

***Factors Influencing Satisfaction with Food among University Students:
Evidence from the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya***

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Health manifests as a multifaceted phenomenon, involving optimal physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. The youth, as the prospective architects of a nation's future, underscores the critical importance of understanding their well-being and its diverse dimensions for national development. Consequently, a thorough exploration of the dietary habits within this demographic becomes imperative. This research is driven by the primary objective of examining in-depth the factors that determine satisfaction with food among students enrolled in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Peradeniya. In 2023, a cross-sectional survey was undertaken within the Faculty of Arts, involving a stratified random sample of 400 students. While maintaining ethical considerations, quantitative data collection utilized e-surveys with a pre-tested questionnaire. Subsequently, STATA (Version 12.0) was employed for data analysis, specifically through logistic regression analysis. Analysis revealed that factors such as perceived food quality, quantity, affordability (price fairness), and perceived healthiness of food show statistically significant effects on students' food satisfaction. Food quality showed a significant positive relationship at the 0.01 level, with a coefficient of 1.021. Food quantity was significant at the 0.1 level, increasing satisfaction by 0.498 units. Food affordability and healthiness were significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels, respectively, with coefficients of 0.739 and 0.781, indicating that better affordability and healthiness of food enhance satisfaction. These findings suggest that students tend to be more satisfied with food, when they have higher perceived quality, quantity, affordability, and healthiness of food options available to them. However, factors such as gender, academic year, and residential status did not exhibit significant associations with food satisfaction. Understanding the factors influencing students' level of food satisfaction is crucial for health, lifelong well-being, and societal development. Improving standards, variety, and availability of food options in academic settings is key to enhancing overall food satisfaction and well-being.

Keywords: Food Behavior, Food Satisfaction, Logistic Regression, Undergraduates, Well-Being