



Examining College Students' Willingness to Consume Local Foods Utilizing the Health Belief Model with the Addition of Social Influence and Self-identity



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BACKGROUND

- Due to the environmental burden of the current global food system, it is imperative to seek ways to reduce potential adverse effects within each step of the system.
- One such way is to reduce carbon emissions associated with transport through the purchase of local foods.
- College students are a population of interest in increasing local food consumption, which can positively impact their dietary habits and contribute to strong local economies and sustainable food systems.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the present study was to examine the determinants influencing college students' willingness to consume local food using the Health Belief Model (HBM) with the addition of social influence and self-identity.

METHODS

- **Design:** A cross-sectional study was conducted.
- **Participants:** A total of 425 college students in the Southern region of the U.S. participated in this study.
- **Main outcome measures:** Participants completed validated instruments measuring, HBM constructs, social influence, and self-identify.
- **Analysis:** Confirmatory factor analysis was first conducted to assess the adequacy of the measurement model. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was performed to examine the hypothetical relationships using Mplus 7.

RESULTS

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N= 425)

Characteristics		%
Gender	Male	20.8
	Female	79.2
Age	18-19	49.5
	20-21	30.7
	22-23	12.1
	Age 24 or older	7.7
Race/Ethnicity	White/Caucasian	77.1
	Asian American	2.8
	African American	9.5
	Hispanic/Latino	3.5
	Other	7.1
Academic Classification	Freshman	40.0
	Sophomore	21.1
	Junior	19.4
	Senior	13.2
	Graduate student	6.0
	Other	0.2

RESULTS

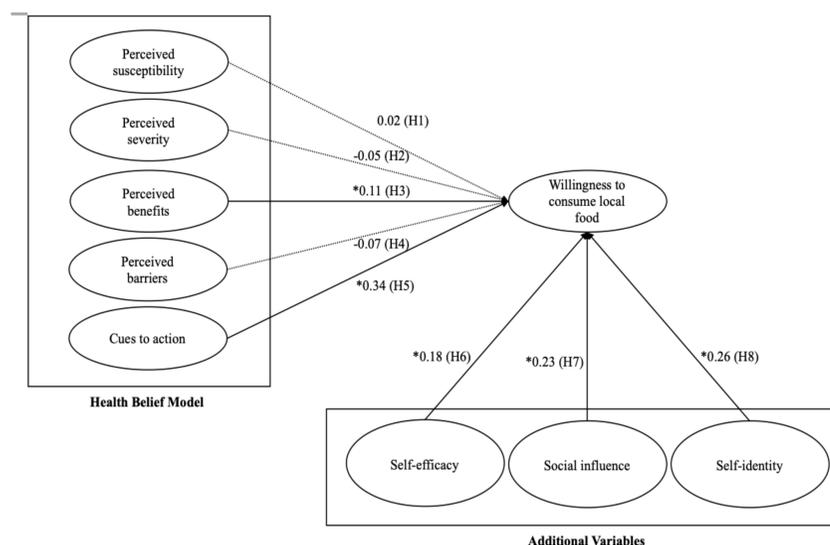
- The results showed that perceived benefits, cues to action, self-efficacy, social influence, and self-identity had a significant positive impact on willingness to consume local foods, while perceived susceptibility and perceived severity did not.
- Perceived barriers were not found to have a significant negative impact on willingness to consume local food.

CONCLUSIONS

- Results of this study indicate that increased nutrition education on the benefits of local foods, advertisement through various marketing medias, and cooking classes could encourage increased local food consumption among this population.
- Further research should be conducted on the implementation of these practical strategies and whether they positively impact college students' local food consumption.

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Note. * = $p < .05$, ————— Significant path, - - - - - insignificant path

Figure 2. Causal Relationships Among Latent Variables (Standardized Estimates)

Table 2. Correlations between dietary intake and total vascular resistance

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