Teen Girls’ Perspectives on Their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: A Qualitative Study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

By

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Abstract

Rapid socioeconomic development in Saudi Arabia, as a result of oil revenues, has had profound effects on people’s lifestyles, including the transformation of people’s dietary habits. Such dietary transformations, known as the nutrition transition, are common in countries undergoing rapid socioeconomic changes. This transition is significant in Saudi Arabia as the traditional Saudi diet is considered a healthy one. Adoption of the Western diet has had negative health effects on the Saudi population, especially adolescents. As evidenced in many studies, adolescents are the most affected population when it comes to changes in dietary habits and physical activity. Adolescence is a vulnerable stage of life when dietary habits are developed, often lasting into adulthood, and may not be easily changed. In the case of Saudi Arabia, youth or adolescents represent almost 60% of the population; therefore, the eating habits they develop now could have profound consequences for population health in the future. To develop effective health promotion strategies, it is important to understand the sociocultural factors that influence the dietary habits and food choices of Saudi teens. I conducted two semi-structured, open-ended interviews, using photo-elicitation techniques, with 12 Saudi girls, aged 15-16 years. Analysis of the data shows four factors that pulled the participants toward eating home cooked traditional food and five factors that pushed participants away from eating home cooked traditional foods. The research suggests that despite the attractiveness of modern, Western ways of eating for Saudi teen girls, parents still play a key role in encouraging and supporting them to eat healthy food.
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Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. Structure of my thesis:

I start my thesis by introducing myself and explaining what made me do this research. Then I talk about the purpose of my research. Then I move to the problem statement explaining the current situation in Saudi Arabia and the gap that my research will fill. After that, I provide a brief background about Saudi Arabia. Then, I provide a background about fast food in Saudi Arabia and family role in Saudi Arabia. The next chapter is the literature review chapter. This chapter is divided to two sections: literature of adolescents’ dietary habits and literature of nutrition transition. In the next chapter I talk about my research methodology and the methods I used in my research. In the methodology section, I explain the significance of using qualitative methods when discussing issues related to food and dietary habits and I explain the relevance of using such methods to serve the purpose of my research. Then I start the methods section, which I divided to five sub-sections: Permissions for data collection, study location, recruitment, ethical consideration, and data collection methods. My next chapter is the results chapter. It is divided to two sections: factors that pull teenagers toward eating home cooked traditional food and factors that make them push away consuming home cooked traditional food. I finish my thesis by concluding thoughts, limitations, and future recommendations.
1.1.2. Why did I choose to do this research?

Topics of nutrition and food have always been my interest since I graduated from high school in Saudi Arabia. I earned my Bachelor degree in Food and Nutrition, and was really keen to learn more by conducting research in this field. Studying nutrition has opened my eyes to the unhealthy dietary habits practiced by people in Saudi Arabia. I started to realize the effect of Westernization on our food. I realized that in a short amount of time, our food has transitioned rapidly to be just like the Western one. I started to realize how people of different ages are adopting the Western diet. Western restaurants have spread massively all over the Kingdom. More and more unhealthy habits are being adopted in our everyday lives, for our special occasions, and on our special holidays. I started to realize the power of forces that encourage people to eat unhealthy and adopt unhealthy dietary habits and how those were more powerful than all efforts made to provide sufficient nutritional education and to spread nutritional campaigns. Internet, TV, and street advertisements are all sources that encourage people to eat unhealthy. I became keen to investigate the “why” and “how” questions about this transition from consuming the traditional healthy diet to an unhealthy Western-like diet.

When I was young, I used to eat McDonalds a lot and fast food was my favorite food. When we had gatherings with relatives, massive amounts of desserts, unhealthy snacks and unhealthy dinner items were served. When I gathered with friends, only unhealthy snacks were served in addition to soda. So, I used to encounter unhealthy food all of the time. But at home, we regularly ate traditional Saudi food. Mom used to cook traditional food every day. At that age, I didn’t think of the unhealthy choices I was making until suddenly, mom was diagnosed with diabetes and then after a year, dad was diagnosed
with diabetes too. Seeing them struggle and suffer made me more interested to do research about our Saudi dietary habits and what caused the shift to unhealthy diets.

At the time my mom and dad were diagnosed with this disease, Saudi Arabia was ranked as one of the top countries where people have diabetes and obesity. Within months, I started my Bachelor degree in Nutrition. Having to study nutrition in depth and knowing the risk of inheriting the disease, I was really worried that my siblings and I were also at risk of developing it. Watching my teenage sister and brother consume fast food and energy drinks frequently added another dimension of interest for me to do something. Although the efforts of one person may not be enough, I really wanted to do something regarding the adoption of unhealthy dietary habits in Saudi Arabia and I really hoped I could make a contribution. I remember in my first meeting with Dr. Elaine when we were deciding my research topic she asked me: “What do you want to do?” And I responded: “I want to change how people in Saudi Arabia eat! And she replied: “That is really optimistic and I appreciate your optimism but you know you can’t change it.” We laughed that my objective was impossible but I really hope that we reach a point where we really know how to choose healthy food and how to avoid unhealthy food. As teenagers are the most people affected by this big dietary change, and as they are at a vulnerable age, they are my biggest concern, and I wish that my research will be one step, even if it is a small step, to better health promotion toward this vulnerable generation of teenagers.

I understand that being a Saudi woman doing research about Saudi Arabia could be seen as a source of bias to the information presented in this research. But I think that my acknowledgement that I might bring my own biases helped me pay attention to
presenting my data without bias. I was surprised by much of what my teen participants told me and not surprised by other things.

1.1.3. My position as being an outsider and an insider researcher:

I am aware of my position as a Saudi female conducting research with participants in Saudi Arabia. According to Dwyer & Buckle (2009), insider researchers are researchers who conduct research with populations of which they are also members, so that the researcher shares an identity, language, and an experiential base with participants. An outsider researcher is outside the commonality shared by participants or doesn’t share the same membership or identity of participants. Therefore, I am aware that I am an insider because I am Saudi born and raised in Saudi Arabia, speak Arabic (the same language my participant speak), aware of the Saudi culture, and aware of the general nutritional habits of Saudi people. I am an “outsider” because I have been living in Canada for 6 years and therefore I return to Saudi with new eyes and can see different things. And given the rapid changes in Saudi, my teen years were quite different than those of my participants.

There are advantages and disadvantages of being in this position. Dwyer & Buckle (2009) state that there are advantages of being an insider researcher. It provides acceptance from the participants towards the researcher because they share the same identity or membership. They added: “the rapid acceptance leads to trust between them” (p. 58). This trust leads to openness from participants which provide greater depth of data (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Therefore, participants might be more willing to share their experiences because there is an assumption of understanding and an assumption of shared distinctiveness.
Despite these advantages, there are disadvantages of being an insider (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). There might be assumptions of similarities, which may lead participants to not explain their experiences fully. There is also the possibility of the researcher’s perceptions, which could affect the data collection or data analysis (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). I took a number of measures through my data collection in order to overcome these challenges associated with being an insider-outsider researcher. I asked varied questions to get deep information using my interview guide. I came to interviews assuming that I know nothing and that I am investigating everything. When analyzing my data, I tried to be as objective as possible, and I put my perceptions and judgments away.

1.1.4. Epistemological position

My approach is a social constructivist approach. Kim (2001) states that social constructivism “emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding”. It is based on the assumption that reality is constructed through human activity, knowledge is socially and culturally constructed, and that learning is viewed as a social process (Kim, 2001). In addition, knowledge and meaning are constructions based on our interaction with, and interpretation of the world (Bourgeault, 2006; Crotty, 2003). A social constructivist approach is unconcerned with making generalizations (Patton, 2002). This approach allows me to recognize my teenage participants as individuals with various experiences. Their lived experiences are developed through the way they see and experience the social world including their lives inside their homes with their families and outside their homes with their friends and others. Although all my participants are teenagers, I acknowledge that their experiences are different based on their interpretations.
of these experiences. As I take this approach, I do not intend to find “the truth” of teenagers’ experience but to acknowledge, understand, analyze, and interpret their individual perspectives.

1.1.5. Problem statement

Saudi Arabia has one of the highest prevalence rates of diabetes and obesity in the Middle East, especially among adolescents (AlAlmaei, 2005; Alherbish et al., 2008; AlOthaimeen et al., 2007; AlRukban, 2003; AlRethaiaa & AlShwaiyat, 2010; Badran & Lasher, 2011; & ElHazimi, 1998). A number of quantitative studies have investigated the dietary patterns of adolescents in different cities and regions in Saudi Arabia (AlHazzaa et al., 2014; AlMummar & ElShafie, 2014; AlNuaim et al., 2012; Attia & Farajat).

However, there is a lack of research examining the sociocultural factors that contribute to shaping healthy or unhealthy dietary habits, and there is no research that investigates the perspectives of adolescents themselves about the influences on what they eat. The existing literature on Saudi adolescents’ dietary habits, which is almost all quantitative, suggests that eating outside the home, particularly in fast food restaurants, is the most obvious reason for the change of current dietary habits of Saudi teenagers. My research focuses on studying the reasons why Saudi adolescents prefer this type of food, and how school, friends, parents, and family influence that preference. My goal is to understand the dietary habits of Saudi adolescents by analyzing their own perspectives on what they eat and what influences them.
1.2. Background

1.2.1. Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is one of the largest and wealthiest countries in the Middle East with a population of 29 million people, and it is the 12th largest in the world (Coleman, 2014). Most Saudis live in urbanized areas and 30% of them are concentrated in three major cities: Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam (AlZahrani, 2008). Saudi Arabia possesses 25% of the world’s petroleum and has been ranked as the world’s largest exporter of petroleum (Coleman, 2014). Saudi Arabia occupies a significant place in Islam as it has the two largest holy mosques in Makkah and Madinah (Coleman, 2014; Sadiq & AlGwaiz, 2013). Saudi Arabia’s economy is dominated by the oil sector and is “characterized by strong government control over major economic activities” (Coleman, 2014). Beginning in 1970, the Kingdom has witnessed rapid economic growth, as oil revenues increased dramatically (Khalidi, 1984; Musaiger, 1993).

1.2.2. Family role in Saudi Arabia

Family is an important part of the Saudi identity and plays a significant role in Saudis’ lives (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012). Each citizen in Saudi Arabia has an extended network that includes parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and cousins (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012). Islam, which is the main religion in Saudi Arabia, encourages Muslims to “maintain close relationships with their family members by visiting them, providing them with money, supporting them when in need, showing appropriate respect and practicing compassion” (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012; AlSaggaf, 2004).
In addition, honor is one of the most significant values in the Saudi culture. Honor in Saudi Arabia is about reputation. An individual should be aware of how he/she behaves, talks, and acts to save the reputation of him/herself and the reputation of his/her family. If the honor of an individual is tarnished, he/she will bring shame to his/her family (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012). Saudi people are family oriented and their families play an important factor in their lives (Almutairi & McCarthy, 2012).

1.2.3. Fast food in Saudi Arabia

Many popular US fast food chains like Burger King, KFC, and Mcdonalds have opened in Saudi Arabia since 1990. These restaurants can now be found in Riyadh, Jeddah, and other major cities in Saudi Arabia (Bhuian, 1999; Mousa, 2013). In 2011, there were a total of 12,700 fast food outlets of all kinds in Saudi Arabia, with estimated sales of about $3.89 billion annually (Mousa, 2013). As stated earlier, with the economic growth in the Kingdom, income per capita has increased significantly from $20,276 in 2008 to $24,276 in 2012. With the increase in household incomes, eating out has become an affordable activity, as well as an entertaining one (Bhuian, 1998; Bhuian, 1999; Mousa, 2013). Fast food restaurants have become sites of entertainment for Saudi families where they can eat together as families and where kids can enjoy playing in the playground areas. Bhuian (1998) conducted a study in Jeddah, the second largest city in Saudi Arabia, and argues that fast food restaurants are becoming more popular for many reasons, including the rapid change of lifestyles of Saudi people.

In addition to the rise of income, there are other factors that encourage Saudis to eat in fast food restaurants. Bhuian (1999) concluded that taste and variety are the attributes that Saudi people most seek when eating at fast food restaurants. Because of that, fast
food chains in Saudi Arabia compete to provide the best taste and variety of food to meet the desires of Saudi consumers (Bhuian, 1999). The popularity of US fast food restaurants in Saudi Arabia can also be explained by the Saudi people’s enthusiastic adoption of the Western consumption culture (AlHazzaa et al., 2014; AlNuaim et al., 1996; AlRethaiaa & Fahmy, 2010; Bhuian, 1999; Gasbarrini & Piscaglia, 2005; Washi & Ageib, 2010). However, food from US fast food restaurants is high in fat, sodium, and calories, and contributes to obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases (Washi & Ageib, 2010). Therefore, adoption of the Western diet poses a health threat to Saudi people, especially vulnerable population like teenagers.

1.3. Why Saudi Arabia?

As stated earlier, the rapid changes happening in Saudi Arabia have affected the Saudi population in many ways including their health. Cardiovascular diseases are now common among all ages (AlAlmaei, 2005;; AlOthaimeen et al, 2007; AlRukban, 2003; AlRethaiaa & AlShwaiyat, 2010; Badran & Lasher, 2011; and ElHazimi, 1998; Khalaf et al, 2015; El Mouzan et al, 2010; Al-Nozha et al, 2005). With the rapid nutritional transition they encountered, traditional food is now replaced with fast food that is high in fat, sugar, and salt (AlOthaimeen et al, 2007). Studies have also revealed that the increase of those cardiovascular disease is due to the increasing consumption of animal products and refined foods in the diet at the expense of vegetables and fruits (Amin et al, 2008; Mahfouz et al, 2008)
Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1. Literature about adolescents’ dietary habits

Adolescence is a significant stage of life characterized by rapid growth and maturation, when adolescents begin to form their identity and become more autonomous (Washi & Agib, 2010). It is a stage when dramatic modifications and changes in lifestyle patterns can occur. AlFaris (2015) argues that adolescents begin to make more unhealthy food choices, start to eat outside the home, adopt sedentary behaviors and become more physically inactive. One of the crucial lifestyle changes that adolescents may experience in this stage of life is developing independent eating habits. Eating habits formed in this stage are significant because they may last for a long time and might be difficult to change in adulthood (Alfaris, 2015; Washi, 2010; Wills, 2005). Many factors contribute to shaping adolescents’ dietary habits, which interact to form either healthy or unhealthy habits that may be long-lasting. According to Croll (2011), eating behaviors are “determined by a wide range of factors, including knowledge, attitudes, sociodemographic characteristics, and behavioral, familial, and lifestyle factors”.

Without an understanding of the factors that shape the diets of adolescents, it will be difficult to create nutrition education programs that encourage them to accept and adopt a healthy diet.

Although there is lots of information available about healthy diets and the healthy food choices an individual can make, adolescents continue to make unhealthy choices (Croll, 2001). Therefore, studying the factors that influence their food choices and eating
practices is essential to understand why they continue to make those choices. Moreover, understanding their perspectives on the food they eat and the choices they make might be more helpful in understanding the deeper meanings associated with those foods (Croll, 2001; Wills, 2005). According to Paquette (2005), individuals’ conscious assumptions about food are key determinants of food choice. Therefore, studying adolescents’ assumptions and perspectives about their food choices and eating practices is more effective than studying only the external factors that impact such choices.

A number of researchers have recognized the significance of teenagers’ perspectives on their eating practices and have studied those perspectives using qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups (Mcphail, 2011; Stevenson, 2007; Wills et al, 2005; Wills, 2009). Wills et al. (2009) studied teens’ food practices at school and what influences their food choices at lunch time. The researchers conducted one-on-one interviews with teenagers at their homes and asked questions about everyday life at school, leisure time, home life, what teens ate and where food was eaten. After analyzing teens’ interviews, Wills et al. found that the majority of teens thought that the rules and constraints at the dining halls at their school were frustrating and unacceptable. Therefore, they preferred to eat out and be with their friends because their school only allowed same year students to eat in certain dining halls. They also found that some students preferred to have lunch at home to escape the unenjoyable, undesirable school atmosphere. Anxiety, bullying, and financial problems are all issues that were discovered when talking to teens. These underlying issues wouldn’t be discovered without a research approach that listens to what teens think. For example, if many students are skipping eating at schools’ cafeterias, changing the menu or introducing new food items wouldn’t
solve the problem if the problems were similar to those discovered in by Wills et al. (2009).

Mcphail et al (2011) took a similar qualitative, interpretive approach. They wanted to find out how teenagers construct themselves as “good” or “bad” through their perceptions of fast food and the people who consume it. After interviewing teens, they found out that they position themselves against those who eat fast food by considering themselves as “good” if not consuming fast food and “bad” if consuming it. They concluded that “teens articulated themselves as successful or unsuccessful through moral pronouncements about the unhealthful nature of fast food” (Mcphail et al, 2011, p.306). Therefore, the boundary between being “good” or “bad” has been articulated by teens through their understanding of the unhealthy nature of fast food. Again, such deep associations wouldn’t be achieved without talking to teens and listening to their perspectives.

Wills et al (2005) set out to explore teens’ perceptions of their own and others’ bodies. Specifically, they wanted to know how weight and body size influence other issues of teens’ everyday lives. During their interviews with teens, a number of factors emerged that were associated with their perceptions of their weights. An example of those factors is class. They found that teens from different social classes have different perspectives and perceptions about their bodies and people around them. So, working class teens were satisfied with their weight, despite being fat or overweight, and they were comfortable with their working-class peers. On the other hand, middle class teens valued thinness. They had negative attitudes about being overweight and recounted
incidents of bullying against obese teens. This study illustrates how using interviews is useful to examine deeper meanings associated with “fatness” or being overweight.

Looking at these studies, we see how issues related to food, eating and the body are complicated, and not simply concerned with health. For this reason, I intend to use a qualitative approach in my research to understand Saudi teens’ perspectives on what shapes their eating habits. Conducting interviews with teens will help me understand the meanings that Saudi teens attach to their eating practices.

To date, there have been only quantitative studies of the eating habits of adolescents in Saudi Arabia. This quantitative research has assessed Saudi teens’ consumption of healthy or unhealthy food in regards to recommendations of healthy eating (Alfaris, 2015; AlHazza, 2013; AlMuammar, 2014; AlRethaiaa, 2010; Attia, 2013; Farghaly, 2007; Washi, 2010). Although all of these studies were conducted in recent years, a time when Saudi Arabia has been witnessing significant changes in lifestyle, dietary habits, and economic changes, no research has explored teens’ perceptions of the impact of these factors. It is useful to understand the nutritional aspects of the Saudi diet; however, there is also a need to understand the deeper reasons underneath the changes in Saudi dietary habits and behind the adaptation of new dietary habits that are not necessarily healthy.

Such understanding is important because Saudi teens’ consumption of fast food and other unhealthy foods continues to increase. While quantitative studies can show us the types and extent of dietary change, we also need to understand the reasons why these changes are happening so that health promotion interventions can be more effective. For example, in their study on fast food consumption among adolescents, Alfaris (2015)
found that 79% of their participants ate fast food once a week and that 53% of them believed it to have high or acceptable nutritional value. Also, Fargaly et al (2006), who studied the impact of nutrition on the health of school students, found that 28% of the participants skipped breakfast and only 41% of them consumed milk everyday. Attia (2013) also studied dietary habits of Saudi adolescents and found that 97% did not eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables and 95% of them consumed fast food twice a week. Washi (2010) found that 87% of the participants took unhealthy snacks, which are high in sugar, sodium, and fat, daily. There is a need to understand the reasons behind these high and significant numbers. Hence, I hope that my study will serve to illuminate some of the reasons behind the choices adolescents make when they eat, whether in their homes with their families, or in school with their friends, or outside with their friends or families.

2.2. Literature about the nutrition transition

The nutrition transition is a phenomena that has been witnessed in many countries over the last three decades. Although some factors that led to this phenomena are varied among different countries, similar changes occurred globally that resulted in transformations of people’s lifestyles including their diets. Income growth, rise in economy, urbanization, media globalization, and increase of large international corporations, are the common factors that impacted countries around the world resulting in the nutrition transition phenomenon (Madanat et al, 2011; Nazmi and Monteiro, 2013; Ng et al, 2011; Popkin et al, 2011; Zaghlul et al, 2013). Following the discovery of oil in the 1960s, the Arabia Gulf countries have witnessed rapid transition from a traditional life to a modern and urbanized one (Ng et al, 2011). Ng et al. (2011) found that Emirati
women who moved to cities in the past five years, “had the highest prevalence rates for overweight and obesity and were the least active”. Along with other findings like low physical activity, high caloric intake, and increased snacking, they concluded that urbanized areas are more obesogenic than rural ones (Ng et al., 2011). In the case of Kuwait, income level isn’t the direct reason for the nutrition transition experienced by Kuwaiti people (Zaghlul, 2013). When the country’s economy increased due to oil revenues, government subsidy was available for all Kuwaiti people. With that, food prices were low for all people and food became available for all people no matter what their income level. However, increased availability of imported foods (85%) and increased access to fast food restaurants were the main reasons for the nutrition transition of Kuwaiti people from a traditional diet to a diet typical to the Western one (Zaghlul et al., 2013).

In Jordan, the nutrition transition impacted young Jordanians in a different way. Exposure to the Western cultural values through media influenced Jordanian women in terms of values associated with thinness and body image (Madanat et al, 2011). For young Jordanians who are exposed to Western ideals and values, perceptions of ideal body size and shape were altered, and therefore young Jordanians tend to adopt restrictive dieting and emotional eating (Madanat et al, 2011). So the case of Jordanian women is different from those in Kuwait and in the United Arab of Emirates. Thus, the impact of nutrition transition is not the same among people from different countries.

Similar factors have been observed in Saudi Arabia. This rapid economic growth has led to changes in many aspects of the lifestyles of Saudi people, including dietary patterns, especially increases in consumption of meat, milk, eggs, and cereals. The
consumption of meat increased almost 500% between 1976 and 1980 (Musaiger, 1993). Rapid economic development was also associated with decreased physical activity in the Kingdom (Badran & Laher, 2011; Millany, 2014). Indeed, as Bhuian (2000) stated, “in a matter of three decades, the people of Saudi Arabia have changed their lifestyles from tent dwelling and camel riding Bedouins to the most modern city dwelling citizens. They have adopted all the modern state-of-the-art amenities from the West into their lives” (p.43). As of today, the impact of the nutrition transition on the diets of young Saudis hasn’t been studied or researched, which is one of the goals of my study.

2.3. Literature on peer influence

Theorists have suggested that in adolescence, peers play a strong influence in the development of individual personality traits, physical characteristics and behavioral tendencies (Coleman, 1980; Epstein, 1989). A number of studies recognize the significance of peer influence in shaping adolescents’ food choices and eating habits (Hutchinson & Rapee, 2007; Kumpel Norgaard et al, 2013; Wills et al, 2005; Wills et al, 2009; Wouters et al, 2010). Adolescents choose to eat the same way as their friends eat to “fit in”. James (2009) states: “Teenagers are often reported as being influenced to perform or undertake specific practices if their close friends are known to or perceived to be doing so” (James, 2009, p.59).

As they move from childhood to adolescence, shared interests, activities and behaviors become more important for adolescent friendships, leading to greater similarity between friends (Goodwin et al, 2012). Adolescents may choose to eat certain kinds of food just because their friends do so. This can pose a risk for adolescents’ health as they might practice bad eating habits. Wouters et al (2010) studied peer influence on snacking.
and concluded that “snack and soft drink consumption are behaviors that are shared by adolescent friendship groups”. Adolescents imitate their peers in the food choices they make not only to “fit in” but also because of the perceived norms associated with consuming particular kinds of food or practicing certain social behaviors. Smoking, consuming alcohol, and consuming energy drinks, eating snacks may be taken up by adolescents because of the perceived social norms associated with these practices (Coleman,1980; Goodwin et al,2012; Wouters et al,2012).
Chapter 3
Methodology and methods

3.1. Methodology

My methodological approach aims to gain rich data that encourages participants to talk freely about their experiences and their interpretation of these experiences. As I discuss later in the following section, incorporating photos in the interviews evoked broader discussions and minimized the power between the interviewer and the interviewee.

3.2. Methods

In this section, I talk about all the details of my data collection procedure. I start with the permissions I had to get in order to do my data collection in Saudi Arabia. Then I talk about my research location and my meeting with the school principal to arrange everything related to my data collection in the school. After that, I explain my recruitment technique including my inclusion and exclusion criteria. Then I describe briefly the ethical considerations and how I protected the privacy and security of my participants. Lastly, I explain my data collection methods and procedures.

3.2.1. Permissions for data collection in Saudi Arabia

In order to do my data collection in a school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, I had to get permission from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. To do so, I sent two official documents to the “General Administration of Education in Jeddah”. The first one was an official letter from my supervisor, Dr. Elaine Power, that states the title of my research and the necessity of doing the data collection in a school in Saudi Arabia, as well as the
method I used for my data collection. The second document was an official letter from my sponsors, the Saudi Cultural Bureau in Canada, which stated that I am a current scholarship student in Canada. After I sent these two documents, I received the approval of my request to conduct a data collection in a school by the “General Administration of Education”. After I received this approval, I sent it to my sponsors, the Bureau, and they issued a ticket for me to go to Saudi Arabia. I waited in Saudi Arabia for three weeks waiting for my sponsors to approve my request to do my data collection. They processed my request and approved it after three weeks. Then I contacted the “Ministry of Education” and requested the final approval for doing my data collection in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. After getting this approval, I asked my sponsors to assist in finding a school for me to work in. They suggested a school for which they contacted the principal and sent her my permission to do my data collection.

3.2.2. Study location

After my sponsors suggested a school to work in, I went the next day to the school, introduced myself to the principal, and handed her the letter of information of my research (see appendix 1). The principal was cooperative and suggested I use the “extra-curricular activities room” for the whole month I planned to stay in her school. She told me that no one will be using the room because the period of these activities is finished. The principal gave me the key of the room and asked me to lock the door at the end of each day and hand it to her secretary, whom the principal talked with and introduced me to. She would unlock the door of the room every morning and hand me the key. The room is located on the main floor where the commons area of the students is located. That is why they lock it everyday, so that students don’t use the room.
During all my interviews, I had permission to lock the door. Locking the door was necessary while interviewing my participants because I wanted to avoid interruptions. In my first couple of interviews, many students went in and out just out of curiosity as I was someone new in their school and they wanted to see what I was doing. Teachers also interrupted my interview. Many teachers came while I was interviewing and were asking about the purpose of my research and were curious about what I was doing. So because of that, I had to ask for permission to lock the door and the principal was totally understanding and gave me permission. I was afraid that participants would feel threatened or uncomfortable by locking the door, yet they felt comfortable talking and locking the door actually gave them more freedom to talk.

During the first week when I didn’t have any interviews, I hung up 3 copies of my poster in the hallways beside students’ classrooms (see appendix 2). Throughout the first week, I kept the door open for students to come ask questions after seeing my research poster.

3.2.3. Recruitment

My recruitment technique had to be adjusted because of the students’ schedules. I started with distributing my research poster in the hallways beside students’ classrooms. The poster stated the purpose of my research, the inclusion criteria, and the location and time I was available at the “extra-curricular activities room” (see appendix 2 for the English version & appendix 3 for the Arabic version). For the purpose of my research, I only looked for Saudi participants because I wanted to focus on the nutrition transition of the Saudi traditional diet and the factors associated with the new dietary habits of Saudis.
Moreover, if I included non-Saudis, I would not be able to compare the past and present in Saudi Arabia, and the significance of new social developments on food habits.

Living with parents was a significant inclusion criteria, because I wanted to study the influence of family on shaping the dietary habits of teens. In addition, I wanted to study the role of family meals in teens’ dietary habits, and whether the nature of the traditional Saudi family meal has changed from the past. Therefore, I decided to exclude students who didn’t live with their families. In Saudi Arabia, there is no legal minimum age for marriage (Mobarak, 2010, p.115; Sandhu, 2014). It is possible that there are students who study at a secondary school and are married. I didn’t want to include any married students in my study because I wanted to focus on studying the influence of the family of origin on food practices. Being married at a young age, a teen has to take on many responsibilities, and with that, she may face difficulty dealing with that and experience stress (Shawky, 2000). Therefore, married teens have different lives than unmarried ones and this would affect my data analysis.

Participants who were willing to participate met me at the room in the hours assigned in the poster. Six participants came the next day after I distributed my poster. They came from the same class and because I knew at that time that their schedule was really tight, because their exams began in three weeks time, I asked them if they could come at the end of the week to have a general meeting with all participants to introduce my project and to hand in the consent letters. They all agreed to come at the recess period for 20 minutes.

I asked them if they were Saudis, whether they lived with their parents, had access to internet, had a cellphone with a camera and whether they were married. I wanted to
include participants who have access to TV and internet because I wanted to discuss the influence of them on food choices. I didn’t see that as a barrier to recruiting participants because mostly everyone has access now to TV and internet in Saudi Arabia. I also asked them if they had a cellphone with a camera because it is more convenient to take photos with a cellphone especially when it comes to taking photos of the food they eat.

When I knew they fit my inclusion criteria, I had them write their names, their class number, and their phone number. I also asked them to talk to their friends and whomever they know at the school to participate in the study. So I used snowball sampling, which is a data collection method that starts with a few key informants who recommend other participants who meet the study criteria (Patton, 2002). In order to ensure the other participants met the inclusion criteria, I asked the participants to make sure to refer participants who are Saudi, lived with their parents, and were not married. The next day, six participants came to meet me saying they were interested in participating and said that their friends told them about the study. I asked them again the same questions to make sure they fit my inclusion criteria and then I asked them to come at the end of the week at the same day and time I confirmed with the first participants. I asked those participants as well to write their names, class number, and phone numbers.

In preparation for the “general meeting day”, I prepared a small presentation to explain the purpose of my research, go through the letter of information and consent letter, explain the procedure of taking photos, nature and length of interviews, and what they should expect during the whole process (see appendix 4, appendix 5, and appendix 6). All participants spoke Arabic, so information letter and consent forms were translated from English to Arabic (see appendix 7, appendix 8, and appendix 9). I also told
participants that I would give each of them an honorarium at the end of the project. The honorarium consisted of 30SR, $10 Canadian, the approximate cost of a fast food meal in Saudi Arabia. At the end of the presentation, I gave the participants 10 minutes to think about all the details of my research and consider if they wanted to participate. If they were willing to participate, I asked them to sign the consent letters. Participants didn’t have major questions, most of their questions were about the photos I asked them to take and about the nature of the interview. I collected the consent letters from the students. I prepared a list with all possible interview times and dates and had students choose the times they were able to meet me. The principal suggested I meet participants during the recess period so that I didn’t affect their classes or schedules.

Only girls were included in my research because of the school structure in Saudi Arabia. Girls and boys study in separate schools and there is no mixing of genders in any school in Saudi Arabia. Only men are allowed to work or enter boys’ schools, and only women are allowed to work or enter in girls’ schools. Therefore, I am legally not allowed to do my research in boys’ schools. In brief, I recruited research participants who were Saudi females, single, 15-16 years old, healthy, speak Arabic, have access to the internet, have a cellphone with a camera, live with their parents, and were willing to participate in this study.
3.2.4. Data Collection

3.2.4.1. Methods used for data collection

3.2.4.1.1. Photo elicitation

I used photo elicitation in my study. It is a method that involves taking photos and using them as a tool in interviewing research participants (Harper, 2000). Incorporating photographs taken by participants into interviews is a technique that can help evoke longer and more comprehensive interviews (Harper, 2000). In addition, Croghan (2008) argues that using photos in interviews instead of words “elicit more concrete information, act as a trigger to memory and are likely to evoke a more emotional many-layered response in participants.” Photos evoke deeper consciousness of the human brain than words do and therefore, more information is elicited. Also, photographs have the ability to depict social intimacies between individuals that words may not express (Clark-Ibanez, 2004; Harper, 2000). An example of that is a photograph of a family or of someone in his or her society or community (Clark-Ibnex, 2004). Clark-Ibanez (2004) argues that photographs used in photo elicitation have a dual purpose. They work as a tool for researchers to expand on questions and they provide participants a unique way to express dimensions of their lives (Clark-Ibanez, 2004). Photo-elicitation helps ease the awkwardness of interviews because the photograph represents something in the life of the interviewee and gives him or her a starting point for discussion (Clark-Ibanez, 2004).

Incorporating photos in interviews has other advantages for the interview process. Manderson et al. (2006) argue that quality and content of an interview can be influenced
by the nature of interviewer-interviewee relationship, and that the researcher should be aware of the factors that influence this relationship. I knew that my position as the interviewer could be seen as a source of power and that this factor may have the potential to affect the quality and the credibility of the information given by my participants. The interviewees can experience the interviewer as a person who possesses power over them because “the interviewer sets the stage, controls the setting, controls the script and initiates the questionings in accordance with his or her research interest” (Anyan, 2013, p. 4). By talking about the photos they’ve taken, the interviewees lead the discussion and have control over the subject being discussed in the interview. Photo elicitation also facilitates the interview by helping to build rapport between the interviewer and interviewee.

3.2.4.1.2. Semi-structured interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews, which are interviews, in which the researcher knows the general information desired, but specific questions are based on the interviewee’s responses. It is different than a structured interview, where a set of questions is constructed before the interview and the interviewer goes through the questions one by one in a set order, no matter what the responses of the interviewee. Semi-structured interviews have advantages over structured ones, especially in qualitative research. The open nature of semi-structured interviews evokes broader and deeper discussions, and therefore more meaningful data can be collected (Patton, 2002). As my research involves discussion of eating habits that can be influenced by many factors, semi-structured interviews offer advantages. I really wanted to get my participants to talk freely about the food they consume and the meaning associated with it. Therefore,
conducting semi-structured interviews helped me create an interactive, stimulating environment for each participant, which enabled me to collect richer data.

3.2.4.2. Structure of data collection

I conducted two interviews with each student. The first interview was informal and focused on building rapport and a relationship with participants, getting to know them, introducing my project, and giving instructions about the project. The first interview took approximately 45 minutes. I went through the sample of the instructions that was given to participants (appendix 10) again with each student, and explained the use of Dropbox and how they were supposed to send the requested photos and confirmed the time of the next interview with each participant. I gave the participants one week to take the photos requested and asked them to send me the photographs at the end of the week via Dropbox. I met the students after printing the photos they sent me and conducted the second set of interviews.

Interview times were based on what suited each participant and were held in the “extracurricular activities room” that was assigned to me. The room is a quiet room and I had permission from the school principal to lock the room during the interviews. In the first minute of the interview, I told each participant that I would start the recording (they signed in the consent letter that they agreed that their interview could be recorded their interviews). Before I press the recording button, I told each participant to ignore the recording and act like it wasn’t there, and that I would be the only one who would have access to the recording, to help them feel comfortable to talk during the interview and not think of the audio recording as a formal thing. In the interview, I used an interview guide (see proposed interview guide in appendix 11). I didn’t follow a specific order of
questions, but as stated earlier, I asked questions depending on what interviewees said. The interviews were interactive. All questions were translated to Arabic and the language spoken during all interviews was Arabic. This interview took between 60 and 90 minutes.

The influence of facial expressions of the interviewer has been studies by a number of researchers as a strong factor on research data (Alby & Fatigante, 2014; Irvine et al, 2013; Turner, 2010). Roulston (2006) argues that “The interviewer’s actions (e.g. nods, smiles), reveal to have relevant consequences in the development of the interview”.

Acknowledging that my facial expressions and gestures can potentially affect my participants’ responses and subsequently my research data, I had to find a way to make sure that my participants talk about their perspectives freely without perceiving what would impress me.

After my first two interviews, I realized that participants were influenced by my facial expressions. For example, I smiled after hearing one of the participants talking about her family and how family time is valued. I believe that she got the impression that I was impressed, and she continued to mention the topic of family importance throughout the interview. I believe she did this to impress me that she is a family oriented person.

Another example was when I asked one participant about the influence of her friends on her food choices. While asking that question, my facial expression was serious and it may have suggested to the participant that I see friends’ influence as something bad. To show that she is a good person or a person who is independent, she continually stated that no one influences her food choices. She even referred to “others” when talked about friends’ influence as a way to show that she isn’t like other people who are influenced by friends.
In both those two participants’ second interviews, I realized there were contradictions in what they told me. Responding to other questions about friends’ and family influence that weren’t as direct as the ones in the first interview revealed to me that the reality is the opposite of what they told me initially. I was able to reveal more of the reality, encouraging participants to talk about their actual food preferences, food choices, and eating habits by having a “neutral” face. Alby & Fatigante (2014) argue that “By responding with a neutral posture, the interviewer follows a logic of understanding for which the ability to openly listen and understand the interviewee’s perspective is based on the avoidance of personalization”. Mallozzi (2009) also adds that staying neutral is conceived as “not taking sides, avoiding judgments, or evaluations of the interviewee’s opinions or behaviors, avoiding disclosure of personal beliefs or experiences related to the interview’s object.”

Although it was hard, I had to stay neutral as much as I could to achieve the goal of encouraging the participants to feel that I am openly listening and understanding. In addition, I had to hide my judgments to avoid their perceptions of what impressed me or what did not. I found that my neutral gesture allowed me to gain richer data and most importantly, I had the ability to know the “truth”. Participants were able to tell me the truth because they didn’t know which sides I take and what responses would have impressed me.

Another problem I encountered during the first three interviews is that I believed I couldn’t ask the participants everything I wanted to. That means that I felt that the interview time was wasted on discussing topics that weren’t necessarily relevant to my research questions. I ended up going home and finding that I didn’t get as much data as I
wanted. So in order to overcome that, I prepared a list of the topics I needed to cover with each participant (see appendix 12). I brought this list with me throughout the rest of the interviews and it really helped. In every interview, I went through the list frequently to check the topics I covered with the participant and make sure I cover as much topics as possible. During that, I also checked the time frequently to know what possible topics I could cover in the time remaining.

Incorporating the photos in my interview helped me as well. The photos helped me ask more questions and relate the questions to things I wanted to investigate and discuss with participants. For example, viewing figure 1, the obvious question that comes to one’s mind would be: what is this dish? Who made it? Is this at home or outside? But looking closely, I had the ability to ask more detailed questions and get information about aspects I want to discuss in my research. For example, noticing four spoons, I asked who else shared the food with her. Then I expanded to questions about family meal and whether she eats with her family and why. I also asked if the food was cooked by someone or brought from outside. Then I expanded to questions about outside food and the availability of restaurants in Saudi Arabia. I also noticed a container and asked her what did it contained and when she said it is a home made salad made by her mom, I expanded to questions about parents’ influence and moved to talk about her mom’s cooking. She also talked about traditional food that she was raised to eat and that it is a habit for her. So from this example, it shows that it was useful to have that list with me to think of questions that cover the topics I wanted to cover and I used participants’ photos to help me with that.
3.2.4.2.1. Contradictions during interviews

As I stated earlier, being an insider-outsider researcher can influence the nature of the interview. I tried to help participants feel comfortable talking about everything I asked them, hoping that they would not feel they had to present a certain way of eating to gain my approval. But still, many participants contradicted themselves either during a single interview or between the two interviews. Participants either wanted to present an image of themselves as family oriented, healthy individuals or as independent individuals who make their own choices. Most participants appeared to show me a side of themselves that I believe they expected would either impress me, or would help them feel that they are good individuals. Being family oriented is perceived as “good” in the Saudi culture, so many participants started their interviews with photos that showed they love their families and they spend a lot of time with them. But all of these participants, except for one, ended up telling me at other points that they spend most of the time with their friends and they don’t spend much time with the family. For example, Maya started the interview talking about a Saudi traditional dish she cooked with her mom (see figure 2).
She said: "This is “Fattah” bread pieces with beef" and it comes with this soup. Me and mom are the ones who made this dish”. When I asked her if she regularly cooks with her mom, she responded: “Yes I do, actually she is the one who made me love cooking, and you can say that cooking is my hobby and I love trying new things. I cook with mom mostly everyday, I enjoy that”. The next photo she shared was a photo of mango pieces (see figure 3). She also wanted to show that she is attached to her mother and that she is a family oriented person.

She said: “Those are mangos, I love eating fruits. We, at home, love fruits a lot.. I like fruits and vegetables in general but we tend to love fruits more”. When I asked her who made her love fruits, she said: “Mom (smiling), she is the one who make us love everything. Like my mom is a foodie person but she really takes care of her body, she
always eats healthy and encourages us to eat healthy. Like she tries to convince us in a
good way. She always goes: just try.. just taste.. if you didn’t like it, it is ok, at least you
tried it” So in discussing these photos, it shows that Maya is attached to her mom and her mom takes a significant part in her life. In the second interview, she didn’t mention her mom at all and all she talked about was her friends and how they have stronger influence on her food choices than her mom. When I asked her who influence her food choices in general? she said: “When it comes to my food choices, honestly my friends influence is stronger because mom’s way of convincing is a little annoying. But my friends know what to say to convince me.” So for Maya, she wanted to show that she is family oriented but when realizing that I wasn’t impressed and that all I cared about is having an open conversation, she talked about her friends.

Other participants wanted to show that they know how to make healthy food choices but ended up talking about the unhealthy ones they make everyday. For example, Reham only took photos of food she claimed she consumes because she is on diet. The first photo she shared was a photo of a salad (see figure 4).

![Figure 4: Chicken and vegetables salad](image)

She said: “this is a salad, it has all kinds of vegetables. I have to eat healthy because I am on a diet. You know when you’re on a diet, you have to eat salads, grilled meat and stuff,”
so yeah this was my lunch.” She also shared another photo to show she knows the healthy food choices one should make when being on a diet (see figure 5)

Figure 5: Yogurt and a green apple

She said: this was my dinner. I always have yogurt and fruit for dinner. You know, it is healthier for a person to eat light food before going to sleep.” When I asked her why, she said: “because it is one of the causes of obesity that people eat heavy food before going to sleep” I asked her later about what she meant by heavy and what kinds of food she considered heavy and she said that it is the food that contains a lot of carbs and fat. She said that traditional food is considered heavy for her. At the end of the interview, I asked Reham if she eats fast food and she said: “yes of course, McDonalds is my favorite food. There is one really close to us and when I call them, they know my name and my order!” So, Reham wanted to show that she knows how to make healthy food choices but said at the end that she regularly eats fast food, which is considered as a bad food choice.

Wejdan was similar to Reham in showing that she makes healthy choices but then makes unhealthy ones. She talked about a photo of yogurts with oats and fruits (see figure 6).
She said: “this is yogurt with oats and fruits. I love eating yogurt with oats and different kinds of fruits. I saw these in Instagram and got really attracted to this healthy side, whenever I study, I only eat these” She shared another photo of potato chips (see figure 7).

She said: “I have to have snacks when I study for exams. Like before the exams period, I go buy potatoe chips, candies, and chocolate so that I eat them while studying” So, although she said at one time that she only eats healthy snacks when studying, she said here that she eats unhealthy ones when studying.

For Nawal, she wanted to show that she preserves eating traditional food, and that she was raised eating traditional food, but then she talked at the end about how she loves Chinese food and that she loves eating at Chinese restaurants and she clearly expressed that outside food attracts her more than home cooked food. She started with sharing a photo of a traditional meal cooked by her mom (see figure 8).
She said: “This is our favorite meal at home, we have to have this meal once a week.”

When I asked her if she regularly eats at home she said: “mom and dad raised us eating these food. So we loved them because of them, and we're now got used to eating those traditional food, and we even crave them. I love eating traditional food more than outside food.” Later, when she talked about another photo she shared of snacks served at her friend’s gathering, she talked about her preference of outside food (see figure 9).

She said: “This was when my friends came over. Of course in every friends gathering, there should be chips, candies, soda and these stuff. And of course dinner is always from outside”. When I asked her why should dinner always be from outside? She said:

“Because I am a teen girl and we, teen girls, love outside food. It attracts me better than home food”. So, even though she said at the beginning she prefers home food, she said at the end that she prefers outside food.
In conclusion, these contradictions show many layers of struggles. Teenagers wanted to show that they are good individuals in many ways. They do this either by showing they preserve their culture and their family traditions by eating home traditional food and eating with the family, or showing they have a choice and they know how to make the right choices. They used their photos to express that they are good people. But in some instances, they left with having to say the reality and that they indeed do make unhealthy food choices and that even though they eat traditional food, they prefer outside food. These kinds of struggles are apparent in many instances of participants’ interviews.

Although these contradictions could be seen as a source of unreliable data for research, I spent a lot of time analyzing my data to find out these contradictions and I tried to make connections to what the intentions of participants when they gave responses that are opposite to each other. Looking at these contradictions, I realized that this what the situation in Saudi Arabia looks like. Teens want to make healthy choices or want to stay connected with their families, while in the same time, there are forces that pull them toward making unhealthy food choice. I talk about this in detail in the next chapter, my results section.

3.2.5. Ethical consideration

During recruitment and interviews of participants I used full names. During the transcription of field notes into research notes after the interview, all identifying information was excluded from these notes. Identifying information was kept in a file protected by a password in my personal computer. In my thesis, only pseudonyms are used for identifying my participants. Audio and transcription files were labeled with an alias and password-protected on my personal laptop, along with the alias key (with the
real names and contact information of participants.) Transcriptions and research notes included only the interviewee alias; personal names referred to by interviewees during the interviews were replaced during transcription and research notes. All data was kept and archived by me in an encrypted file on an external hard drive after data collection was completed. All data will be destroyed after the project is complete. Participants signed in the consent letters that they agreed to record their interviews. They also consented that I can use their photos in my research.

My research was approved by The General Research Ethics Board (GREB) at Queens university (see appendix 13 & appendix 14).
4.1. Data analysis

Data analysis is a process that starts even before conducting the interviews (Patton, 2002). My research data were analyzed using a qualitative interpretive approach. I followed the stages of qualitative data analysis described in Lacy (2011). I started my analysis with making field notes as soon as possible during the interviews. In the field notes, I quickly took notes of anything I thought significant and made short analysis in parenthesis. I assigned codes that represent the notes I took on each participant that helped me then in my analysis. After each interview, I took two minutes looking at the notes and tried to give codes as much as I could. When I was done with all interview, I made a chart where I made a summary of the most significant field notes for each participant (see appendix 15). After I finished all interviews I started my transcription process. The transcription process took a very long time as I had to transcribe each interview in Arabic and then translate it to English. I talk about transcription and translation in details in the next section. After I translated all transcriptions, I continued my analysis process which started with the field notes. I printed the translated interviews and made a file for each participant. I put the field notes of each participant along with her two interviews transcribed in English as well as her photos printed. I ended up having 12 files, a file for each participant. As a consideration of privacy and confidentiality, these were kept in a locked cabinet at my home in Saudi Arabia. I was the only one who had the key for this cabinet. I analyzed each interview separately starting with coding.
Coding is the process in which words, sentences, or paragraphs are given key words or codes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). It organizes the text in interview transcripts and helps in discovering patterns within that organizational structure (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Coding make it easier for the researcher to compare information and it facilitates the development of new connections and concepts (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Auerbach & Silverstein (2003) argue that researcher will be able to discover patterns that he or she wouldn’t be able to see with the massive amount of text when starting the analysis process. This is exactly what I faced, I left with massive amount of text and needed to find a way to organize my data to make analysis easier. I used Auerbach and Silverstein book on qualitative data analysis as a guide through my analysis (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Because they used a theory-based process, I only used their initial steps until forming themes. I really found their steps in the coding process easy to follow and apply to my kind of research. They explain each step in details and apply their example to show the reader how to do it. Briefly, they state that “coding move from “raw text” to “research concerns” in small steps, each step building on the previous one”. They state that the steps of coding move from “raw text” to “relevant text” to “repeating ideas” to “themes” to “theoretical concerns” to “theoretical constructs” to “theoretical narrative” to “research concerns”. So, I followed these steps until I formed “themes”. I started with my interview transcriptions as my “raw texts”. Then I highlighted “relevant text”. I decided what is relevant and what is not, depending on my research questions in mind. Then I randomly selected one participant are a “starter text” as explained in (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003) book. I then transferred all highlighted text from my “starter text” in one file. After that, I
went through the transferred highlighted text to search for ideas that I knew were repeated frequently by other participants. I knew what ideas were repeated because I read through all my transcripts to familiarize myself before starting my data analysis. So, I created a file and named it repeating ideas from first starter text. In this file, I gathered all ideas extracted from my first starter text that I knew were repeated by others. Then I went through other participants’ transcribed interviews and looked for ideas similar to the ones in the file I created (see appendix 16). I grouped similar ideas together to organize the file. I kept looking for repeating ideas until I went through all relevant ideas highlighted from the “starter text”. Then I chose another participant as a “starter text” and did the same. I ended up choosing four participants until I covered all the “relevant text” from all participants. Then I started to form “themes”. I did that by looking at each group of repeating ideas and think through them, find the link between them, and give a title (see appendix 17 for examples of themes assigned to repeating ideas). This was a comprehensive and an inductive process that I had to read many articles and books to understand and analyze what participants said and why they said what they said. In other words, I had to find the meaning behind those texts. I had to look beyond what participant said to see how the influenced participants’ responses (Power, 2004). After I formed all the themes, I looked at all the themes I began to find a broad link between all the themes. More details about what I found about the struggle teenagers faced between consuming traditional food and consuming outside food is in my results chapter.
4.2. Transcription and translation

I am a native Arabic speaker. I have confidence in my language both speaking and writing and I studied English for 11 years in Saudi Arabia, beginning in the 6th grade until my last year in college. Then I traveled to Canada to get my Master’s degree, so I studied English as a second language in an academic Canadian institute. So, I have studied English for a total of 13 years. I studied in an English school for two years and I have been living in Canada for six years, living my everyday life in an English-speaking environment, so I am familiar with the language here. So, for these reasons, I believe that I am qualified for translating and transcribing my research interviews.

In terms of transcription, I translated all my interviews from Arabic to English word by word. But in some cases, I faced some issues with translating Arabic slang words, religious phrases, and famous Arabic quotes and sayings for which I can’t provide a literal English translation. In these cases, I had to find equivalent words in English. For example, a famous quote in Arabic that I translated was: “to die with a group is better than dying alone”. The participant didn’t literally mean that she wanted to die with a group, she just wanted to say that in some situations, she preferred to be included in a group than being alone. Another example is a slang phrase said frequently by participant in response to the question: “why do people eat outside?” Participants frequently said: “to change the weather”. This translation is a literal translation that I avoided and had to find equivalent phrase in English. By this phrase, they meant breaking the routine of eating at home. So, I translated it to “to change the routine”. Many religious phrases were used as well throughout the interviews and I had to find equivalent words or phrases for them. An example of that is: “glory be to Allah”. This phrase is used frequently by Muslims when
they are shocked, surprised, or impressed. I didn’t translate that literally and found that “wow” would mean the same thing and would represent that participants were surprised or impressed.

4.3. Trustworthiness

To ensure the quality of my research, I used the process of “validation” throughout my research. As I take a social constructivist approach, I didn’t aim to validate the objectivity of the knowledge produced, but I explain here how trustworthiness is addressed from a social constructionist perspective. Validation is part of trustworthiness and is an ongoing process that occurs throughout the research process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). By validating research data, the researcher must question and theorize the data, interpretation, and methods (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). S/he must ask questions from different perspectives which may, or may not, support the researcher’s understanding (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In my data analysis chapter, I addressed many issues of trustworthiness. I referred to various books and articles to understand and interpret my data; Horace, 2011, James, 2009, De Vault, 1994 are examples of books I read to help me in interpreting my data. During interviews, I kept a small paper beside me while interviewing where I wrote things I needed clarified or confirmed from participants, and I asked them to give me a clearer understanding of what they said rather than making assumptions. I constantly made sure that my biases don’t interfere with the interpretation of my data. As recommended by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), I frequently questioned my interpretations of the data and consulted with the transcripts and my notes to recontextualise the coded information. I also met with my supervisor several times to check with her my interpretation and my analysis of the data.

Triangulation is a strategy often used to test the validity of qualitative research. Carter et al. (2014) states that triangulation refers to “the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena”. Golafshani
(2003) adds: “triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods.” Meijer et al (2003) distinguished five types of triangulation in qualitative research. The type that I used in my research is “triangulation by method”. It is referred to the combination of methods. There are many benefits of using this strategy for validating studies like mine. It provides more detailed and multi layered information about the phenomena under study (Meijer et al 2003). It is also considered as a “fruitful” procedure because it increases the researcher’s insight into the content of the data they’re seeking.

I used “triangulation by method” as a validation for my research as I combined two qualitative methods in my research which are photo elicitation and semi structured interviews. For my research, combining those two methods served as a tool to gain rich data and evoked monger discussions with participants. Participants’ photos helped me ask more questions and expand on covering different topics from one photo. Combining two methods also helped me in my analysis as it helped me linking categories and finding themes. I talked about how photos helped me in conducting my interviews in details earlier in my methods section.

Because I take a social constructionist approach, I do not aim to generalize my findings, but rather trust that the reader will assess whether my findings can be transferred to other individuals or situations.
Chapter 5

Results & Discussion

5.1. Results

After conducting my data analysis, it appeared to me that teenagers’ dietary habits and food choices are conflicted between factors that "pull" them towards eating home food or food choices made by their parents, and factors that "push" them away from consuming it. My analysis of the interviews with participants about their perspectives on the factors that influence their food choices revealed that they are actually in a struggle between wanting to feel connected with their families, having to adhere with family traditions, and a struggle of wanting to feel independent, keep up with modern life, and fit in the new modern society. I noticed that this "struggle" theme is apparent in most of my participants' responses to my interview questions. Sometimes they wanted to feel that they are independent and that they have a choice, and other times they wanted to feel that they are connected to their families and that they still preserve their family traditions.

While teens generally are in a period of maturation that involves this type of struggle, it might be stronger for teens in Saudi Arabia than other cultures, because of the strength and richness of family ties. Having to live with the rapid changes happening in Saudi Arabia adds another dimension to Saudi teenagers’ struggle to keep up with the modern lifestyle and to fit in this new world while balancing their desire to stay connected to family and traditions.

I decided to describe my results in two major sections. The first section is entitled “Factors that pull teenagers toward eating home cooked traditional food” and the second
section is entitled “Factors that make them push away consuming home cooked traditional food.” In each section, I discuss all the factors that either pull teenagers towards eating home food or that push them away from consuming it.

I chose to make traditional food the center of my discussion of my research results because of many reasons. Consuming traditional food is associated with preserving culture, family traditions, and family meals. But with the many changes happening in Saudi Arabia, consuming modern or Western food has become more popular and easier than consuming traditional food. In other words, many people are now concerned with keeping up with everything modern and want to adopt a Western lifestyle. Consuming Western food is associated with being modern and being up to date with everything new. So, because consuming modern food is more popular nowadays in Saudi Arabia than consuming traditional food, I decided to make consuming traditional food the center of my discussion. It is the food that Saudis are moving away from. By centering traditional food, I am not suggesting that it is better than modern food. Indeed, I think that discussing the factors that pull teenagers toward consuming traditional food and the factors that push them away from consuming it would shed light on the factors that contributed to the nutrition transition that happened in Saudi Arabia. It will also shed light on what current dietary habits of teenagers look like and the struggle they face during this time.
5.1.1. Factors that pull teenagers toward eating home cooked traditional food:

In this section, I discuss four factors that influence teenagers to eat home cooked food. When I talk about home cooked food, I mean the traditional Saudi food that mothers cook for their families. I don't discuss in this section any dish cooked by teenagers themselves at home or dishes they had at other peoples' homes like their aunts or their other relatives. I only discuss the "family meal" that includes mom's cooking. I chose to do that because I want to discuss how food is related to their relationship with their parents, their attachment to their parents, their adherence to family meals, and their food habits at home. I chose to discuss those aspects because I wanted to examine the factors that help them preserve eating home food despite the increase of foreign and fast food restaurants, availability of cellphones, popularity of internet and TV, and the many things that can influence them to eat food other than food at home, or make them busier so they don't have time to eat home food. Teenagers want to live a “modern” life, but the factors I discuss in this section "pull" teenagers toward wanting to eat home food and food that their mother cooks.

5.1.1.1. Mother’s influence

Mothers play a significant role in influencing teenagers to eat home food or food they never had before. Teenagers claimed that the nagging and the repeated trying is what makes mothers' influence effective to try new food whether home cooked food, fruits or vegetables. For example, Rania claimed that she used to not like the "Mulukhiya" (traditional Saudi dish made with corchorus leaves and meat) because she just doesn't "like trying new things". But when talking about the picture she shared, she said that her
lunch was "Mulukhiya" and when I asked her what made her try it? She said: "because mom kept telling me all the time to try it, I tried it."

For Maya, she doesn't have a problem trying new things but she "didn't feel like trying zucchini and eggplants, but ended up eating them". And when I asked her what made her try them, she said: "mom tried to convince me many times to try them and I eat them now and I even crave them". For other participants like Nawal and Reham, they claimed that it is not the nagging, but rather it is mom's way of convincing that makes them try new food. Nawal said: "Mom always convinces me to eat without forcing me, so I try it. Even if I didn't like it, I still tried it at least." And Reham stated: "she always be like: "just try.. just taste.. if you don't like it, just leave it. So, we always end up trying because of the way she convinces us".

In addition to the repeated trying and the way of convincing, trust is another reason that makes teenagers try food offered by their mothers. For example, Rana only trusts her mom and siblings to try new food because she is used to them and they know her taste. Nawal shares the same opinion about her mom's and siblings’ food choices as she stated: "Their taste is the same as mine, so they are the only ones who will get me to try new food". Indeed, mother's way of convincing, repeated trying, and the trust built between her and her teenage daughter are all factors that contribute to making teenagers eat food offered by her that they have never had before.

However, mothers were not a positive influence for all participants. Some participants claimed that their mothers can't possibly get them to try any kind of food. For instance, when asked about food choices offered by her mother, Sana's response was: "you can't trust if it will be delicious or not." Her reason for the distrust toward her
mom's food choices is because she thinks that family always offer choices that are healthy but not necessarily delicious. Just like Sana, Rania also responded that her friends were more likely to get her to try a new kinds of food. When asked about the reason, she responded: "because family, or mom specifically, is always concerned about my health, so the food they will get me to try will not always be delicious."

Friends’ influence is stronger than family for Samah as well. She stated: "I trust my friends more, family will not always offer tasty food.” Fatma is also influenced by her friends more than her family because she wants to eat just like her friends do. She said: "Like if I am eating something they don’t like, I'll quit eating it so that our food will be the same or if I didn’t like a particular food, but they eat it, I have to eat it so that we can all eat together the same food.” Wejdan's mom can't get her to try new food, because the food her mom offer is food that "has a lot of things and a lot of vegetables and it is fatty.” This shows that some participants were willing to try food offered by their moms and others will not, for different reasons.

Based on my participants’ perspectives, their mothers nag them “all the time” to get them to eat the food that the mothers want them to eat. I recognized that participants mentioned the use of this strategy by their mothers only when talking about healthy food choices that are not necessarily tasty. As a way of caring, mothers try hard with their teenage daughters and sons to ensure they eat healthy food, so they use a variety of strategies to do that, including nagging. Bassett et al. (2008) discuss nagging and other strategies used by mothers to encourage teenagers to eat healthy. According to their findings, they stated: “Adolescents mentioned their mothers telling them time and again to make their supper or to eat in healthy ways. By nagging, parents were sometimes able
to coax their teens to make one choice over another.” So, their findings are similar to mine when it comes to using the strategy of nagging to make teenagers choose to eat the healthy choices offered by their mothers. Mothers have to use those strategies in order to motivate their teenage kids to eat healthy because teenagers are now in a stage where they want to make their own food choices based on factors that are not necessarily related to health.

Elbel et al. (2011) used focus groups to examine the factors that teenagers are concerned about when making food choices. They found that hunger, food cravings, appeal of food, convenience of food and parental influence are among the most influential factors. Looking at these factors, one can notice that health is not one of the priorities teenagers are concerned about. This may help explain why mothers have to try hard to convince teenagers to eat healthy food.

Nagging does not always result in teens eating the food offered by their mothers. Participants who claimed that their mothers got them to try food they didn’t want to try, clearly expressed that their mothers try hard and that she convinces them without forcing, which is actually the reason they think their mother is the only person who could make them try food they don’t want to try or have never tried before. On the other hand, those who said they can’t be influenced by their mothers were concerned about the taste of the food that their mothers offer and claimed that the food they offer is always healthy but not necessarily tasty. This shows that they understand and that they are aware that the food offered by their moms is healthy, but they choose not to eat it because the taste factor is more important for them than health.
5.1.1.2. Love of mothers’ cooking

Attachment to and admiration of mother’s cooking is another factor that pulls teenagers toward eating food made at home by their mothers. Many participants expressed their love of their moms’ cooking and that they love home food because their mom cooks it. Nawal stated: “I love home traditional food because mom cooks it from her heart.” Bayan also stated: “Mom is the one who made me love home food and cooking”. She expressed her admiration for her mother’s cooking many times during the interview and she even bragged about it when she said: "At school, everyone will ask me to bring this dish which Mom cooks. Even the teachers, they took my mom's phone number to ask her about the recipe". Sana also stated: "I eat traditional food regularly. I crave different traditional food that my mom cooks.” Some home cooked food is only preferred if the mother cooked it. For example, Rana eats the okra stew only if her Mom cooked it. She said: "I only eat it from the hand of one person, Mom.”

5.1.1.3. Mothers encourage cooking skills

Another factor that supports teenagers love of home food is mothers' positive attitudes towards cooking. A number of participants expressed that they either love helping their moms to cook or love cooking because their moms always encourage them to cook. For Bayan, she said that her mom always gives her instructions while cooking and she is the one that made her love cooking. She said: "my mom is always like.. dice that.. mince this.. wash the rice and like that you know she always teaches me.” Safia also expressed her love of cooking because of her mom and her admiration to help her mom in cooking. When talking about the photo she presented (see figure 10), with a smile on her face she said: "Me and mom are the one who made this dish. It has zucchini, green
peppers, tomatoes, and half cooked rice. We stuffed the veggies and we cooked it.” When I asked her if she always cooks with her mom, she responded: ”I help her every once and a while, and I learned a lot while helping her.”

Maya started her interview talking about cooking and how her mom taught her how to make all kinds of traditional Saudi dishes. She also mentioned that her mother is the one who made her love cooking and she added: "You can say that cooking is now my hobby." Maya claimed that her mother is teaching her how to cook and do house chores so that she is prepared for marriage. Although her mother's primary goal was to prepare her for marriage, not instill a love of cooking, Maya loved cooking and eating home cooked traditional food. So for these teenagers, the love of home cooked traditional food came from their moms’ support of their cooking skills and helping their moms’ in the kitchen.

Although teenagers are in a stage when they want to be independent, family support is crucial in their lives (Horace, 2011). While they are in the process of being, and wanting to be autonomous individuals, family guidance is essential. Teenagers feel the need that they want to do things on their own, including cooking food. Mother’s
positive encouragement of cooking motivates teenagers to cook food at home. Doing so, enhances teenagers self-esteem and the feeling of being responsible individuals. These feelings are the ones that teenagers need at this stage of life and that subsequently could make them love cooking and consuming home food.

5.1.1.4. Home Cooked Traditional Food as a Habit

Many participants talked about consuming home cooked food as a habit that they're used to. According to them, eating traditional food cooked at home is something they didn't actively choose as much as they're raised to love. For example, Nawal talked about how she was raised to love home cooked traditional food. She stated: "For us, mom and dad raised us eating these foods. So, we loved them because of them, and we have now got used to eating those traditional foods, and we even crave them. And when we eat at restaurants for a long time, we crave home food."

One of the questions I asked most of my participants was: “What makes a person choose to eat home cooked traditional food or eat outside food?” Participants gave different responses to this question, but they all agreed that it depends on what the person is used to and that it is a habit that start from a young age. Bayan said: "It depends on what the mother raises her children to eat and what she has been giving them when they're hungry. Like it depends on what they're used to. If they're used to eating rice and lamb, they will grow up eating rice and lamb and like that." Maya's view was: "From two years until adolescence ..like you give him and he can choose.. and of course there will be things he likes and sometimes not. It depends if he accepts it or not. But mothers have to always try.. try to make their kids eat home cooked food.. like my mom has always been trying with us and it worked.” Maya also added: "yeah for me, I think
that parents are the main reason for eating or not eating outside food. They have to raise their children to be responsible and to be aware of what they’re eating because at the end, it is your health on the line, not others.” Safia also agrees with Maya's and Nawal's views. She stated: "the first thing and the main thing that makes a person is parents. They are the ones who will make the child love outside food or not. They have to be disciplined and not let their kids buy candies and outside food all the time.” In brief, teenagers agree that consuming home food is a habit that depends on how parents raise their kids to eat.

Other participants shared the same view on consuming home food as something a child gets used to, but they didn’t see it as a matter of choice. For example, when I asked Bayan the same question, she responded: "It depends on the mother, if she cooks at home or not, and also on what she regularly cooks. Like for me, mom always cooks rice and lamb. So I don’t have a choice but to eat, because I am hungry, I have to eat what is available.” Sana also shared the same view. She responded: "It depends. Like in our house.. when it comes to us.. Most of the food is the food that my father likes.. so lunch at home is always Arabic food. Like rice with chicken, and these stuff. And this is normal.”

As discussed earlier, eating habits formed in adolescence stage are strong and may last for a long time (Alfaris, 2015; Washi, 2010; Wills, 2005). Although teenagers are at risk of adopting unhealthy habits more than healthy ones. (De Vet et al, 2015) argue that “habits are formed when people repeatedly engage in the same behavior in the same context efforts from parents to raise good and healthy habits can result in teenagers preserving those good habits”. So, this means that repetition of encouraging them to
practice or do these habits could result in teenagers sticking to these habits for a long time.

5.1.2. Factors that push teenagers away from eating home cooked traditional food

With the rapid changes happening in Saudi Arabia in all aspects of life, Western ways of living are becoming more and more attractive especially for younger people. Like teens in other places, Saudi teens want to explore the world, discover opportunities, and use all that is available to create their own identities. This identity creation is influenced by many factors, inside and outside the home.

Teenagers in Saudi Arabia are now surrounded by Western consumer goods, services and technology that are very appealing to them but pose a threat to the maintenance of traditional Saudi culture and values. Modesty is one of the values that has a significant place in the Saudi culture. As the Saudi culture is dominated by the Islamic religion, Muslims are encouraged to be modest especially around members of the opposite sex. Therefore, Western “secular emphasis on sexuality” poses a threat to this value. Islam also values family and community. Muslims are encouraged to be connected with their families and to protect each other and Islam encourages people to be responsible and caring for their families throughout their lives. Western values of freedom and independence also pose a threat to these values of family and community (Hodge, 2002).

Preserving family traditions and traditional Saudi culture, including traditional food, is more challenging now because of the many Western, modernizing forces that Saudi teens encounter and the attractiveness of these forces. In this section, I discuss the factors that encourage teenagers to choose to push away from eating home cooked
traditional food and choosing to eat outside food or eat any food other than the traditional food cooked at home by their moms. By that I mean the factors that contribute to pulling teenagers from their home circle, whether factors related to their age as teenagers, or other factors in their environment.

5.1.2.1. Convenience of fast food

Almost all participants talked about fast food restaurants, their wide availability, their tasty food, their fast service, and their convenient delivery. They frequently mentioned fast food in their responses to different questions. The most popular shared answer was to my question about participants’ favorite restaurant was McDonalds. Rana's response was: "the best restaurant for me is Mc'Donalds.” Reham also said: "Mac’s my favorite." By "Mac", she meant McDonalds, which I confirmed while I interviewed my participants. Participants called it “Mac” to make the name shorter and easier. Wejdan also said: "Mac is my favorite one of course.” Fatma said: "no doubt, it is Mac. And I always get the big burger, the one called big tasty.” Rania said: "I would say Mac.. yeah it is the best.”

Although they all said “Mac” is their first choice, they weren't sure why. I asked them: “What makes McDonalds different than other restaurants?” Participants responded that the food was delicious, but had to think for a while before coming up with any other answers. They didn't have a clue what distinguishes McDonalds from other fast food restaurants or why they would choose to eat McDonalds rather than eating home food. Their answers suggested that they know that there is no specific reason, just that they just know they love to eat there. For example, Nawal's response was: "Umm.. maybe because it is available everywhere. Like in every street, you’ll find a Mac branch. So,
that’s why it is popular. It is close to everyone. Whenever they think to eat, there is a Mac close by. Even if they don’t deliver, people might go out just to buy from Mac.” She also had other reasons. She said: "And it is delicious and they have different kinds of burgers and chicken nuggets and stuff. so it satisfies all tastes." Rana's reason was: "because it is delicious.” Fatma's response was similar to Rana. She said: "because it is just so delicious.” Maya also commented on the deliciousness of food offered at McDonalds. She said: "their food looks appealing. And honestly, it tastes really great and better than the other ones.”

For Rania, she doesn't think that there is something that distinguishes McDonalds but rather, there are reasons that make her choose it over other restaurants. Her response was: "It is not like there is something that distinguishes it from other restaurants. But it is just that it is the closest to our house, so we always get food from there.” Reham wasn't too sure why she loves McDonalds but she tried to give as many reasons as she could to show that McDonalds deserves to be the best. Her response was: "I don’t know. It is close to home and I can even call them to order delivery. And they even know me. I don’t know, I just love this restaurant.”

Samah's response was fair but she was also hesitant to say it. Her response was: "Aaah..maybe because its meals are always the same.” Wejdan as well was hesitant in her response. She said: "Maybe because it is popular.. and aah..fast in delivery.” Participants also talked about the convenience of choosing to eat fast food rather than cooking at home or eating home food. For example, Reham talked about the convenience of ordering delivery than having to cook at home. She said: "Like if I don’t want to cook, I can just order delivery and it will be delivered just to my home.” Samah also talked
about fast food delivery as a feature that makes someone choose to order food delivered to home rather than waiting for food to be cooked or having to cook it. She said: "like when I am hungry and there is no food to eat and I don’t feel like eating rice or home food, I can order delivery." She also added that the internet made it easier and faster to order delivery. She said: "the reason why most people order fast food delivery is because we now have a lot of applications that you can download in your phone for food delivery. And people in social media advertise for these applications as well. So, people really like that, and it is really easy now to order food to your home while you're sitting at home and also when you don't feel like eating home food." Indeed, convenience, speed, taste, variety, and availability are the reasons that participants cited for choosing to eat fast food over home food.

Choosing to eat fast food over home food was a popular choice among all my participants. Similar to my findings, results of other studies conducted in different countries around the world show that fast food consumption is popular among teenagers (AlFaris et al,2015; AlMummar et al,2014; Forsyth et al,2012; Frank,2012; Fraser et al,2011; McPhail,2011; Seo et al,2011). As discussed in my introduction chapter, there is an increasing number of fast food restaurants in Saudi Arabia. As of today, there are international fast food restaurants in over 90 countries worldwide, including Saudi Arabia, and McDonald’s is now operating a chain of branches in 21 Saudi cities (http://www.mcdonaldsarabia.com). The large number of these fast food restaurants in Saudi Arabia makes them an easy and convenient choice for teenagers.

When it comes to choosing to eat fast food, Frank, (2012) argues that teenagers are concerned less about rationality than effectiveness. This means that they are likely to
choose what they “like” over what “benefits” their body and health. When it comes to food choices, they are more likely to choose, for example, delicious fatty food over low caloric food that might not be necessarily tasty. In other words, taste is an important factor for teenagers when choosing food. Most of my participants claimed that “because the food is delicious”, they choose to eat from fast food restaurants. Other studies also found that taste is particularly an important factor to teenagers (Goldberg and Gunasti, 2007; Hill, 2002; McPhail et al., 2011).

Participants also stated other factors influencing their choice of fast food beside taste. They claimed that time, convenience, and availability are the factors that make fast food their best choice. AlFaris et al. (2015) justify the preference of fast food among teenagers as they stated: “As taste, time considerations, convenience, and cost are major factors that contribute to an adolescent’s or young adult’s food choices, fast food restaurants serve as popular sites for their meals eaten outside the home.” Because fast food restaurants offered all those factors that teenagers look for when making food choices, they choose to eat fast food. They go with this choice because it is most suitable for them according to the factors they look for.

Other studies had the same findings as mine. Participants in the study by AlFaris et al. (2015) claimed teenagers eat fast food primarily for enjoying the delicious taste, followed by convenience. Similar reasons were reported among American students with reverse order, as they chose to eat fast food for limited time, followed by enjoyment of the taste (Driskill et al, 2006). In a Korean study, teens listed fast service, convenience, taste, and price, in that order (Seo et al, 2011). In conclusion, taste and convenience are
factors that push teenagers from consuming home food and pull them toward eating fast food for the enjoyment of taste and the convenience of service.

5.1.2.2. Weight Maintenance and Concern for Appearance

When it comes to food choices, teenagers may choose food based on motives that are not always related to taste or satisfying hunger. In other words, when teenagers are exposed to messages concerned about body image, appearances, beauty, and being healthy, they often choose food they believe will not affect their weight or their health and reject food that they believe does the opposite. A number of participants thought that consuming traditional food could affect their weight, so they chose to avoid it. For example, Rana said: "I stopped eating Saudi traditional food, I am on a diet." Reham also thought that it could affect her body weight. She said: "I have to have something light, rice and traditional dishes are heavy on my stomach." She added: "my family regularly eats the regular traditional food that my mom cooks, which is not considered diet food. But I don't eat with them, they all know that I am on diet." Fatma thinks that traditional food is healthy but she avoids it because of its high carbohydrate content. She said: "it is ok for me to eat traditional food, but because now I am on a diet, rice and carbs in general are prohibited." Wejdan's comment was: "I can't eat it, it is all fatty food." So for those participants, rejecting traditional food cooked at home is linked to concerns about weight gain and dieting.

Participants didn’t give detailed information about the food they consumed during their diet as much as information about the food they avoided. For example, when Reham talked about her family about the kind of food she calls "diet food", she said: “They eat the regular food that my mom cooks, which is not considered as "diet food", which is the
food I eat nowadays.” When she defined the food she eats, she said: ”I eat diet food. Like any food that doesn’t have sugar or a lot of fat.. like that, you know.” But when I asked her about the food she avoids, she gave details. She said: “I don’t eat rice dishes or pastas or stews, those are prohibited. “She added: “traditional food is heavy, I can’t eat it. Those traditional dishes and carbs in general are prohibited.” Rana also didn’t give many details about the food she consumes while she is on diet versus the food she used to eat before starting the diet. When I asked her if she eats traditional food, she responded: “No, I stopped eating that.” And when I asked her “What do you eat regularly in your average diet day?” she said: “Aaah.. like in the morning for example... two eggs for breakfast. For lunch, A salad and aaah.. maybe grilled beef or grilled chicken for example. For dinner, it can be a salad, or a juice, or yogurt. Like that. ”

Fatma also listed the food items and drinks she avoided to lose weight but gave general information about the food she consumes nowadays because of her diet. She talked about a drawer in her room she used to call the “drawer of happiness” She said it contained many varieties of chocolate bars, candies and energy drinks. When talking about her diet, she said: “Suddenly, I took everything out of the room. Everything that is unhealthy, I took it out. All the chocolates, candies, and energy drinks. And I started eating fruits and vegetables. My family was shocked and they were like: ”what is happening?” and I enrolled in a gym. And I am like: ”I have to lose weight”. I will only eat healthy. If anyone makes any food that is not healthy, I won’t eat with them.” As a response to my question : “do you eat with your family the home food that your mom cooks?” , she said : “No, pastas, stews, and rice and all those foods are prohibited.”
Indeed, participants were more concerned about the food that could make them gain weight than food that is healthier for their bodies. They are not concerned about the quality of the food they eat as much as wanting to eat food that they believe doesn’t affect their weight. In other words, they have a motive to avoid everything they think could influence their weight but not too sure what are the food items that they can consume instead of those that they avoid. In conclusion, concerns about weight loss push teenagers away from consuming home food, which they perceive to influence their weight and subsequently the way they look.

Weight management is a concern expressed by many of my participants. None of the participants showed extreme concern about weight as much as losing weight to look good. Indeed, following a diet for those participants was a matter of having a good-looking body, which is achieved by losing weight. In other words, they are concerned about their body image and their appearance and want to avoid food that could influence their weight. Females attach ideals of body image and weight from a very young age starting from teenage (Bhurtun & Jewoon, 2013). Tiggemann & Slater (2013) argue that “the current inordinately thin beauty ideal for women is transmitted by a number of sociocultural influences, of which the media are the most pervasive and powerful.” Multiple media sources deliver massive amount of massages that are concerned with Western ideologies of beauty, thinness, and looking good. A number of participants expressed this influence of media on their perceived norms associated with their body image which subsequently influenced their food choices. For example, Reham talked about the influence of the internet on her food choices. She said: “*Now with the internet and the photos you see in Instagram of those thin and beautiful people.. oh my God.. like*
I said to my self, I have to do something.” Maya also talked about the influence of the internet on her food choices. She said: “Yes, internet does influence our food choices. Like when we see for example Beyonce’s body, of course people will follow her and follow her diet and lifestyle and would eat and drink like her”.

Khalaf (2015) argues that “scientific studies covering this important area, the mass media are partly responsible for the high rates of body image disturbance and eating disorders among women.” As a thinner female body is considered desirable in Western countries and European ones, exposure to such values by Saudi teenagers leads to concern about body image that makes them want to lose weight. In addition, being thin is associated with female beauty in the Arabic culture. Therefore, Saudi teens take measures to be thin in order to achieve this perceived norm of beauty (Khalaf, 2015).

Participants also thought that the internet was the reason they started to eat healthy or follow a diet. For example, Wejdan talked about Instagram as a source for healthy recipes and information about nutrition and nutritious food. She said: “I got to know healthy food choices from following different accounts in Instagram. There are accounts that only post information and photos of healthy food. I got really attracted to eating yogurt with oats and fruits because of Instagram and also eating fruits” Reham also shared the same view on the influence of Instagram on making healthy choices and starting a diet. She said: “For now, I just follow accounts that post healthy food. This is why I got excited to start a diet. Instagram is the thing that most encouraged me to start a diet. It is really fun.” I should note her that participants decide what “healthy” and what is “not healthy” according to what they find in the internet. For example, when Reham said: “I have to eat healthy food because I am on a diet”, I asked her: where do you find
information about healthy food? She responded: “I browse the internet.” You can find everything you need” I asked Wejdan the same question when she said: “I really got attracted to the healthy side of eating. I mean eating healthy food.” And she responded: “From Instagram, I follow a lot of accounts that post information and photos of healthy food” So when they mention “healthy”, they refer to information they found on the internet. Indeed, the internet, especially social media websites, influence Saudi teenagers’ food choices and could have an impact on making them choose to eat healthy. In addition, photos posted in these websites motivate teens to lose weight to achieve the ideals promoted in the internet and specifically in these websites. Tiggemann & Slater (2013) had similar findings in their study as they stated: “Internet exposure was associated with internalization of the thin ideal, body surveillance, and drive for thinness in our sample of adolescent girls.” Other studies also studied the impact of internet, especially social media website, on teenagers body image concerns (Bell & Dittmar, 2011; de Vries, 2016; Holmstrom, 2004; Homan et al, 2012; Knobloch-Westerwick & Crane 2012; Perloff, 2014). In conclusion, concerns about body image and appearance are reasons that push teenagers from consuming food that they think affects their body weight, including traditional home cooked food.

5.1.2.3. Independence and Making Choices

During my interviews with participants, I noticed that every once and a while they wanted to show that they have choice over the food they consume. My questions ranged between questions about their dietary habits and their food choices at home to ones about outside food choices. I used a variety of questions to discuss with them the reasons behind their choices. They had different reasons for choosing different food but in some
questions, they used some sentences to show that they can say "no" or that they have the power to choose what they want to eat and be independent in their choices.

For example, when I asked Sana about the food she eats when she gets back from school, she said: "When I get back from school, I go to my room and change. Then if I am hungry, I go check to see if I liked the food that my mom cooked or not. If I didn't like it, I'd go sleep and order food when I wake up". Samah also expressed that she has to have a choice over the food she eats. She said: "I am a kind of a person who doesn't eat all kinds of food. Like you know, I don't like homemade pastas, I don't like homemade rice dishes. I just don't like these things. And this is what they cook at home through the week and I don't eat that. So, I avoid eating with them and I eat from outside." In response to other questions related to consuming traditional Saudi dishes, she said that she doesn’t eat any traditional dishes. When I asked her about the reason behind that, she said: "I just don’t like them and you know, at our age we develop this, we start to say "I don’t want to eat this and that." Like you can say that we start to have our own independence in choosing. We start to have our own personality." For Wejdan, she frequently showed pictures of processed, packaged, or easy to make food, and frequently said that she shared or cooked the food with her sister. When I asked her about her parents food and why doesn’t she eat the food they eat, she said: "mom only cooks for her and dad. We make our own food and sometimes we order delivery. We just don't like the vegetables in their food and those stuff. And it is always beef or lamb. I don't like that. I don't like rice dishes at all". Refusing to eat home cooked traditional food is a matter of choice and an assertion of independence for some participants in my study.
Adolescence is a stage of life when girls and boys become more autonomous and develop food habits that may last to adulthood (Wahsi & Ageib, 2010). Teens start to retreat from childhood parental attachment, pushing for greater independence and personal responsibility (Horace, 2011). When it comes to food choices, Stok et al. (2010) argue that “eating is more than mere necessity and takes on a role in self-definition and identity communication.” As teenagers begin to form their identity and start to have a sense of responsibility, they feel the need to make their own food choices. Through food choices, teenagers express their autonomy and independence (Stok et al., 2010).

A number of studies on adolescents’ food choices suggest that autonomy is related to unhealthy food choices: adolescents are thought to utilize unhealthy eating as a form of rebellion against parental control (Hill, 2002; Stevenson et al., 2007; Stok et al., 2010). During interviews with my participants, they used different phrases to show this rebellion like: “No one can convince me” or “If I am not convinced, no one can get me to eat something I don’t want to eat” or “no one can influence my food choices”. They also responded to various questions with answers that show they have a choice like: “I just don’t like it” or “I don’t like the food they cook” or “I don’t like rice dishes” or “I don’t like their food, it has a lot of things”. These responses imply that teenagers want to feel that they have a choice and that they have their independent food choices.

Autonomy doesn’t always result in making unhealthy food choices. Some studies suggest that autonomous adolescents might actually make healthier food choices (Bassett et al., 2008; McPhail et al., 2011; Spear & Kulbok, 2004; Videon & Manning, 2003; Wills, 2006). This is the case for three of my participants: Reham, Fatma, and Wejdan. They claimed that they make their own food choices and never choose to eat with the
family because home family meals are unhealthy. In conclusion, the need of autonomy and independence can push teenagers from consuming home food as a matter of having a choice whether because the food is not healthy, they don’t like it or it represents a form of resistance to and rebellion against familial control.

5.1.2.4. Change of routine

From the perspectives of the teenagers in my study, having to eat or cook the same kind of food every day is considered a boring routine that makes people choose to eat outside. When I asked them about the reason why they or their family choose to eat outside, many participants had the same answer. Rana said: "if we were like.. not feeling eating home food or don’t want to cook, we eat outside." And Maya said: "we eat out to change the routine. Like we always eat at home. Or for example if we didn’t feel like cooking and we were tired of cooking, we eat outside. It is just easier.”. Sana also commented on being tired of cooking. She said: "Aaah.. if we were tired of having or cooking home food and we want to have something new, like if we want to change the routine, we eat outside. Or if we were already out, like if we want to go to the beach, we’ll just take our coffee or tea and our lunch will be from outside.. like that.” Reham thinks that most people have the same reason. She said: "we always want to change the routine. Everyone wants that. The food is always the same at home. People want to eat something different from the typical one.” Nada also said: "We eat outside to change the usual routine. Like we always eat at home, but sometimes I crave food from outside.”. Wejdan has the same view as well. She said: "we're bored of home food, we have to change the routine. And also if there is not time to cook or if we don't feel like cooking.
we eat outside”. So mostly all participants think that outside food offered a chance for people to change the routine and a chance to skip cooking and have something different.

5.1.2.5. **Friends’ influence**

Many participants talked about the influence of their friends on their food choices. Being in a group of friends influenced many of them either to eat the same way their friends eat or choose to eat particular food because their friends did or encouraged them to do so. For example, Sana talked about a burger she always orders from Hardee’s, a fast food restaurant, that it is her favourite. When I asked her about the reason that she tried it in the first place, she said: “The first time I tried it was at my friend’s house. I liked the taste of the burger itself. It was really delicious because it was a little spicy and it gives you joy. So, after that, I always get food from Hardee’s and to be honest, their fries are fresh.” She also talked about how her friends got her to try the burger. She said: “She kept saying over and over that the burger is really really delicious. And it is also not expensive and she was like: it is sooo good. So yeah, she got me to try it and love it.”

Samah also talked about a food she tried because her friend convinced her to try it. She said: “All my friends eat the “Warag Enab” (grape leaves filled with boiled rice). They all like it and I didn’t use to eat it. But then my friend told me you have to try it and she kept trying to convince me and she told me to try one that my other friend was selling, her mom is the one who makes it, and I really like it now.”

Other participants talked about food they felt they had to eat to be the same as their friends. Fatma said: “My food should always be the same as my friends. Like if I am eating something they don’t like, I’ll quit eating it so that our food will be the same. If I
didn’t like a particular food but they eat it, I have to eat it so that we can all eat together.” Bayan also talked about a kind of ice cream she likes because all of her friends like it (see figure11).

![Grape ice cream](image)

Figure 11: Grape ice cream

She said: “This is our favorite ice cream among my friends. We all love it. I had to try it because they all love it and when they knew I don’t eat it, they told me many times that I should try it and I really love it now. We even created a dessert using this ice cream.”

A number of participants talked about friends gathering and shared photos of snacks and beverages consumed at friends gathering. They talked about snacks and food expected to be served at any friends gathering. Rania said: “In each friends gathering, there should be different kinds of chocolate bars, candies, and potato chips. These have to be there in our friends gathering. If you brought pastries or other food, no one will eat it.” Rania said that her mother also knew that her friends would expect that and when talking about the photo she shared (see figure 12).
She said: “My friends said they were coming over. So mom brought this stuff. She said that girls in my age would mostly eat this stuff other than pastries and their food. So you just have to serve these during the gathering and buy them dinner from McDonald’s or Pizzahut at the end of the night.” Nawal also shared a photo in a friends’ gathering (see figure 13) and talked about the food expected to be served.

She said: “This is in a girls’ gathering. Like for sure there must be chips, candies, soda and this stuff. Like this stuff is a must in each girls’ gathering.” When I asked her about the kind of dinner she would serve to her friend, she said: “Because I am a teen girl, I
know that outside food attracts me more, so I’ll definitely buy from outside for them and it will be for sure fast food like Mac, Pizza Hut, anything that the girls my age would love, you know.”

In order to know their views on the influence of friends on their food choices, I asked participants directly: “Do your friends influence your food choices?” Participants were divided between those who admitted that friends do have an influence and those who either said family influence is stronger or those who said that no one can influence their food choices. For those who said no one can influence their food choices, I asked them about the reason they think that. Sana admitted her friends do influence her food choices. Her response to my question was: “Yes, they do influence me, especially when it comes to food, they really have an influence.” And I asked her then, “is it possible that you eat something just because your friends do?” She responded: “Yes, “to die with a group is better than dying alone”. Maya’s response to my question about friend’s influence was: “yes they do influence my food choices and their influence is stronger than my family. Because to be honest, I don’t spend a lot of time with my family. I spend most of the time with my friends. Like when I get back from school, my mother will be busy because she is teacher. My brother will be also busy playing video games or he’ll be out with his friends. So yeah, I spend most of the time at school with my friends.”

Nawal has an opposite view, saying that her family’s influence is stronger than her friends’ influence. When asked about the reason, she said: “It is about priorities, if you put your family on top of your priorities, they will have a strong influence in your life. If your friends are the priority in your life, you’ll be influenced by them.” Reham thought that friends do influence people’s food choices but believes that she is not a person who
can easily get influenced by friends. She said: “They rarely influence me. In most cases, I don’t get influenced at all. But you can find a lot of girls who get influenced completely by their friends on the way they eat and everything. Some girls are influenced completely by their friends.” Reham had the same opinion: “No, I don’t. But I know that a lot of girls do.” Samah also expressed that she isn’t influenced by her friends. She said: “No, my friends don’t influence me. Like even my best friend can’t do that. If I am eating something she doesn’t like or the opposite, it doesn’t mean that we have to eat the same thing or that we will be influenced by each other.” Indeed, friends can sometimes influence teenagers’ food choices and determine whether they eat traditional food. Because they sometimes want to eat just like friends do, which means they could choose to eat food from outside over home food just because their friends do so.

Peer influence has been studied as a significant factor in adolescents’ lives (Hutchinson & Rapee, 2007; Kumpel Norgaard et al, 2013; Wills et al, 2005; Wills et al, 2009; Wouters et al, 2010). Peers influence adolescents’ girls and boys in the development of individual personality traits, physical characteristics and behavioral tendencies including eating behaviors (Hutchinson & Rapee, 2007). As evident and confirmed in these studies, friends do influence teenagers’ food choices. In regards to what my participants said about having to eat the same food that their friends eat, a number of studies studied the influence of friends’ groups and the idea of “fitting in”. James (2009) states: “Teenagers are often reported as being influenced to perform or undertake specific practices if their close friends are known to or perceived to be doing so” (James, 2009, p.59). This is what happened with some of my participants who expressed that they wanted to eat the same food their friends eat, so that their food will be
the same. James (2009) also discusses this behavior, which is having to act or eat like friends do, as a sense of “belonging”; finding a way to remain connected to the group (p.59). Wills et al, (2005) also argues that when adolescents are in a group of friends, they have to take into account what their peers choose to eat.

Participants talked about having the same snacks their friends have during their gatherings and having to serve snacks when friends come over. A number of studies discussed snacks consumption among adolescents and the influence of friends on this consumption (De Vet et al,2015; Kumpel-Norgaard et al,2013; Stok et al,2010; Wouters et al,2010). They argue that self-image associated with snack consumption can sometimes be the reason why they consume snacks and continue to do so. They also argue that “sharing” is what encourages teenagers to consume snacks and beverages that their friends consume. In conclusion, in order to “fit in”, “belong”, or “share” with friends, adolescents consume the same food or snacks their friends consume.
Chapter 6

Conclusion and future recommendation

6.1. Conclusion

I started my research with the objective of understanding the influences on teen girls’ dietary habits and food choices. After interviewing my participants, I realized that no one can point exactly to what influences our food choices. I found that there are many layers of factors that determine what influences teenagers’ food choices. Teenagers in Saudi Arabia are in a stage where they face a struggle everyday either to make the right choice or take the easy way and make the wrong one. According to my participants’ responses in the interviews, either way is difficult. Making the “right choice” has become really difficult when there are forces that pull them toward the “wrong choice”. As they are in a stage when they are forming their own identity and want to feel that they are making good choices, they struggle between times of eating healthy and times of eating fast food or unhealthy food. The increase of fast food restaurants, popularity of social media websites, and efforts of advertisements toward consuming unhealthy food are all factors that contribute to encouraging teenagers to eat unhealthy.

With the rapid transition in Saudi Arabia, making choices has become much more complicated for the Saudi population, especially for teenagers. Therefore, more education is needed in schools to teach teenagers how to make the right choices when eating. In addition, health promotion should focus on promoting healthy choices more. I also think that family can still influence teenagers’ choices. It appeared to me through the interviews that family efforts can actually make a difference in the dietary habits of teenagers. Some teen participants in my study were willing to adopt healthy choices if
their parents encouraged them to do so. It might be difficult at the beginning, but my findings suggest that trying can result in teenagers listening to their parents.

6.2 Limitations

The sample size of my research is a limitation of my study. Also, this research represents teenagers from one school, so if more schools were included, stronger conclusions could be drawn. In addition, because there are governmental schools and private schools in Saudi Arabia, I would have been able to include perspectives from people from different socioeconomic classes. The reason for that is because students who attend governmental schools attend for free and this applies to all students who are Saudi. But that doesn’t mean that all Saudis go to governmental schools. There are many Saudi families who pay for their children to study at private schools. Giving the fact that tuition fees are relatively expensive in Saudi Arabia, including participants from private schools would have given me data on the perspectives of teenagers from higher socioeconomic classes. The research is also limited by the inclusion only of girls (by necessity) and cannot speak to the influences on what Saudi boys eat.

6.3. Future recommendation

I recommend that another qualitative research project, be done among boys, so that we have a fuller picture of the influences on all teenagers eating practices in Saudi Arabia. Given the strong influence of parents on their teen girls’ eating practices, it would be interesting to understand parents’ perspectives on their teen children’s eating practices.
References


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and identity in everyday life (pp. 52-68). Palgrave Macmillan Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire.


Dear Principal/

I am a graduate student at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada and I am conducting a study that investigates Saudi teenagers’ perspectives on their dietary habits. Specifically, this study aims to analyze the influences on Saudi teens’ dietary habits in a sociocultural context. It aims to understand how modernization, economic growth, and developments in Saudi Arabia have shaped the way Saudi teenagers eat and the way their eating habits changes. I hope that this study will lead to a better understanding of the influences on our teens’ eating habits and their food choices.

With your support, I will recruit 12 students from your school to participate in my study. I would like to distribute a poster throughout the school which states the purpose of my research, the inclusion criteria of participants I am looking for, the deadline for starting the project, incentive given to participants and the location and time I will be available at school. I have an approval from the “Ministry of Education”, by the “General Administration of Education in Jeddah” and the General Research Ethics Board at Queen’s University.

In order to participate, participants will have to come to meet me to get consent forms and information letters to their parents. After their parents sign the forms, they have to return the forms to me and we will then schedule interviews times that don’t disturb their classes’ schedules. I need your help and permission in deciding the time and location of the interviews and where I can be available for any questions they have.
Appendix (2) Recruitment Poster

Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Are you interested to participate in a research?

TELL ME WHAT DO YOU EAT?

6.1 Who?
6.2 Students at this school aged 15-16 years old

6.3 What?
6.4 Participate in a photo Project featuring food and two interviews

6.5 Where?
6.6 In your school

6.7 Why?
6.8 To explore and understand

6.9 Your perspective on your
6.10 Eating habits and food

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE COME AND MEET ME
من هي الفئة المستهدفة؟
طالبات المدرسة اللاتي اعمارهن تتراوح من 15-16 سنة

ماهية البحث؟
المشاركة في مشروع تصويري يختص الطعام وعمل مقابلتين

ما هو مكان اجراء البحث؟
في داخل المدرسة

ما هو غرض البحث؟
لمحاولة اكتشاف وفهم وجهات نظركن في عاداتكن الغذائية واختياراتكن للأطعمة

إذا كنت مهتمة بالمشاركة في البحث الرجاء مقابلتي في غرفة الأنشطة من الساعة 9 صباحاً

Appendix (3) Arabic version of recruitment poster
Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Appendix (4) Letter of Information for participants
Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Title of Research Project:**
Adolescence Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Researchers:**
Principal Investigator: **Maha Malibari**
MA Student
School of Kinesiology and Health Studies
Queen’s University
Email: 13mm223@queensu.ca

MA Supervisor: **Dr. Elaine Power**
School of Kinesiology and Health Studies
Queen’s University
Email: power@queensu.ca

**Introduction:**
I am a Saudi-born woman who grew up in Jeddah, and have been studying in Canada for five years. I am conducting a study that investigates Saudi teenagers’ perspectives on their dietary habits. Specifically, this study aims to analyze the influences on Saudi teens’ dietary habits in sociocultural context. I hope to understand how modernization, economic growth, and developments in Saudi Arabia shaped the way Saudi teenagers eat and the way their eating habits have changed.

You are being invited to participate in this project. Before you sign to consent to be part of this project, please take the time to carefully read and consider the following information.

**Purpose of the Project:**
In this project, I will explore your perspectives on your eating habits and food choices. The purpose of this project is to broaden the understanding of adolescent eating habits in Saudi Arabia.
Description of the project:

There are two sections in this project: the photo-taking section and the interview section. I will ask you to take photos of any food you consume whether in your home or outside in a restaurant or a shopping mall using your cellphone camera. If you do not have a cellphone, then please let me know so I can arrange a camera for you. There are no restrictions on what food you have to take photos of or not to take. You will have two weeks to take pictures of food and email them to me at the end of the two weeks. I will print out the photos and bring them with me to the interview. You will have the opportunity to choose the time of the interview in the following week in a place that will be chosen by the principal of the school. At the interview, we will have a sharing session where you can share your thoughts and perspectives about the photos you took. I will ask you questions about the food in the picture and we will go through all the pictures that you chose to talk about.

Potential Risks:

The only known risk associated with this project is the potential for you to feel shy or uncomfortable about your own or your family's food choices. Please feel free to pause talking to me or talk to me about your concerns. If you want to talk to someone else such as your school’s social support worker or a community counsellor, just let me know. You are also free to stop altogether without any pressure to continue. In regards to classes, I ask that you only do the interviews at non-class time. It will take about 45 minutes for our first interview and 60-90 minutes for the second one.

Potential Benefits:

I hope this project will be a fun, interactive and a positive experience for you. At the end, you may gain a deeper understanding of your food choices and the influences on these choices, but there are no direct benefits. Your participation and sharing of your information will provide an understanding of Saudi adolescents' eating practices and food choices. If you wish, I can send you the results of the project when it is done.

Confidentiality:

With your permission, I will be recording the interview for the purpose of data analysis and the recording will be saved with a password in my computer and no one will listen to
it. Your name will be used only for the consent form but in the research, I will use either a code or a different name that represents you. Any notes I take during the interview, in addition to the photos you took, will all be stored on a USB that has a password that no one can access except me. Five years after the study has finished, all the data will be destroyed.

**Incentive:**

In appreciation of your participation in the project, you will be given a $10 (30 SR) honorarium in cash at the end of the interviews.

**Participation:**

Your participation in this project is voluntary, meaning you are not being forced to participate. You don’t need to answer any questions that you don’t want to or that makes you uncomfortable. If you wish, you can leave the project at any time. Should this be the case, I will ask you if you would like any information you have provided up to that point to be included or omitted from the project.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments about your participation in this project. I can be reached at 13mm223@queensu.ca Should you have questions, concerns or complaints about this project you may also contact my research supervisor, Dr. Elaine Power at (613)533-6000 ext.74690 or at power@queensu.ca, or the Queen’s University General Research Ethics Board at (613) 533-6081 or at chair.GREB@queensu.ca.

This study has been approved by the Saudi “Ministry of Education”, by the “General Administration of Education in Jeddah”, by the school’s principal, and the General Research Ethics Board at Queen’s University

Sincerely,

Maha Malibari

Cellphone: 966541237966

Email: 13mm223@queensu.ca
Appendix (5) Consent form

Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

I, ________________________________, have read and kept a copy of the letter of information for the Adolescence Girls’ Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia study and my questions about participating in this project have been answered. I understand that the purpose of this project is to explore Saudi teenagers’ perspectives on their dietary habits. In participating in this project, I will be taking pictures of food. I will be discussing these photos as well as my experiences with Maha Malibari. This discussion will be recorded with an audio recorder, unless I state otherwise. I understand that my pictures will not be used for other purposes without my written consent, and that my identity will be kept confidential in any reports or papers that are written about this project. I also understand that my participation in this project is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time without any negative effects. I do not need to answer any questions that I don’t want to answer. I am aware that I may contact Dr. Elaine Power or the Queen’s University General Research Ethics Board with any questions, complaints or concerns that I have about this project. I hereby consent to participate.

________________________________
Name of Participant

________________________________
Signature of Participant

________________________________
Date

____ By initialing this statement, I am granting permission for Maha Malibari to audio record our interviews

____ By initialing this statement, I agree to be contacted again by Maha Malibari if she has follow-up, or clarification questions after our meetings.
Appendix (6) Consent for using photos
Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Researcher:** Maha Malibari, email: [13mm223@queensu.ca](mailto:13mm223@queensu.ca)

In addition to allowing Maha Malibari to view my photographs during our one-on-one sharing session, by initialing the following statements, I also give her permission to reproduce my photographs in:

___ her Master’s thesis

___ papers published based on this project

___ presentations based on this project

**OR** ___ I DO NOT give Maha Malibari permission to use my photographs for anything other than the sharing sessions

By signing this form, I acknowledge that Maha Malibari will take steps to protect my privacy at all times.

________________________________
Name of Participant

________________________________
Signature of Participant

________________________________
Date

---

Appendix (6) Consent for using photos
Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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________________________________
Name of Participant

________________________________
Signature of Participant

________________________________
Date

---

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Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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___ her Master’s thesis

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___ presentations based on this project

**OR** ___ I DO NOT give Maha Malibari permission to use my photographs for anything other than the sharing sessions

By signing this form, I acknowledge that Maha Malibari will take steps to protect my privacy at all times.

________________________________
Name of Participant

________________________________
Signature of Participant

________________________________
Date
خطاب المعلومات

المقدمة

أنا طالبة سعودية مبتعثة إلى كندا ودرست في كندا لمدة خمس سنوات. حاليا أنا أقوم بإجراء بحثي للماجستير الذي يتعلق بدراسة وجهات نظر طالبات المرحلة الثانوية السعوديات في عاداتهم الغذائية. على وجه التحديد تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل التأثيرات على عاداتهم الغذائية لطالبات المرحلة الثانوية السعوديات في السياق الاجتماعي والثقافي. أمر أن أقوم بهذا الدراسة كيف شكل وساهم النمط الاقتصادي والتطورات في المملكة العربية السعودية في طريقة تناول طالبات المرحلة الثانوية السعوديات لطعامهم والطريقة التي تغيرت بها عاداتهم الغذائية.

لقد تم دعوتكم للمشاركة في هذا المشروع. قبل التوقيع على الموافقة على أن تكوني جزءا من هذا المشروع، يرجى أخذ الوقت الكافى لقراءة المعلومات التالية بعناية.

الهدف من المشروع:

في هذا المشروع سوف استكشف وجهة نظرك في عادات تناول الطعام الخاصة بك وخياراتك الغذائية. والغرض من هذا المشروع هو توسيع فهم العادات الغذائية لدى طالبات المرحلة الثانوية في المملكة العربية السعودية.

وصف المشروع:

هناك قسمان لهذا المشروع: القسم الأول أخذ الصور والقسم الثاني هو المقابلة. سوف أطلب منك التقاط صور لأي طعام تتناولينه سواء في المنزل أو في الخارج في مطعم أو مركز تجاري باستخدام كاميرا الهاتف المحمول الخاص بك. لن توجد أي قيود أو ممنوعات على أنواع الأطعمة التي تقدمها لتصويرها. سيكون لديك 8 أيام لالتقاط الصور وإرسالها لي بالبريد الإلكتروني عند الانتهاء. بعد ذلك سوف أقوم بطباعة الصور وإحضارها معك للمقابلة. سيحدد وقت المقابلة بعد الاتفاق مع مدير المدرسة وسوف يتم إبلاغك بالموعد. في المقابلة ستكون طبيعة المقابلة كجولة مشاركة بيني وبينك حيث يمكنني تبادل أفكارك ووجهات النظر الخاصة بك حول الصور التي قمت بتصويرها.

سأسأل أسئلة خاصة عن الطعام الموجود في الصورة وسوف نناقش جميع الصور التي قمت باختيارها.

المخاطر المحتملة:

لا يوجد خطر مرتبطة بمشاركتك في المشروع. ولن يتثرد جدول الدراسي عند مشاركتك في هذا المشروع.

المعلومات التي يتم مناقشتها في المقابلة ستكون طوعية تماما، والمعلومات التي تمت مشاركتها في المقابلة ستكون طوعية تماما، ومungkin اختيار عدم التحدث عن أي شيء لا ترتاح في الحديث عنه.

الفوائد المحتملة:
أمل أن يكون هذا المشروع تجربة ممتعة وتفاعلية وإيجابية بالنسبة لك. في نهاية المشروع قد تكتسبين فهم أعمق عن اختياراتك الغذائية وما قد يؤثر على هذه الاختيارات. ومشاركتك وتبادل المعلومات الخاصة بك تساهم في توفير فهم للمعادات الغذائية لطالبات المرحلة الثانوية السعوديات واختياراتهم الغذائية.

السرية:

بعد أخذ موافقتك سوف يتم تسجيل المقابلة لغرض تحليل البيانات و سيتم حفظ التسجيل مع كلمة مرور في جهاز الكمبيوتر الخاص بي ولن يستمع أحد إلى التسجيل. وسيتم استخدام اسمك فقط لنمذجة الموافقة، أما في البحث فسوف أقوم بإستخدام رمز خاص بك. أي ملاحظات أو اختيارات الشفافية خلال المقابلة بالإضافة إلى الصور سوف تكون جميعها مخزنة في جهاز تخزين له كلمة سر لا يمكن لأحد غيري الوصول إلى هذه المعلومات.

الحوافز:

تقديري لمشاركتك في هذا المشروع، سوف تحصلين على هدية عينية في نهاية البحث.

المشاركة:

مشاركتك في هذا المشروع هي طوعية، وهذا يعني أنك لست ملزمًا على المشاركة. يمكنك عدم الإجابة على الأسئلة التي لا تعجبك أو التي تشعرك بعدم الراحة. إذا كنت ترغبين في الانسحاب، يمكنك القيام بذلك في أي وقت وسوف أسألك إذا كنت ترغبين في ان أضيف أو أمسح المعلومات التي قدمتها حتى الانسحاب من المشروع.

شكرا لأخذك الوقت الكافي لقراءة هذه المعلومات، واسمحي لي أن أعرف إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة أو تعليقات حول مشاركتك في هذا المشروع. إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة أو استفسارات حول هذا المشروع يمكنك التواصل معي عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني على m-malibari7@hotmail.com.

تمت الموافقة على هذه الدراسة من قبل وزارة التعليم في السعودية، من قبل الإدارة العامة للتعليم في جدة، ومديرة المدرسة، ومجلس أخلاقيات البحوث العامة في جامعة كولومبيا، ومن الملحقية الثقافية في كندا.

الباحثة: مها مليباري

m-malibari7@hotmail.com
أوقع أنا الطالبة__________ بإنني قمت بقراءة واستلام نسخة من خطاب المعلومات الخاص بالدراسة التي عنوانها: "وجهة نظر طالبات المرحلة الثانوية بالعوامل المؤثرة على عاداتهم الغذائية اختيارهم للأطعمة". لقد فهمت أن الهدف من هذا البحث بأن يتم دراسة وجهة نظر طالبات المرحلة الثانوية بالعوامل المؤثرة على غذائيهم. بمشاركتي في هذا البحث سأقوم بالتقاط صور للأطعمة. سأقوم بمناقشة هذه الصور في المقابلة الشخصية التي سأقوم بها مع الباحثة مها مليباري وسأقوم بتسجيل هذه المقابلة صوتيًا عن طريق مسجل صوتي.

أوقع بأن الصور التي سألتقطها لن يتم استخدامها إلا لغرض هذا البحث وأن هويتي ستكون سرية عند نشر هذا البحث.

وعند نشر أي معلومات خاصة بهذا البحث.

أوقع أيضاً بأن مشاركتي في هذا البحث هي طوعية وأنني استطيع الانسحاب في أي وقت بلا أي عواقب سلبية.

أوقع أنه لن أقوم بالإجابة على أي سؤال لا أريد الإجابة عليه خلال المقابلة الشخصية.

لقد تم إعلامي أنه يمكنني التواصل مع الباحثة إذا أردت السؤال أو الاستفسار أو الاعتراض خلال هذا البحث.

بعد قراءة كل المعلومات, أوقع بأنني سأقوم بالمشاركة في هذا البحث.

التوقع:

بتوقيعي هنا أنا أعطي موافقتى للباحثة مها مليباري بتسجيل صوتي في المقابلة

بتوقيعي هنا أنا أعطي موافقتى للباحثة مها مليباري بالتواصل معى بعد انتهاء المقابلة إذا احتاج الامر لتوضيح أو لمراجعة البيانات أو للسؤال عن أي معلومة

________________________

95
Appendix (9) Arabic version of consent form for using photos
Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

بالإضافة إلى السماح للباحثة مها مليباري لعرض صوري خلال المقابلة، من خلال توقيعي على العبارات التالية فأنى أيضا أوافق على إعادة إستخدام الصور الخاصة بي في الأماكن التالية:

رسالة الماجستير الخاصه بالباحثة مها مليباري

أوراق بحث تنشر بالعلاقة مع هذا البحث

أو أنا لا أوافق على استخدام الصور الخاصة بي لأي غرض غير المقابله

من خلال توقيع هذا النموذج، أعلم أنه باستطاعتي أن أسحب موافقتي لأي استخدامات أخرى للصور التي اتقطتها في أي وقت، وأن مها مليباري ستتخذ خطوات لحماية خصوصيتي في جميع الأوقات.

اسم الطالبة المشاركة:____________________________________________________

توقيع الطالبة المشاركة:__________________________________________________

96
Appendix (10) Instruction on taking photos

Please avoid taking pictures of people. I’d like you to take pictures of a variety of foods. The following are examples of foods you could take pictures of:

- Your favorite food or drink
- A food you shared with someone
- A food that you eat regularly
- A food that you ate outside of your home
- A food you think a younger person might eat
- A food you think an older person might eat
- A food you don’t like
- A dish that is special to you or one that you make
- A food that you associate with feelings and emotions with
- A food that is new to you
- A typical food that you eat with your family
- Food that is your family’s favorite
- Food your family doesn’t like
- A food that is served on special occasions with your family and friends
- A food that is part of a family tradition
- A food that has lots of memories attached to it
- A food that reminds you of your childhood
- A food that tends to be served at gatherings with your family

Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Appendix (11) Interview Guide
Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Proposed questions for interviews:

- How did you find the experience of taking pictures of the food you ate?
- Which one of the pictures you think the most significant and would like to start with?
- Tell me about the food in this picture. What is it? Where did you eat it? And with whom?
- What are the feelings, emotions, or memories that you link with this picture?
- Do you think of any one in your life when seeing this picture? Who is it? And why?
- Why did you take a picture of this food?
- When did you start to consume this food? What were the circumstances?
- Do you think that there are other people like peers, friends, or family who eat this kind of food? Why? Are there people who don’t eat this food? Why not?
- If it is a Saudi traditional food, why do you think people still eat it? Why do you like to eat it? On what occasions would you eat it?
- If it is a food eaten outside the home, why did you eat it outside home?
- In what situations are you most likely to eat this food?
- Do you eat this food regularly and why do you think it became regular?
• Would you consider this to be a traditional or cultural food? Why or why not?
• Do you think that people older or younger than you would eat this food? Why?
• In what ways do you relate this food to you as a teenager?
• What is your mother’s or father’s perspective on this food?
Appendix (12) List of topics in interview

Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>(√)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family influence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eating outside</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TV influence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (13) GREB application form
Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

GREB Application Form

Project Info.

File No: 6018126

Project Title: GSKHS-227-16 Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives On Their Current Dietary Habits and Food choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Principal Investigator: Ms. Maha Malibari (Faculty of Arts and Science\GREB\Unit REB Kinesiology & Health Studies)

Start Date: 2016/04/19

End Date:

Keywords: Adolescents, food choice, Saudi Arabia, Nutrition transition

Project Team Info.

Principal Investigator

Prefix: Ms.

Last Name: Malibari

First Name: Maha

Affiliation: Faculty of Arts and Science\GREB\Unit REB Kinesiology & Health Studies

Rank: Master’s Student

Gender: Female

Email: 13mm223@queensu.ca

Phone1:
Phone2:

Fax:

**Primary Address:** 440 Conservatory Drive

**Institution:** Queen’s University

**Country:** Canada

**Comments:**

---

**Other Project Team Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Role In Project</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr.</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Elaine</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts and Science\Department of Geography and Planning</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:power@queensu.ca">power@queensu.ca</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Common Questions**

**1. 1. CORE Completion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Applicant: CORE Completion * Students, postdoctoral fellows and staff submitting ethics applications must also attach their CORE certificate. To complete CORE go to <a href="http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/">http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/</a> If desired, CORE can appear on your transcript as SGS804. (Click Info tab for further details).</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2  Project details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Level of Research (Click all categories that apply)</td>
<td>Masters thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>If you are a student, please add your Supervisor's name in the box below. Also, make sure to add you Supervisor to PROJECT INFO TAB under Other Project Member info. If you are a Faculty member indicate N/A in the field below.</td>
<td>Dr. Elaine Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Abstract (300-500 words) See Info tab for further details.</td>
<td>Rapid socioeconomic development in Saudi Arabia, as a result of oil revenues, has had profound effects on people’s lifestyles, including the transformation of people’s dietary habits. Such dietary transformations, known as the nutrition transition, are common in countries undergoing rapid socioeconomic changes. Technological developments that link the world together, including the introduction of satellite TV and the internet, facilitate these changes. As evidenced in many studies,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
adolescents are the most affected population when it comes to changes in dietary habits and physical activity. Adolescence is a vulnerable stage of life when dietary habits are developed and last to adulthood and may not be easily changed. In the case of Saudi Arabia, youth or adolescents represent almost 60% of the population; therefore, the eating habits they develop could have profound consequences for population health in the future. As a result, it is important to understand why Saudi teens eat the way they do and the consequent implications for health promotion. My study will focus on understanding the sociocultural contexts that are associated with dietary habits of Saudi adolescents. In this study, I aim to discuss sociocultural factors that influence teens’ dietary habits in Saudi Arabia so that health promotion efforts with Saudi teens can be more effective.

| 2.4 Method (Explain protocols in 1000 words) |
| See Info tab for further details. |

I will seek permission from high school principal to conduct my research in her high school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. With her permission and support, I will conduct interviews, using photo elicitation, with
approximately twelve female students, aged 15-16 years. Photo elicitation is a method that involves having participants taking photos and using them as a tool to facilitate discussion in interviews with research participants. I will conduct semi-structured interviews, a type of interview in which the researcher knows the general information desired, but specific questions are asked based on the interviewee’s responses. I will conduct two interviews with each student. The first interview will be informal and will be focused on building rapport and a relationship with participants, getting to know them, introducing my project, giving instructions about the project and taking photographs of the food they eat. Most students will have cell phones that they can use to take photos. If they do not have a cell phone, I will lend them a digital camera to take photos, so that lower-income students will not be excluded. The first interview will take approximately 45 minutes. The instructions that will be given to participants is attached. I will give the participants two weeks to take the
photos requested and will ask them to send me the photographs at the end of the second week via Dropbox. I will meet the students after printing the photos they have sent me and conduct the second interview. Interviews will be held in the school at times convenient for the participants. I will ask the school’s principal for a quiet room that I can use for two hours each day until I finish my project. The interview guide is attached. I will not follow a specific order of questioning but, as stated earlier, questions will depend on what interviewees say. I expect the second interview to take between 60 and 90 minutes. All forms including consent forms, information letters, and instruction forms will be translated to Arabic, the language spoken by my participants. Arabic is my mother tongue and will be used to conduct all interviews and communications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.5</th>
<th>Conflict of Interest (COI)</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>If YES above, please explain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Unfunded Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Sponsor agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Location - Will the data be collected on Queen's campus or affiliated hospitals? (NOTE: Survey data collected at other</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>institutions requires their clearance as well – See TCPS2 Chapter 8: Multi-Jurisdictional Research.</td>
<td>Data collection will take place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. I am from Jeddah and I will travel there and stay for three months, with my family, for my data collection. Specifically, data collection will take place in a governmental girls' school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>If NO above, please describe. (NOTE: all off-campus activities require OCASP clearance (See <a href="https://webapp.queensu.ca/safety/ocasp">https://webapp.queensu.ca/safety/ocasp</a>).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>Are other approvals or permissions required? (e.g. Off Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP), School Board Approval, Community/Institutional Approval, Multi-Jurisdictional research, FluidSurvey account from OIRP).</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>If YES, above, please identify and describe the necessary authorizations (i.e., Multi-jurisdictional research needs other institutional clearance [Chapter 8, TCPS2], Queen's OIRP to access student warehouse data)</td>
<td>- Off Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP) - I have been granted permission from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia to conduct my data collection in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. A copy of the approval letter is attached. No ethical guidelines were provided. The letter is written in Arabic. Key points: support from the ministry to conduct the research, an encouragement from the ministry to the researcher, and an approval from the ministry to conduct the research in a governmental school. - A copy of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
an approval letter from the school principal is attached. No ethical guidelines were provided. The letter is written in Arabic. Key points: support from the principal to conduct the research in her school, a statement showing that she supports such research to help improve the health of adolescent girls and the health education in general in Saudi Arabia.

If you will be using archived data from a previous research project, please describe the data source and identify the custodian of the database (if known).

### 3.3 Recruitment

<table>
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<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>12. &quot;I will submit an ethics amendment&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Sources of Participants - Check all that apply</td>
<td>Schools (i.e. elementary/secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>If OTHER above, please describe. If you selected SCHOOLS above, please identify the School Board(s) from whom permission will be sought.</td>
<td>I will be working in a government secondary high school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Only girls will be included in my research because of the school structure in Saudi Arabia. Girls and boys study in separate schools and there is no mixing of genders in any school in Saudi Arabia. Only men are allowed to work or enter</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
boys’ schools, and only women are allowed to work or enter in girls’ schools. Therefore, I am legally not allowed to do my research in boys’ schools. Research participants will be Saudi, single, 15-16 years old, healthy, speak Arabic, have an access to the internet and TV, be able and willing to take photographs of their food, live with their parents, and are willing to participate in this study.

| 3.5 | Will vulnerable population(s) be recruited? (See info (i) tab for description). | NO |
| 3.6 | If YES above, please describe the population and any special measures that will be needed to address their vulnerable status | No. In Saudi Arabia, 15-16 year olds are considered old enough to give informed consent. |
| 3.7 | A) Will First Nations, Inuit or Métis participants in Canada be recruited or studied? OR B) Will Aboriginal populations in other countries be recruited? | NO |
| 3.8 | If YES above - Has band approval been obtained? | N/A |
| 3.9 | Will the findings be reviewed by a First Nations, Inuit or Métis community before dissemination? | N/A |
| 3.10 | If NO to 3.8 and/or 3.9, please explain | |
| 3.11 | Describe how and by whom potential participants will be recruited. | I will put up a poster in the school to recruit participants (see attached). |
Participants who are willing to participate can meet me at my location in the school in the hours assigned in the poster. When meeting participants, I will identify eligible participants according to my inclusion criteria. Then, I will recruit a representative sample for my study, and have them to read and sign the consent forms (attached). The targeted sample size is n=12.

3.12 Please describe procedures should someone wish to withdraw?

Should someone wish to withdraw before, during or after the interview, they can let me know by email or in person. Participants may withdraw up to the point of the submission of my thesis, or for publication in any form. At that point all research notes and recordings will be destroyed and I will inform them of this. This will be discussed in the letter of information and in the consent form provided to each participant.

3.13 If remuneration or compensation will be offered, please provide the details. Indicate N/A if not applicable.

I will give each participant an honorarium at the end of the project, 30SR, which is approximately $10 Canadian, the approximate cost of a fast food meal in Saudi Arabia.

4. 4. Risk Assessment

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<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Will this study involve any of the following (Check all that apply)</td>
<td>No known risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Please describe risks selected from</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Please describe your plan to minimize these risks and describe how you will provide support to participants in the context of these risks. Indicate N/A if not applicable.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 5.1 | Please describe the potential benefits of the research to the participants in your project, the research community and/or to society at large. | Participants will not get direct benefits from my research. However, I hope my research will be useful for health and nutritional specialists to introduce and produce health promotion intervention programs for teens. My research data may also be useful for parents to understand the influences on their teens so that they can work on those influences in a way that they can promote healthy eating habits and healthy food choices. |

| 6.1 | Please identify ALL that apply to your project (i.e., more than one could apply to different aspects of data collection to data storage). For definitions of each category, click the Info (i) tab. | Directly identifying information (e.g., name, S.I.N., personal health number, etc) | Indirectly identifying information (i.e., ID person indirectly (i.e., birth date + residence, etc)) | De-identified/coded information (i.e., remove direct identifiers using code names or numbers) |

| 6.2 | Based on 6.1, explain your process. | During recruitment and interviews of |
from recruitment to dissemination and how you intend to protect the privacy of your participants at each stage.

participants I will use full names and identifying information such as address and age. During the transcription of field notes into research notes after the interview, identifying information will be coded and all identifying information will be excluded from these notes. Identifying information will be kept in a file protected by a password in my personal computer. In my thesis, only pseudonyms will be used for identifying my participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Will information about the participants be obtained from sources other than the participants themselves?</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Will the information on individual participants be disclosed to others who are not named on this application? (Disclosure could be during data acquisition, data reduction or publication).</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>If you answered YES to 6.3 or 6.4, please explain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Will the participants be made aware of this disclosure?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Will the confidentiality of the participant's identity be protected to the extent possible?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>If you answered No above, please explain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>Could publication of the research allow participants to be identified?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>If you answered YES above, please explain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>Will anyone other than the principal investigator or co-applicants listed on the application have access to the data during collection or processing?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>Please identify who will have access?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>Will the person identified above (e.g. translator, transcriber, RA, etc.) sign a Confidentiality Agreement? If YES, please attach a Confidentiality Agreement.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>Will the data or aspects of the data be encrypted:</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>Provide specific details about security procedures for the raw data, methods of data transcription as well as plans for the ultimate disposal of records/data. (NOTE: Data can be retained permanently, if appropriate, at the Queen’s Research Data Centre).</td>
<td>Audio and transcription files will be labeled with an alias and password-protected on my personal laptop, along with the alias key (with the real names and contact information of participants.) Transcriptions and research notes will include only the interviewee alias; personal names referred to by interviewees during the course of the interviews will be replaced during transcription and research note elaboration with identifying relationships in square brackets rather than names and any potentially identifying information will be omitted or obscured. In some cases,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
these names may also be given aliases. Data will be kept and archived by me in an encrypted file on an external hard drive after the research project has been completed. All data will be destroyed five years after the project is complete.

7.7. Informed Consent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Will participants be given a written, electronic, or verbal Letter of Information (LOI)?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>If you answered NO above, please explain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Will participants be given a written, electronic, or verbal consent form (may be combined with LOI)?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>If you answered NO above, please explain:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Does the research project involve deception of the participant?</td>
<td>no deception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>Describe the deception of the participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Describe the debriefing procedure for the participant, if applicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>If participants are not in a position to give consent to participate, will written permission be acquired from a person with legal authority?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>If participants are children or other population unable to legally provide</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
consent (e.g., disabled, senility), what procedure will be followed?

8.8 Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Copy of the completion certificate for the CORE Course for each participant.</td>
<td>Attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Letter of Information</td>
<td>Attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>Consent Form</td>
<td>Attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>Questionnaire, sample questions, interview guides, verbal scripts, letter scripts, research stimuli.</td>
<td>Attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>Copies of your recruitment notices, emails, scripts, advertisement, and/or information sheet as well as any information for participants provided by a sponsor or supportive organization, as may be applicable</td>
<td>Attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>Confidentiality Letter (for translator, RA's, etc)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>Debriefing Letter</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>Other support information (e.g., sponsor or supportive organization)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>If you are a student in the Principal Investigator's role. Did you add your Supervisor's name on the PROJECT TEAM INFO tab? You MUST attach a letter/e-mail from the project supervisor stating that s/he has reviewed and approved your ethics application. Have you attached the</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
required document? Please note: postdoctoral fellows should select "N/A"

Verify information is correct on the PROJECT TEAM INFO tab. Is your AFFILIATION correct? If you are a non-faculty researcher at Queen’s University and your department has a Unit REB, this must be stated in the AFFILIATION drop-down menu, (i.e. Departments with Unit REBs are: Cultural Studies, Global Development Studies, Faculty of Education, Geography and Planning, Gender Studies, Music, Political Studies, Psychology, School of Business, School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, and Sociology).

**Attachments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doc / Agreement</th>
<th>Version Date</th>
<th>File Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>INSTRUCTIONS FOR PHOTOS.pdf</td>
<td>Instructions for photos</td>
</tr>
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<td>Poster</td>
<td>0001/01/01</td>
<td>Poster.pdf</td>
<td>Recruitment Poster</td>
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<td>Other document</td>
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<td>Approval from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Type</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Authoritative Entity</td>
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<td>Interview Guide</td>
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<td>Delegated Clearance Letter</td>
<td>2016/04/19</td>
<td>Malibari GSKHS-227-16 6018126 Apr 19 2016.pdf</td>
<td>delegated review clearance letter sent Apr 19/16 GI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor's letter/ email</td>
<td>0001/01/01</td>
<td>Supervisor email.pdf</td>
<td>Supervisor review and approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Information/Consent Form</td>
<td>2016/04/18</td>
<td>LOIconsent for participants.pdf</td>
<td>LOI and consent for participants</td>
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<td>Other document</td>
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<td>Approval from the school principal.pdf</td>
<td>Approval from the principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Information</td>
<td>0001/01/01</td>
<td>LOI to the principal.pdf</td>
<td>LOI to the principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (14) GREB approval letter

Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

April 19, 2016
Ms. Maha Malibari
Master’s Student
School of Kinesiology and Health Studies
Queen’s University
28 Division Street
Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6

GREB Ref #: GSKHS-227-16; Romeo # 6081826
Title: "GSKHS-227-16 Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives On Their Current Dietary Habits and Food choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia"

Dear Ms. Malibari:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB), by means of a delegated board review, has cleared your proposal entitled "GSKHS-227-16 Adolescent Girls’ Perspectives On Their Current Dietary Habits and Food choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia" for ethical compliance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS 2 (2014)) and Queen's ethics policies. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (Article 6.14) and Standard Operating Procedures (405.001), your project has been cleared for one year. You are reminded of your obligation to submit an annual renewal form prior to the annual renewal due date (access this form at http://www.queensu.ca/tras/signor.html; click on "Events"; under "Create New Event" click on "General Research Ethics Board Annual Renewal Form for Approved Studies").

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (access this form at http://www.queensu.ca/tras/signor.html; click on "Events"; under "Create New Event" click on "General Research Ethics Board Adverse Event Form"). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example, you must report changes to the level of risk, applicant characteristics, and implementation of new procedures. To submit an amendment form, access the application by at http://www.queensu.ca/tras/signor.html; click on "Events"; under "Create New Event" click on "General Research Ethics Board Request for Amendment of Approved Studies". Once submitted, these changes will automatically be sent to the Ethics Coordinator, Ms. Gail Irving, at the Office of Research Services for further review and clearance by the GREB or GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Sincerely,

John Freeman, Ph.D.
Chair
General Research Ethics Board

cc: Dr. Elaine Power, Faculty Supervisor
    Dr. Lucie Levesque, Chair, Unit REB
## Appendix (15) Field notes for participants

Adolescents Girls Perspectives on their Current Dietary Habits and Food Choices: a qualitative study in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s name (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Field notes’ summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Bayan**                     | - Family oriented (family influence)  
- Eats traditional food regularly  
- Used to consuming traditional food (habit).  
- Loves pasta and enjoys cooking it. (convenience)  
- friends share same food like pasta, and snacks(belonging)  
- Brags about mom’s cooking (family influence)  
- Traditional food remind her of her deceased father (food and memories)  
- Values parents’ influence on kids’ food choices  
- Social events have changed from the past (modernization)  
- Snapchat makes her crave food (internet influence)  
- Gets recipes from Instagram (internet influence) |
| **Rana**                      | - Actress in YouTube  
- Loves photography  
- Making profit is the reason she thinks fast food is popular  
- Loves Korean food b/c she watches their drama (TV influence)  
- Saudi traditional food is tasty but not healthy  
- Named many food items in English  
- Acknowledges that fast food is not healthy but tasty  
- TV ads are less influential than street ads. (advertisements’ influence) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rania</th>
<th>Reham</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-On a diet and goes to the Gym.</td>
<td>-On a diet to lose weight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Loves McDonalds and PizzaHut.</td>
<td>-Frequently mentions “healthy food” and gets info about it from the internet (internet influence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Parents divorced.</td>
<td>- Traditional food is “heavy” on the stomach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Stated that family influence her food choices.</td>
<td>- Fast food is everywhere so we’re used to it (fast food availability).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Weekend is family time.</td>
<td>- Instagram influenced her to start losing weight and start a diet (internet influence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Traditional food is a habit but can’t consuming because of weight concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mom supports her diet. (family influence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eating outside ruins the diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Refers to “others” when talking about friends’ influence (Being independent- rebellion)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-McDonalds is her best choice b/c it is close to home (availability of fast food)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Not sure why McDonalds got popular.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Says that friends don’t influence her food choices (Being independent- rebellion)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mom gets her what she wants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mom is the only one who can get her to try new food (family influence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Candies and chocolate are expected to be served at friends’ gatherings (friends’ influence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Sister influenced her to try food she never tried before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Food reminds her of family (food and emotions)</td>
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</table>

120
|   | States that all outside food is not healthy.  
|   | Loves McDonalds and they know her name when she calls them.  
|   | -McDonalds is popular because it is tasty.  
| Sana | Foreign food is popular among Saudis because they love trying new things.  
|   | -food at home is always traditional and it is normal (habit)  
|   | -Imported chocolate are better than local ones (modernization)  
|   | -TV ads make her crave food (TV and advertisements’ influence)  
|   | -Loves eating and cooking pasta (convenience-taste)  
|   | -Takes recipes from Instagram (internet influence)  
|   | -Loves fast food and states that it is a problem she can’t control.  
|   | -Her friend made her love a burger from Hardee’s (fast food- friends’ influence).  
|   | -States that friends’ do influence her food choices.  
| Samah | Don’t eat with family because she doesn’y like the food they cook (rebellion- having a choice)  
|   | -Sanpchat make her crave food (internet influence)  
|   | -Knows about the risk of fast food on health.  
|   | -Loves McDonalds because it is tasty.  
|   | -States that people in her age start to have a choice.  
|   | -McDonalds is popular because it is always the same and always available (availability of fast food)  
|   | -Eating outside doesn’t necessarily means food isn’t available at home.  
|   | - States that she used to eat with family before her father started his job as pilot (family influence)  
|   | - Loves Turkish coffee because her father brings it to her when he travels (family influence)  
|   | -Always eats alone whether delivery or cooking for herself.  
|   | - States that no one can influence the way she eats (rebellion)  
| Safia | Loves cooking with mom. (family influence).  

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| Fatma | - Eats traditional food but not her favourite (habit).
- States that parents are the ones who makes a person love traditional food (family influence).
- Friends influence her food choices.
- Spends time with friends more than family (friends’ influence).
- Linked the “family spirit” with a traditional dish (food and emotions).
- Food is significant in social events in Saudi Arabia (culture).
- Food can be linked to happiness (food and emotions).
- Should eat lunch together as a family every Friday because father insists (family influence).
- States that friends influence food choices more than family (friends influence).
- She and her friends have to eat same food (belonging).
- Red Bull is her favourite drink.
- Traditional food is tasty but not healthy.
- Loves cooking pasta (convenience).
- People know she makes good cookies - takes recipes of cookies from YouTube (internet influence).
- Ads on TV make her crave food (TV and advertisements’ influence).
- Don’t like to eat with family because they make comments on the way she eats (rebellion).

| Maya | - Loves cooking at home because of mom (family influence).
- Loves traditional food because of mom (family influence).
- Western cultures influence body image values. Internet delivers these values (internet influence).
- Trusts her mother for recipes more than Instagram.
- Mom can’t get her to try new food because of the way she talks (rebellion).
- Friends can get her to try new food or make her lose weight because they convince her (friends influence).
- Spends time with friends more than family.
- Mom made her love fruits
- Can’t eat out all the time- eating out depends if mom has money (income)
- Brother influenced her to love “Mountain Dew”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wejdan</th>
<th>Loves trying healthy recipes but still eats unhealthy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eats processed food most of the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t like traditional food because it isn’t tasty and fatty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instagram encouraged her to eat healthy food choices because pictures are attractive (internet influence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always eats with her sister at home and outside (family influence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mom only cooks for herself and father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sister’s influence is stronger than friends’ (family influence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekend is family time because father says so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snapchat gets her to crave food (internet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loves McDonalds because sister does.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nawal</th>
<th>Eats traditional food regularly (habit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents are the ones who make a person love traditional food (family influence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Her family are the only ones who influence her food choices because they know her taste (family influence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends can never influence her food choices but do have an influence on other things in life (friends influence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variety is key for the popularity of fast food restaurants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Repeating Ideas from Nawal (first starter text)

11-N: Mmm.. to change the usual routine. Like we always eat at home, but sometimes I crave something from outside.

2-R: if we were like.. we are not feeling like eating home food we crave outside food...
So we eat outside.

2- R: To change the routine. Like we always eat at home.

5- S: Because they want to change the routine. The food is always the same. So they want to eat something different from the typical one.

12-W: To change the routine. Like we're bored of home food

12- N: if mom didn't cook or didn't feel like cooking, so we go have our lunch outside. And there are a lot of available choices outside, so we either have lunch or dinner outside.

8- F: Ok, the first reason would be : mom didn’t cook. She will be like : "let's all go outside and have lunch or dinner".

9- Ma: We go eat outside If we didn't cook

11- W: if there is no time to cook. Or if we don't want to cook and didn't feel like cooking.

11- W: All Saudis are lazy to cook. They love to have everything prepared for them.

12- N: Like we have a variety of restaurants that satisfies all tastes. Like there is the Turkish, the Egyptian, the Chinese, the Mexican. Like it satisfies all the tastes whether girls, women, kids, boys, or men. Like I fell that because restaurants are now really varied and choices are increased, Saudis got attracted.

4-R: Because these were new here and people got excited to try them. So of course when many people try them, they get popular. And for those who like them after they tried their food, of course they will go again.
4- R: Yes for sure. Because we didn't use to have a lot of restaurants. Not like now. They increased and they got more popular nowadays. So for now, whenever people don’t feel like cooking or if they were already out, they can just go to a restaurant. They don’t return back home to cook. And there are people who never cook at home, they rarely go to the kitchen.

11- W: Because of the turnover to restaurants in Saudi Arabia. People tend to go to restaurants a lot. And those restaurants owner see that there is huge turnover to a lot of restaurants, so they're encouraged to open new ones and new ones.

12- N: Mmm.. I don't know maybe because it is delicious and they have different kinds of, burgers and they have chicken nuggets and stuff, So it satisfies all tastes.

2- R: Their food is delicious.

2-R: What could possibly distinguishes Mac from Hardee's.. I feel like Mac is lighter than Hardee's.

2- R: Man.. their food is delicious. It is tastier than Hardee's.

5- S: I liked the taste of the burger itself. It was delicious. Because it was a little bit spicy and it gives you joy. And also, to be honest, their fries are clean.

5-S: I don’t know, there is nothing that distinguishes it..There is a meal that I really like and that I always order. Sometimes it comes cold, but it is the one that I like and always have.

5- S: Because its meals are always the same

11- W: maybe because it is popular. And it is fast in delivery. And aaah.. that’s it, I just love it

12-N: This is in a girls gathering. Like for sure there are chips, candies, soda and these stuff. Like these stuff are a must in each girl gathering.

4-R: This is at my home. I was bored so I invited my friends to come over. So mom brought me these stuff. So these are chocolate and candies. Mom said that girls in my age would mostly eat these stuff other than pastries or stuff. So you just have to buy these stuff and at the end of the day, you can buy them dinner. So in that day, we bought them dinner from Mac.
4-R: Yeah. Like in the past, I would bring pastries and they would eat them, no problem. But nowadays, they just prefer to have chocolates and candies during the gathering. So mom said we'll just serve them these stuff and buy dinner for them at the end of the night.

4-R: Like they don’t eat food other than chocolate and candy during the gathering. They prefer to have chocolate and candy and have dinner at the end like from "Pizza hut" or "Mac".

4-R: if your friends my coming over to my house, I would get them " Pizza hut" or "Mac" for dinner.

5-S: In girls gathering, dinner is always from outside.

5-S: Honestly.. I don’t have any idea, because when I go to the grocery store, I go for something specific. Like if my friends are coming over, I'll go to the supermarket and buy candies, pastries, and stuff.

12-N: Aaah.. It will never be any rice dish. Because there no older women, so there will be no rice dishes. And because I am a teen girl, I know that outside food attracts me more, so I'll definitely buy from outside for them. Like fast food like Mac, Pizzahut, anything that the girls would love.

12-N: who would influence me to eat something I never had before? Aaah.. I think it will be one of my family. Yeah because their taste will be close to my taste. But for my friends, our tastes are not alike.

2-R: My family. Because either way, I don't have any friends.

4-R: Yeah. This one. So one time we went out, with my cousins, so on our way home, we asked dad to buy us dinner and he bought us this. Of course our favorite food is from outside.

4-R:Even at home, sometimes mom cook a dish that everyone likes except me. I'll be like : "mom, I don't like that" and she will be like : "why are you always different? Why don’t you eat the food we all eat?" (smiling)

5-S: To be honest, you can't trust if it will be delicious or not, because maybe they just want you to try it. So that’s why I don’t try.

5-S: When it comes to choices, they don’t let you choose.

5-S: You see, in our age group we develop this.. like we start to say: "I don’t want to eat this". like you can say that we start to develop our personality.
5-S: like for me, I grew up not liking hot dogs because my family showed me how it is made, so I got disgusted. Even when my friends at school bring hot dog, I'll tell them: "no, I don't want that".

5-S: No. my family always tell me: "you don’t know how do they slaughter the animals, you don’t know this and that". So I avoid eating beef from what they said.

5-S: My father is a pilot, and when he travel to Turkey, he will bring their coffee with him and he bring other stuff as well. And I also like their sweets. I have them with their coffee.

5-S: I always eat from outside, because I don’t like the food they cook.

9-W: No. No one from my family or friends encouraged me to eat these stuff and be healthy. Never.

W: Yeah. When I eat a lot of sweets, they will be like "you might get diabetes, we have diabetes, and it is possible that you get it so be aware" and like that.

W: My sister will have stronger influence on me.

12-N: Mom. She always tells me to try. Like she always says "if you were in a place and this was the only food available, what would you do?" and she always convinces me to eat without forcing me, so I try it. Even if I didn't like it, I still tried it at least.

2-R: Of course for the "Okra stew" I only eat it from the hand of one person: mom. Like my aunt tried to make it, our nanny, my grandmother.. no, no one made it like mom.

3-R: Honestly it was easy for her to cook for all of us the same food. But now, she has to cook different food for me and different food for them.

3-R: Yeah and she is really happy that I started this diet. Because she used to tell me a lot of times to lose diet. She was always like: "it is better to lose weight now, in the future it will be hard". I didn’t listen to her. But now with the internet and the photos you see in Instagram (laughing)

3-R: Although mom tried hard to convince me to lose weight. But Instagram was more effective to convince me. Like I use Instagram all the time. I was like: "I have to do something this year".

3-R: because there is always someone in your family who has a strong influence on you. Like for me it is mom. I always get affected to what she says. Like sometimes she will make me love a kind of food. so yeah, family has a strong influence.

4-R: Doughnuts. Of course when we go out, we always ask mom: "mom we want this", "mom we want that". and she always buys for us.

R: Maybe mom. Like when she makes a dish.. for example the "molokhia" . I didn't like it, but I wasn't sure why. And one time she made it and she was like: "just try it". I just don't like trying new things. And many times she will say: "try that" and I am always : "No, I don’t want to". And
she used to tell me to try the "molokhia" many times. And one time I tasted it, and didn't like it much. But I tried it again and now I ask her to make it for me all the time. (smiling)

9-Ma: Mom (smiling), she is the one who make us love everything. Like my mom is a foodie person and she really takes care of her body. Like she always goes " just try.. just taste.. if you didn't like it, just leave it".

9-Ma: I used to not like neither eggplants, nor zucchini nor spinach. I didn't love them at all. like I don't know, I felt like I wanted someone to hit me so that I eat them. But then mom convinced me to try them and I eat them now and I even crave them. She would say "Popeyes ate Spanish and he became strong" and like that..

5-S: .. sometimes I go check if I liked the food that my mom cooked that day or not. If I didn't like it, I will go sleep (Laughing).

5-S: We used to eat rice and lamb each Friday together. But we don’t do that any more. Because at that time, my father wasn’t a pilot. But now, he travels a lot. So each Friday, I'll go to my aunt's and they will go to my uncle's. so everyone is busy

12-W: This is pasta. We didn't have time to cook a good food because I had to study, so me and my sister made this pasta. I can't eat alone. We always make food together and eat together.

12-N: Family are the ones who will get me to quit eating something, not my friends.

N: Like they make me scared, so I quit. Like for example the coffee, they would get angry and tell me that it is not good for my health, and I actually quit drinking it. But when they noticed that I got sick quitting it, I had to drink it again. Like it is now out of their hands.

3-R: No. my friends can't get me to quit eating anything.

4-R: I don't know.. if there is something that I really like, no one can get me to quit it.

4-R: Yeah. If it is something that is good for my health, no one can get me to quit having it. But if it was something like.. for example when I used to have "code red", my family used to tell me that it is not good for me and they will be like : "don’t drink it, it is not good for you", it is possible that I'll quit drinking it.

R: Even my friends can do that. Like they all can get me to quit things that harms my health. But things that I believe are good for my health, no one can influence me to quit them.

8- And I have to eat all kinds of food with a spoon. Like for example chicken or eggs, I have them all with a spoon. And people always comment on that. So I avoid their comments and don’t gather with them at meal times. And yeah, at dinner time, I 'll just have a glass of water or juice. And they will be like: "you don’t eat much and you still didn’t lose wait!". (laughing). They try to
put me down.. and they would make the food that I like and I am like : " I can't eat that!". So it is so annoying (smiling).

8-F: They really got popular and they really increased. Like it is impossible to find a girl my age who doesn’t drink code red or red bull". It is really important among the girls. It really became popular. I can't talk about the advantages and the disadvantages but what you hear the girls say and what I personally say is: "it tastes really good". But on the other hand, what you hear from older people is : "this is not healthy, it harms your health", "it is not healthy for you to drink it". But what do we do? We don’t listen to what they say. You know.
□ People eat out to change the routine, which is eating at home or eating home food.

- "Mmm.. to change the usual routine. Like we always eat at home, but sometimes I crave something from outside."
- "If we were like.. we are not feeling like eating home food we crave outside food.. So we go eat outside."
- "To change the routine. Like we always eat at home.
- "Because they want to change the routine. The food is always the same. So they want to eat something different from the typical one."
- "To change the routine. Like we're bored of home food"

□ People eat out if they don't want to cook or if the person responsible for cooking doesn't want to cook.

- "If mom didn't cook or didn't feel like cooking, so we go have our lunch outside. And there are a lot of available choices outside, so we either have lunch or dinner outside."
- "Ok, the first reason for eating out would be: mom didn’t cook. She will be like: "let's all go outside and have lunch or dinner"."
- " We go eat outside If we didn't cook "
- "If there is no time to cook. Or if we don't want to cook and didn't feel like cooking."
- " All Saudis are lazy to cook. They love to have everything prepared for them."

□ People are not always aware of the reasons why they prefer fast food

- "Mmm.. I don't know maybe because it is delicious and they have different kinds of, burgers and they have chicken nuggets and stuff, So it satisfies all tastes."
- "Their food is delicious."
- " What could possibly distinguishes Mac from Hardee's?.... I feel like Mac is lighter than Hardee's."
- "Man.. their food is delicious. It is tastier than Hardee's."
-"I liked the taste of the burger itself. It was delicious. Because it was a little bit spicy and it gives you joy. And also, to be honest, their fries are clean."

-"I don’t know, there is nothing that distinguishes it.. There is a meal that I really like and that I always order. Sometimes it comes cold, but it is the one that I like and always have."

-"Because its meals are always the same"

-"Maybe because it is popular. And it is fast in delivery. And aaah.. that’s it, I just love it"