

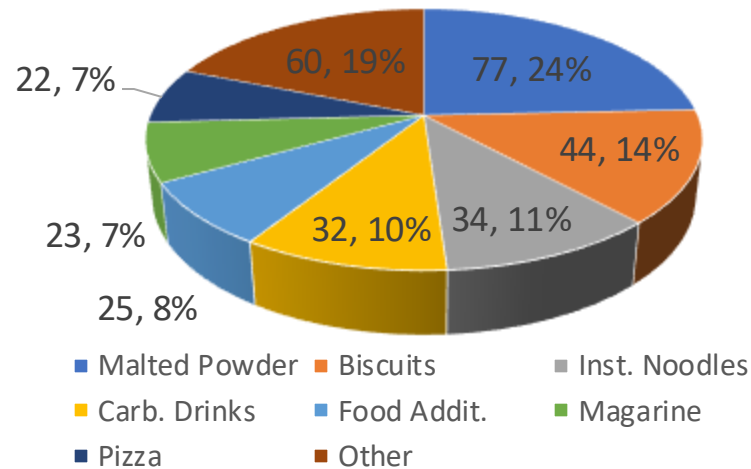
Influence of Food and Beverage Advertisements on Youth

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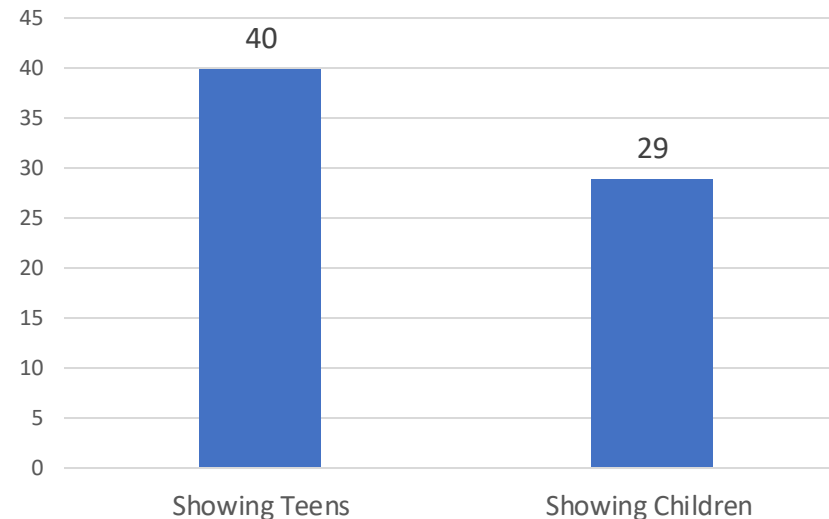
1 – RDHS, Unawatuna, Galle, Sri Lanka

- **INTRODUCTION** – Television advertisements have a significant influence on food and beverage preferences of youth. Advertisements often promote unhealthy food and dietary practices. Policy makers should be advocated to take necessary actions regarding this issue.
- **OBJECTIVE** – To analyze content and influence food and beverage advertisements shown in leading television channels in Sri Lanka during prime viewing times have on youth.
- **METHODOLOGY** – Three assessors alternatively watched three highest rated TV channels on three consecutive days from 7pm to 10pm, and recorded all advertisements related to food and beverages. The data was analyzed using several quantitative variables including duration, whether children or teens appear in the advertisement, and type of food or beverage. Qualitative analysis was done by eliciting key messages appealing to youth.
- **RESULTS** – A total of 317 advertisements were taken for analysis.

Types of Foods Beverages



Showing Teens and Children (%)



- **CONCLUSIONS** – Ultra-processed food with significantly negative health benefits are being highly marketed in television advertisements which especially target youth. A negligible number of advertisements focused on healthy eating.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS** – Government authorities should regulate advertisements which promote unhealthy food and beverages focusing on youth. Children and teenagers should be educated about the implications of such advertisements. Key messages promoting healthy eating should be delivered via television during prime viewing times. Regulations should be brought to restrict showing children to market unhealthy food and beverages.