



Investigating the Cons of Being a Vegetarian

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ABSTARCT

Some people decide to switch to a vegetarian diet without doing any research because they think that eating veggies is good for them and the environment. In light of that, our main objective is to look into the drawbacks of being a vegetarian, such as the limited availability of good food options. Inadequate protein intake has further negative effects on health. Vegetarian food is more expensive than meat. Young vegetarians are also more and more likely to experience mental health issues including eating disorders. Therefore, we conducted interviews to learn more about this research and the respondents' perspectives. The results showed that most candidates preferred to be meat eaters over vegetarians. Additionally, we obtained every candidate's favourable viewpoint. Ultimately, people shouldn't try to convince someone to vegetarian before they fully understand how it works. It is crucial to conduct study and read articles like "Investigating the Cons of Being Vegetarian" before making a vegetarian diet commitment.

Keywords: Vegetarian food, vegetarian diet, health

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Do you know that transforming into a vegetarian will help you live longer than a non-vegetarian? According to a team of professionals at Loma University in the United States, vegetarian men live an average of 10 years longer than non-vegetarian males. Becoming vegetarian can add six additional years to a woman's life. Giant pandas, as example, switched to eating nothing but meat approximately 6 million years ago. Pandas, as we know, eat bamboos, and they eat more bamboos in order to obtain more protein due to their carnivore digestive systems needs more energy.

Based on a recent survey, between 10% and 12% of people worldwide consume mostly vegetarian foods. Countries having the highest amounts of vegetarians includes Taiwan, India, and Israel. In order to be sure, in India especially Brahmins are strictly vegetarians. Indians honours the cow because they represents the Mother Earth 'Devi'. The main author and co-author as a sample in this case, we aren't allowed to eat beef owing to our family culture and traditions law. Meanwhile, Muslims are prohibited from pork which is non-halal for them. Following the article, Being a vegetarian has its advantages, such as maintaining excellent health with a diet rich in micronutrients, as vegetarians consume fresh fruits and green leafy vegetables.

Vegetarian groceries are lower in price than nonvegetarian goods. Depending to the Wall Street Journal, the costs of meat were higher in June compared to vegetables and fruits. The pork was 12%, whereas the tomatoes just 0.6%. Vegetarian also can help you avoid or minimize your risk of getting cancer. Plant-based diets are abundant in fiber, which has been demonstrated to reduce the incidence of breast and colorectal cancer.

They are also an alternative as rectum develops out of control. Every path has its imperfections and being a vegetarian has disadvantages as well. In this article, we do like to share our investigation on cons of being vegetarian such as limited food options, inadequate proteins, expensive substitute foods, and mental health issues. Only you can decide if you're ready to become a vegetarian, but if you want to learn more about vegetarianism, this article can help.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Limited food options

The major con of being vegetarians is limited food options. This infers that vegetarians are facing the difficulty to find restaurants with quality, tasty and various food options in the menu card. This is illustrated by Thed Swee Tee (2012) vegetarian diets are dull due to insufficient of food selection. Although it is true that most of the vegetarian meals the restaurants provide will be salad and vegetables related foods only. Furthermore, numbers of vegetarian restaurants are less as well. This is because most of the population on earth is non vegetarians and for the reason of that business owners are more preferred to run a non vegetarian restaurant. This lead vegetarians to prepare their own meals to make sure they don't starve by not able to find vegetarian food, especially when you are travelling to a country where English is not their first language. It will be arduous to communicate with them about your diet plan and due to that travelling is a big challenge for vegetarians.

2.2 Inadequate proteins

It is essential to realise that a vegetarian diet can lead to inadequate proteins. This implies that vegetarian diets are lack of Calcium, Vitamin B12, Zinc, Iron and Omega-3 fatty acids. This is demonstrated by Fumio et al (2014) that Vitamin B12 sources are animal based and aren't available in many plant-based foods. Couldn't agree more because foods such as beef liver, salmon, chicken, egg and clams are high in Vitamin B12. Fish especially canned tuna and sardines are high in calcium and Zinc. Not only that, mackerel are high in both Iron and Omega-3 fatty acids. Consequently, lack of proteins may cause muscle weakness, hair loss, extreme fatigue and dry skin. Most of the parents taught their children to adapt vegetarian lifestyle, but little do they know that it might lead to stunted growth or even death? Tahmeed et al (2013) found that inadequate energy and protein are the results in children's growth and the researchers also mentioned that around 12% children under the age of 5 died due to lack of common nutrients. This is because people didn't do much homework and research before becoming a vegetarianism.

2.3 Expensive substitute foods

Do you know vegetarian lifestyle can cost you an arm and a leg? Vegetarian substitute foods are more expensive than meat. For instance, Ion (2007) reported that vegetarian sausages cost more than 1.82 times the price than normal sausages. We must consider it because of my personal outlook, the finest 'Ayamas' chicken frankfurter sausage was RM 5.90 for 340g, whereas the finest 'Frys' vegan sausage was RM 12.30 for 300g. Plus, if you're considering eating out, vegetarian food tends to be sumptuous. Vegetarian foods are always sold premium comparing meat filled foods. The evidence that supports this is from The ProVeg International (2023) reported that 70% of the respondent from the survey thinks that vegetarian food is costing more and unaffordable than non- vegetarian foods. We take 'La Pasta' restaurant as an example, they sell Chicken bolognese spaghetti with minced chicken and tomato sauce for RM 15.50 and Mixed vegetables spaghetti with vegetables and tomato sauce for RM 17.50. From this we can clearly insinuate that the owners of the restaurants knew that vegetarians are willing to pay to eat various vegetarian foods since they don't have many options and this is the reason why they selling vegetarian foods overpriced.

2.4 Mental health issues

It is also fundamental to note that vegetarian lifestyle can lead to various mental health issues such as Eating disorders. The types of eating disorders that are hunting young adult current vegetarians are Anorexia nervosa and Bulimia nervosa. Romano et al (2009) has examined that vegetarian youngsters were more conceivably go crazy with binge eating compared to non vegetarians. Although some people indeed fascinate to vegetarian diets as an alternative to reduce food intakes and calories. This is a warning sign that the individual has disordered eating patterns and danger of developing an eating disorder. Eating disorders can lead to physical effects such as thyroid hormone levels drop. These may lead a young woman's period to stop, nevertheless they can also have serious consequences such as bone loss. The view from psychological effect is disordered eating can lead to drug addiction. They believe drugs will make it simpler for them to avoid eating and get their weight reduction and makes them feel satisfied.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research design was used in this study, and a sample of 30 respondents were selected for the interview sessions. A semi-structured interview question was used, and the samples were chosen randomly. Thematic analyses were used for this study's findings to identify common ideas, thoughts and themes that appear commonly between the participants.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

1) Are you vegetarians?

THEME	EXTRACTS
Non-vegetarians	CANDIDATES 1 "No...ah...I'm not a vegetarian" CANDIDATES 2 "Hmm...actually no...ah...I'm not a vegetarian but I like to eat vegetables"
Meat	CANDIDATES 3 "No...ah...I more prefer eat meat" CANDIDATES 4 "Meat is my friend especially chicken and beef"

From the interview, we know that 4 of our candidates are not vegetarians. Candidates 1 only mention that they're not vegetarian, and candidates 2 like to eat vegetables. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 really like meat so makes sense that they're not vegetarian.

2) Do you prefer to be vegetarians or non-vegetarians?

Preference	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Ah...I prefer to be non-vegetarian because I think like easily to fill up stomach"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>' Well most of us prefer to be non- vegetarians'</i></p>
Hard	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Oh...Its hard to cope up vegetarian lifestyle la"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"Personally I feel its actually very hard to adapt with plant based food like for me"</i></p>

From the interview, 4 of our candidates prefer to be non- vegetarian. Candidates 1 thinks that only eating vegetables won't be easy to fill up stomach. Candidates 2 said that most people are more likely to be non- vegetarians, which is true. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 feel that it is hard to live with a vegetarian lifestyle.

3) In your opinion, do you think choosing to be vegetarian may take social dining situation more challenging and awkward? Why?

Awkward	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Erm...In most cases, choosing to be a vegetarian may make social dining situations more challenging or awkward, especially in cultures where meat is a staple food item...because In many social dining situations, the menu may heavily feature meat dishes. As a vegetarian , you may have limited options to choose from that...which can be awkward if you are the only one with a different preference...that's it"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"I think yeah... it can be quite awkward for them... sometimes they have to request special meals...so like the restaurant staff need to do more work for them"</i></p>
Expensive	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>" I feel like very challenging because there is less vegetarian restaurants out there...even if got also the foods are very expensive.</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>" Vegetarian foods are so expensive like why telling selling it expensive? Sometimes I felt so bad for those who could not afford.</i></p>

From the interview, Candidates 1 and candidates 2 replied that choosing to be vegetarian may take social dinning quite awkward. Candidates 1 thinks that meat will be appear as staple food in most culture and it will be difficult if you can't cooperate with others' preference. Candidates 2 thinks that workers in the restaurant need to prepare special meals for them which cause a burden to them. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 commented vegetarian food in restaurants are expensive. Candidates 4 also thinks it is sad for those who can't afford them.

4) How you feel about vegetarian speciality foods that are more expensive than meat based options?

Expensive	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Because they are special so it is normal that they are more expensive"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"Oh umm...it is actually not reasonable at all like why vegetables very expensive? Aren't they cheap? But why selling plant based foods for expensive price? I really don't feel good about this! "</i></p>
Complicated	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Erm...I think because the process of making those vegetarian food are more complicated than packaging the meat"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"Because they are complicated to make."</i></p>

From the interview, we know that candidates 1 agree with the expensive price of vegetarian speciality food but candidates 2 disagree with that because they think those food are still made out of vegetables, and vegetables are cheap. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 think that the proses of making the planted based food is complicated.

5) Don't you think some plant based ingredients may be harder to find in certain areas?

Hard	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Ah...In my perspective, my housing area is very less and hard to find like vegetarian groceries store...even if I want to go also it will be at least 20 minutes distant"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"Since my mom takes vegetarians food every Friday...hmm...whenever we go out on Friday it will be really hard for us to find vegetarian restaurant"</i></p>
Supermarket	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>" No la! My mom is a vegetarian...she always buy plant based ingredients in supermarket for vegetarian"</i></p>
	<p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>" For me its not hard at all...since my grandma has her own vegetables farm so no need to go supermarket"</i></p>

From this interview, the opinion of candidates 1,2 and candidates 3,4 are totally different view. Candidates 1 lives at places that it's hard to get planted based food. Moreover candidates 2 family member takes only vegetables on Friday and of course, it is hard to find vegetarian restaurant too. Candidates 3's mother manage to find planted based food at supermarket. Candidates 4 no need to go supermarket to search for planted based food because their grandmother own a garden.

6) Do you think vegetarians are those people with morals?

Immoral	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Actually I think those people who think they are moral because they are vegetarians are even more...hmm are even more immoral themselves because they may think that people who are not vegetarians are immoral"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"From my opinion' I don't think the only vegetarians are those people with morals...because morals have in every human beings...some more I cannot judge people that eat meat are people immoral."</i></p>
Behave	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Morals are from a person thoughts and how they behave to another person...so eating non-veggies food cannot be sure that a person with morals"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"It depends on how people behave."</i></p>

From this interview, we know that candidates 1 believe that those vegetarians that think they are a moral person are actually immoral because they may judge non-vegetarians people. Candidates 2 thinks that morals is within everyone, not just vegetarians, non-vegetarians can be nice too. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 don't judge people for who they are but how they act, and there's many non-vegetarians people with a kind heart too.

7) Eating only vegetables can't give you enough energy. Would you agree this statement?

Inadequate energy	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Yes I agree this statement because just eating vegetables can't give us enough energy...because most vegetables don't have carbohydrates...it will cause us not focus in our daily life"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"Yes I agree with the statement because we also need to eat foods with carbohydrates, protein and fats to give us more energy"</i></p>
Contains energy	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Erm no because vegetables contains carbohydrates that can provide you energy, for example...carrot"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"If just eat vegetables can't give you enough energy then why those vegetarians still can survive? Like we humans need energy to survive right?"</i></p>

From this interview, candidates 1 and candidates 2 mention that only eating vegetables can't provide us enough energy because of the lack of carbohydrates. This will bring impact to us in our daily life. Candidates 3 give an example of vegetables that contains energy which is carrot and 4 asked if vegetables can't give us enough energy, why vegetarians can still survive after all those years. I think people can survive even without good meals but there will be health problems to them.

8) You know being vegetarian has high risk of binge eating

Eat a lot	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"I heard about this before from my relative...that it only happened to someone that used to eat a lot"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"Binge eating people usually eat a lot la as I know"</i></p>
Satisfied	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Hmm really? I'm not a vegetarian but somehow I think only eat vegetables can't make me feel satisfied"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"I think vegetables cause binge eating because I won't feel full and satisfied"</i></p>

From the interview, candidates 1 knows someone that go through binge eating before, and both candidates 1 and candidates 2 believe this issue only happens on people that used to eat a lot. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 think that people who attempting binge eating is because they don't feel fulfilled of what they ate.

9) "Vegetarian foods are boring". Agree or disagree ?

Bad	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Of course because vegetarians foods are always green and leaf...if you ask me I'll say vegetarian food is bad"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"For me, vegetables taste bad, and I don't like them"</i></p>
Delicious	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Well I'll be neutral on this statement since all the foods taste good. For example bibimbap so delicious with various of vegetables, so for me this statement is not acceptable"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"Paneer butter masala is so bomb...ill die to eat it forever yummy so delicious..you should try"</i></p>

From this interview, we know that Candidates 1, 2 and candidates 3, 4 have different comments for vegetables and vegetarian food. Candidates 1 and candidates 2 think that vegetarian food and vegetables taste bad. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 don't agree with this statement. Both of them are obviously vegetables lover. They also give some examples of food that was mostly made out of vegetables to proof their reason of disagree for this statement.

10) From your point of view? Have you think vegetarians will use animal based cosmetics or products?

Use	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"From my point of view...I think maybe they would use because they like only like care about not eating it like...no matter if they eat or don't eat, animals are still being killed so...not everything is not animal...not everything is non- animal based... so yeah"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>" People use tiger skin jackets even vegetarians"</i></p>
Don't use	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>" Ah...I don't think they use...because the intention of being vegetarian not to hurt animals...if they use animal product then what is the point of being a vegetarian"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>" I don't know but I think they wont"</i></p>

From this interview, Candidates 1 and candidates 2 believe that vegetarians still use animal based product. Some vegetarians maybe just care about not eating animal's meat, as for some female vegetarian, they may use animal based cosmetics too without realizing it. Candidates 1 also mention that animal will still being kill and keep decreasing because there is still many immoral hunters outside in the woods. Candidates 3 don't think vegetarians use animal based product because mostly their main reason of being a vegetarian is bring no harm to animals. As for candidates 4, they're not sure about their answer but they think vegetarians won't use those cosmetics and products.

11) Would you agree that vegan meats can cause unwanted weight gain?

Fat	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"I agree because vegan meat made from flour right? It's like eating bread and rice at the same time...so it is easier to be fat"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"Oh...I know some vegetarian friends during my primary school and they seems fat to me, so I guess so"</i></p>
Wheat	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"I agree oh...because got wheat a lot"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"As I know vegetarians food contains wheat flour and will make you gain weigh"</i></p>

From this interview, we understand that candidates 1 thinks that eating vegan meats that made out of flour is just like eating bread and rice, and according to the food pyramid, too much bread or rice intake will gain weight. Candidates 2 had some friends in their primary school that are vegetarian but still chubby, so they think eating vegan meats will cause unwanted weight. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 believe that some vegan meats contain wheat that can makes us gain weight.

12) Do you think vegetarians cause an impact to food chain?

Biology	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"According to Biology text book, humans are not in the food chain so there is no impact...and I think humans are the biggest predators of all"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"Ah...I learn Biology and my teacher told me before food chain only include animals and plant, if want to add more erm...microorganisms is the top of the food chain"</i></p>
Plants	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Erm...yes, Imagine everyone turns vegetarians...it is like we are robbing plants from herbivore...sounds funny to me"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"Yes because plants are from food chain"</i></p>

From the interview, candidates 1 said that humans are not in the food chain if look back to the Biology book, and they also think that humans are the biggest predators that is sad but true. Candidates 2 also mention about her biology teacher told her if really wants to included the biggest predators, it is not humans but microorganism. From my point of view, some add on for candidates 2's opinion, microorganism such as bacteria plays role as a decomposer at the end of the food chain. Candidates 3 thinks vegetarians cause changes in the food chain because we are eating more plants than how we suppose to eat, this will cause a sudden change to other species. Candidates 4 said that plants are from food chain, and vegetarians eat plants. Thus vegetarian give impact to food chain.

13) Would it be right to say being a vegetarian will affect your health ?

Health	<p>CANDIDATES 1 <i>"Umm I don't think so, because vegetarians or non- vegetarians both have advantages and disadvantages so we can't tell that being a vegetarian can lead to health problems"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 <i>"No because being vegetarian can lower the risk of most of the health issues such as cancer"</i></p>
Avoid	<p>CANDIDATES 3 <i>"Ah long-term eating vegetables can avoid intake of fat and nutrition...and as an adult I don't think I need too much protein...so the advantages are more than disadvantages"</i></p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 <i>"I think eating vegetables can avoid getting"</i></p>

From the interview, Candidates 1 thoughts is neutral because they think vegetarians or non- vegetarians, both can bring pros and cons to our health. Candidates 2 is supporting vegetarian, and believe that being a vegetarian can avoid diseases such as cancer. Candidates 3 thinks the advantages towards health of being a vegetarian is more than disadvantage. Their reason is, as an adult, they don't need that much protein from plants if compare with kids and teenagers, they can also avoid consuming too much fat. Candidates 4 believe that eating vegetables can avoid from being sick, but this is not true, we need balance diet to build up our immunity to protect our body from pathogen.

14) Why most of the vegetarians are obesity?

Wheat	<p>CANDIDATES 1 "I think they obesity because they eat too many wheats stuff...like they cannot eat meat so there's no other choices for them when they don't want to eat veggies"</p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 "Erm... I think because they like to eat planted based food...and inside those food, got many wheat"</p>
Lifestyle	<p>CANDIDATES 3 "Hmm... I don't know but maybe because of their lifestyle... sometimes if they eat too much also maybe can cause them obesity...Erm but they still eat vegetables only so...maybe some of them just didn't exercise"</p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 "I don't recall many vegetarian is obesity but i know people became obesity because of their lifestyle, so yeah"</p>

From this interview, we know that candidates 1 thinks that most vegetarians are obesity because the intake of vegan meat, and sometimes we can't blame those vegetarian since they don't have much options of food to choose. Candidates 2 also agree that vegetarians eating too much planted based food causing them gain weight. Candidates 3 and candidates 4 believe that it is those vegetarian's lifestyle problem, some vegetarians that don't like to do exercise can keep eating vegan meats can gain fat in no time.

15) Would you consider to do an article about the con's of vegetarians lifestyle?

Not consider	<p>CANDIDATES 1 "I won't consider to do the article because I know that nowadays a lot of people go vegetarians but I don't think it's a good and compulsory healthy lifestyle"</p> <p>CANDIDATES 2 "Hmm no I don't consider...because I think the pros of being a vegetarians are more than cons...so no"</p>
Consider	<p>CANDIDATES 3 "Yeah, maybe... it sounds like a challenge for me to try...I like to know more about the cons of being a vegetarian because this is the first time I heard that being a vegetarian got cons"</p> <p>CANDIDATES 4 " I got experience in writing article, so why not?"</p>

From this interview, Candidates 1 and candidates 2 are not interested to do the article but Candidates 3 and 4 wanted to try out this challenge. Candidates 1 know that many people are becoming vegetarian to protect themselves from diseases but still they're not supporting vegetarian. Candidates 2 thinks that the pros of being a vegetarian are more than cons. Candidates 3 heard there is cons for being a vegetarian for the first time, so they wanted to know more by doing more research when trying to write an article. Candidates 4 seems excited to learn new stuff, so they're consider to write the article.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In the end, people should not persuade someone to become a vegetarian without completing research on how it works. We were also able to review the disadvantages of being a vegetarian, such as limited food options, inadequate protein, expensive foods, and issues with mental health, as a result of this research. Vegetarians lives are made more difficult by a lack of food options, and even when they manage to find food, it is sometimes extremely expensive. Protein deficiency also has impacts on the body, as well as mental health issues such as eating disorders. As an outcome, before becoming a vegetarian, people should conduct study or read any related article, such as our article "Investigating the Cons of Being Vegetarian." After reading this article do you consider to be a vegetarian?

6.0 REFERENCE

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