

The Impact of Effective Advertising on Purchase Intention with Moderating Effect of Age – Comparative Analysis of Advertisements for Healthy and Unhealthy Food in Sri Lanka

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When the current global trend of food advertising is analyzed, the influencing power of unhealthy food advertisements is higher in the buying decision of consumers than healthy food advertisements. Exposure to the advertising of unhealthy foods is a widely acknowledged risk factor for the development of obesity and noncommunicable diseases which is an alarming issue for the health sector in Sri Lanka. Hence, the aspects which are more effectively addressed in unhealthy food advertising should be identified in order to promote the consumption of healthy food for better health of Sri Lankans. The main focus of this study is to identify most influential factors persuading consumers to make the buying decision of either healthy or unhealthy foods. To gather primary data, the researchers employed quantitative research approach and distributed a self-administrated questionnaire among respondents who has the exposure to healthy and unhealthy food advertising. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses, and the results revealed several dimensions of effective advertising have a positive and significant impact on purchase intention with respect to both healthy and unhealthy food advertising. The age of the consumer has not significantly influenced the purchasing intention in the study sample. Current study provides valuable insights and provide compelling evidence to support that unhealthy food advertising has a greater impact on purchasing intention of foods. Future research is needed with different demographic of consumers to have a better insight. This study has great significance to the existing food suppliers and manufacturers in Sri Lankan market to plan out and develop their techniques of food advertising.

Keywords: *Brand Recognition, Healthy Food Advertisements, Informativeness, Loyalty, Purchase Intentions, Unhealthy Food Advertisements*