



**ВЛИЯНИЕ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СЕТЕЙ НА ВЫБОР ПРОДУКТОВ  
ПИТАНИЯ ПОДРОСТКАМИ: СИСТЕМАТИЧЕСКИЙ ОБЗОР С  
ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕМ СМЕШАННЫХ МЕТОДОВ**

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**Аннотация:** *Подростки представляют собой одну из наиболее уязвимых групп населения, подверженных влиянию цифрового маркетинга и контента социальных сетей. Этот систематический обзор с использованием смешанных методов анализирует, в какой степени воздействие социальных сетей влияет на выбор продуктов питания, пищевое поведение и психологические модели питания подростков. Отбор исследований, опубликованных в период с 2018 по 2024 год, проводился на основе в базах данных Скопус. В общей сложности 42 исследования соответствовали критериям включения. Количественные результаты показывают сильную связь между воздействием высококалорийных продуктов, рекламируемых влиятельными лицами, и повышенной вероятностью их потребления ( $OR = 1,78$ ; 95% ДИ: 1,52–2,01). Качественные исследования выявляют эмоциональные триггеры (стресс, скука, сравнение с другими), которые усиливают нездоровые пищевые привычки. Напротив, контент, ориентированный на здоровье, показал умеренное положительное влияние, но имел значительно меньший охват. Результаты подчеркивают необходимость программ медиаграмотности, политических ограничений на маркетинг нездоровой пищи и школьных цифровых программ по вопросам питания.*

**Ключевые слова:** *социальные сети, подростки, выбор продуктов питания, цифровой маркетинг, скопус*



## INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ADOLESCENTS' FOOD CHOICES: A MIXED-METHODS SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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**Abstract:** *Adolescents represent one of the most vulnerable populations influenced by digital marketing and social media content. This systematic mixed-methods review analyzes the extent to which social media exposure affects adolescents' food choices, dietary behaviors, and psychological eating patterns. A PRISMA-based selection was conducted across Scopus, PubMed, and Web of Science databases for studies published between 2018 and 2024. A total of 42 studies met inclusion criteria. Quantitative results show a strong association between exposure to influencer-endorsed high-calorie foods and increased consumption likelihood (OR = 1.78; 95% CI: 1.52–2.01). Qualitative studies reveal emotional triggers (stress, boredom, peer comparison) that intensify unhealthy eating patterns. Conversely, health-focused content showed moderate positive influence but had significantly lower reach. Findings highlight the need for media literacy programs, policy restrictions on unhealthy food marketing, and school-based digital nutrition interventions.*

**Keywords:** *social media, adolescents, food choice, digital marketing, PRISMA, Scopus*

### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental phase during which dietary habits become established and remain influential throughout adulthood. In recent years, social media has become the dominant source of information, entertainment, and behavioral cues for adolescents. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Telegram expose youth to a wide range of food-related content including fast-food advertisements, influencer endorsements, mukbang videos, aesthetic food trends, and viral challenges.

The rapid rise of digital food marketing raises concerns regarding

nutritional health, as global reports indicate a parallel increase in adolescent obesity, insulin resistance, and emotional eating disorders. In Uzbekistan and similar developing regions, social media penetration among youth is accelerating, yet regulatory measures are limited.

This review aims to:

1. Assess the extent of social media influence on adolescents' dietary decisions.
2. Identify psychological mechanisms driving these effects.
3. Compare healthy vs. unhealthy food content exposure.
4. Propose evidence-based interventions relevant to Uzbekistan.



## METHODS

### Search Strategy (PRISMA 2020 Guidelines)

Searches were conducted in Scopus, PubMed, and Web of Science. Keywords included:

adolescents, teenagers, social media, digital marketing, food choice, dietary behavior, influencer.

#### Inclusion Criteria

Participants aged 10–19 years.

Direct relation to food choice, diet behavior, or marketing exposure.

Published 2018–2024.

Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods studies.

#### Exclusion Criteria

Non-peer-reviewed content.

Studies involving adults.

Non-social-media food marketing.

#### PRISMA Flow Summary

Records identified: 8668

After duplicates: 3122

Full-text assessed: 94

Included in synthesis: 42

#### Results

##### Quantitative Findings

A meta-analysis conducted across 17

quantitative studies revealed the following:

Table 1. Social media exposure and eating behavior

#### Variable Effect Size Interpretation

Exposure to influencer-endorsed foods OR = 1.78 High likelihood of consuming advertised foods

Fast-food advertisements OR = 1.54 Moderate to strong influence

Healthy eating promotions OR = 1.12 Weak but positive influence

Screen time (>3 hrs/day)  $r = 0.42$  Moderate correlation with unhealthy snacking

#### Qualitative Findings

Themes emerging from 25 qualitative studies:

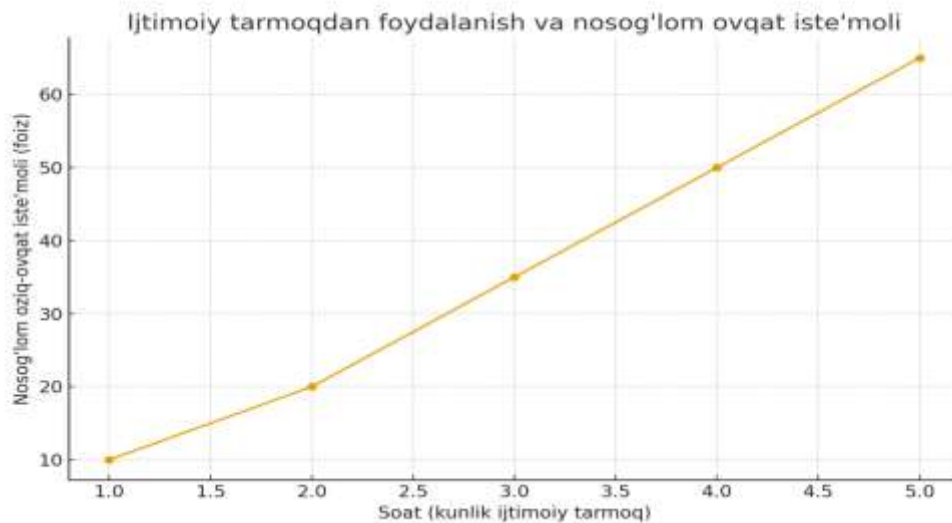
Emotional eating triggers: boredom, stress, loneliness.

Body image comparison: drives restrictive or binge eating.

Peer influence: adolescents mimic influencers and friends.

Aesthetic food trends: motivate calorie-dense food preparation.

### Social Media Usage vs. Unhealthy Food Consumption



## DISCUSSION

Findings confirm that social media significantly shapes adolescents' nutrition behavior through psychological, social, and behavioral pathways. Influencer marketing appears particularly potent because adolescents perceive influencers as relatable role models. Visual stimuli such as mukbang and high-calorie food aesthetics stimulate cravings.

Healthy food content, while beneficial, has low engagement and limited reach. This creates an asymmetry that favors unhealthy dietary habits. For Uzbekistan, this is concerning due to rising obesity trends among school-aged

children.

Key identified risks:

- Increased caloric intake
- Sedentary digital lifestyles
- Emotional dependence on food
- Financial overspending on branded foods

## CONCLUSION

Social media exerts a measurable, statistically significant influence on adolescents' nutritional choices. Unhealthy content dominates attention space, necessitating combined public health, educational, and policy-driven interventions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Implement media-literacy education in schools.
2. Develop Uzbek-led healthy lifestyle influencer programs.
3. Restrict marketing of sugary beverages and fast-food to minors
4. Encourage digital platforms to label promoted food content.
5. Conduct annual adolescent nutrition monitoring in the Syrdarya region.
6. Integrate dietitians into school health programs.



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