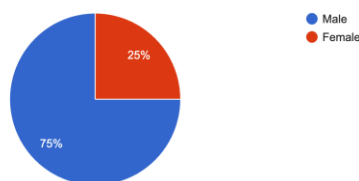This report I made for my Mini Project Assignment in my Data Management and Data Science course presents an analysis of fast-food consumption patterns among current and former college students. The survey was designed to explore who consumes fast food, what restaurants they prefer, when and where they buy it, and why they make these choices. A total of 12 participants completed the survey over a one-week period.

The survey collected responses from 12 participants with the following demographic characteristics. In terms of gender, 75% of respondents identified as male and 25% identified as female. About year in school, the majority of respondents were graduate students at 58.3%, followed by seniors at 16.7%, and sophomores, juniors, and freshmen being 8.33%. For employment status, participants were evenly split between part-time employment (41.67%) and full-time employment (33.3%), with smaller percentages holding multiple jobs (16.7%) or being not employed (8.33%). Here are some visuals to have a better understanding of the data collected.
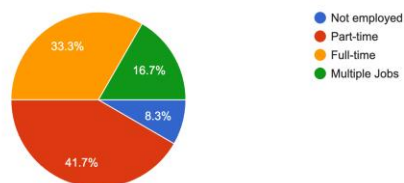
Gender
12 responses

- Male
- Female

25%

75%

Year in School
12 responses

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate

58.3%

8.3%

8.3%

16.7%
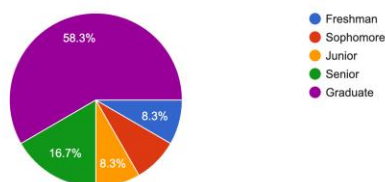
Employment Status
12 responses

- Not employed
- Part-time
- Full-time
- Multiple Jobs

33.3%

16.7%

8.3%

41.7%

When asked which fast food restaurant they visit most often, responses were distributed across several popular chains. The top three restaurants were tied, with Chick-fil-A, Chipotle, and Zaxby's each receiving 25.00% of responses. The remaining participants selected Whataburger (8.33%), McDonald's (8.33%), and Taco Bell (8.33%).
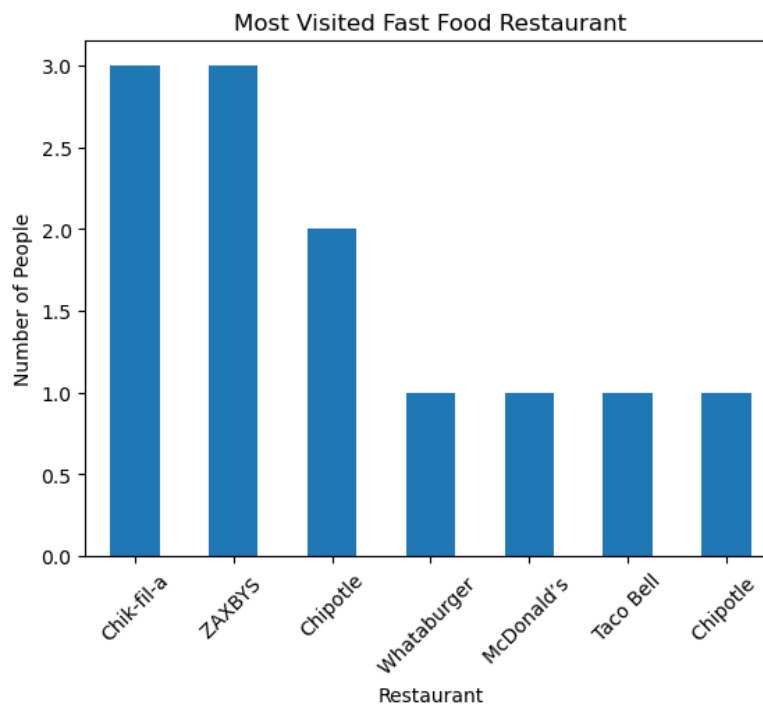
The majority of participants reported eating fast food 1-2 times per week (66.7%). A quarter of respondents showed they eat fast food 3-4 times per week (25.00%), while a smaller part reported consuming fast food 5 or more times per week (8.33%).
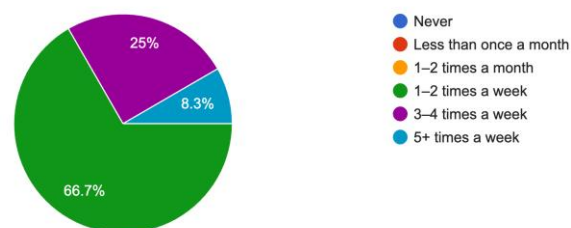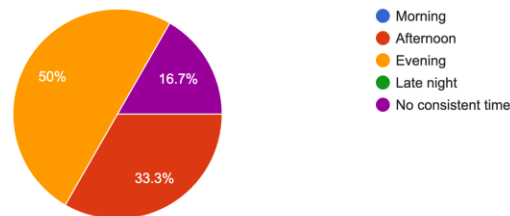

Evening was the most popular time for fast food consumption, with 50.00% of participants reporting this as their usual time. Afternoon was the second most common

time at 33.33%, and 16.67% of respondents showed they had no consistent time for eating fast food.

When do you usually eat fast food?
12 responses

Drive-thru service was overwhelmingly the preferred method of obtaining fast food, with 66.67% of respondents selecting this option. Going inside the restaurant was chosen by 16.67% of participants, and delivery apps such as Uber Eats or DoorDash were used by 16.67% of respondents.
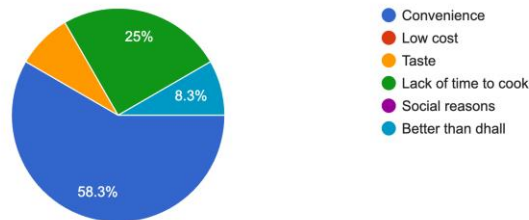
Where do you usually get fast food?
12 responses
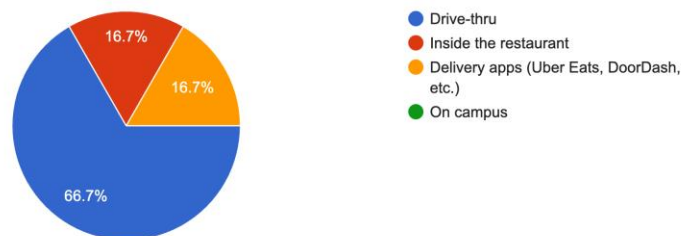
Participants were asked three "why" questions to understand their motivations. For the main reason they choose to eat fast food, convenience was the leading factor at 58.33%, followed by lack of time to cook (25%), taste (8.33%), and "better than dhall" (8.33%). When asked why they eat fast food at their selected time, 33.3% said it fits their schedule, 50% cited quick meals between classes or work, and 16.67% mentioned late-night availability. Regarding why they choose their preferred location (drive-thru, delivery, etc.), faster service was the dominant reason at 66.7%, with other factors including no transportation (16.7%), comfort (8.33%), and "better when I go in" (8.33%).
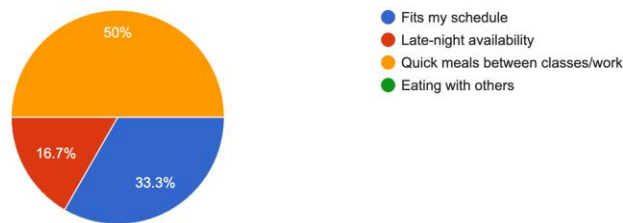
Why do you choose to eat fast food?
12 responses

- ● Convenience
- ● Low cost
- ● Taste
- ● Lack of time to cook
- ● Social reasons
- ● Better than dhall

25%
8.3%
58.3%

Why do you eat fast food at the time you selected?
12 responses

- ● Fits my schedule
- ● Late-night availability
- ● Quick meals between classes/work
- ● Eating with others

50%
16.7%
33.3%

Why do you choose that location (drive-thru, delivery, etc.)
12 responses

- ● Faster service
- ● Comfort
- ● No transportation
- ● Easier with groups
- ● Better when I go in

8.3%
16.7%
8.3%
66.7%
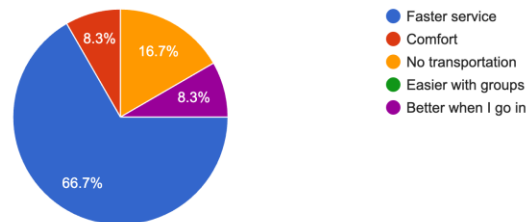
A few methods I used to conduct this survey were distribute the survey itself via text message to friends and family over a one-week period. Data analysis was conducted using Python with the pandas library to calculate percentages and matplotlib to create visualizations. Two primary weaknesses I found in this study were the small sample size of only 12 respondents and a lack of gender diversity with the sample being predominantly male. To improve this study in the future, a larger sample size of 50 or more participants would be beneficial, and random sampling methods should be employed instead of convenience sampling to reduce bias.

As I wrap up my report, one clear pattern appeared to me from the data, drive-thru is overwhelmingly the preferred location for obtaining fast food, with approximately two-

thirds of respondents choosing this option. This finding suggests that speed and convenience are the main factors in fast food consumption among college students. The preference for drive-thru service aligns with the reported reasons for eating fast food, where convenience and faster service were often cited. Future research with a larger and more diverse sample could explore whether this pattern holds across different demographics and geographic locations.