

Promoting healthy or preventing unhealthy? An experimental investigation in the context of food products sold through smart vending machines

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Abstract

Smart vending machines are becoming increasingly ubiquitous and account for important market shares of food and beverage consumption out-of-home. Recent reviews highlight the lack of adequate literature on many aspects concerning consumer behavior. Since food vending machines are always scrutinized for contributing to over-consumption and unhealthy lifestyles, studies that investigate how to improve nutrition interventions would be welcome. The present study aims at contributing to this stream. Through a between-subjects experimental design, we manipulated the product type (vice vs virtue) and the message type (prevention vs promotion-focused) to verify which strategy would be more effective in increasing (decreasing) the intention to buy healthier (unhealthier) products from vending machines. Results show how prevention-focused messages seem more effective in reducing the intention to buy vice products than promotion-focused messages to increase the consumption of virtue products.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Retailing*

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