# Vegetarian or an Omnivorous

Diet plays a significant role towards building and maintenance of healthy bodies. Consuming a balanced and healthy diet is cited as very important to everyone. Many nutritionists agree to the idea that vegan diet is best and recommendable because of the nutritional benefits that come with its composition. This has elicited a debate with other scholars disagreeing to the opinion that omnivore-diet should be given priority. A vegan diet is characterized by plant-based diet comprising natural foods with strict exemption of meat. Geissler and Powers (2017) support the suggestion of vegan diet as a cruelty-free act to the nature. As such, the adoption of the vegetarian diet is perceived as a surest way to alleviate unnecessary suffering and deaths of countless animals and birds. A report obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture indicates that 4% of Americans who are mostly adults are vegetarians while over 10% do not taste red meat at all. The above statistics have been superseded by the United Kingdom who has recorded the largest population of vegetarian in its population among the European country (Thomas, 2016). Of vital concerns to note is that vegetarian diet offers substantial benefits against diseases, physical benefits, conserving natural resources and improving the environment at the same time. Vegetarians are perceived to be better than omnivorous. This is paper is set to explore facts in relation to the vegetarians and omnivores. Besides, it also presents information regarding the diet of vegetarians and omnivores through comparative analysis to come to a consensus on what food products should be consumed by human beings to attain a balanced diet.

Vegetarian diet is healthy as it is believed to safeguard against many diseases. Based on a research conducted by Thomas (2016), persons who survive on plant diet are less likely to suffer from chronic diseases such diabetes and heart related infections. Research evidence suggests vegetables are rich sources or vitamins and refined components of amino acids that prevent the body from developing high blood pressure and bad cholesterol which are detrimental to human health. A similar sentiment has been supported by Federici et al. (2017), who agrees that vegetarians are able to evade some chronic diseases that come with the consumption of animal products. Along with the prevention of chronic diseases, vegetarians can easily observe body weights and skin health. Other that health related benefits that come with consumption of vegetables, vegetarians also help to conserve natural resources. Close to 10 pound of the vegetable must be consumed by an animal in order or one pound of meat. Meat is the main source of protein in diet but since vegetarians do not take meat, it is important to pursue protein from plants such as legumes, soy, and nuts that can provide the essential nutrient. A vegetarian diet consists of food products which are sourced mainly from plants and supplements. Therefore, there antioxidants and phyto-chemicals found in vegetables help in minimizing the risk of diseases associated with cholesterol and animal fats such as obesity, hypertension and other cardiovascular diseases (Holick & Nieves, 2014). However, vegetarians are however cut out from vitamin B12 and limit DHA/EPA which is essential for brain development. The diet of a vegetarian necessitates the inclusion of some food products in the diet such as nuts, soy, and legumes due to the absence of animal protein and Omega-3 (Federici et al., 2017). These help in the provision of the vital nutrients required for the health of a brain.

Omnivores have varied spectrum of food thereby giving more options to a balanced diet. First, omnivores are people who consume variety of food products including meat, dairy foods, whole grains, vegetables, and fruits. Omnivores get have the capability of consuming healthy cholesterols and sufficient amino acids that cannot be obtained from plants. According to Geissler and Powers (2017), a diet of meat and dairy products rich source of amino acids that are essential for healthy skin and medicinal on wounds. Moreover, omnivores consume foods rich in protein, iron, zinc and Vitamin B12 and other nutrients such as creatine and carnosine which are essential for the development of the brain and muscles (Edelstein, 2018). Vitamin B12 is also vital for the prevention of pernicious anemia, thus an omnivore’s diet aids in the protection of the brain and nerves. Bone health is also attributed to the nutrients obtained from meat. Consumption of the meat offers added layer of variation thereby giving a full choice of nutritive ingredient including omega 3 and fatty acids. Omnivore can also get vitamins and minerals that are needed for the body with a lot of relative ease. The main benefit of meat and other animal products is its protein composition which has high absorbability capability and is easily utilized by the body. Research shows that individuals that are omnivorous have a high chance of having a longer life if such individuals are able to balance the type of foods that are included in their diet (Clarys et al., 2014).Research shows that the majority of chronic diseases are experienced among those who consume meat and other animal products. Excessive consumption of animal products is harmful to the body due to the presence of cholesterol and fatty acid (Federici et al., 2017). Most animal products are contaminated with hormones which are used to fatten the growth of the domestic animals of which carries along harmful effects on the consumers (Edelstein, 2018). Other harmful products used in such animals include antibiotics which are used not only for treatment of disease but also for prevention purposes. Consistent consumption of such components is detrimental to the body and their effects are mainly felt at an older age.

Proponents of vegetarianism argue that consuming meat is harmful to the health of the person, wastes resources, leads to deforestation, and pollution. They claim that killing of animals is cruel and unethical and leads to ecological imbalance. An omnivore’s lifestyle has numerous adverse effects on the environment/ecology including the killing of animals. Research shows that a single individual consumes approximately 10000 animals in their lifetime. As a result, this may lead to ecological imbalance and extinction of some rare species of animals. Conversely, vegetarians also contributes to the depletion of some plants species (Clarys et al., 2014).To some extent, the dependency on the fruits and vegetables by vegetarians leads to the deforestation and extinction of some plants species which also eventually lead to soil erosion. Planting more trees is very important as they are essential in sustaining the life of living things. On the other hand, critics of the vegetarian lifestyle argues that eating meat is healthy and humane. Meat consumption has been in existence for over 2.4 million years and the extinction of certain animals species experienced in the past was not majorly due to consumption of meat (Edelstein, 2018). Ultimately, it cannot be concluded that either of the dietary approaches is appropriate to the environment. However, the antioxidants produced by vegetables in a vegetarian diet helps in the prevention of a number of chronic diseases associated with nutrition. Such a diet however lacks basic nutrients for instance vitamin B12 which is essential for brain health. In a similar manner the omnivorous have access to Vitamin B12. However, they are more susceptible to health issues associated with excessive consumption of cholesterol. Nevertheless, a properly observed balanced diet comprising of animal products is much better than that of vegetarians due to the nutritional value of most animal products.

Although, each dietary lifestyle has its merits and demerits, it is clear that the merits of omnivores surpass those of vegetarians. The major reason for this deduction is the facts that omnivorous have access to a wider variety of nutrients such as vitamins, proteins and minerals among others. The protein acquired from animal products cannot be equated to other sources of protein due to its ease in absorption. Nevertheless, it is important for either of the dietary lifestyle to be balanced to enhance the body health. It is also important that the environment be conserved through planting of trees to maintain an ecological balance in the ecosystem. The impact that either of this diets has on the environment should be reconsidered and appropriate measures developed to curb their effects. The government can also participate in spreading awareness of the various food products that are essential for body health and this will eventually translate to a more productive and healthy nation. Based on the discussion in this paper, I do agree to the idea that it is better to be an omnivorous than being a vegetarian.

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