Food Marketing Influences Children’s Attitudes, Preferences and Consumption: A Systematic Critical Review

This systematic review gives a comprehensive contemporary account of the impact of marketing on children aged 0-18 years and critically evaluates the methods used. The review used 5 electronic academic databases were searched using key terms for primary studies (both quantitative and qualitative) published up to September 2018.

The review assessed the negative impacts of food marketing, including enhanced preferences and increasing consumption of marketed foods. This was documented for a wide range of marketing techniques, particularly adverts used in television/ movies and product packaging.

These studies contribute strong evidence which recommends restriction of food marketing to children. The review signposted distinct gaps in literature. There is a lack of use of qualitative and physiological methodologies. Contemporary and sophisticated marketing techniques used in media require research attention. Finally, more research is required to evaluate longer term effects of food marketing on children’s’ weight.