

# On Belief- and Biology-Based Accounts of Consumer Responses to Price Promotion and In-Store Display for Healthy and Unhealthy Food

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## **Abstract**

Consumer research on healthy and unhealthy food have shown mitigated results in the fight against obesity. The bulk of consumer research has relied on consumer's belief about what is Un/Healthy and with little consideration to the biological mechanisms underlying consumer responses to food. We argue for a biological account of food behavior based on neurobiological mechanisms. We examined how the interaction between homeostatic and environmental signals, and the actual nutrient content of food items determine consumers' motivation to purchase. Using three years sales data of twelve food categories, we assessed the differential effect of marketing activities on sales based on perceived un/healthiness of food (belief-based model) and based on the actual nutrient content of food (biology-based model). We noted systematically opposing results between the belief-based and biology-based approaches. Results show that the biology-based model is more in tune with neurobehavioral patterns.

**Keywords:** *pricing; display; food-marketing*

**Track:** Pricing & Promotions