

Contrariwise obesity through organic food consumption in Malaysia: a signaling theory perspective

Publons ID	(not set)
Wos ID	WOS:000742652900006
Doi	10.1186/s12889-021-12480-3
Title	Contrariwise obesity through organic food consumption in Malaysia: a signaling theory perspective
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Publish Date	JAN 14 2022
Journal Name	BMC PUBLIC HEALTH
Citation	2
Abstract	<p>Background: the context and purpose of the study Unhealthy food consumption has raised an alarming situation of obesity among Asian nations and posing serious threats to human health. Recent studies have acknowledged that organic food consumption has been contrariwise associated with obesity. The consumption of healthy food has received research attention in social marketing and several antecedents and consequences have been identified. However, to date, there is a void in literature that how social, individual, and marketing elements together tradeoff in predicting a healthy lifestyle. Thus, the current investigation unfolds the antecedents of healthy foods' adoption in Asia by integrating the brand signaling and theory of planned behavior. Methods The data of 241 respondents were collected from selected social media Facebook communities through a survey using assessed 42 questions. For this purpose, participants' Facebook accounts were selected from the online healthy communities such as 'Diet Suku Suku Separuh' (469,000 followers), 'Hiking, and Camping around Malaysia' (351,200 followers), and 'Healthy Malaysia' (332 followers). The enumerator also engaged with the online community by liking posts and following health accounts. Results The data was analyzed using PLS (SEM) approach, the outcomes of hypotheses revealed interesting information that health consciousness not significantly predicts the purchase intention of healthy food. All antecedents were significant contributors to the prediction of foods' purchase intentions in this study. However, the findings indicated that no positive relationship exists between brand image identifications and brand credibility identifications, and healthy foods' purchase intentions identifications. The findings also indicated that no positive relationship exists between health consciousness identifications and healthy foods' purchase intentions identifications. Conclusions: (summary and potential implications) Owing to the perilous increase in obesity among the general public in Asia. This study reinforced the factor that can help in the adoption of a healthy lifestyle. The study validated that a healthy lifestyle is reliant on the consumers' health consciousness, environmental concern, and innovativeness through motivating the consumers' healthy foods' purchase intentions. Surprisingly, the results highlighted that respondents have not identified brand image and credibility as an antecedent of purchase intention. Given that organic food brands are somewhat new in Asian markets and therefore, brands must endure crisis marketing practices to improve their brand recognition. Therefore, policymakers must facilitate the food promotional activities that are critical to enhancing the perceived benefits of organic food to combat issues like obesity. This paper offers a foundation for future empirical investigations in Asia and various stakeholders on how to promote a healthy lifestyle in Asia. Specifically, the results will help policymakers to offer positive policies and procedures for the improvement of a healthy lifestyle through the understanding of the antecedents and consequences of health-conscious consumers' healthy foods' purchase intentions.</p>
Publish Type	Journal
Publish Year	2022

Page Begin	(not set)
Page End	(not set)
Issn	
Eissn	1471-2458
Url	https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/full-record/WOS:000742652900006
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