

A CRITICAL STUDY OF RISE OF READY-TO-EAT FOOD CULTURE, IMPACT ON HEALTH AND REGULATIONS IN INDIA

AUTHOR – HARSHITA SALUJA, STUDENT AT AMITY LAW SCHOOL, NOIDA

BEST CITATION – HARSHITA SALUJA, A CRITICAL STUDY OF RISE OF READY-TO-EAT FOOD CULTURE, IMPACT ON HEALTH AND REGULATIONS IN INDIA, *INDIAN JOURNAL OF LEGAL REVIEW (IJLR)*, 5 (4) OF 2025, PG. 927-934, APIS – 3920 – 0001 & ISSN – 2583-2344.

ABSTRACT

Dr. Tarun Mittal, an obesity surgeon from New Delhi says that when he joined his practice he saw only two to three patients a month who had issue of obesity. But in the recent times those numbers have increased and now he sees such patients on a regular basis, fifteen to twenty patients a month to be more precise.

The terms like ultra-processed, ready-to-eat, junk food, instant food, fast food are quite in use in today's world. Ready-to-eat food items were developed by the companies for the people of army which is now being consumed by civilians on a daily basis. Researches have found the high consumption of such food is directly linked to various non-communicable diseases. But still its consumption is rising day by day all over the globe. As per recent study, its sale in India increased from \$6.2 billion in 2009 to \$32 billion in 2022.

In this writeup, I would take you all on the journey from where the story of food processing starts, what all circumstances encouraged the need to create ready-to-eat food items, how it entered into households, why its consumption is harmful, what are the laws prevalent in India for selling and purchasing of such food items and how the laws can be strengthened.

Keywords: Ready-to-eat, Ultra processed, junk food, non-communicable diseases, obesity

I. Introduction

Food, shelter and clothing are one of the basic requirements of every human being, no matter in whichever country he stay in. If we try to compare which is the most important factor among these 3 basic requirements, it would be safe to say that food is the most important. We can adjust ourselves according to any place and wear any type of clothes, but we should be really cautious of what we eat. Our elders always suggest us to eat healthy. The reason behind saying so, is because what we eat, directly affects our body and health. Health is the greatest asset that a human being can possess. So it is our duty to protect it.

The terms like ultra-processed, ready-to-eat, junk food, instant food, fast food are quite in use

in today's world. And the cheap prices and easy availability of such food items is actually a cause of concern.

In the modern world, if we provide an option to choose between eating a packet of chips and a bowl of fruits, mostly people would prefer the first option. The reason behind it is, first, they are much cheaper as compared to healthy/minimally processed food items. Second, eating chips is much easier than washing and cutting the fruits. And lastly, ready-to-eat food items are designed in such a way that they taste so good that it becomes almost impossible for a person to not be addicted to it.

Eating healthy is connected to eating homecooked meals.¹⁵⁶⁰ But, living in a fast-paced world where we are expected to be on our toes every time, it becomes quite difficult to make food from scratch, i.e. from making our own spice powders to cutting and chopping of vegetables to preparing the final dish. And therefore, we have to buy company made spice powders and ready-to-eat food items.

In this writeup, I would take you all on the journey from where the story of food processing starts, what all circumstances encouraged the need to create ready-to-eat food items, how it entered into households, why its consumption is harmful, what are the laws prevalent in India for selling and purchasing of such food items and how the laws can be strengthened.

II. From where the story of food processing starts

A. Role of World Wars in shaping the food that is consumed around the world

The consumption of ready-to-eat food items by the people around the globe didn't start overnight. The modern-day items like tomato ketchup, breakfast cereals, sugary drinks and much more that are consumed all over the world in the current times have their origins to the world war. Anastacia Marx de Salcedo, a food writer and the author of "Combat-Ready Kitchen: How the U.S. Military Shapes the Way You Eat", takes us into the journey of how the military of United States shaped the ready-to-eat food items that are consumed by the civilians in the modern times.

During wartime, the U.S. military was in need of such food items that were portable, non-perishable as well as nutritious. This led to the introduction of various ration kits. One such ration kit was k-ration which provided three meals breakfast, supper and dinner and it consisted of canned meat, biscuits and powdered beverages.¹⁵⁶¹ These rations were

designed to be lightweight and compact so that they could be easily transported as well as consumed in the field.

The U.S. military and the government had to come up with the idea of ready-to-eat food items not only due to the portability and transportability factor but also due to the mass malnutrition which prevailed during that time. During the 1940s, while the U.S. military was recruiting males for fighting in the war, it had to reject one ninth of potential draftees solely because they were physically weak due to malnutrition caused by Great Depression. In order to solve this problem, the U.S. army and the U.S. government came up with the solution to pump American men full of vitamins and minerals.¹⁵⁶² On one hand, The U.S. government hired nutritionists, surveyed the eating habits of Americans, issued propaganda films and recipes to teach women to cook nutrient-rich meals for their husbands and sons so that they could become fit for being appointed for serving at war.¹⁵⁶³ On the other hand, the U.S. military invested its own resources for inventing such food products that were portable, convenient to use and had a longer shelf-life.¹⁵⁶⁴ From finger-staining dust on Cheetos to the meal-in-a-bar protein bars, World War II played a major role in shaping the universe of processed food.

B. How ready-to-eat food items entered into households, role of television and other tactics by food business operators

Ready-to-eat food items were developed by the companies for the people of army which is now being consumed by civilians on a daily basis.¹⁵⁶⁵ Once the World War II ended, food

[https://www.history.com/articles/soldier-wartime-food-rations-battle-
napoleon-vietnam](https://www.history.com/articles/soldier-wartime-food-rations-battle-napoleon-vietnam).

¹⁵⁶² Chelsea Davis, Stanford historian traces military's influence on modern American nutrition, Stanford Report (31st March 2025, 3:15PM), [https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2019/01/historian-traces-militarys-
influence-modern-american-nutrition](https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2019/01/historian-traces-militarys-influence-modern-american-nutrition)

¹⁵⁶³ Id.

¹⁵⁶⁴ Nicola Twilley, How Military R&D Created the Food We Eat, Popular Science (31st March, 2025, 4PM), [https://www.popsci.com/how-military-
created-food-we-know-it/](https://www.popsci.com/how-military-created-food-we-know-it/).

¹⁵⁶⁵ Nadia Whitehead, Cheetos, Canned Foods, Deli Meat: How The U.S. Army Shapes Our Diet, NPR (1st Apr 2025, 5PM),

¹⁵⁶⁰ Susanna D H Mills, Heather Brown, et al., Frequency of eating home cooked meals and potential benefits for diet and health, 14(1) IJBPA 1, 7 (2017)

¹⁵⁶¹ John Ortved, Soldiers' rations through history: From live hogs to Indestructible MREs, History (31st March 2025, 3:00PM),

manufacturers feared that they would lose their business, and hence, they started researching and developing such techniques which would make their food items quite addictive so that the people would be tempted to buy their products again and again.

So far, the food companies have been quite successful in making people addictive to their ready-to-eat food items, thanks to their high availability and low prices.¹⁵⁶⁶ As per the statistics, the sales of ready-to-eat food items in India has increased from \$6.2 billion in 2009 to \$32 billion in 2022.¹⁵⁶⁷ Majorly because such food items are available everywhere in grocery stores, supermarkets and in television advertisements.

Television advertisements have a major role to play in the growth of high sales of ready-to-eat items.¹⁵⁶⁸ For example: The advertisement of Kellogg's Multigrain chocos claim to be high in fibre and protein with no maida. The real fruit juice company advertises its Mosambi juice stating that it is made up of 20 mosambi. The same company advertises its mixed fruit juice by stating that this juice has twice the amount of fruits which is recommended by experts for children. Good day Cashew cookies represents itself as it has a lot of cashews in it. Kissan fresh tomato ketchup claims that it makes its ketchup with real and fresh red tomatoes. And the list of such advertisements can go on. But if we pick up the packs of such items and read the ingredient list, the claims made in advertisements turn out to be false and misleading.

Television advertisements has manipulated the minds of the consumers so much that they believe such advertisements to be true and buy the advertised products without any second

thought. The reason behind this is that the companies advertise their products in such a way which makes their food items look tasty and healthy at the same time. While advertising the food products for children, the companies use cartoon characters and colourful packaging to attract children towards their products.¹⁵⁶⁹ In case of advertising for adults, they either advertise their products as healthy or hire famous celebrities to advertise for their products.

To increase the sales, companies also provide offers such as 15% extra, buy 1 get 1 free etc. They also use the terms like fresh, real, high in fibre, high in protein, full of nutrients to make their products look as if they are actually healthy. All of this manipulation has led to blind consumption of such food items by the consumers. Mostly consumers have been blindly believing the advertisements to such an extent that even though the ingredient list of a food product clearly point out that it contains such items which are quite harmful for a human body but the consumer would still buy such a product. There are majorly two reasons behind such a behaviour of consumers. First, if a famous celebrity has been hired for advertising that product, then the consumer thinks that if the celebrity is consuming that product then such a product would be really good, not knowing the dark reality of such advertisements.¹⁵⁷⁰ Secondly, the companies use such terms in their ingredient list that understanding and decoding it becomes quite difficult for consumers, and hence, they avoid glancing at the ingredient side but just look at the nutritive side of the product label and buy the product.

Using the tactics such as low prices, attractive packaging and television advertisements have proved to be beneficial from the point of view of

<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/07/31/427854425/cheetos-canned-foods-deli-meat-how-the-u-s-army-shapes-our-diet>.

¹⁵⁶⁶ Dave Davies, Cheap, Legal And Everywhere: How Food Companies Get Us 'Hooked' On Junk, NPR (1st Apr 2025, 5:30PM), <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/04/26/990821079/cheap-legal-and-everywhere-how-food-companies-get-us-hooked-on-junk>.

¹⁵⁶⁷ Survey of Household Consumption Expenditure: 2022-2023, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

¹⁵⁶⁸ Leandro Dragueta Delfino, William Rodrigues Tebar, et al., Food advertisements on television and eating habits in adolescents: A school-based study, 54 Rev. Saude Publica. (2020)

¹⁵⁶⁹ V. I. Kraak, M. Story, Influence of food companies' brand mascots and entertainment companies' cartoon media characters on children's diet and health: A systematic review and research needs, 16(2) Obes Rev. (2014)

¹⁵⁷⁰ Angie Basiouny, The Marketing Psychology Behind Celebrity Endorsements, Knowledge at Wharton (6th Apr 2025, 5:00PM), <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/the-marketing-psychology-behind-celebrity-endorsements/>.

companies as it has led to increase in sale. But if we see from the perspective of consumers, they have become so addicted to such ready-to-eat food items due to their taste and texture that even if they wish to reduce its consumption, they are unable to do so and ultimately get prone to many lifestyle diseases.¹⁵⁷¹

From time to time, many researches have indicated that the consumption of ready-to-eat items have a connection with chronic diseases, and many activists have been continuously educating people to reduce its consumption. Many of them have tried to sue the food manufacturing giants for giving misleading advertisements and for using such ingredients which are unfit for human consumption. Various efforts of these activists have created a positive impact in the society, not only in India but across the globe.¹⁵⁷² But there are still miles to go in order to make every single person living in this world aware about the scams of these food manufacturing companies.

III. Why rise in consumption of ready-to-eat food items has become a cause of concern

Throughout the country, many people are opting out of homecooked meals and are preferring ready-to-eat food items in its place. Ready-to-eat food items are those which go through a lot of processing and are prepared in such a way that they are ready for final consumption by the consumers.¹⁵⁷³ They are such food items which have undergone multiple industrial processes or that have been beaten to a pulp and bathed in flavours, colours and other additives. They include instant snacks, soups, breakfast cereals, ready meals, baked goods and the like.¹⁵⁷⁴

Ready-to-eat food items are convenient to use but are highly processed with a lot of calories, sugars, unhealthy fats and salt in them, and hence, they are also known as Junk food, fast food and ultra-processed food.¹⁵⁷⁵ Moreover, they have very little or no fibre in them and they are made up of such ingredients which many people have never heard about. During World War II, the main area of focus was to produce such food items that were easily portable, easy to eat and had longer shelf life. Little or no attention was given for researching on the health issues that might be caused in the long run by eating such food products. And when the second world war ended, the people had developed their taste buds according to the taste present in the ready-to-eat food items, and they demanded more of such products. Thereby, increasing the demand of ready-to-eat meals due to the taste factor.

In today's era, everyone is living such a busy life. There is not much time for cooking from scratch, and therefore, major chunk of people have to rely on such food items which are quick to make and are affordable to buy. This again increases the demand of ready-to-eat food items due to efficiency factor. Such food items are easy to consume and require little or no pre-preparation and the people have got used to the convenience brought by such products that it has become difficult for them to either reduce its intake or replace them with healthier options altogether.

The food manufacturing companies have taken advantage of this situation and have developed such food items which are cheap, tasty and addictive. A lot of research and development happens before such food items enter into markets for final consumption where a lot of attention is given on their taste and texture so that the consumers are compelled to eat them again and again. They are made in such a way that once you start eating them you cannot control yourself and become addicted to such

¹⁵⁷¹ Rebecca, *Junk Food, Sugar and additives- the dark side of the food industry* (DW documentary, Youtube, June 30, 2023), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=myv7yydtCKc>

¹⁵⁷² Kiran Kabtta Somvanshi, Label Padhega India: A Key Step to Build Consumer Awareness, *Economic Times* (7th Apr 2025, 7:00PM), <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/food/label-padhega-india-a-key-step-to-build-consumer-awareness/articleshow/110379178.cms?from=mdr>

¹⁵⁷³ Parthena Kotzekidou (ed.), *Food Hygiene and Toxicology in Ready-to-eat Foods* (2016)

¹⁵⁷⁴ Cybernetik, <https://www.cybernetik.com/blog/ready-to-eat-rte-food-manufacturing-process/> (8th Apr 2025)

¹⁵⁷⁵ Natalia G Vallianou, Dimitris Kounatidis, et. al., *Ultra-Processed Foods and Childhood Obesity: Current evidence and perspectives*, 14(1) *Curr Nutr Rep.* (2025)

food items. Currently, the scenario is such that no matter whichever grocery store we go to, we see a lot of food items packed in colourful boxes, containers and plastic wrappers. We have a high availability of fast food and processed snacks.

The only benefit of ready-to-eat food items is that it's quick to make and quick to eat, but if we start counting its negative sides, they are endless. In order to produce ready-to-eat food items, food manufacturing companies have five major technological obstacles to overcome: control the atmosphere, prevent spoilage, preserve flavours, prevent moisture and control temperature.¹⁵⁷⁶ In order to overcome these obstacles, companies have to take help of many preservation techniques and have to include a lot of chemicals that are harmful for human body.

Researchers have found that high consumption of ready-to-eat food items has a direct connection with the increasing rates of obesity, migraine, stomach issues and various chronic diseases. Such food gives us instant energy but after sometime we feel lethargic and lazy and after a short duration we again feel hungry and it also leads to negative impact on our working abilities. According to a study published in NIH Pub-med in the year 2023, excessive consumption of Ultra-processed food increases energy intake on one hand, but, in the long run it also increases the risk of obesity.¹⁵⁷⁷

The countries where junk food is easily accessible to the general public like India and America, the rates of people prone to obesity are quite high. Since the Ready-to-eat food entered into the American Supermarkets, the issue of obesity and heart diseases has been on rise. During the early 1960s, an average American male weighed 76 kgs, while average female weighed 64 kgs. During the modern era, weight of average American male has

increased to 81 kgs, while weight of average female is now 68 kgs.¹⁵⁷⁸

IV. Indian government's action against the rise of ultra processed ready-to-eat food items

A. The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006¹⁵⁷⁹

The aim of the government behind enacting this act was to regulate manufacturing, storing, distributing, selling and importing of food articles so that availability of safe and wholesome food that is fit for human consumption can be ensured. Section 3(i)(q) defines food safety as an assurance that the food items are fit for human consumption. Section 24 restricts advertisements of those food products that are misleading which includes falsely representing the food product to be of a particular standard, quality or quantity; providing a false or misleading representation as to its usefulness; and giving guarantee to public relating to the effectiveness of the product without any scientific justification. Section 53 imposes a liability of Ten Lakh rupees (Rs. 10 Lakh) on a person who publishes any advertisement which provides false description of the food product or which might mislead the consumer with regards to the nature, substance or quality of food item or provides a false guarantee relating to a food item.

B. The Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018

Section 2(i)(b) defines the term advertisement as any publicity made through the means of audio, video, light, smoke, print, website, notice, label, wrapper, circular or other documents. Section 2(i)(l) and section 5 explains what would come under the term nutrition claim. Section 4 provides certain general principles relating to the claims where section 4(7) mentions that if the brand name or trade mark

¹⁵⁷⁶ David M. Cutler, Edward L. Glaeser, et. al., Why Have Americans Become More Obese?, NBER Working Paper No. 9446 (2003)

¹⁵⁷⁷ Moradi S, Entezari MH, et. al., Ultra-processed food consumption and adult obesity risk: a systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis, 63(2) Crit Rev Food Sci Nutr. (2023)

¹⁵⁷⁸ David M. Cutler, Edward L. Glaeser, et. al., Why Have Americans Become More Obese?, NBER Working Paper No. 9446 (2003)

¹⁵⁷⁹ The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, No. 34, Acts of Parliament, 2006 (India)

of the food manufacturing company has the adjectives 'Natural', 'Fresh', 'Pure', 'Original', 'Traditional', 'Authentic', 'Genuine', 'Real' etc on their package labelling, then a disclaimer in minimum 3 mm size shall be provided on the label itself stating "This is only a brand name or trademark and does not represent its true nature".

C. The Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020

This regulation was made by FSSAI to provide all the labelling requirements which the food business operators have to follow while packaging their food and beverage items as well as the essential information that must be displayed on the premises where such food items are manufactured, processed, served and stored.

D. The Food Safety and Standards (Safe Food and Balanced Diets for Children in School) Regulations, 2020

Section 5 of this regulation deals with marketing, advertising and selling of food products to children in school. This regulation prohibits people from advertising, marketing or selling including free selling of those food products which are high in saturated fat or trans-fat or has added sugar or sodium within the school campus or in an area which is within the 50 meters radius from school. Moreover, the regulation also provides guidance relating to the food items that the schools can provide in the school canteen to its students where it has mentioned that desserts, packed foods, bakery products and beverages can be provided to the students but only once a week that to in small quantity.

E. The Consumer Protection Act, 2019

The aim of the government behind enacting this act was to provide protection to the interests of consumers and to establish authorities for settling consumer disputes timely and effectively. Section 2(28) defines what would constitute as misleading advertisement. It states that if an advertisement provides a false

description about any product, any false guarantee with respect to the product or deliberately conceals any important information such advertisement would be considered as misleading. Section 21 states that if the Central Consumer Protection Authority is satisfied that an advertisement is false or misleading or contravenes consumer rights, it can direct the concerned advertiser to either discontinue or modify such advertisement.

F. The cable television networks rules, 1994

The aim of the government behind enacting this regulation is to regulate and govern the cable television industry of India. Rule 7 under the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 talks about advertising code. Rule 7(2)(viii) prohibits advertisements which promote production, selling or consumption of cigarettes, tobacco, wine, alcohol, liquor, infant milk substitutes, feeding bottle or infant food.

V. Are the laws sufficient in the modern times or they need any modification

Even though the government of India has implemented various laws from time to time but still there are many gaps that need to be addressed.

A. The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006¹⁵⁸⁰

It is one of the major laws relating to packaged food products. But it fails define what all would come under the term 'Misleading advertisement'. Moreover, the basis of the act was to provide such food items that are safe for human consumption, but, no efforts has been made by the government to fulfil that aim. There are various ready-to-eat food items that are declared to be harmful by governments of different countries but in India such food items are still in use. For example: Cadbury gems in India still uses Colour 171 for giving white colour which is actually titanium dioxide. This colour has been banned in European Union as it

¹⁵⁸⁰ The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, No. 34, Acts of Parliament, 2006 (India)

damages DNA.¹⁵⁸¹ Similarly, Colour 124, Colour 127 and Colour 122 which is used for providing red colour to the gems is actually prepared from coal tar. These colours have been banned in Norway and USA as it has connections with asthma attacks and hyperactivity in children.¹⁵⁸² Furthermore, there is no provision for stopping the food business operators from hiring celebrities to advertise for their products, even though the government clearly knows that if celebrities will endorse any product the general public would definitely buy such products.

B. The Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018

It prohibits advertisements of those food or beverage items that claim to be meal replacement if no other regulation specifically permit them to claim so and those advertisements which might be deceptive. But, no provision has been provided to curb the advertisements relating to ready-to-eat food items. Furthermore, no emphasis has been laid that the companies must also promote in their advertisements that reading both nutrient content as well as ingredients of the products is important. Moreover, this regulation permits the food manufacturing companies to use adjectives such as 'Natural', 'Fresh', 'Pure', 'Real' etc. as their brand name and add a disclaimer relating to the same so that it doesn't mislead the consumers but in reality many customers get misled and they believe the brand name is actually representing the true nature of the product.

C. The Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020

It has provided a detailed list of things that must be included in the labels of food and beverage products. But, no emphasis has been laid on mentioning that if the product contains

high salt, sugar or fats, the same must also be mentioned on the labels.

D. The Food Safety and Standards (Safe Food and Balanced Diets for Children in School) Regulations, 2020

It doesn't provide clear provisions and are contradictory in nature. At first they mention under section 5 that the products that are high in saturated fats, trans-fat or has added sugar should not be provided to children within school campus or the areas near the school. But, on the other hand, they provide guidance that once in a while students can be given ice creams, desserts, packed food, bakery items etc. in the school canteens, which is nothing but ultra processed food that has been prohibited from giving to students under section 5. Moreover, when students go on school picnics they are provided ultra processed food as refreshments which is again violation of section 5.

E. The Consumer Protection Act, 2019

It clearly mentions that if the advertisement deliberately hides important information it would be considered to be misleading but there are many advertisements that conceal the fact that they have high sugar, salt or fats in them. For example: advertisement of Bonn's High Fibre Brown Bread conceals the fact that it is high in sodium, Cadbury Bournvita hides the fact that it has high sugar content, Sunfeast All Rounder Chatpata Masala Thin Potato Biscuits conceals that it has high fats etc.

F. The cable television networks rules, 1994

It prohibits advertisements relating to cigarettes, tobacco, wine, infant food etc. but there is no prohibition on advertising ultra processed food to children below the age of 18 years. Moreover, the food business operators use cartoon characters in their advertisements for attracting children to their products. But, again, there is no provision in these rules to stop the companies from using this tactic to increase their sales.

¹⁵⁸¹ Shreya Ghosh, 7 Gems Colours, Many Diseases!, *Curly Tales* (11th Apr 2025, 6:00PM), <https://curlytales.com/7-gems-colours-many-diseases-man-lists-the-dyes-used-in-candy-are-banned-in-other-countries/>

¹⁵⁸² Id.

VI. Conclusion

During the last few years, India has seen a rise in the consumption of breakfast cereals, potato chips, confectionary items and sodas. According to the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey, Indians have been spending more on buying ultra processed food rather than home cooked meals.¹⁵⁸³ The food manufacturing companies are targeting both children and adults by scientifically engineering their ready-to-eat food items by making them highly palatable along with using the tactics of misleading advertisements and celebrity endorsements without making consumers aware about the importance of reading product labels. In 2022 itself, Indians spent \$30 billion on ultra processed food. As per the 2023 study of ICMR-INDIAB, 100 million people are facing the issue of diabetes and one in four Indians is either pre-diabetic or is facing the issue of obesity.¹⁵⁸⁴

In order to regulate the companies and to protect the interest of consumers, the government enacted various legislations. But, there are many gaps in these laws due to which they are not being implemented properly. There is a need to fill those gaps so that the laws serve their purpose for which they were enacted.

The governments of different countries have imposed various restrictions on the food business operators which is actually proving to be beneficial for the citizens of their countries. Quebec, a province in Canada, has restricted the food business operators from targeting children below the age of 13 years.¹⁵⁸⁵ After putting a ban, the province saw decrease in the consumption of ultra processed food in households with children. The country Chile has restricted the food business operators from advertising certain products from 6 AM to 10 PM. Similarly, the Mexican parliament passed three

regulations. First, imposing a sugar tax. Second, restricting advertisements targeting children. And lastly, mandating the companies to provide a warning label in case their food items contain high sodium, sugar or fats. Implementing these three laws helped in creating a positive impact in Mexico. The food companies had to expose and declare to the public if their food items had excess sugar, fats, sodium or calories. Moreover, they had to remove cartoon characters from those food products that were designed for consumption by children.

All these laws and regulations brought up by different countries have proved to be beneficial for their citizens as after implementation of these laws the consumption of ultra processed food has decreased in their countries and people are making informed choices. Similarly, the Indian government must also stand for its citizens and implement such rules and regulations that are implemented in the above stated countries. Moreover, the Indian government must lay emphasis on creating awareness about the ingredients that are used by the companies so that the consumers are aware about the harmful chemicals that goes in making those products which they consume so mindlessly.

¹⁵⁸³ Survey of Household Consumption Expenditure: 2022-2023, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

¹⁵⁸⁴ Ranjit Mohan Anjana, Ranjit Unnikrishnan et. al., Metabolic non-communicable disease health report of India: The ICMR-INDIAB national cross-sectional study, 11 (7) ICMR-INDIAB-17 (2023)

¹⁵⁸⁵ Tirtha Dhar, Kathy Baylis, Fast-Food Consumption and the ban on advertising targeting children: The Quebec experience, 48(5) Journal of Marketing Research 799 (2011)