

To Encourage Healthy Eating, Higher Taxes should be imposed on soft Drinks and Junk food.

Outline

1 Introduction

Thesis Statement

The consumption of unhealthy food causes serious health issues. The imposition of higher taxes can reduce the consumption of soft drinks and junk food thus ensuring a healthy society.

2 Deciphering the term "Healthy Eating"

3 Consequences of poor dietary habits

(3a) Obesity and health risks associated to it

(3b) Nutritional deficiencies

(3c) Impaired cognitive abilities

(3d) Increased risk of mental disorders

(3d) Healthcare burden and cost ✓

(3f) Food production and GHG emissions ✓

(3g) Waste generation ✓

4/ levying higher taxes - promotion of healthy dietary choices

(4a) Reduction in consumption of unhealthy food and beverages ✓

(4b) Reduced burden on health care due to low obesity problems ✓

~~(4c) Providing incentives on producing healthy and nutritious food and beverages~~

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(4e) Allocation of resources to health initiatives ✓

5/ Conclusion

The prevalence of unhealthy eating habits, impacting public health has become a serious concern in the modern society. The soft drinks and junk food, which have no nutritious value, often marketed aggressively and available easily; have become part of contemporary diet. The unhealthy habits, often characterized by soft drinks and junk food have become contributors to escalating global health concerns. Unfortunately, these items are rich in sugars, unhealthy fats and empty calories, causing obesity, diabetes and tooth decay. To combat this escalating health crisis, the proponents of levying higher taxes argue that it would serve as an effective deterrent, nudging consumers to healthy options. By making unhealthy food product expensive, individuals could be inclined to reconsider their choices. Moreover, incentivizing the healthy and nutritious food producers

could also foster a shift from unhealthy food choices to healthy ones. The revenue generated from higher taxes could be used in healthcare system, nutritious programs and initiatives to promote healthy and wholesome food.

To begin with, it is pertinent to understand the term "Healthy Eating". A healthy and nutritious food provides all the nutrients required by body for growth as well to prevent chronic diseases. It involves incorporating fruits, vegetables, whole grains and cereals in diet. Hydration is also crucial and water should be primary beverage. Healthy eating promotes physical health, boosts mental activity, increases energy levels, improves digestion system and strengthens immune system.

good in transition

Unhealthy eating habits have far-reaching implications on society including health issues and environmental impacts.

To begin with, health implications have significant importance. One of most apparent implication of eating junk food is obesity. Obesity, caused by accumulation of fats in body, poses serious health problems. People who consume junk food regularly, are more prone to become overweight.

The reason thereby is junk food lacks nutrients which help body's metabolic activities which is essential for fitness. According to a report by World Health Organization (WHO) global obesity rates have tripled since 1970, with more than 1.9 billion adults being overweight, of which over 650 million are considered obese.

Hence, unhealthy dietary habits that prioritize junk food and soft drinks over nutritious food can have severe health problems.

Similarly, the consumption of soft drinks and junk food on daily basis

can lead to nutritional deficiencies.

The junk food has very low nutritious values with high quantity of added sugars, empty calories and low-quality carbohydrates. It also lacks vitamins and minerals and the individuals reliant on it can have deficiency of vitamins A, B, C, and minerals like Potassium and Calcium.

According to a report by centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP), individuals who regularly consumed junk food and soft drinks had significantly lower intakes of essential nutrients as compared to those with healthier dietary patterns.

Thus, these deficiencies can weaken the immune system, hinder the proper growth and can lead to severe chronic diseases.

Moreover, the consumption of soft drink and eating junk food can have significant impact on cognitive

functions. The consumption of sugar rich food can lead to spikes in blood sugar level, which have negative impacts on brain's ability to focus and retention. According to a report by American journal of Clinical Nutrition, individuals who have reported consumption of junk food and soft drinks had higher risk of developing mood disorders including depression and anxiety. Hence, the consumption of junk food and soft drinks results in decreased attention span, reduces memory retention and impaired cognitive processing.

Other than health implications, the unhealthy eating habits have become an economic burden on society. As more people turn to these convenient but unhealthy food options, the risks of diseases like obesity, diabetes and hypertension increases. It puts a strain on healthcare system to provide

and manage medical facilities.

The more people turning to health care system leads to long waiting and reduced access to care for patients. According to a report by World Health Organization (WHO), the annual economic cost of obesity related healthcare in United States alone reached a staggering \$ 147 billion. Hence, prevalence of obesity and chronic diseases can exacerbate health disparities causing socio-economic burden on society.

Apart from above mentioned implications, there are environmental implications as well. The production of food and its environmental implications have profound impacts on planet's health, especially when it comes to junk food and soft drink beverages. The intensive processes involved in production of junk food and soft drinks, lead to Green house gases

emissions. The cultivation of ingredients like corn, soy, and sugarcane for junk food and production of carbonated beverages require large amount of water, land and energy. Thus, these activities contribute to deforestation, biodiversity loss, habitat loss and emission of carbon dioxide and methane, exacerbating climate change and environmental degradation.

Last but not the least, the production of junk food and carbonated beverages have contributed to waste generation in recent years. The more consumption of junk food results in more production which ultimately leads to more waste generation. This waste is unfortunately dumped in open spaces or landfills causing litter in natural environment. Sometimes, the waste is thrown into waterbodies like lakes, rivers and oceans, not only littering natural aquifers but also endangering marine life. According to World Economic

Forum, there is an estimated 75 to 99 million tons of plastic in our oceans, with further 33 million pounds of plastic entering marine environment every single year, killing over 1 million marine animals every year.

Recognizing the importance of shifting away from unhealthy eating habits, it is essential to know that how implementing higher taxes can effectively discourage this detrimental trend. While outrightly banning the consumption of junk food and soft drinks, is not a realistic approach for any country, levying higher taxes can be fruitful. The expensive junk food and soft drinks would nudge people to healthy food options. These taxes often termed as Sin Taxes since they are on the food rich in sugar, fat and calories, which are associated with the diseases like obesity, diabetes and

heart problems. According to a report by British Medical Journal, a 10 percent increase in price of sugary drinks leads to 12 percent decrease in their consumption. As the cost of junk food and sugary drinks increase due to higher taxes, the consumers are incentivized to reconsider their dietary choices and opt for healthier options instead.

Moreover, the implementation of higher taxes not only addresses the issue of obesity, but also sends a powerful message about the importance of promoting dietary habits. Government can use revenue generated by the heavy taxes on initiatives such as nutrition education programs, community wellness centers and subsidized access to fresh produce.

For instance, Mexico's soda tax, introduced in 2014, led to 7.6 percent decline in sugary drink purchase and generated funds for public health

initiatives.

In addition, promoting healthy eating is crucial for addressing global diet related diseases. One of effective strategies is to incentivize the healthy nutritious food producer, while imposing heavy taxes on unhealthy food. By offering incentives on producing healthy items such as fruits, vegetables, whole grain and cereals, government can stimulate the supply of healthy food choices while hindering unhealthy ones by heavy taxes. Incentives like tax breaks and subsidies can increase production of healthy food at low cost, making it easily available to consumers. According to a report by the American Journal of Agricultural Economics, price reduction on fruit and vegetables led to increased consumption among low income individuals.

Furthermore, implementing promotional

taxes can be directed towards impactful health initiatives

In a nutshell, the implementation of higher taxes on soft drinks and junk food is prudent and an effective measure to promote healthy eating and combating the escalating rates of dietary related illnesses. By discouraging the consumption of sugary and unhealthy food, these taxes can contribute to reduce the prevalence of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. The revenue generated from these taxes can be used in public health initiatives and education, fostering societies that prioritize well being and embrace healthier lifestyle.

