweden, Norway and Denmark (Story & French, 2004:3).

Findings showed that apart from the USA, Australia and the UK had the highest levels of fast food television advertisements targeting children and teens. Australia and the UK had an average of 200 advertisements in a 20 hour period. The lowest levels of food advertising using television were found in Sweden where such advertising was almost nonexistent (Story & French, 2004: 3). Even in these countries where food advertising levels were low, advertising tended to focus on fast foods, confectionary and breakfast cereals (Story & French, 2004: 3).

The food and advertising industries have traditionally played down the effectiveness of their advertising on children. Children are now exposed to more advertisements on television than by any other means. Television is extremely persuasive and can be a very effective method to communicate with children.

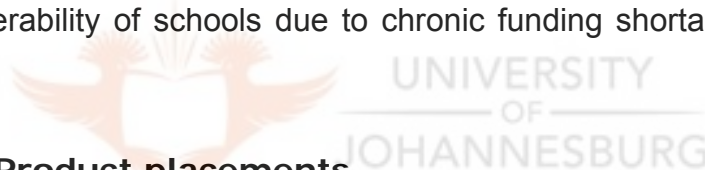
The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) states that:

“Children under the age of eight accept advertising claims to be true and they cannot distinguish advertising from regular television programming”

3.4.2 In- school marketing

During the past decade in the USA, use of public schools as marketing and advertising venues has grown. Schools have become a paradise for fast - food marketers. Vending machines and Tuck shops stocked with soft drinks, chocolates, ice cream and chips are rife. Fast food companies have a big presence in the schools. It is a great way for them to by-pass parents and promotes their high-fat products to children. At least one out of every five schools now contains a fast food outlet or tuck shop (Ruskin, 2005:7).

Reasons for the increase of In-school marketing to children and adolescence are driven by marketers’ desire to increase sales and generate product loyalty, the ability to reach large numbers of children and adolescence in a contained setting and the financial vulnerability of schools due to chronic funding shortages (Story & French, 2004:3).



3.4.3 Product placements

Another form of marketing to children is by use of Product Placements. Product Placements can now be found in nearly every medium children watch and have taken over commercial television. Product Placements have even spread throughout children’s books. Junk food feature in children’s book like Winnie the Pooh, Hershey’s chocolates and Oreo biscuits (Kirkpatrick, 2000: 3).

One parent (<http://www.netmums.com/foodrepcombined.htm>) was quoted in an article, *Stop Pushing Junk Food to our Children*, saying:

“I am tired of every time I go down the fruit aisle at Tesco my 3 year old screams because she wants roo juice, I would not mind much but she doesn’t actually like it, she does it purely because Winnie the Pooh is on it”.

Product placements have become very popular. Producers of TV shows and movies contend that product placements make sets look more realistic and that brands help

define characters and settings. In addition to this, product placements often help offset production costs (Story & French, 2004:5).

3.4.4 Internet

Online media play an increasingly significant role in the lives of children and teenagers. Advertisers and marketers have thus begun to target the rapidly growing number of children who have access to the internet. In targeting these children, marketers have made use of a variety of new interactive advertising and marketing techniques. The forms of advertising and marketing on the web differ significantly from TV commercials. By utilising the unique features of the internet, companies can seamlessly integrate advertising and website content (Story & French, 2004:5).

Almost all the companies that advertise and market to children have created their own websites designed as “branded environments for children” McDonald’s and KFC have made very effective use of this approach especially in the USA (Story & French, 2004:5).

3.4.5 Toys and products with brand logos

A recent trend among food companies has been to market toys and products with brand logos to preschoolers and young children to develop an early and positive relationship with the child and thereby to promote brand awareness and preference. The food industry has partnered with food manufacturers to create toys that advertise food and enhance brand recognition and loyalty. A leading light with regard to this approach is McDonald’s with the Ronald McDonald toys that come as accompaniments to children’s “Happy Meals” (Story & French, 2004:5).

3.4.6 Youth targeted promotions

Story and French (2004:6) contend that promotions are commonly used marketing methods for reaching children and adolescence and include cross selling, tie-ins, premiums and sweep stake prices. Cross selling and tie-ins combine promotional efforts to sell a product.

In the USA, the food industry has forced promotional links with Hollywood, Network studios, toy companies and sports leagues. For example Burger King has formed a linkage with Nickelodeons and McDonald's has forged a linkage with Fox Kids Network. Disney has also launched cross selling campaigns and tie-ins worth millions of dollars to promote its films and characters. Some of these promotions are being done as a ten year strategic joint venture with McDonald's (Story & French, 2004:6).

3.5 ADVERTISING AUTHORITY ROLE

In the US, there are currently few policies or standards for food advertising and marketing aimed at children (Story & French, 2004). The advertising industry maintains self-regulatory policies established by the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the National Council of Better Business Bureaus. CARU's guidelines apply to all forms of children's advertising, but it has no legal authority over advertisers and can only seek voluntary compliance. CARU has a group of about 20 advisors and 35 supporters, many of whom are from the food industry, such as Burger King, Frito-Lay, McDonald's, General Mills, Nabisco and Hershey. The CARU voluntary guidelines list seven basic principles, which address areas such as product presentation and claims, endorsement and promotion by program characters, sales pressures, disclosures and disclaimers and safety concerns (Story & French, 2004).

At a federal level, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) share authority for regulating advertising, although each agency has a different emphasis (Story & French, 2004). The FCC has the responsibility of establishing public interest obligations for television broadcasters, while FTC's responsibility is to regulate advertising deemed unfair or deceptive (Story & French, 2004).

3.5.1 Television

Concerns about advertising on children's television were first raised in the early 1970s by the children's advocacy group, Action for Children's Television (ACT) which urged the FCC and the FTC to prohibit or limit advertising directed at children. In

1974, the FCC required specific limitations on the overall amount of advertising allowed during children's programs (12 minutes/hour on weekdays and 9.5 minutes/hour on weekends) and clear separation between program content and commercial messages. This involved policies against "host selling," the use of a program host or other program personality to promote products on the program. The FCC also required clear delineation when a program is interrupted by a commercial to help young children distinguish program content from commercial messages. As a result it became common for television stations to air "bumpers," such as "We'll be right back after these commercial messages"(Story & French, 2004).

In 1978, the FTC formally proposed a rule that would ban or severely restrict all television advertising to children. The FTC presented a comprehensive review of the scientific literature and argued that all advertising directed to young children was inherently unfair and deceptive. The proposal provoked intense opposition from the food, toy, broadcasting and advertising industries, who initiated an aggressive campaign to oppose the ban. A key argument was First Amendment protection for the right to provide information about products to consumers. Improvements Act of 1980 that removed the agency's authority to restrict television advertising. The act specifically prohibited any further action to adopt the proposed children's advertising rules (Story & French, 2004).

In 1990, children's advocacy groups persuaded Congress to pass the Children's Television Act that included limiting the amount of commercial time during children's programming to 10.5 minutes per hour on weekends and 12 minutes per hour on weekdays. These time limits remain in effect today (Story & French, 2004).

3.5.2 Internet

Advertising and marketing aimed at children is rapidly becoming a pervasive presence on the Internet, with new techniques constantly being developed, yet advertising on the Web is virtually unrestricted. Advertising and content for children are often seamlessly interwoven in online "infomercials," interactive forms of product placement, and branded environments on food company websites. In 1997, CARU revised its Children's Advertising Guidelines to include a new section addressing the Internet. However, the CARU guidelines regarding online and Internet advertising are

considerably weaker than those applied to television. For example, one of CARU's guidelines for television is that products derived from or associated with program content primarily directed to children should not be advertised during or adjacent to that program. Yet, this does not apply to websites or the Internet (French & Story,2004).

In the mid 1990s, children's media advocacy groups documented a number of exploitative data collection marketing practices on children's websites used to gather personal information from children and learn about their preferences and interests. These included interactive surveys with animated characters or spokespersons, guest books, registrations, incentives, contests, and prizes for filling out surveys. This information permitted companies to conduct market research which then could be used to and create personalized marketing and sales appeals to children. In 1998, Congress passed the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), which directed the FTC to develop rules restricting certain data collection practices and requiring parental permission for collection of personal information for children under 13 years of age (Story & French, 2004).

3.5.3 Schools

The majority of US schools and states do not have any policies about commercial marketing activities in schools. The US GAO report found that only 19 states currently have statutes or regulations that address school-related commercial activities. This includes some state statutes to encourage commercial activities (e.g., New Mexico's only statute allows advertising in and on school buses).

Only five states were reported to have more comprehensive policies covering various activities related to product sales, and direct or indirect advertising. New York and California have adopted laws prohibiting or restricting many types of commercial promotional activities in public schools. In most states, local school boards have the authority to make policy decisions about commercial activities

Several national organizations and youth advocacy groups are concerned about the growing influx of in-school marketing and advertising and have advocated limiting commercial activities in schools, arguing that children's health is not an acceptable

"trade off" for increased revenues. The Consumers Union Education has urged that parents and educators unite to make schools ad-free zones, where young people can pursue learning free of commercial influences and pressures.

Recently, there have been successful local initiatives to eliminate soft drink vending machines and advertising from schools. Several school districts across the country have refused to enter into agreements with soft drink companies after protests by parents, students and school officials. In 2002, Oakland, California school district banned all school sales of soda and candy. The same year, the Los Angeles unified school district, which includes 677 schools and 736,000 students, voted to ban the sales of soft drinks in vending machines. These initiatives demonstrate the effectiveness of local efforts to regulate commercial activities in schools.

3.5.4 Regulations in other Countries

Concerns about the effects of television advertising on children are shared by a number of European countries and Australia. The Nordic countries are at the forefront of protecting children from the effects of advertising. Sweden has the strictest controls in Europe and in 1991 instituted a ban on television and radio advertising targeted at children under the age of 12.

The Swedish government views advertising to children as morally and ethically unacceptable, since children have difficulty distinguishing between the purpose of advertising and other modes of communication. In Belgium, it is forbidden to broadcast commercials during children's programs as well as during the 5 minutes before and after them. Australia does not allow ads during television programming for preschoolers. Data are needed regarding whether more stringent regulation of television food advertising to children results in more healthful food choices and eating behaviours (French & Story, 2004).

3.5.5 Regulations in South Africa

In South Africa, marketing of products to children is regulated by the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa (ASASA). ASA is an independent body set up and paid for by the marketing communications industry to regulate advertising in the public interest through a system of self regulation (<http://www.asasa.org.za>).

The ASASA works closely with government, statutory bodies, consumer organisations and the industry to ensure that the content of advertising meets the requirements of the Code of Advertising practice (Anon,<http://www.asasa.org.za>).

The ASASA has provided a set of regulations focusing on a diverse range of issues including:

- Disparagement – advertisements should not attack, discredit or disparage other products, services, advertisers or advertisements directly or indirectly
- Comparative advertising – this is permitted provided that the facts or criteria used are fairly chosen, relevant and representative, and a basis for comparison is the same.
- Protection of children - advertising to children is permitted provided the advertisement to children does not contain any statement or visual presentation that might result in harming them mentally, morally, physically or emotionally. Advertisements should also not exploit the natural credulity of children or their lack of experience.

Beyond these broad regulations, no evidence could be found that ASASA has promulgated a set of specific regulations controlling the advertising of fast foods to children. As a result of this, it has to be assumed that the issue of unfair or harmful advertising to children is likely to be adjudicated within the rubric of the broader provisions relating to children's protection and safety_(Anon,<http://www.asasa.org.za>).

This seems to indicate that as is the case in the USA and other parts of Europe, much more work still needs to be done to ensure the specific protection of children from harmful practices perpetuated by the fast food industry (Anon,<http://www.asasa.org.za>).

There is a growing belief that food advertisers should be made to advertise their products on the basis of their nutritional value and should be barred from linking them to “cool” personalities and or activities. There is a massive advertising of unhealthy foods but none of the manufacturers seem willing to develop and promote healthy eating (Anon,[http:// www.netmums.com](http://www.netmums.com)).

South Africa needs to follow the United Kingdom's example, where consumer and health groups have called for a ban on all fast food advertising aimed at children before the 9:00 pm watershed hour (Sikiti da Silva,n.d).

3.6 TORWARD A CRITIQUE OF MARKETING TO CHILDREN

Central to any discussion on food advertising to children is the nature of children's comprehension of advertising. Numerous studies have documented that young children have little understanding of the persuasive intent of advertising (Story & French, 2004).

Prior to age 7 or 8 years, children tend to view advertising as fun, entertaining, and unbiased information. An understanding of advertising intent usually develops by the time most children are 7-8 years old. Because of their level of cognitive development, children under 8 years of age are viewed by many child development researchers as a population vulnerable to misleading advertising (Story & French, 2004).

The heavy marketing of high fat, high sugar foods to this age group can be viewed as exploitative because young children do not understand that commercials are designed to sell products and they do not yet possess the cognitive ability to comprehend or evaluate the advertising. Preteens, from ages 8-10 years, possess the cognitive ability to process advertisements but do not necessarily do so (Story & French, 2004).

From early adolescence (11-12 years), children's thinking becomes more multidimensional, involving abstract as well as concrete thought. Adolescents still can be persuaded by the emotive messages of advertising, which play into their developmental concerns related to appearance, self-identity, belonging, and sexuality (Story & French, 2004).

Fast food marketers such as McDonald's and Burger King have reshaped the diets of parents and children worldwide and the rise in fast food consumption has been

paralleled by the boom in incidences of childhood obesity. Obesity has been linked to preference for fast foods by children (Ruskin, 2003:5).

According to Wikipedia (2007), fast food is criticised mainly for having the following shortcomings:

- Many popular fast food menu items are unhealthy and excessive consumption (where excessive is generally defined as two or more times per week) can lead to obesity
- Exploitative advertising and marketing are used, especially directed at children (which can have an adverse effect on their eating habits and health)
- It causes environmental damage through excessive packaging and clearing forests for animal rearing
- It reduces the diversity of local cuisines
- It survives on a low-wage, low benefit employment model, promoting exploitative labour practices throughout the food and the food service industry
- Its franchising scheme (royalties)
- It is often lower quality versus sit down restaurants

This view is substantiated by a number of studies that indicate clearly those preferences that have negative health consequences can and are often instilled through advertising. (Story & French, 2004:6).

Between 1995 and 1997, the percentage of meals eaten at fast food restaurants doubled. This has been especially devastating to the health of children because of the high sodium, sugar or fat contents of these foods. The increase in soft drink consumption has been just as damaging.

(Anon, <http://www.commercialalert.org/index.php/category/id/36/article>)

Michael Holden in the article “Fast Foods pulling a fast one on kids” wrote in the Star Newspaper and called Mcdonald’s, McLiars. Fast food outlets seem to be trimming the truth rather than the fat. The report accuses companies of providing misleading information about their fast foods (Holden, Star December 15, 2005).

According to Holden (Star December 15, 2005), the editor of Which Magazine called for the “aggressive marketing” of unhealthy foods to children to be stopped and criticised the use of free toys to attract youngsters.

3.7 CLOSURE

As has been pointed out earlier, in recent years, the fast food and beverage industry has increasingly started viewing children as a major market force. This has resulted in children being targeted aggressively by marketers.

This chapter reviewed the trend of children as a target market by examining how children are targeted by marketers as well as the role that advertising plays in targeting children. The role of children as decision makers in families, the role the advertising authorities play in marketing to children was also discussed. Finally the chapter also provided a brief critique of the marketing and advertising practices of fast food outlets.

Chapter FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research Methodology refers to the overall approach to the research process. It includes the methods which will be used to collect and analyse data (Collis & Hussey, 2003: 54). This methodology is concerned with the following main themes:

- Why certain data will be collected,
- What data will be collected,
- Where this data will be collected,
- How the data will be collected and analysed.

This study is grounded within the quantitative research approach and as such it involves the identification of the characteristics of an observed phenomenon and the exploration of possible relationships between the phenomena being studied (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:191).

This approach was chosen because it is well suited to the task of examining children's fast food preferences, and the influence of fast food advertising on these preferences. The objective of the research is to infer generalizations from the data collected and in so doing, to get a clearer understanding of what influences children's fast food preferences.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the plan and structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions. This plan is the overall scheme or program of the research. It includes an outline of what the researcher will do from writing the

hypothesis and its operational implications to the final analysis of data (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:146).

Zikmund (2003: 65) describes research design as a master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information. Bak (2004: 24) supports this view by stating that a research design “constitutes the framework for the collection of information”.

Various authors (Collis & Hussey, 2003:10, Cooper & Schindler, 2003:189, Zikmund, 2003:56) state that there are a number of different quantitative research designs. These are summed up as follows:

Exploratory research: Exploratory research is undertaken when there are very few or no earlier studies to which the researcher can refer to for information about the issue or problem. The aim of this type of study is to look for patterns, ideas or hypothesis rather than testing or confirming a hypothesis. Exploratory research is initial research conducted to clarify and define the nature of a problem. (Collis & Hussey, 2003:10)

Descriptive research: Descriptive research is undertaken to ascertain and describe the characteristics of pertinent issues. More complex descriptive studies may extend this investigation to include estimates of the proportions of a population that have these characteristics and to discover relevant associations of properties (Cooper and Schindler, 2003: 189).

Causal research: research conducted to identify cause-and-effect relationships amongst variables when the research problem has already been narrowly defined. In causal studies it is typical to have an expectation of the relationship to be explained such as prediction about price, packaging, advertising and the like on sales (Zikmund,2003:56)

As has been mentioned earlier, in this study a quantitative approach was preferred which employed the use of a methodologically mix of descriptive and causal elements to relate to issues under study namely; (a) what are the preferences of children, (b) what are the causal elements that relate to whether or not

advertisements influence choices and (c) the extent to which the advertisements influence choice.

A Survey is described in the literature as a commonly used tool in a positivist methodology whereby a sample of subjects is drawn from a population and studied to make inferences about the population (Collis & Hussey, 2003: 66).

In this study, a survey is used to assess what children fast food preferences are, why they have these preferences and the extent to which advertising is responsible for these preferences.

Various types of surveys exist in which researchers can gather primary data. Surveys are divided into three major types namely; personal interviews, telephonic surveys and mail surveys. Personal interviews include door-to-door, executive and mall intercept interviewing. Telephone interviews take place when respondents are telephoned in order to gather primary data. Mail surveys include internet surveys and self administered interviews whereby respondents are left on their own to complete questionnaires (Cant, 2005: 100).

In this study a self administered questionnaire technique was used. It is an approach that asks respondents for information by using verbal or written questions. Gathering information via surveys is inexpensive, efficient, quick and flexible (Cant, 2005:89). The researcher poses a series of questions to willing participants, summarizes their responses with percentages and frequency counts (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 196). In this study this was done by means of a questionnaire that included ten items, some of which were structured and semi structured (Annexure A).

4.3 RESEARCH POPULATION

Cant (2005:164) defines a target population as a collection of elements or objects from which information is to be gathered to solve the research problem. The target population in this study were children between the ages of 8-15 who make use of fast food outlets. These children were from four schools, two were public and two private

schools. The schools were all situated in Johannesburg, Gauteng. The schools spanned different LSM levels in order to ensure some representation across all income levels. The four schools and their key LSM classification are captured in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Demographics of the schools under study

Name of school	Type of school	Area	Classification	Race	Gender
Bishop Bavin	Private	Bedfordview	LSM 8	Multiracial	Boys & Girls
St Marys Girls	Private	Waverly	LSM 8	Multiracial	Girls
Feed my Lambs	Public	Eldoradopark	LSM 3	Coloured	Boys & Girls
Phineas Xulu	Public	Vosloosrus	LSM 2	Black	Boys & Girls

The following fast food outlets were selected: KFC, McDonalds, Steers and Wimpy. The choice of the outlets was based on the visibility and proximity of the outlets. As a result of the visibility and proximity of these outlets, it was then convenient to select them for the study.

4.4 SAMPLING

4.4.1 Sampling design

According to Wegner (2007:170) sampling is the process of selecting a representative subset of observation from a population to determine the characteristics of the random variable under study. Several sampling designs, i.e.

methods of drawing the sample are available. Sampling designs can be divided into probability sampling and non probability sampling design.

Probability sampling occurs when elements or sampling units are selected by chance. All elements do not necessarily have the same chance of being selected but the probability of selection of each element can be specified (Cant, 2005:183). On the other hand non-probability sampling relies on personal judgement of researchers to select the sample (Cant, 2005:183). Non probability sampling methods include convenience sampling, judgemental sampling, quota sampling and snowball sampling (Cant, 2005:183).

According to Welman and Kruger (2001:47) in a non probability sample the probability that a particular unit will be included in the sample is unknown. In a probability sample all units are known but do not necessarily have an equal probability of being included in the sample.

The sampling techniques that were used in this study constituted a judicious mixture of convenience sampling, judgement sampling and quota sampling. Convenience sampling is when a researcher selects the elements. Often the respondents are in the right place at the right time when the sample is drawn (Cant, 2005:166). A convenience sample included children from neighbouring schools i.e. schools that were near the researcher's home.

Judgment sampling is a form of sampling where elements are selected based on the judgement of the researcher. The researcher decides which elements will form an appropriate sample (Cant, 2003:166). A judgement sample tries to get a best representative sample of the population. In this particular study the sample included children from both upper and lower income groups.

Quota sampling is done when the sample is divided into quotas of which the characteristics of interest represent the population. A quota sample ensured that all relevant subgroups were targeted (Collis & Hussey, 2003:158)

The basic idea of sampling is that by selecting some of the elements in a population, researchers may draw conclusions about the entire population (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:179). According to Kotler (2003:286), for market segments to be useful, they must be measurable, substantial, accessible, differentiable and actionable. Thus, in this work schools in Johannesburg, Gauteng were chosen. The reason for that was that the researcher is based in Johannesburg and the schools could be easily reached. Financially, it also made a lot of sense to select schools that were close by. Table 4.2 indicates the schools and number of respondents realised in this study.

Table 4.2 **Number of respondents per school**

Name of school	Grades	Number of respondents	Age group
Bishop Bavin	0-12	79	8 -15
St Marys Girls	0-12	93	8 - 15
Feed my Lambs	0-7	78	8 -14
Phineas Xulu	8-12	51	13 - 15
TOTAL		301	

4.4.2 Sampling size

There is a temptation particularly with questionnaire surveys to pick as large a sample as possible (Collis & Hussey, 2003: 159). However there are some considerations that must be kept in mind when deciding on the sample size. The considerations are as follows:

- The kind of statistical analysis that is planned
- The expected variability within the samples and the results – the greater the expected variation, the larger the sample (Collis & Hussey, 2003:160)

Since it is not practical from a cost and time perspective to obtain complete information on all members of the population, the researcher usually obtains

information from a sample and uses this information to estimate the information for the whole population. The larger the size of the sample, the closer the information obtained will represent the whole population. However, the larger the sample size, the more costly it will be to collect the data (Hall M, 2006:39).

In this study 400 questionnaires were distributed. Three hundred and one were received back. This constitutes 75% return on the questionnaire.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION

Both primary data and secondary data were collected. Central to the data collection aspect of the research design for this particular study was the use of the following information gathering techniques namely:

- Primary data collection
- Secondary data collection
- The self administered questionnaire

4.5.1 Primary data collection

Primary data collection is the data gathered specifically for the research project at hand (Zikmund, 2003:176). Primary data does not exist prior to the research and is collected by researchers to address a specific research problem. Primary data can be collected with qualitative or quantitative research (Cant, 2005:88).

The collection of primary data was through the utilisation of a survey targeting about 301 children based on a self administered questionnaire with both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The children were selected according to their grades. Thus children from grade 3 to 8 were selected.

4.5.2 Secondary data collection

Secondary data collection is data gathered and recorded prior to the current research (Zikmund, 2003:154).

The collection of secondary data was through a literature survey. The literature survey honed in specifically on relevant texts from appropriate books, journals, and articles from the web, newspapers, magazines, company web pages, industry reports and government papers.

4.5.3 The research instrument

The research instrument that was used in this study was a self administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions.

The advantages of self administered questionnaires are that they tend to be inexpensive, efficient, quick and flexible. Feedback is obtained immediately and there is no waiting period (Dillion, Madden & Firtle, 2003). The questionnaire was designed having the following three objectives in mind:

- It should translate the required information into specific questions that respondents can answer
- Encourage respondents to be involved in the research
- Should minimise response errors

Open ended questions were not used because the respondents were children who seldom tend to give elaborate answers. It would also be difficult to categorise respondents' responses as these could vary from one child to another. Structured questions were asked which permitted responses and made information available to the respondents.

In the first four questions a nominal scale of measurement was used where the respondents were required to select a description, e.g. what is your gender? What is your most favourite fast food outlet? The next six questions tested the children's opinions and perceptions of fast foods. The scaling technique used in this questionnaire was the Likert scale. The comprehensive questionnaire is attached as Annexure A.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The questionnaires were sent to the Statistics Consultancy Services (Statscon) at the University of Johannesburg for data capturing and analysis. The application used to capture and analyse the data was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data collected was expressed in frequency distribution tables. Simple bar charts, multiple bar charts and pie charts were used to summarise and the data. Correlation statistics was used to establish if there was any relationship some variables such as age and frequency of buying from the outlet, age group and reason for choosing outlet, age group and frequency of ordering a meal amongst others.

4.7 CLOSURE

This chapter constitutes the research design part of the study. As such it describes the research design that was followed. The design was essentially a quantitative research design which aimed at providing insights into which fast food outlet was most preferred by children, what the drivers were for popularity, which particular meal was the most popular, whether background of the child influenced this preference and whether advertising influenced these choices.

The research design that was used was composed of the following elements; sampling, collection of primary data, collection of secondary data, data analysis and reporting. This approach appears to have particularly suited to the objectives of this study as the findings discussed in the next chapter will indicate.

Chapter FIVE

REPORTING AND FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the results are presented and interpreted. Pie charts, bar graphs and tables are used to present and illustrate the results. The responses to the questions posed are presented and analysed in the following section.

5.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The following section looks at the results obtained from the questionnaires that were distributed. The reporting will be on each and every question that was posed. Four schools were targeted. Out of the 400 questionnaires distributed, only 301 children responded. Figure 5.1 shows the pie chart displaying the schools and the percentage of respondents received.

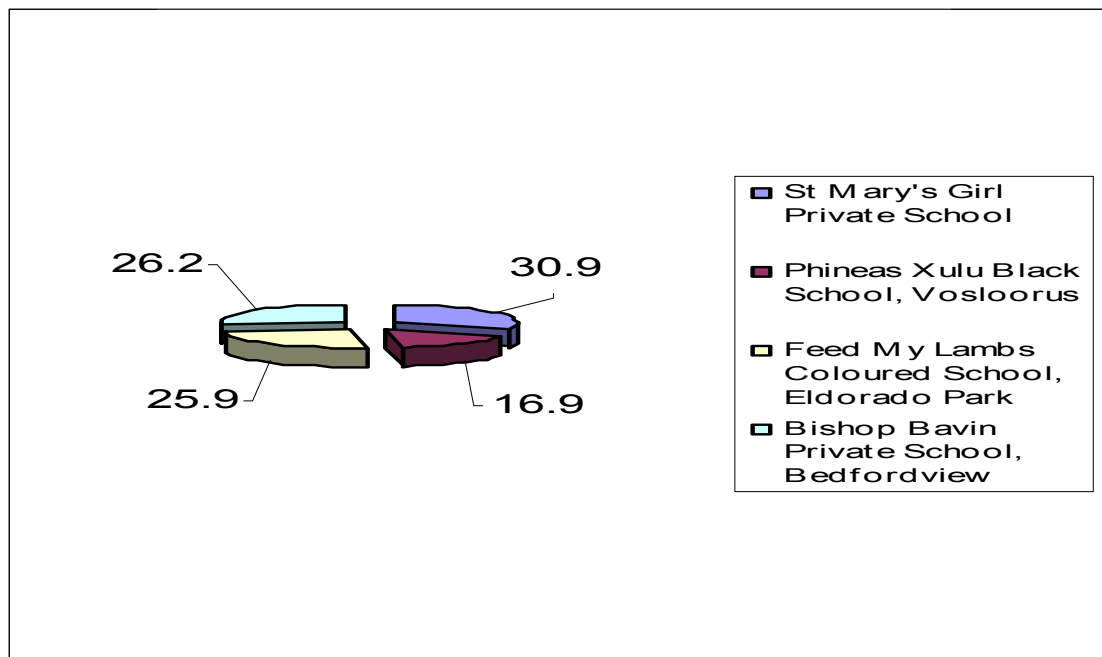


Fig 5.1 Pie Chart for Participating Schools

Explanation of the number of respondents per school is depicted in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Illustration of percentage responses

School	Type of school	Grades	Gender	Questionnaires handed out	Questionnaires handed back	% response
Bishop Bavin	Private Multiracial	0 -12	Boys & Girls	100	79	26.2%
St Marys for Girls	Private Multiracial	0 -12	Girls	100	93	30.9%
Feed my Lambs	Public Coloured	0 -7	Boys & Girls	100	78	25.9%
Phineas Xulu	Public Black	8 -12	Boys & Girls	100	51	16.9%
				400	301	99.9%

Single and mixed gender schools participated in the survey. Figure 5.2 illustrates the distribution of participants by gender.

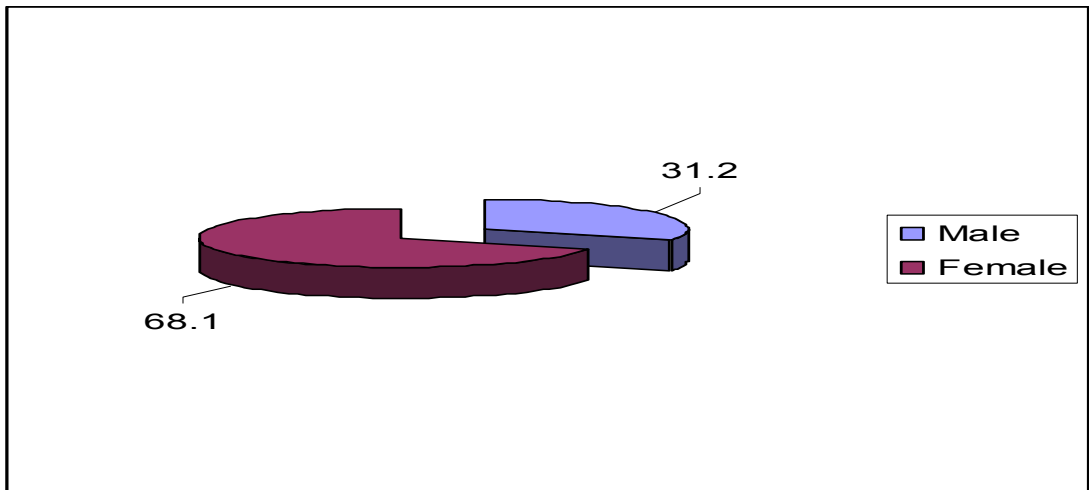


Fig 5.2 Distribution of Respondents by gender

The total number of female respondents was much higher than the male respondents. This is due to the fact that the majority of respondents were from St Mary School for girls.

Q: How old are you?

Analysis per age bracket is indicated in Figure 5.3. The age brackets considered can be seen in the table below. The majority of the respondents were from the age bracket 12-13 and 14-15.

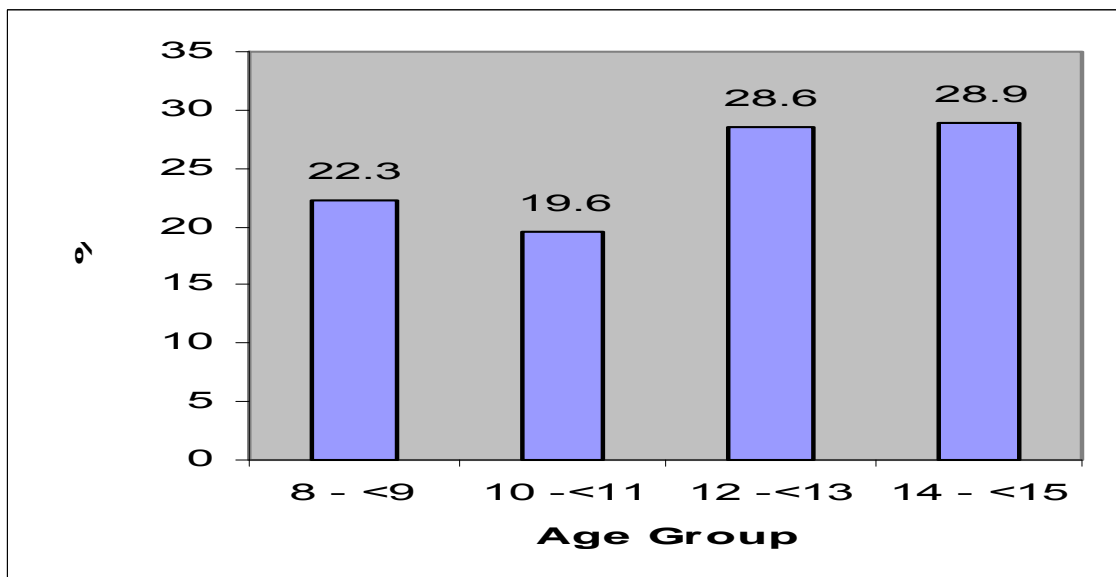


Fig 5.3 Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Q: How many brothers or sisters do you have?

Table 5.2 shows the frequency distribution table for number of siblings each participant had. There was no relationship observed between number of siblings and frequency of visiting the researched fast food outlets.

Table 5.2 Sibling frequency distribution

No. of siblings	Frequency	Valid %
1	108	35.9
2	74	24.6
3	36	12.0
4	18	6.0
5	5	1.7
6	1	.3
7	1	.3
9	1	.3
15	1	.3
No answer	56	18.6
Total	301	100.0

The number of siblings did not have any effect on the frequency of visiting the outlets.

Q: How often have you had a meal from each of the following fast food outlets in the last month?

The fast foods outlets considered were KFC, McDonalds, Wimpy and Steers. Participants were also asked to state other fast food outlets of their choice that may not have been included in the survey. Figure 5.4 shows the frequency of the participants visiting the outlets in one month.

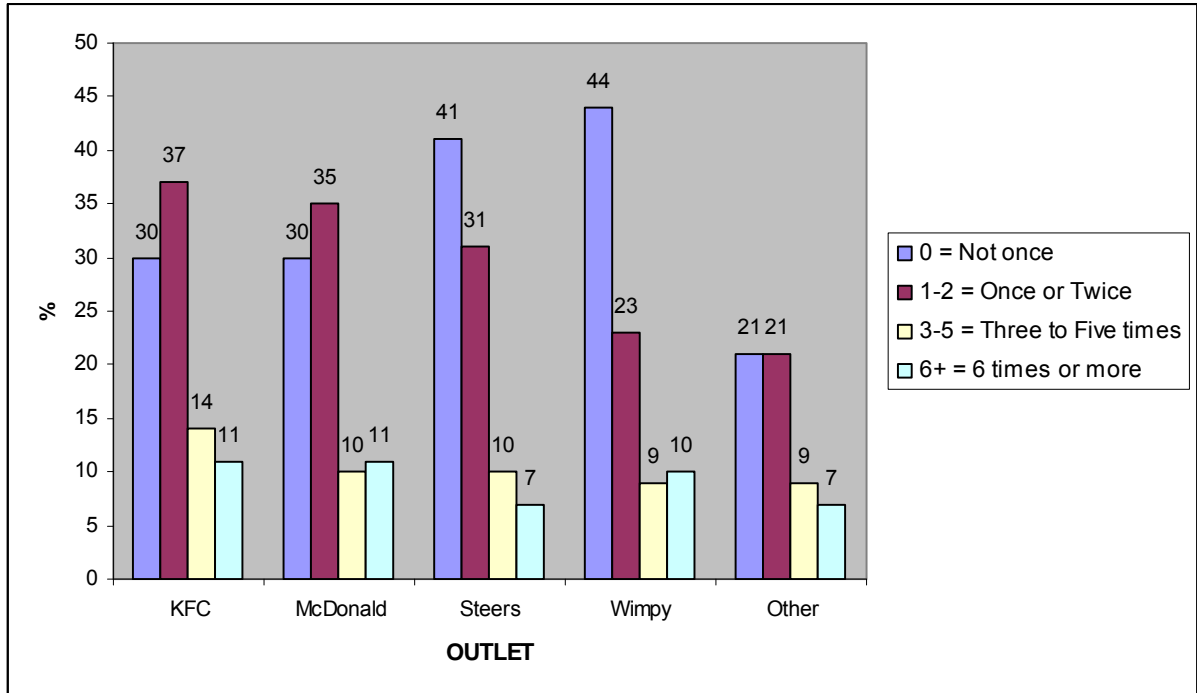


Fig 5.4 Frequency of participants visiting fast food outlets

The intention of this question was to check whether or not the participants had exposure to the above fast food outlets. Many participants indicated that they have not visited Wimpy or Steers in the last month.

Q: Which one of the following fast food outlets is your most favourite?

McDonald and KFC were found to be the most favourite fast food outlets. Eighty four out of 301 (28%) participants indicated that they preferred McDonalds and 78 out of 301 (26%) favoured KFC. Third favourite was Steers and lastly Wimpy. This is illustrated in figure 5.5

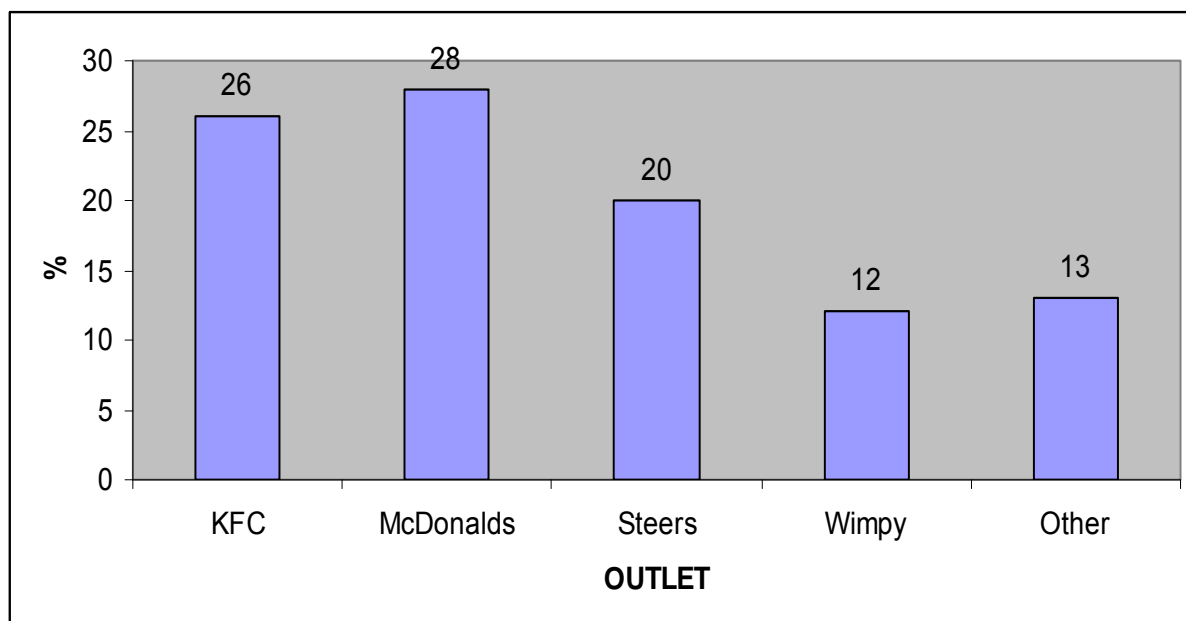


Fig 5.5 Participants' Favourite Food Outlets

Q: Why is this fast food outlet your most favourite?

The participants were asked to state the reason why they said the chosen fast food outlet was their most favourite. Eight possible reasons were given to the children to choose from. The reasons are listed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.3 Reasons for choice of Favourite Food Outlet

Reason	%	Rank
The food is good	26.0	1
The service is quick	16.8	2
The people who work there are friendly	15.1	3
The shop is near your home	10.2	4
The food is cheap	8.2	5
The toys are great	7.5	6
The play room is exciting	6.8	7
The food is healthy	6.6	8
Other reason	2.9	9

Twenty six percent (26%) of the children indicated that the fast food outlet was their favourite because the food at these outlets was good. Quick service and friendly staff were other reasons why the participants chose the outlets as their favourite

Q: When you have a meal at your favourite fast-food shop, how often do you order each of the following?

Almost fifty percent of the respondents indicated that they always buy soda. Chips as expected remained the favourite item that the children bought from the fast food outlets. It was also clear that the children would not buy salad when eating out at the fast food outlets. Kiddies or Happy meal did not seem to be the favourite item also. This could be due to the fact that the children that participated in the survey were from ages 8 – 15 and toys which are part of the Kiddies meal were no longer an attraction for this age group. According to the data gathered, the children will always buy chips, a burger, chicken and a soda.

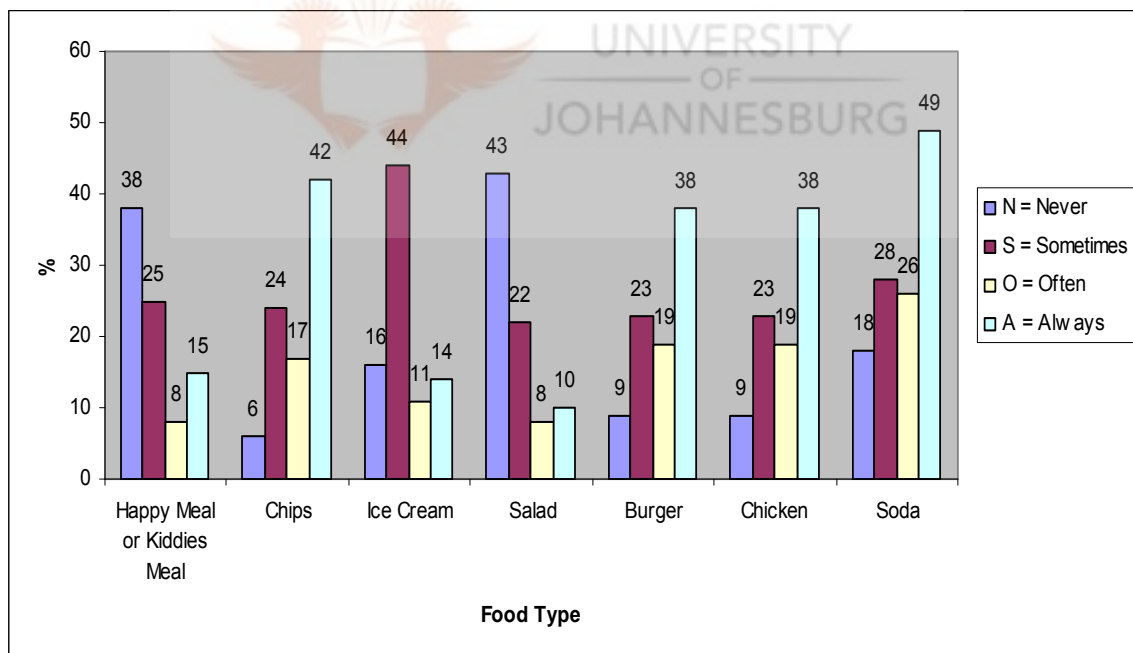


Fig 5.6 Frequency of ordering Favourite Food

Q: Please indicate where you have seen or heard advertisements about it

The results indicated in the figure 4.7 show that most of the participants have seen the advertisement of the fast food outlets on TV. Almost all of the outlets viz, KFC, McDonalds, Steers and Wimpy are advertised aggressively on TV and participants have been made aware of such outlets through this medium.

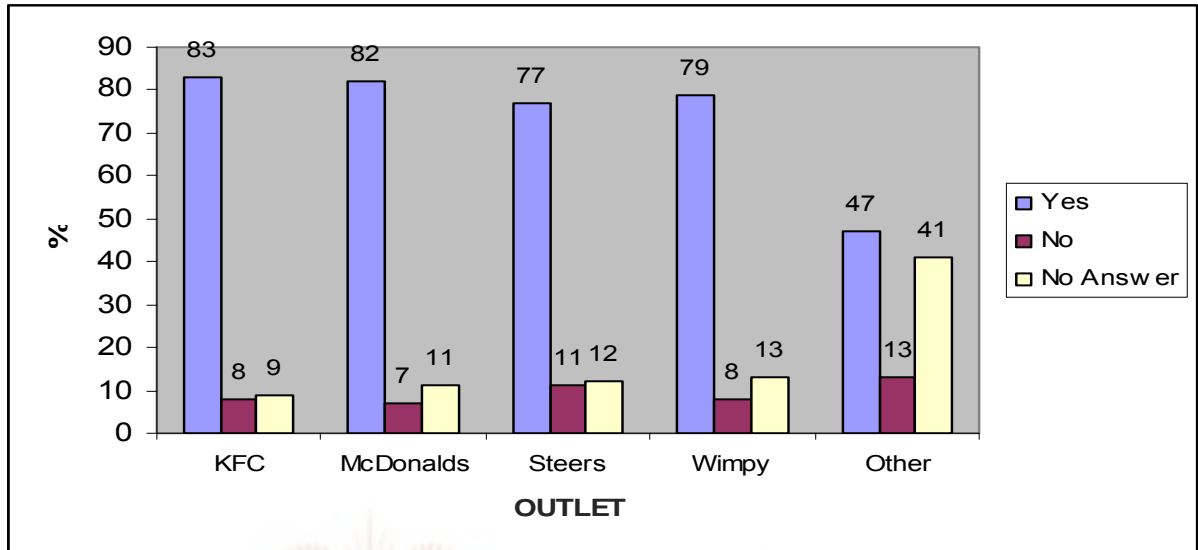


Fig 5.7 Awareness of TV advertisements on fast food outlets

More than 50% of participants have seen billboards advertisements of Kentucky and McDonalds. Steers and Wimpy have also been seen.

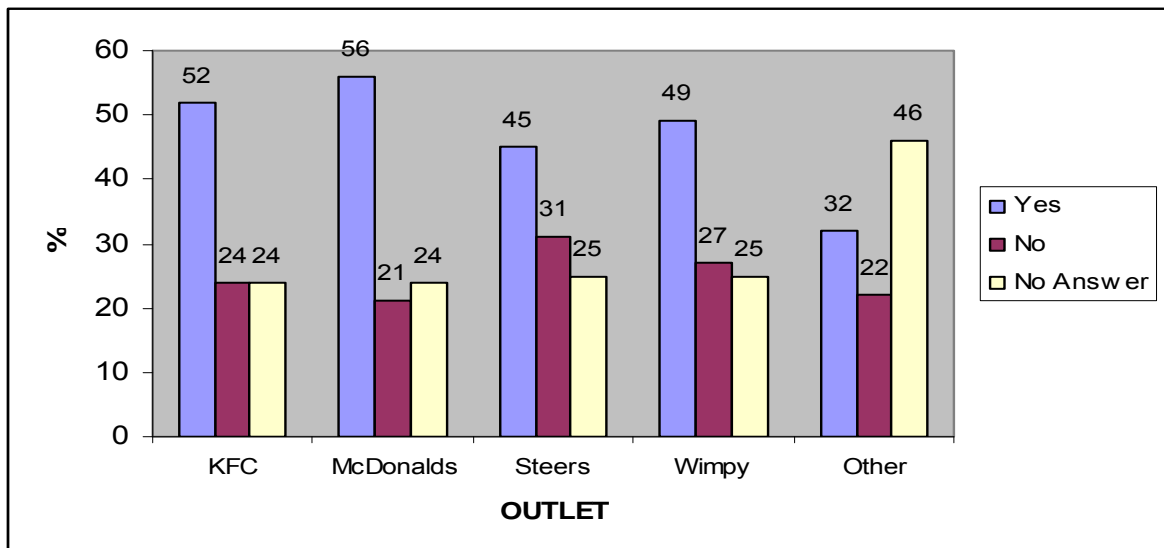


Fig 5.8 Awareness of billboards advertisements on fast food outlets

The results for magazines and newspapers as illustrated in figure 5.9 indicate that 45% of respondents have seen the advertisements. Approximately 25% indicated that they have not seen these adverts and another 25% did not answer. This could be due to the fact that the targeted age group is not much into reading newspapers and magazines.

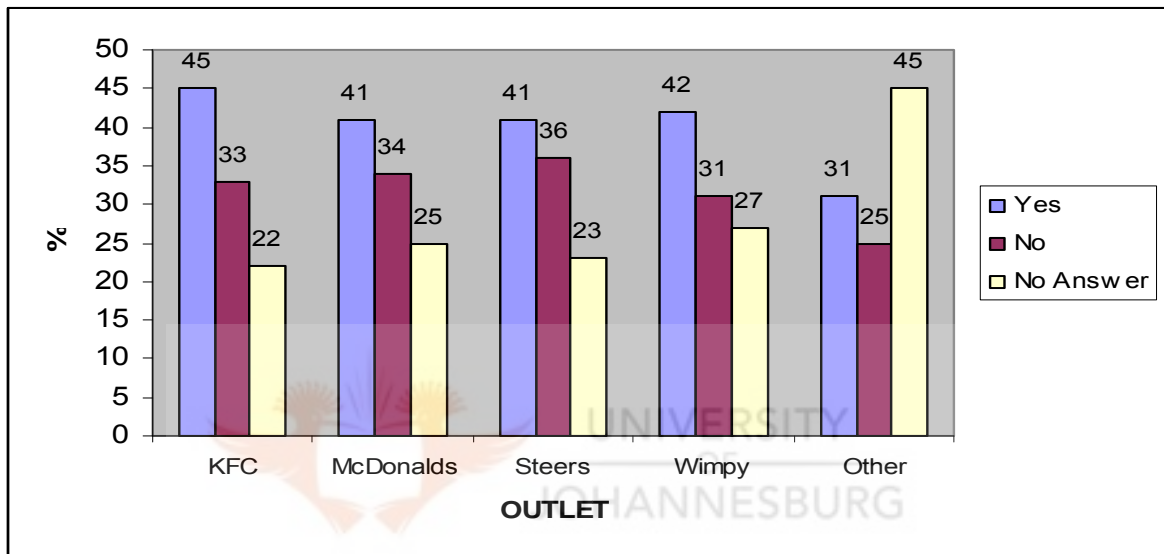


Fig 5.9 Awareness of advertisements in magazines/newspapers of fast food outlets

A high number of respondents indicated that they have not seen the advertisements about fast food outlets in the internet. Figure 4.10 show that 59% of respondents have not seen the adverts from the net. This could be related to access reasons. A large number of respondents come from LSM 2-3 and may not have the facilities of the internet. Another reason for this trend observed in figure 5.10 could be due to the fact that the age group targeted for the research may not be computer literate.

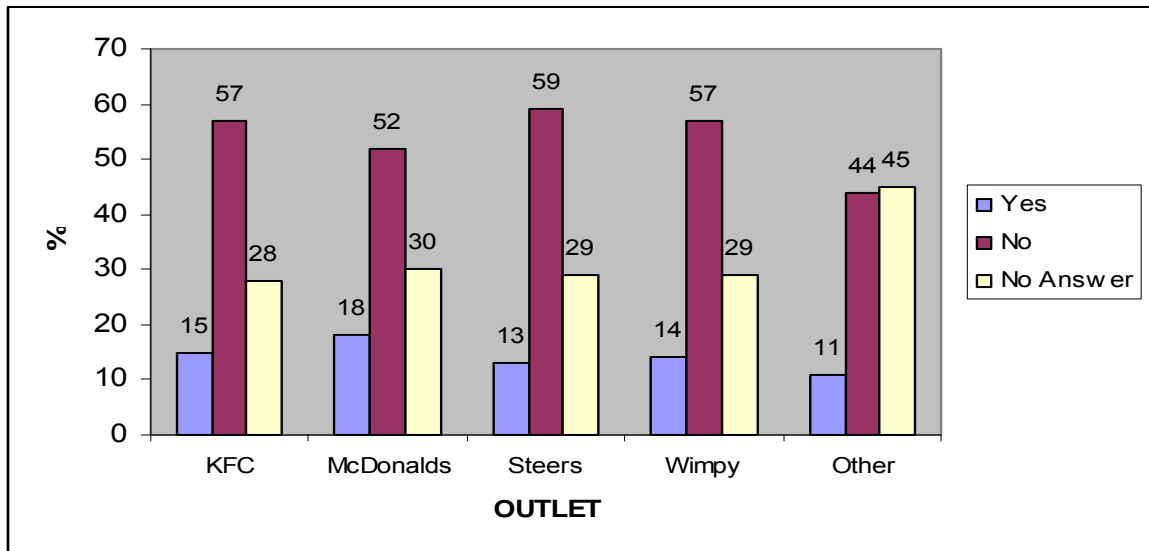


Fig 5.10 Awareness on internet advertisement of fast food outlets

Less than 50% of respondents have heard the advertisements on radio. Also a fair percentage of the respondents indicated that they have never heard the advertisements of these fast foods outlets on radio. Figure 5.11 shows the responses to this question.

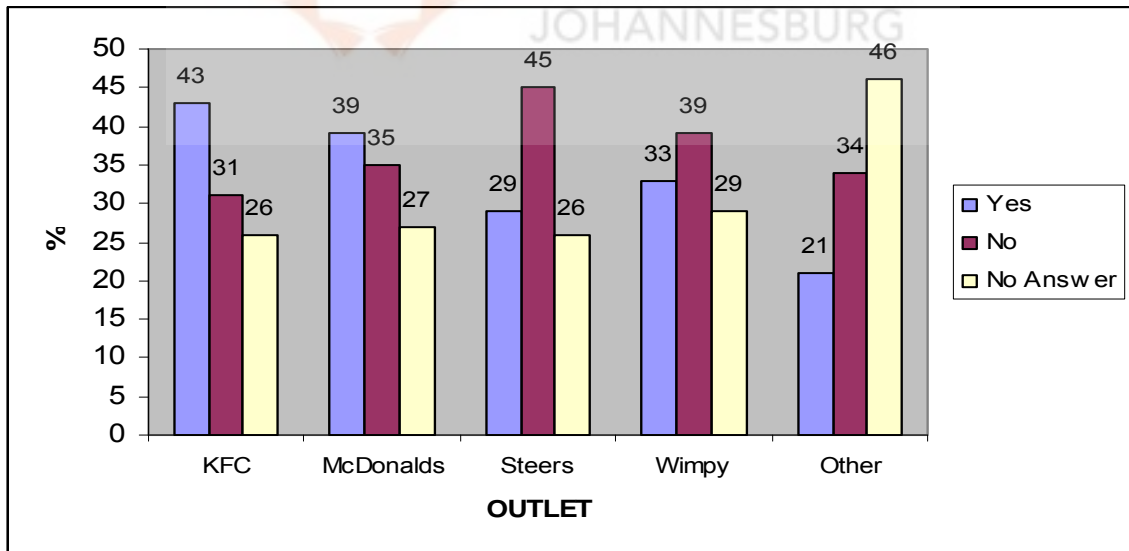


Fig 5.11 Awareness of radio advertisements on fast food outlets

The effect of the advertisements on the participants is indicated in Table 5.3. When the participants were asked about their reaction when they saw an advert of their fast food outlets, various answers were brought to bear. More than 60% indicated that

they wanted to go and eat at the outlet. Their responses are summarised in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Effect of seeing advertisement of my favourite fast food shop

View	%	Rank
I want to go and eat there	64.2	1
I feel hungry	59.1	2
I ask my parents to take me there	56.4	3
I get something to eat in the fridge or pantry	33.2	4
I ignore it	22.2	5

The responses as to why children ate at fast food places are indicated in table 5.5. The majority indicated that they ate at these outlets because their parents took them there. Peer pressure or influence by other friends ranked last in the list.

Table 5.5 Reasons for eating at fast food places

View	%	Rank
My parents take me there	66.4	1
The food at Fast Food outlets is more delicious than home cooked food	42.2	2
The food at fast food outlets is nutritious	29.2	3
My friends do it	21.9	4
The food at fast foods outlets contain little oil	20.0	5
The children who eat at fast food outlets are cool	14.9	6

5.3 CROSS TABULATION ANALYSIS

The purpose of cross tabulation analysis is to establish relationships between any two variables. In this study cross tabulation analysis was done to determine any relationship between age group of respondents to a number of variables such as:

- Frequency of buying from an outlet
- Reasons for choosing outlet
- Frequency of ordering a meal

P – Values are calculated for each pair of variables. The decision rule is that if P-value is ≥ 0.1 , no relationship exist, otherwise there is a relationship. The p-values used in this study are based on a significance level of 5%. The various relationships are discussed and illustrated in Table 5.5.

According to the cross tabulation analysis, there was no relationship between the age of respondent and the frequency of buying a meal from any of the fast food outlets. On the other hand a relationship existed between age and favourite outlet. Most of the younger respondents preferred McDonalds to any other fast food outlets. No relationship existed between age group and the frequency of ordering any meal served at the four fast food outlets under the study.

Table 5.6 Cross tabulations

Variables	P-Value	Comment
1. Frequency of buying from an outlet versus Age group		
1.1 Frequency of buying a meal from KFC	0.178	No Relationship
1.2 Frequency of buying a meal from McDonald	0.691	No Relationship
1.3 Frequency of buying a meal from Steers	0.132	No Relationship
1.4 Frequency of buying a meal from Wimpy	0.059	No Relationship
2. Age group versus frequency of buying a meal from any other outlet	0.662	No Relationship
3. Age group versus favourite fast-food outlet	0.011	Relationship exists
4. Age group versus reason for choosing outlet		
4.1 Choice of outlet is based on price of food	0.010	Relationship exists
4.2 Choice of outlet is based on goodness of food	0.010	Relationship exists
4.3 Choice of outlet is based on quickness of service	0.145	No Relationship

4.4 Choice of outlet is based on greatness of toys	0.000	Relationship exists
4.5 Choice of outlet is based on friendliness of staff	0.097	No Relationship
4.6 Choice of outlet is based on nearness to home	0.407	No Relationship
4.7 Choice of outlet is based on excitement in the playroom	0.000	Relationship exists
4.8 Choice of outlet is based on provision of health food	0.147	No Relationship
4.9 Choice of outlet is based on any other reason	0.001	Relationship exists
5. Age group versus frequency of ordering a meal		
5.1 Happy meal or Kiddies meal	0.000	Relationship exists
5.2 Chips	0.099	No Relationship
5.3 Ice-Cream	0.780	No Relationship
5.4 Salad	0.241	No Relationship
5.5 Burger	0.011	Relationship exists
5.6 Chicken	0.021	Relationship exists
5.7. Soda (Coke, Sprite, Fanta)	0.825	No Relationship
5.8 Milkshake	0.217	No Relationship

5.4 CLOSURE

In this Chapter the findings emanating from the primary data collection phase (interviews) are presented. This presentation is done by providing analysis and discussion as well as interpretation of the data. This has resulted in a set of findings which are presented through different formats such as bar graphs, pie charts and cross tabulation tables. The findings provided various insights into children's preferences of fast food.

Chapter SIX

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Children's food preferences are important determinants of food intake. Food preferences are influenced by parents and caretakers, peer pressure, media and fast food outlets. Television is an important media source of education for children, influencing them from a very young age. Television is pervasive with unique powers of persuasion and can be a very effective method to communicate with children.

In this research children's preferences for fast food was examined. This examination has been conducted so as to establish responses to the following questions:

- Which is the fast food outlet mostly preferred by children?
- What are the motives, reasons and drivers of these preferences?
- What is the most sought after fast food meal?
- Does the background of the child influence the child's preference for fast food?
- What roles do advertisements play in these preferences?

In exploring these questions, a quantitative research design was followed. The design was characterised by an approach located within a positivist paradigm. Samples were drawn from four schools. The research sample consisted of 301 respondents who provided primary data through a self administered questionnaire. Secondary data was collected through a literature survey consisting of reviews of books, journals, magazines, newspapers and internet based sources. As has been pointed out, the research objectives were pursued by addressing certain research questions.

6.2 SUMMARY

The summarised findings emanating from the research are presented in the ensuing discussion. This discussion focuses on the following:

- Determination of the type of fast food outlet mostly preferred by children
- Identification of the drivers, motives, reasons and factors determining the popularity of fast food outlets
- Determination of the most sought after fast food meal
- Determination of whether social background influences preference for certain fast foods
- Determination of the influence of fast food advertisement on children's preferences for fast food

6.2.1 The fast food outlet mostly preferred by children

Four outlets were chosen for this research. According to the analysis of the data collected, most children indicated McDonald's as the most popular and preferred fast food outlet. This is in keeping with the global view that McDonald's is the most popular fast food outlet in the world. As a result it has overtaken Coca Cola as the world's most famous brand (Schlosser, 2002:4)

From the responses received, 28% indicated that McDonald's was their favourite fast food outlet. Twenty six (26%) identified KFC as their most popular food outlet as opposed to 20% who favoured Steers and 12% who opted for Wimpy. The reasons given for this preference ranged from the food being good, quick service, friendly staff right through to reasonable prices.

The trend identified in the responses on this particular issue support other research findings. A case in point is Euromonitor International (2005:41) which states that during the period 2003/2004 burgers enjoyed strong performance with a total sales value of R1.8 billion.

This finding bears testimony to the widely held belief that McDonald's has been able to attain an ubiquitous presence in the minds of children. Key to the successful

attainment of this, has been branding reinforced by aggressive advertising feeding off an interplay of psychographic factors including pester power (Story & French, 2004:2).

6.2.2 The drivers, motives, reasons and factors determining the popularity of the fast foods outlets

This issue which has a qualitative dimension identified the drivers, motives, reasons and factors that determined the popularity of the fast foods outlets. The main drivers, motives and reasons for preference were affordability, availability, location, goodness of food, quickness of service and staff friendliness.

A survey of the literature indicates a diverse range of drivers, motives, reasons and factors determining the popularity of fast food outlets. These include pricing, variety of products, type of products, and the convenience of the location of the outlet as well as the quality of service provider.

This is in keeping with the findings of this research which indicates that fast food outlets were chosen because of the “good taste of the food, the price of the food, the easy accessibility and convenience of the outlet as well as the efficient, prompt and friendly service of staff.

6.2.3 The most sought after fast food meal

According to this research, the fast foods mainly preferred by children were chicken, burgers, chips and soda. Children indicated that they almost always ordered these items when visiting fast food outlets. This trend supports research done by other researchers who indicate that burgers, chicken, chips and soda were the most popular items.

This trend is further supported by the statistics which indicate that burgers and chicken were the two items that dominated sales in the fast food category accounting for 45% and 42% increase in the establishment of new fast food outlets. (Euromonitor, 2005:41)

Kiddies' meal which always contained a toy did not seem to be the children's preference. The reason for this could be that the group of children targeted for this research was older than six years. It is the researcher belief that Kiddies meal is attractive mostly to children younger than six years.

6.2.4 Background of the child and the preference for certain fast foods

This study shows that children who came from LSM's 2 and 3 seem to prefer any meals that had chicken. This could be due to the fact that chicken is cheaper than beef. Affordability was the driver for this preference. Another reason could be the availability of the outlet. KFC is found in all the areas around the schools that were researched.

The children from LSM 8 showed a preference towards burgers. These burgers could be either beef or chicken. Once again these children were exposed to outlets such as Wimpy, Steers and McDonald's which offer a variety of meals instead of chicken only.

However, this aspect of the study was not sufficiently detailed to draw conclusive inferences. This would require a more detailed causative and correlation study focussing specifically on this aspect.

6.2.5 The influence of advertisements on children's preferences for fast foods

Advertising has a huge impact on children's preferences for fast foods. KFC, McDonald's, Wimpy and Steers advertise so aggressively on different media especially TV. The advertisements are so appealing that it is not easy for children to resist temptation for the fast foods. This is confirmed by the findings presented in Table 5.4 Advertising ranks as the highest reason for children's preference for fast food as is indicative from the comments of children "*I want to go and eat there*"

Many studies have been done on the influence of advertising on children's preferences for fast foods. The results of such studies are varied with some researchers claiming that advertisements have a minimal impact whilst others claim that advertising has a significant impact.

The indication in this study is that advertising does have some significant influence on children's preference for fast foods. The study was not intended to and as such did not quantify and measure in a structured systematic manner the influence of advertising on children. As a result of the limitations of the study, it focused mainly on determining at a rather basic level whether or not advertising did have an influence on preferences

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

If South Africa does not want to fall into the same trap as the USA, South Africans need to be proactive with regard to the diet they and their children need to eat. The following discussion focuses on the recommendations for the future with regards to fast foods. It is the researcher's view that children should be advised not to be hooked on fast foods.

Fast food advertising on TV should be limited during children's viewing times. If possible, TV advertising of fast foods should be restricted. TV adverts should reduce advertising of unhealthy food and promote children happily enjoying a banana, apple and even porridge.

Fast foods should be limited at schools tuck shops. Healthy food such as sandwiches and fruit should be sold at tuck shops. Some schools have vending machines which have unhealthy snacks and fizzy drinks. Those vending machines should be stocked with fruit, fruit juices and water to encourage children to get used to eating healthier from an early age. Children should be educated that snacks such as dried fruit, carrot sticks and fruit are healthy and energy packed.

Use endorsement by celebrities, sport heroes and cartoon characters to promote healthy foods. Schools should encourage healthy eating habits. Should help parents promote good nutrition by prescribing to parents what needs to be packed for the children's lunches. Parents and children should be encourage to reduce the number of times in which they visit the fast food outlets.

Parents should teach the children the principle of healthy eating. Parents should make sure that there is always a healthy snack in their grocery cupboards. This will prevent children from wanting to persuade the parents to buy them fast foods.

Parents should make meals a pleasant family occasion and emphasise on the importance of eating healthy foods. Parents should control what their children eat.. A fast food lunch or supper once a month when there is no time to cook is acceptable, but three to four times a week is a recipe for disaster. Not only will it pile on the kilograms but it will create the idea in children that fast food is a normal and acceptable way of eating.

Shops should be encouraged to replace sweets on sale at the checkout points with healthier options. All products that are high in fat, salt or sugar should be clearly labelled on the front of the packets, possibly in the form of government health warning.

This study has highlighted important gaps in the knowledge of children's preferences for fast foods. There is a scarcity of literature dealing with this issue especially in the South African context. Whilst literature on this subject is relatively readily available in the USA and Europe, few focussed studies have been done in South Africa. This creates an opportunity for research on a range of aspects including but not necessarily limited to the following:

Whether socio-economic background influences children fast food preferences

The extent to which advertising affects children's preferences for fast food

The relationship between preferences for fast food and health conditions that are on the increase such as diabetes, hypertension and coronary heart disease

The correlation and linkages between branding, advertising and children's preferences for fast food

Hence, it is clear that substantial scope exists to explore these and other research problems dealing with fast food. This will no doubt contribute to broadening our knowledge and providing us with deeper insights into this interesting and contentious subject.

6.4 CONCLUSION

Consumption of fast food has increased rapidly in this era. Many factors such as fast urbanisation, industrialisation, opening to western culture, lack of time to prepare food, the effects of mass media, advertisement and the development of food industry have naturally led to the development of the fast food phenomena. As a result of these developments there has been some changes in the eating habits of children over the past few decades.

Fast food outlets have entrenched themselves in the business landscape giving rise to both positive and negative effects. The positive effects relate to job creation, enterprise development and economic growth, whereas the negative effects relate to a decline in the general health status of children primarily as a result of an increase in obesity.

This study has determined that children in South Africa (as in the case in other parts of the world) have very clear and strong preferences for a range of different fast foods. The study has also determined that these preferences are determined by a multitude of factors including branding, advertising, convenience and social dynamics such as the change in traditional family structures. Given this background, it is thus clear that the issue of fast food and its appeal to children will be with us for a long time.

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THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Self administered questionnaire (Instrument)
INTRODUCTION
<p>The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data from children ages 8 to 15 years on their fast food preferences and their opinions related to fast food advertising. Your responses and time taken to answer the questions posed is highly appreciated.</p> <p>Kindly direct any queries to the researcher: Cynthia Mboweni - de Klerk Contact telephone: 082 922 5331 or 011 796 2000 E-mail : cynthia@experttech.co.za</p>
<p>Please answer each of the questions truthfully. For each question, please cross the block that best describes your response.</p>

1.	What is the name of your school?										
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Bishop Bavin</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Phineas Xulu Sec</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Eldorado Park Sec</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">Feed my Lambs</td> <td style="width: 20%; padding: 5px;">St Mary' s Girls</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Bishop Bavin	Phineas Xulu Sec	Eldorado Park Sec	Feed my Lambs	St Mary' s Girls					
Bishop Bavin	Phineas Xulu Sec	Eldorado Park Sec	Feed my Lambs	St Mary' s Girls							
2.	Your gender?										
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;">Male</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;">Female</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Male	Female								
Male	Female										
3.	How old are you?										
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">8-9</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">10-11</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">12-13</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">14-15</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	8-9	10-11	12-13	14-15						
8-9	10-11	12-13	14-15								
3a	How many brothers and sisters do you have?										
4.	How often have you had a meal from each of the following fast-food outlets (shops) in the last month?										
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;"></td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">0= Not once</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">1-2= Once or Twice</td> <td style="width: 25%; padding: 5px;">3-5 = Three to Five times</td> <td style="width: 20%; padding: 5px;">6 + = 6 times or more</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">KFC?</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">0</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">1-2</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">3-5</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">6+</td> </tr> </table>		0= Not once	1-2= Once or Twice	3-5 = Three to Five times	6 + = 6 times or more	KFC?	0	1-2	3-5	6+
	0= Not once	1-2= Once or Twice	3-5 = Three to Five times	6 + = 6 times or more							
KFC?	0	1-2	3-5	6+							

	McDonald?	0	1-2	3-5	6+
	Steers?	0	1-2	3-5	6+
	Wimpy?	0	1-2	3-5	6+
	Other fast food place? Specify	0	1-2	3-5	6+

5. Which ONE of the favourite fast-food outlets (shops) (in questions 4 above) is YOUR MOST FAVOURITE? Please tick one option ONLY.

KFC	McDonalds	Steers	Wimpy	Other (Specify)

6. Why is this fast-food outlet (shop) your most favourite? Mark all applicable reasons.

1. The food is cheap	
2. The food is good	
3. The service is quick	
4. The toys are great	
5. The people who work there are friendly	
6. The shop is near your home	
7. The play room is exciting	
8. The food is healthy	
9. Other reason	

7. When you have a meal at your favourite fast-food shop, how often do you order each of the following?

	N=Never	S=Sometimes	O=Often	A=Always
1. Happy meal or Kiddies meal	N	S	O	A
2. Chips	N	S	O	A
3. Ice cream	N	S	O	A

	4. Salad	N	S	O	A	
	5. Burger	N	S	O	A	
	6. Chicken	N	S	O	A	
	7. Soda (coke, sprite , fanta)	N	S	O	A	
	8. Milkshake	N	S	O	A	
8.	For each of the following fast-food outlets (places), please indicate where you have seen or heard advertisements about it?					
		Have you seen a TV ad about it?	Have you seen Billboards (signs on the roads) about it?	Have you seen advertisements in Magazines / newspapers about it?	Have you seen Internet advertisements about it?	Have you heard Radio advertisements about it?
	1. KFC	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO
	2. McDonalds	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO
	3. Steers	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO
	4. Wimpy	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO
	5. Other	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO	YES / NO
9.	To what extent do you agree/disagree with each of the following statements					
	When I see an advertisement of my favourite fast-food shop....					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1. I want to go and eat there					

	2. I ask my parents to take me there					
	3. I feel hungry					
	4. I get something to eat from the fridge or pantry					
	5. I ignore it					
10.	<p>To what extent do you agree/disagree with each of the following statements</p> <p>I eat at fast food places because</p>					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1. My friends do it					
	2. My parents take me there					
	3. The food at fast food places is nutritious					
	4. The food at fast food places is more delicious than home cooked food					
	5. The food at fast food places contain little oil					
	6. The children who eat at fast food places are cool					
	THE END					