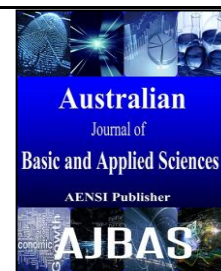




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Food Nutrition Impact toward Rural Consumer in Kelantan

¹Zul Ariff Abdul Latiff and ²Mohamad Amizi Ayob¹University Malaysia Kelantan, Faculty of Agro Based Industry, Locked Bag No. 100, 17600 Jeli, Kelantan²University Malaysia Kelantan, Faculty of Agro Based Industry, Locked Bag No. 100, 17600 Jeli, Kelantan

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ABSTRACT

Consumers' food consumption patterns are changing rapidly. Consumers are becoming more aware about the food they consume. They tend to consume food product which has food nutrition label so that they will get information from there. This study is focus on their awareness and intention about food nutrition labels when they purchase food product in Kelantan. A structured questionnaire was designed and used as an instrument to gather the information towards food nutrition labels among the consumers. A survey was conducted and distributed to 300 rural respondents in Kelantan, Malaysia. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected. The result indicate that most of the respondents aware of the food nutrition labels. The respondents also indicate that food labels not only about nutrition information but they believe food products which have labels is quality products.

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INTRODUCTION

Food nutrition label is very useful for people when they want to make decision for consume a product. Usually food label will contain nutrition information to help customers make choices that would assist them in maintaining their dietary practice to be health. Other than that, food labeling also contain an ingredient, expiry date, brand and price consideration. The Nutritional Labeling Education Act (NLEA) has resulted in significant changes in the attitude in which nutrition information is provided on food labels (Burton and Andrews, 1996). In this new era, consumers will depend through food labeling to identify what they are consuming. However some of the Malaysian is lack in the knowledge about food nutrition labeling. Without proper food nutrition labeling, consumers will feel difficult to get information of the product. This is very important for the manufacturing industries of food product in aspect of labeling and there are many studies pertaining to food nutrition labeling which give an idea to the manufacture.

Literature Review:

Asiamah, (2006) mentioned that labeling consist of any written, printed or graphic information that represent on the package of the product or is exhibited near the food for the purpose of promoting the sale or disposal. According to Drichoutis (2009),

food label is influenced by many factors at many levels, start from demographic to attitudinal and product related. Vlosky, (2007) stated that product labeling is the function to identify environmental preferable products which based on an environmental impact assesstmen of the product compared to conventional product.

Nowadays, the purchasing behavior of Malaysia consumers base on the food labeling (Zulariff, 2015). Food generally contains a variety of nourishment that is highly necessary for optimal body functioning, and it is mentioned that the decision consumers make before purchasing or consuming any food product is a function of the quality of food, price, packaging, and labeling (Mohd Daud *et al.*, 2011).

Most consumers do not understand of food label information put on the food product they buy (Doauaud, 2007). Older aged elderly women tend to face difficulties in interpreting nutrition information on food labeling compared to younger aged elderly women (Byrd-Bredbenner & Kiefer, 2000). However, the most important motivating factors that influence their pre-packed food products are the nutritional information, price and taste (Mahgoub *et al.*, 2007). Besides that, Noussair *et al.* (2002) found that European consumers typically not unaware of labeling regarding foods containing genetically modified ingredients. This is because, recent reviews of food labeling suggest that consumers use a little of nutrition information if the information is

Corresponding Author: Zul Ariff Bin Abdul Latiff, Faculty of Agro Based, University Malaysia Kelantan, Locked Bag No 100, 17600, Jeli, Kelantan
Tel: +6019-2231584; E-mail: zulariff@umk.edu.my

complicated and difficult to understand (Grunert and Wills 2007).

Based on previous study, Ariyawardana (2003) founded that a significantly greater proportion of individuals in the age around 36 to 50 years, individuals with tertiary education, individuals with special dietary status, and households which live with less than four members were willing to pay more for the nutritional labels. Eco-labeled also give effect to the customer intention on purchasing product. Based on Gunne (2007) individuals with experience of eco-labeled alternatives were more influenced by beliefs about product quality such as taste and health impact, but for those who never choose eco-labeled beliefs that food product is more expensive counteracted that they would try out that alternatives later.

Other than that, consumer buying behavior is a process which is including the process of getting information, about selecting and purchasing product (Hansen, 2005). According to Webster (1975), there is no relationship of some factors such as income, education, type of housing of customer. Consumer behavior is about focus that how they make decision to spend their available resources such as time, money, and effort on purchasing related to the goods (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2008). Knowledge on consumer behavior effect on their attitude toward food labeling (Zulariff, 2015)

Thus, the objective of the study is to investigate Malaysian awareness towards food label and their intention in order to do their purchasing towards food label.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Conceptual framework

The theory of plan behavior (TPB) as introduced by Ajzen (1991) is use in this study which leading frame work in previous study which is use to examine Malaysian consumers' behavior. The theory is plan to investigate the factors that can influence consumer's behavioral choices. There are three independent determinants of behavioral intention which is subjective norm, attitude and perceived behavioral control. Intention is an indicator of which customers are willing to try something new and how many effort they will put into a particular behavior. Thus, according to Ajzen, 1991, the higher the intention of individual to perform some particular behavior, the greater the likelihood of a particular being performed.

TPB postulated that the behaviors of the customer towards food label are made up of their belief and awareness about the importance of the food label. Consumer's behavior and their attitude of buying also may be based on external factor such as socio-demographic and customer's background for example age, education level, gender, income, religious, information and knowledge. These factors contribute to the consumer's trust towards food nutrition label. Besides that, subjective norms, also had considered in this study such as details of the consumer's parents and close friends.

Sample and questionnaire:

A random sample was made where 300 respondents were interviewed via structured questionnaires to test their awareness and consumption intention towards food nutrition label. The questionnaire was divided into three sections for example first section is demographic information such as gender, residential area, age, marital status, education, occupation, religion, income, and lifestyle. For the second section is awareness and knowledge. Open-ended questions were used and third section is intention towards food nutrition label for example, 'how likely for you to search for food label products when you do your shopping?'. The questions were measured using a seven point Likert scale.

Method of analysis:

The data collected was analyzed using SPSS. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) and descriptive analysis. Since the objective of the study is to investigate Malaysian's awareness of the food nutrition labels and their intention towards food nutrition label, chi-square tests independence were used in order to find the extent to which the selected socio-demographic characteristics created and influenced the respondent's awareness and intentions towards food nutrition label while consume the food product.

Results:

The Cronbach's alpha value, which was get from reliability analysis for attitude and intention, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and intention control, was 0.947. This high value shows that there were consistency among the theory of planned behavioral that one can conclude that the model is suitable for conduct this study.

Table 1: Reability statistic Reliability Statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.947	.948	57

Socio-demographic information:

Descriptive analysis is use to explain the result of the socio-demographic items of the respondents. The data value such as gender, area, age, ethnic

group, level of education, income and lifestyle, all of which are analyzed using descriptive analysis. By using descriptive analysis, the data values such as demographic can affect the variable in this research.

In this study, most of the respondent are female (61.7%) compared to male (38.3%). In table 2, the majority of the respondents are Malay (50%), followed by Chinese (31%), and Indian (19%) and the numbers of suburban and urban areas are 28.3% and 71.7%.

More than half of the respondents are married (59.7%) and the largest group of age is 26 to 40 (63.7%). In terms of income, at least 18.1% of respondents have an income between RM 3001 to RM 4501 per month and a smaller percentage of respondents (0.6%) have incomes above RM 6000.

Table 2: Socio-demographic profile of the respondents (n=300).

Characteristics	Percentage	
Gender		
male	38.3	
female	61.7	
Race		
Malay	50	
Chinese	31	
Indian	19	
Area		
Urban	71.7	
Suburban	28.3	
Marital status		
Single	40.3	
Married	59.7	
Income		
Below 25	17.2	
1500-3000	63.7	
3001-4500	18.1	
Above 6000	0.6	

Table 3 shows the mean scores and the percentage of components included in the questionnaire using seven-point scale (1 to 7). The results show consumers will stop purchasing the food nutrition labels products when the price is high because certain food products which have labels will category as quality product. Besides that, most of the consumers are aware about the food label because they will search food products with food nutrition

labels. They also believe those food products which have food nutrition labels, it might come from quality products. Government should focus on creating social expectations regarding food label improving consumers' sense awareness and ability to buy food with some information regarding ingredient, nutrient and halal logo on it (Abdul Latiff, 2013).

Table 3: Respondent's perception and intention towards food nutrition consumption in Malaysia.

Statement	mean
How likely is it for you to purchase food product with nutrition labels?	4.97
How likely you want to purchase food products because you are concern about quality of products?	4.68
How likely you will stop purchasing the food nutrition label products because of the price?	5.07
How likely for you to search for food nutrition label products when you do your shopping?	5.42

Statement	mean			
How likely is it for you to purchase food product with nutrition labels?	4.97			
How likely you want to purchase food products because you are concern about quality of products?	4.68			
How likely you will stop purchasing the food nutrition label products because of the price?	5.07			
How likely for you to search for food nutrition label products when you do your shopping?	5.42			
Statement	Frequency (%)			
While purchasing food products do you look for food nutrition labels?	261	39	87	13

Statement	Frequency			
	Yes		No	
While purchasing food products do you look for food nutrition labels?	261	39		

Conclusion:

It is important for the food industry to know the rural consumer's intention towards food nutrition labels so that they can construct food nutrition label which is easy for consumers to understand. The finding indicate that majority of the consumers had awareness to look at food nutrition labels first before do the purchasing. They also have intention to consume food product which have food nutrition labels because they believe that food product with food nutrition labels is a quality product.

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