

The Purchase Intention of Online Home-based Food Products among Kelantanese

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Abstract

In Malaysia, online home-based food products business had shown the increase during Movement Control Order (MCO). Buying food online has a significant effect on local consumers when as an example, 99 individuals have been confirmed to seek medical attention for symptoms of food poisoning and some have been hospitalised for foam pudding bought online (Bernama, 2020). Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the consumers' level of knowledge, attitude and perception towards food safety affecting consumers' intention to purchase online home-based food product. A quantitative study has been through with 138 respondents from Kelantan was decided using power analysis. A correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength of the linear correlation between variables. The finding revealed that consumers' knowledge had the moderate positive relationship with purchase intention, followed by strong positive correlation between consumers' attitude and purchase intention. Meanwhile, consumers' perception had the moderate positive relationship with purchase intention. From the findings it are often concluded that buyers in Kelantan are very concern towards hygiene and in normal face to face setting this is often one among the factors which will be observed by consumers before making purchases. Additionally, there's a requirement for the regulations and legislation towards home-based online food provider and local agencies where they ought to monitor this business to make sure that there's no food safety issues arise in the future especially in Kelantan.

Keywords:

Behavioral Intention, Homemade Food, Food Hygiene, Food Delivery

1 Introduction

In Malaysia, the strengthening of food safety control has been led by the increasing demand for safe food. The government has taken initiative in conducting food premise inspection and enforcement. Businesses may face revenue loss and potential court charges if they did not suits with the standards and regulations. Worst case scenario, the operation of the business is going to be shut down. To ensure that the food processing activities are in compliance to the hygiene and safety requirements, Ministry of Health has established Food Safety & Quality Division (FSQD). The FSQD is additionally responsible in supervising food safety through the supply chain which may disrupt the supply chain and jeopardise food safety. Food Act 1983, Food Regulation 1985 and Food Hygiene Regulation 2009 are the food safety standards practiced in Malaysia (Rentokil, n.d).

Following the recent outbreak of COVID-19, Malaysians were advised by the Government to resume their normal lives during and after the outbreak of COVID-19. This has affected the present food industry in Malaysia. As the government announced the Movement Control Order (MCO), many people do not dare to leave the building. National Security Council (NSC) has regulated the standard operating procedures (SOP) for the food sector involves all premises situated in a building, roadside stalls and farmer's market. Where they have limited operation time and they need to follow certain rules. Although the food industry operates as usual, it is encouraged to use food delivery services and take away only to its customers. However, some food companies got to be temporarily shut down. Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia had shown the rise within the sale of food products from home since the existence of the Movement Control Order.

According to Soon et al. (2020), lack of hygiene in food preparation area and insanitary food handling procedures were recognized as the factors contributing to foodborne illnesses in Malaysia. Thus, food handlers who produce and sell food products from home should have a legitimate sales license and that they should comply with the food safety requirement in preparing food. Additionally, food producers should properly label food product for legal sales to consumers'. Food product manufactured at home should be clean and safely packed under the conditions set out in the 1938 Food Act (Daniel, Di & Sharma, 2015). Buying food online features a significant effect on local consumers when as an example, 99 individuals are confirmed to hunt medical attention for symptoms of food poisoning and a few are hospitalised for foam pudding bought online (Bernama, 2020). Thus, the objective of this study is to investigate the consumers' level of knowledge, attitude and perception towards food safety and their intention to purchase online home-based food product.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Home-based Food Business

Home-based food companies are using their home (or someone else's) to manage food purchasable. This includes food preparation for school canteens or local markets, catering for events, business and online food sales from home (Food Standard Australia & New Zealand, 2021). The home base food businesses are considered to be able to improve the welfare of the local community (Tyas et al., 2019). According to Ministry of Health Malaysia under Food Safety and Quality Division, home-based food is food prepared at home for sale. Now that a lot of food enterprises need to operate from home and move to online orders and cash-on-deliveries, Ministry of Health thus has provided specific food safety guidelines for food products marketed online. Consequently, all parties need to understand and take precautions in ensuring that food purchased or marketed online meets food safety requirements.

The online distribution of food has been on the increase recently because the Malaysian government declared a Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia. More food companies have turned to online delivery approaches to meet consumers. In fact, many people make their own food and cook from home to sell it to others outside by promoting their goods online during check orders. Unfortunately, many home-based food companies do not have a business licence and this raises concerns about the extent of food hygiene and protection they use when preparing food for their customers (Bernama, 2020).

2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour is that the theory which will be supported by factual evidence. Attitude towards behaviour refers to “the degree to which an individual features a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question” (Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes behaviour social toward expectations and perceived behavioural control are often expected with a level of accuracy. Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence behaviour; they are indications of how hard people are willing to undertake , of what proportion of an attempt they are getting to exert, so as to perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

In psychology, Theory of Planned Behaviour explained the connection between people's attitudes and practices (Ajzen, 2002). In addition, a typical method employed in understanding and analysing human reactions to particular occurrences especially within the field of health studies is a Knowledge-Attitudes-Practices (KAP) model (Launiala, 2009). However this study is specializing in consumers' knowledge, attitude and perception towards food safety and purchase intention of online home-based food. Knowledge (K) refers to the perception of food safety and hygiene. On the opposite hand, Attitude (A) refers to customers' views on the topic also on the concepts that they had previously considered. Perception (P) refers to how customers react through their emotions to their data and attitudes (Tiongco et. al, 2011).

2.3 Food Safety

Food protection involves human life and it is incredibly important. Food safety principles are designed to stop food contamination and bacterial infections which will cause food poisoning. Moreover, food safety standards shall include the upkeep of personal hygiene, transport, refrigeration, food labelling and heating of food in accordance with ambient temperatures, the utilization of appropriate and clean equipment and in accordance with existing procedures (Malaysian Food Safety and Quality Division, 2020). Additionally, the HACCP framework is intended to make sure food safety in business (Alqurashi, Priyadarshini & Jaiswal, 2019). Food protection applies to food additives, food labelling and also the use of biotechnology in export and import management guidance under the inspection and certification framework. Unhealthy food can cause disease and malnutrition in harmful foods. This might have an effect on consumers within the selection of foods that are nutritious, clean and healthy for consumers to buy (World Health Organization, 2020).

A study done by Baptistaa, Rodrigues, and Sant'Ana (2020) indicated that every member in the food chain must be alert of the associated food risk and to present knowledge necessary for the conservation of food and adequate decision-making about food handling, in order that it does not contribute to food-borne disease occurrences. Additionally, a study done by Odeyemi et. al (2019) revealed that consumers from Asia countries have good food safety knowledge, attitude and practices. They also mentioned it is important that consumers are aware of foodborne diseases that could arise from consuming contaminated food since buyers are the end-users of food products. Consumers should report every case of foodborne disease symptom to the closest hospital for proper treatment and record. Moreover, consumers' knowledge, attitude and perception of food safety and hygiene are vital given their future roles as individuals and as members of the family (Ali et. al, 2019).

2.4 Behavioral Intention

Intentions are defined by attitudes towards the behavior. Attitudes and subjective norms are determined by the significant beliefs people hold about the behavior (Ahmed & Sathish, 2017). Behavioral intentions are the result of the satisfaction process that can be categorized into two groups which are economic behavior and social behavior (Lyon & Powers, 2004). Kuruuzum and Koskal (2010) in their study revealed that behavior intentions can be measured by repurchase intentions, willingness to recommend, and positive word of mouth. Moreover, in order to know how potential customers react to a new service or product, it is vital to understand consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchasing behaviour (Alkaabi, 2021).

It is said that behavioural intentions could not be improved by food safety knowledge (Lin & Roberts, 2020). In addition, consumers' views on food safety vary due to the availability of positive and negative views. This perception of the consumers' can therefore influence their intention to purchase food (Lobb, Mazzocchi & Trail, 2007). Additionally, it is important to assess the extent of data of consumers, which can decide their perception towards food safety then turn them into their purchase behaviour (Ali

et. al, 2019). This study use knowledge, attitude and perceptions towards food safety to test whether it effect consumers’ purchase behaviour intention of online home-based food products. Based on the literature done, a research framework has been adapted from Lieong et al., (2017). Figure 1 shows the research framework.

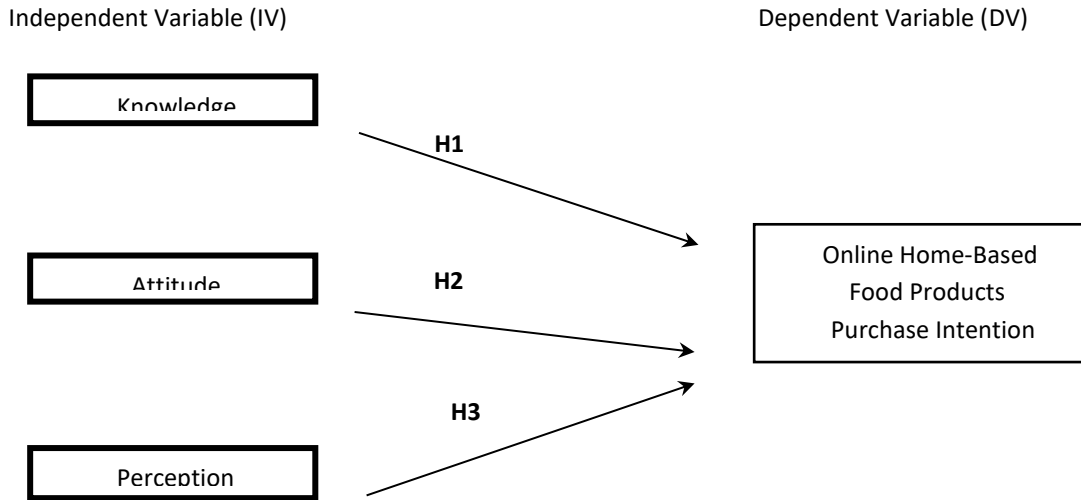


Figure 1: Research framework

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Quantitative analysis has been applied during this research design, which can end in numerical evidence because of the outcome. This analysis is predicated on an impression study to look at the connection between the extent of consumers’ knowledge, the attitude and perception of food safety, and therefore the purchase intention of the home-based online food. The study is a cross-sectional study in which data was collected at one point in time. The research was conducted during a non-conventional setting where the study will consider customers of online home-based food delivery.

3.2 Population and sample

The respondents for this study are the people that buy online home-based food products in Kelantan. This study was conducted in Kelantan because the survey conducted by Malaysia-Traveller.com had shown that Kelantan was within the first place with high numbers of food poisoning cases. The study selects the population from a selected web base group to review the extent of consumer knowledge, attitudes, and perception of food safety and therefore the intention to get online food products. The

snowball effect sampling has been utilized in this study because the population for this study is difficult to locate. Sampling power analysis was used to determine the sample size. As a result, 138 sample size was decided because the minimum requirement.

3.3 Instrumentation

The questionnaire is split into five parts which are parts A, B, C, D, and E. During this analysis, section A is about the demographic profile, section B, section C, and section D are the sections for independent variables namely knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of food safety, while section E is that the dependent variable which is purchase intention. The instrument developed by Mustaffa, Rahman, Hassim and Ngadi (2017) was utilized in sections B and C. Section B also adopts the questions employed by Fariba et al. (2018). Meanwhile, questions in section C are developed using the instrument by Ali et al. (2019). The things utilized in section E were adopted by the instrument developed by Zhao et al. (2017). The questionnaire contains a complete of 35 questions. Additionally, the "Likert Scale" questionnaire was chosen to be utilized in this questionnaire. Respondents got to choose one among the range ratings that begins with a strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. During this pattern, the amount from one to five is going to be indicated for every option.

3.4 Data Collection

All responses were collected by distributing questionnaire surveyed via online Google Form. The online questionnaire was distributed to variety of online platforms like Whatsapp, Telegram and Facebook. The samples of targeted web base group or community are "Kelantan Home Food Delivery, Kelantan Delivery, COD Makanan Kelantan, Food Delivery Kelantan" and other group associated with the online selling home-based food.

4 Findings

4.1 Result and analysis

4.1.1 Demographic Profile

In this study, a complete of 107 (77.5%) female respondents and 31 (22.5%) male respondents were able to participate. The majority of the respondents were from the age group 21-25 years old, with 75 respondents (54.3%). Most of the respondents who participate in this study were degree holders with 62 respondents (44.9%). The majority of the respondents were students, with 66 respondents (47.8%). Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Measure	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	31	22.5
	Female	107	77.5
Age	20 years old and below	39	28.3
	21-25 years old	75	54.3
	26-30 years old	8	5.8
	31-40 years old	14	10.1
	41 years old and above	2	1.4
Education Level	SPM	59	42.8
	Matriculation graduate	4	2.9
	Undergraduate	62	44.9
	Post graduate	13	9.4
Occupation	Employee	56	40.6
	Self-employed	6	4.3
	Student	66	47.8
	Not working	10	7.2
District	Kota Bharu	56	40.6
	Pasir Mas	22	15.9
	Tumpat	44	31.9
	Tanah Merah	2	1.4
	Machang	7	5.1
	Other	7	5.1

Note: N = 138

4.1.2 Reliability Analysis

Table 2 illustrates Cronbach's alpha coefficient scores for the variables employed in this study. Based 138 samples, the knowledge subscale consisted of 10 items was found to be accepted as moderate reliability ($\alpha = .724$). Meanwhile, the attitude with 10 items was found to be accepted as high reliability ($\alpha = .905$). Next is for perception subscale consisted of 6 items also was found to be high reliability ($\alpha = .943$). Lastly, the purchase intention is subscale consisted of 4 items was found to be highly reliable ($\alpha = .846$). The mean scores for all variables are above 4.00 which considered as high. The variable with highest mean score is perception (M = 4.66, SD = 0.69), followed by attitude (M = 4.49, SD = 0.66), knowledge (M = 4.15, SD = 0.56) and purchase intention (M = 3.97, SD = 0.87).

Table 2: Cronbach's alpha coefficient scores for the variables

	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD	No. of Items
KP	Knowledge	0.724	4.15	0.56	10
AP	Attitude	0.905	4.49	0.66	10
PP	Perception	0.943	4.66	0.69	6
PI	Purchase Intention	0.846	3.97	0.87	4

4.1.3 Pearson Correlation Analysis

A Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to measure the relationship between variables. Based on Table 3, there was a moderate positive correlation between knowledge and purchase intention ($r = .427$, $n = 138$, $p < 0.01$) with moderate levels of knowledge allied with higher levels of purchase intention. The correlation analysis supports that the knowledge has a significant positive relationship with purchase intention. A study done by Fariba et. al (2018) has supported this result as they said that the relationship between knowledge and the intention to purchase food is good and moderate.

Furthermore, there was a strong positive correlation between attitude and purchase intention ($r = .533$, $n = 138$, $p < 0.01$) with high levels of attitude towards food safety related with higher levels of purchase intention. It shows that consumers have positive attitude about the products with claims for product safety. This finding parallels with the study from Recker and Saleem (2014). They found that the attitude also got a significant positive outcome on consumer’s purchasing attitude.

Moreover, there was a moderate positive correlation between perception and purchase intention ($r = .470$, $n = 138$, $p < 0.01$) with moderate levels of perception towards food product safety correlate with higher levels of purchase intention. The finding shows that Kelantanese did trust that home-based food handlers are practicing good food handling procedures which later influence their intention to buy. The correlation analysis supports that the perceptions have a significant positive relationship with purchase intention. According to Jaafar, Lalp, and Naba (2012), a factor that affects consumer’s intention to purchase was their perception of food safety.

Table 2: Result for Pearson Correlation Analysis

	r- value	Relationshi p	Hypothesis Decision	Result
Knowledge score - Purchase intention score	0.427	Moderate positive correlation	$p = 0.00 < p = 0.01$	Accepted
Attitude score- Purchase intention score	0.533	Strong Positive correlation	$p = 0.00 < p = 0.01$	Accepted
Perception score - Purchase intention score	0.470	Moderate positive correlation	$p = 0.00 < p = 0.01$	Accepted

5 Discussion and conclusion

Since this study was conducted during MCO period, the demographic analysis data found out that the biggest group that has intention on buying online home-based food

products in Kelantan are students. This may happen because the foods offered are cheaper compared to other food delivery and some food delivery services are not accessible in certain areas. Findings from this study also shows that home-based food products were choose by working women. This data may come as a result that they have to work from home and they have less time in term of preparing food. The results from this study proved that consumers who have a good attitude regarding food safety are seeking for good quality of food and aware about getting a good food for their family. In addition, all variables in this study which are level of knowledge, attitudes and their perception about food safety did effects the purchase intention.

Consumer with food safety knowledge will choose wisely the food product sold from home. However, they rely on review or trust since they did not able to monitor or observe how the food is being prepared. Moreover, the increasing numbers of home-based online business are triggered by the pandemic, but if the cases of the food safety are kept on rising, in the future consumers will lose their confident toward this business. Hence, it is crucial for the home-based online business to ensure that they practice the guideline provided by Ministry of Health Malaysia under Food Safety and Quality Division and such incident will be avoided in the future. Then, few limitations were addressed in which this study only study about the population in Kelantan and only discussing the relationship between knowledge, attitude, and perceptions toward purchase intention. Further study may use different settings so that there is an additional increase in the generalizability of discoveries that can be achieved by directing the same research with large or diverse segments. A study from the perspectives of the home-based food handlers also should be studied to ensure all members in the food chain did aware of practicing good food safety in ensuring food is safe for consumption. It is also recommended to study other factors that contribute to the purchase intention of online home-based food since this business has become popular.

6 About the author

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