DETERMINANTS OF YOUNG ADULTS' FAST FOOD PURCHASING INTENTION

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND ACCOUNTANCY UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH 2016

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Thank you for all the support,

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09 SEPTEMBER 2016

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine young adults' fast food purchasing intention by using the extended theory of planned behaviour model. One of the main aims of this study is to measure the factors that constitute the development and maintenance of attitude in order to gain a better understanding of Kota Kinabalu's young adults' attitude toward fast food. Young adults in the age range of 20-39 years old were the unit of analysis of this study, 210 questionnaires have successfully been collected throughout Kota Kinabalu. The finding of current study confirmed that affective attitude is the strongest predictors of young adults' fast food purchasing intention; cognitive attitude however is fairly weak in predicting fast food purchasing intention. This study shows that young adults in Kota Kinabalu rely more on emotional reaction and impulsivity when deciding to purchase fast food. Subjective norms (descriptive norm & injunctive norm) were both significance to purchasing intention, young adults were highly influenced by societal approval and acceptance before engaging in a specific behaviour. This study found that perception of control is weak, but self-efficacy is strong in predicting fast food purchasing intention. The factor of Mood is introduce in this study as one of the factors that is able to influenced the development and maintenance of young adults' attitude are found to be significant to both affective and cognitive attitude. Since subjective norms (descriptive & injunctive), and self-efficacy are able to predict young adults' fast food purchasing intention, future intervention program should be focusing in that aspect.

Keyword: Fast Food, Young Adults, Purchasing Intention, Extended Theory of Planned Behaviour.

ABSTRAK

Penentu Niat Pembelian Makanan Segera Antara Golongan Dewasa Muda

Tujuan kajian ini dijalankan ialah untuk menguji niat pembelian makanan segera antara golongan dewasa muda dengan mengunnakan model TPB yang dilanjutkan. Salah satu matlamat utama kajian ini ialah untuk menguji factor yang menyumbang kepada pembinaan sikap seseorang bagi mendalami lagi sikap dewasa muda terhadap makanan segera. Dewasa muda dalam golongan umur 20-39 merupakan unit analisis dalam kajian ini. 210 soalan kaji selidik telah Berjaya dikutip di sekitar kawasan Kota Kinabalu. Keputusan yang diperoleh oleh kajian ini mendapati bahawa komponen afektif dalam sikap dewasa muda merupakan peramal terkuat bagi menentukan niat pembelian makanan segera bagi golongan dewasa muda. Ini menunjukan bahawa golong dewasa muda di Kota Kinabalu bergantung kepada aspek emosi dan pemerimaan peribadi dalam menentukan niat pembelian makanan segera. Norma soial juga merupakan peramal yang kuat dalam penentu niat pembelian makanan segera. Walaupun tahap kawalan golongan dewas<mark>a muda</mark> didapati lemah, tetapi efikasi kendiri adalah kuat dalam meramal penentu belian. Oleh itu program bagi membaik pulih gaya pemakanan golongan dewasa muda harus di utamakan dari aspek sosial dan efikasi kendiri. Faktor emosi yang diperkenalkan dalam kajian ini mendapati bahawa ia mampu mempengaruhi pembentukkan sikap golongan dewasa muda.

Kata Kunci: Makanan Segera, Dewasa Muda, Niat Pembelian, Theory of Planned Behaviour.

TABLE OF CONTENT

		PAGE
DECLARATION		II
CERTIFICATION		Ш
ACKNOWLEGEMENT		IV
ABSTRACT		V
ABSTRAK		VI
TABLE OF CONTENT		VII
LIST OF TABLES		XII
LIST OF FIGURES		XIII
CHAPTER 1	UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH	1
INTRODUCTION		1
1.1 Background of Study		1
1.2 Problem Statement		3
1.3 Research Objectives		5
1.4 Research Questions		6
1.5 Scope of Study		6
1.6 Signitifant of Study		7
1.7 Definition of term		8
1.8 Chapter Summary		8

CHAPTER 2	9
LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.0 Introduction	9
2.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour	9
2.2 Factors affecting fast food purchasing intention 2.2.1 Attitude towards intention 2.2.1a Affective Attitude 2.2.1b Cognitive Attitude 2.2.2 Subjective Norms towards intention 2.2.2a Injunctive Norms 2.2.2b Descriptive Norms 2.2.3 Perceived Behavioural Control towards intention 2.2.3a Perception of Control 2.2.3b Self-efficacy 2.3 Factors influences attitude towards fast food 2.3.1 Convenience 2.3.2 Satisfaction 2.3.3 Social Conscience 2.3.4 Mood	11 11 13 13 13 14 15 15 16 16 17 17 18 19
2.4 Chapter Summary	20
CHAPTER 3	21
RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY	21
3.0 Introduction	21
3.1 Research Framework	21
3.2 Hypotheses Development 3.2.1 Convenience to Attitude 3.2.2 Satisfaction to Attitude 3.2.3 Social Conscience to Attitude	23 23 24 24

3.2.4 Mood to Attitude 3.2.5 Attitude toward intention	25 25
	26
3.2.6 Subjective Nom toward intention 3.2.7 Perceived Behavioural Control toward intention	26
S.E.F. Fereerved Behavioural Control toward internation	
3.3 Methodology	27
3.4 Research Design	27
3.5 Sampling Design	27
3.6 Instrument Design	28
3.6.1 Measurement of Attitude	29
3.6.2 Measurement of Subjective Norm	30
3.6.3 easurement of Perceived Behavioural Control	32
3.6.4 Measurement of Purchasing Intention	33
3.6.5 Measurement of Convenience	34
3.6.6 Measurement of Satisfaction	34
3.6.7 Measurement of Social Conscience	35
3.6.8 Measurement of Mood	36
3.7 Data Collecting Method	37
S., Pata directing the late	
3.8 Data Analysis Method UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH	37
3.9 Validity	38
3.10 Reliability	38
3.11 Chapter Summary	38
CHAPTER 4	39
ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS	39
4.1 Introduction	39
4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents	39

4.3 Convergent Validity	44
4.4 Cross Loading	50
4.5 Discriminant Validity	51
4.6 Hypotheses Testing	52
4.7 Blindfolding Analysis	57
4.9 Chapter Sumarry	60
CHAPTER 5	61
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	61
5.1 Introduction	61
5.2 Recapitulation of the Study	61
5.3 Discussion and Implication	61
5.3.1 Relationship between convenience and affective attitude	61
5.3.2 Relationship between convenience and cognitive attitude	62
5.3.3 Relationship between satisfaction and affective attitude	63
5.3.4 Relationship between satisfaction and cognitive attitude	64
5.3.5 Relationship between social conscience and affective attitude	64
5.3.6 Relationshp between social conscience and cognitive attitude	65
5.3.7 Relationship between mood and affective attitude	66
5.3.8 Relationship between mood and cognitive attitude	67
5.3.9 Relationship between affective attitude and purchasing intention	67 68
5.3.10 Relationship between cognitive attitude and purchasing intention 5.3.11 Relationship between descriptive norm and purchaisng intention	69
5.3.12 Relationship between injunctive norm and purchasing intention	69
5.3.13 Relationship between perception of control and purchasing intention	70
5.3.14 Relatinship between self-efficacy and purchasing intention	70
5.3.15 Conclusion for Data Analysis	71
5.4 Implications of Study	72

5.5 Limitation of the Study	73
5.6 Recommendatin of future study	74
5.7 Conclusion	74
5.8 Chapter Summary	76
REFERENCES	77
APPENDIX	82



LIST OF TABLE

	Page
Table 3.1 Measuremnet Item for Affective Attitude	29
Table 3.2 Measurement Item for Cognitive Attitude	30
Table 3.3 Measurement Item for Injunctive Norm	31
Table 3.4 Measurement Item for Descriptive Norm	31
Table 3.5 Measurement Item for Perception of Control	32
Table 3.6 Measurement Item for Self-Efficacy	32
Table 3.7 Measurement Item for Purchasing Intention	33
Table 3.8 Measurement Item for Convenience	34
Table 3.9 Measurement Item for Satisfaction	35
Table 3.10 Measurement Item for Social Conscience	36
Table 3.11 Measurement Item for Mood	36
Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondnets	40
Table 4.2 Fast Food Consumption Pattern ERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH	43
Table 4.3 Measurement Model	44
Table 4.4 Cross Loading	50
Table 4.5 Discriminant Validity	52
Table 4.6 Hypotheses Testing	52
Table 4.7 Q2 value	57

LIST OF FIGURE

	Page
Figure 3.1 Modified Research Framework	22
Figure 4.1 Measurement Model	47
Figure 4.2 Structural Model	48
Figure 4.3 Blindfolding Analysis	59



Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The fast and convenience food trends have merge into Malaysian food culture. This study aims to study the determinants of fast food purchasing intention among young adults. This chapter will address the background of the study, discuss the purpose of the study, explore the problem statement, develop research objective and research question, validate the significance of the study, and explain the definition of term.

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1.1 Background of the study

Fast food industry is one of the main contributors to Malaysia's economic growth. The enormous growth and success of fast food franchise restaurant has encouraged Malaysian government to heavily promote and support western fast food franchises in the 9th Malaysian Plan (9MP). The fast food restaurant in Malaysia is using the same business method and offer the same product as it is in the west, but with specific modification in order to meet the cultural and legal requirement of this nation. The industry growth reach MYR5.5 billion with 3,951 outlets in 2014 and is expected to grow healthily to reach MYR7.7 billion with 5,400 outlets by 2019 (Euromonitor, 2015). The 10th Malaysian Plan (10MP) is targeting a 55 percent women workforce by 2015, along with the support of Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (MWFCD, 2014). The expecting increase in the number of women in the workforce will disrupt the traditional mealtime,

increasing the importance of fast food purchasing intention and contribute to the rapid growth of fast food industry (Dunn, Mohr, Wilson & Wittert, 2011).

Young adult (age 20-39) account for one third (34 percent) of Malaysian population in 2010 (Malaysia Department of Statistics, 2010), Lee and Tan (2007) conclude that food (34 percent) is the biggest proportion spent in Malaysian household income. The emergence of fast food restaurant in the nation has change the attitude and social acceptance among young adult in Malaysia, where eating out and buying food outside is preferable than in home cooking (Razak, Abidin, Yusof, Sakarji & Nor, 2014). An estimation of 92.5 percent of Malaysian adults aged 18 and above do not consume the recommended daily serving of fruits and vegetables (Abdullah, Mokhtar, Bakar & Al-Kubaisy, 2014). Malaysian Association for the Study of Obesity (MASO) stated that Malaysian dietary pattern have change in the past four decades (1960 – 2000) as a result of emerging food processing technology that increases the amount of food availability (MASO, 1994).

Aggressive marketing campaigns is the main success factor of chained fast food operators, tempting offers such as free coupons, membership discounts, value set discounts, free side dishes and beverage make it more affordable for young adults compared to full-services restaurants (Davey, Allotey & Reidpath, 2013; Euromonitor, 2015). Chicken fast food and burger fast food remains the top sales among the fast food category over the years, with MYR171 million for chicken based fast food and MYR163 million for burger based fast food in 2014; however, chained bakery products fast food remains to be the fastest growing value with 14 percent in 2014 (Euromonitor, 2015). Chained fast food restaurants gain a positive 13 percent value growth in 2014 due to aggressive marketing campaign and outlet expansion. This has successfully attracted young generation and encourages them to eat more fast food. The emerging trend of eating out is rapidly increasing in the recent years where the numbers is even greater for dual-income households.

Eat-in remains the most popular option with 62.5 percent value share in 2015 as a result of comfortable and modernize restaurants environment along with additional facilities such as Wi-Fi and cable plugs (Euromonitor, 2015). However, there is a

consistent decline in eat-in market shares over the years as a result of increasing market shares in home delivery and drive-through segment (Euromonitor, 2015). The expanding rate of drive-through and delivery services, along with fast food restaurants that is offering 24 hour operation has made fast food very accessible and encourage late night suppers trend among young adult in Malaysia.

Malaysian are treating fast food as a treat and usually engaging in a celebration mood when consuming it. Fast-food consumption behavior has become a major concern by dietitian and health professionals because dietary belief, and habits that are form during young adulthood might influence future health status (Blodin, Mueller, Bakun, Choumenkonvitch, Tucker, & Economos, 2015), and pass down this unhealthy lifestyle to the next generation. Gallup (2013) found that young adults eat the most fast food, 57 percent consume fast food at least once a week and the percentage is gradually dropping as the factor of age increased. According to World Health Organization, obesity is currently the world fifth leading risk for death, unhealthy diet is one of the key factors that contributes to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) (WHO, 2010).

1.2 Problem Statement

The health effect of fast food consumption in the long term is clear and publicly known. Even though people understand that the behaviour of fast food consumption is clearly bad, but they still intent to purchase fast food on a regular basis (Dunn, Mohr, Wilson & Wittert, 2011). The subject of fast food purchasing intention has been explored in various studies (Bagozzi, Wong, Abe & Bergami, 2000; Frank, 2012; Mahon, Cowan, & McCarthy, 2006), however an attitudinal model that are able to clarify the variance in fast food purchasing intention is not yet confirm (Dunn et al., 2011). One study by Dunn et al., (2011) has taken the initiative to specify the factors that influence the progress and buildup of attitude related to fast food purchasing intention and consumption in order to improve the attitudinal model fit in the aspect of fast food purchasing intention, but it is only tested in Australia. Due to cultural and social economic differences, generalization of these studies in Malaysian context could be inappropriate.

Malaysia is a unique multicultural country which possesses unique set social culture in this multiracial nation. Therefore Malaysians in general possess different sets of attitude, and behavioral intention; thus, the roles of factors such as convenience, social conscience, and satisfaction that are able to influence young adult attitude toward fast food purchasing intention in Malaysia might be different compared to the western countries. The factors of convenience, social conscience, and satisfaction is chosen as a factors that are able to influence an individual attitude toward fast food are based on the top criteria in food selection and concern as shown in previous studies (Dunn et al., 2011; Glanz, Basil, Maibach, Goldberg & Snyder, 1998; Steptoe & Pollard, 1995). It is important to understand the foundation of an individual attitude in order to get a better understanding on their purchasing intention. Ajzen (2016) stated that attitude is the strongest predictor to explain behavioural intention in the topic of food. Past studies do not consider mood as a factors that are able to influence an individual attitude toward fast food. Ajzen & Fishben (2005) stated that mood can be one of the factors that has the capability to apply influence in attitude because the type and amount of food (Jauregui-Lobera & Rios, 2011) in food selection process will be vary depending on the positivity and negativity of an individual mood.

Furthermore, the fast food price in Malaysia is much higher compared to the United States of America; it is affordable but definitely not cheap. An à la carte double cheese burger cost USD1.59 in the United States; in Malaysia the same burger is priced at RM8.95 (Euromonitor, 2015). Since fast food in Malaysia is priced way higher compared to local delicacies which is cheaper, healthier, and tastier, therefor; an application model of Extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1985, 1991, 2015) will be used in this research to explain that the decision to purchase fast food is not impulsive where consumers actually plan their intention to purchase fast food. Another interesting fact would be that young consumers who are a frequent fast food eaters, Gallup (2013) found that young adults consume more fast food compared to the elder generation. Various study regarding fast food has been conducted in Malaysia (Mohamed & Daud, 2012; Osman, Osman, Mokhtar, Setapa, Shukor & Temyati, 2014); however, studies that focus on measuring the development and maintenance of young consumers attitude toward fast food is lacking in Malaysia scenario, by measuring the

factors that underlie attitude toward fast food; this research will be able to explain young adult's level of acceptance and intention in purchasing fast food.

In conclusion, this study aims to adopt the extended TPB model in predicting fast food purchasing intention by measuring the factors (satisfaction, convenience & social conscience) that constitute the development and maintenance of young adult's attitude toward fast food. The main highlight in this study is the inclusion of mood as one of the factor that is able to affect young adults' attitude toward fast food because food that is high in sugar, salt, and fat is very effective in mood management (Drewnowski, 1999; Gardner et al., 2011).

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the problem that has been identified and objective that we aim to achieve, the questions that will be answered by this study are:

- Does convenience influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food?
- 2. Does satisfaction influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food?
- 3. Does social conscience influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food?
- 4. Does mood influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food?
- 5. Does young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) significantly relate to fast food purchasing intention?
- 6. Does subjective norm (normative & descriptive) significantly relate to fast food purchasing intention?
- 7. Does perceived behavioural control (perception of control & self-efficacy) significantly relate to fast food purchasing intention?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to highlight the application of Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to measure the determinants of fast food purchasing intention among young adult in Malaysia. This study will also specify the factors that might underlie the development and maintenance of attitudes related to fast food purchasing intention.

- To assess factor of convenience that might influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food.
- 2. To assess factor of satisfaction that might influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food.
- 3. To assess factor of social conscience that might influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food.
- 4. To assess factor of mood that might influence young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) toward fast food.
- 5. To investigate the relationship between young adults' attitude (affective & cognitive) and fast food purchasing intention.
- 6. To investigate the relationship between subjective norm (normative & descriptive) and fast food purchasing intention.
- 7. To investigate the relationship between young adults' perceived behavioural control (perception of control & self-efficacy) and fast food purchasing intention.

1.5 Scope of study

This study will be conducted in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Kota Kinabalu is the capital city of Sabah with prosperity industry development and advancement; therefore, population all across the states of Sabah is centered in Kota Kinabalu. Sabah is a unique state in Malaysia institution because majority of the population consisted of Borneo natives like Kadazan, Dusun, Lundayeh, Bidayu, etc. The sample of this study is young adult age range from 20-39 (Erikson, 1968). Population that is not in the age range and do not have purchasing power will be excluded from being a respondent in this study. Fast Food is defined as easily prepared processed foods that can be served quickly, this

include foods such as chickens, burgers, pizzas, and sandwiches. Fast Food Restaurants include KFC, McDonalds, Marrybrown, Burger King, Subway, Sugarbun, Wendys, and A&W, these brand are specifically mentioned in the study because they are the top fast food brand that have been established in Malaysia (Euromonitor, 2015).

1.6 Significance of study

The focus of this research is to study the factors that can influence young adult attitude and fast food purchasing intention in Malaysia. This research will serve its usefulness to the scope of research by broadening the scope of the research by introducing the factor of mood in influencing young adult attitude toward fast food, to test if the variable of mood is able to influence an individual attitude toward fast food. Focusing on young adult is very important because young population consume the most fast food. This study will also take the type of fast food restaurants into consideration, providing a more concrete result in response to young adult purchasing intention.

This research will also contribute to the Fast food industry in Malaysia, knowledge and result gain by this research will provide an accurate insight on the factors that can influence young adult fast food purchasing intention in Malaysia; the information and knowledge of this study can assist the company to develop a better product and marketing activity that is targeted at young adults.

This research will also serve its usefulness to food and nutritional professionals. Identifying and understanding the reason why young adults consumes fast food can help professionals nutrition and dietitian to prepare a meal that is quick, tasty, economic and healthy as a healthier alternative. The information gain from TPB can be used to develop an effective intervention plan to eliminate undesirable behavior (Ajzen, 2015).

1.7 Definition of term

1.7.1 Young Adult

There are no an exact age range that define young adult, the meaning of young adult differs globally depends on the culture and society of a nation. Erikson's stages of psychosocial development (1968) define young adult as a person in the age range of 20 to 39 (or 40). Young adult is the social group that stands between pre-adulthood (teen) and mid adulthood stage.

1.7.2 Fast Food

Fast food is best defined to be quick meal that is easily prepared and available in restaurants and snacks bars.

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the trends of fast food industry in Malaysia along with problem statement based on the issue. Research objectives and research questions are form based on the problem statement. This chapter also discussed scope of the study, significance of the study and definition of term.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will present the theoretical framework and literature review of factors influencing fast food purchasing intention.

2.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1985, 1991, 2015) is a model that predicts a consumers purchasing intention and behavioral usage towards a certain brand of product compared to the availability of an alternative choice. In the TPB model, intention is measured by three set of belief which is attitude towards the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1985, 1991, 2015). Attitude towards the behavior is evaluated based on the consumer's positive or negative attitude towards the act of purchasing or using a certain type of brand or product. A positive attitude towards fast food might directly affecting purchasing intention among consumers and thus increases the sales of fast food industry.

Subjective norm referred to how an individual react to the social belief and social expectation towards the act of purchasing or using a certain type of brand or product, subjective norm consist of two components which is injunctive norm (refers to what other people think), and descriptive norm (refers to how other people behave). Perceived behavioural control measures the strength of an individual self-control and ability in performing a specific behavior in purchasing or using a certain brand or