

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINANTS OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION AMONG ADULTS: A SCOPING REVIEW



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INTRODUCTION

Fruits and vegetables (FV) are known to be an important part of the daily diet intake. WHO recommended that adults should consume at least five (5) servings daily or (400 grams) of FV. This practice reduces the risk of major non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, certain types of cancer and likely reduces body weight.

METHODS

- ▶ Selected articles published from 2000 till 2019.
- ▶ Studies identified using electronic based: PubMed, Scopus, Google Scholar, Cochrane and grey literature as well.
- ▶ The study included Malaysia and ASIAN countries. Asian countries were selected based on the characteristics of diet, weather and diversity of society which contributed to some extent to the similarities with Malaysia.
- ▶ Search term included various combination of keywords "fruits" or "fresh fruits"; "vegetables" or "green vegetables"; "consumption" or "intake"; and "adults".
- ▶ Adults were identified as respondents aged 18-59 years old (NHMS 2014).
- ▶ The environment was defined as 'all factors external to the individual'
- ▶ PRISMA-ScR was used for the study selection process (Liberati et al.2009)
- ▶ Mendeley software was used to manage the records via searching.

RESULT

A total of 28 studies met the inclusion criteria as presented in Figure 1. Findings showed there was a great diversity in the environmental factors studied. Most studies found that FV price were among the factors that had high impact on both influencing and barriers to FV consumption.

The study also revealed that parental control and family influences among adults are associated with high levels of FV consumption. Social interaction with the family itself motivates the adults to consume FV. The studies indicated that their eating patterns were influenced by family members, especially by the mothers. On the other hand, a few studies also found negative influences by family members and friends resulting in decreased consumption of FV thus becoming a barrier for FV consumption

Availability and easy access to FV have a significant impact on consumer behaviour. Adults are responsible to purchase FV and this leads to a higher consumption. The results also found that lack of access and limited choices to FV around residential areas and working places were also reported to have a negative impact on FV consumption. Time constraints and effort required to prepare, cook FV and busy lifestyle also poses barriers.

AIM

This study aims to summarise the existing evidence pertaining to the environmental influences on FV consumption.

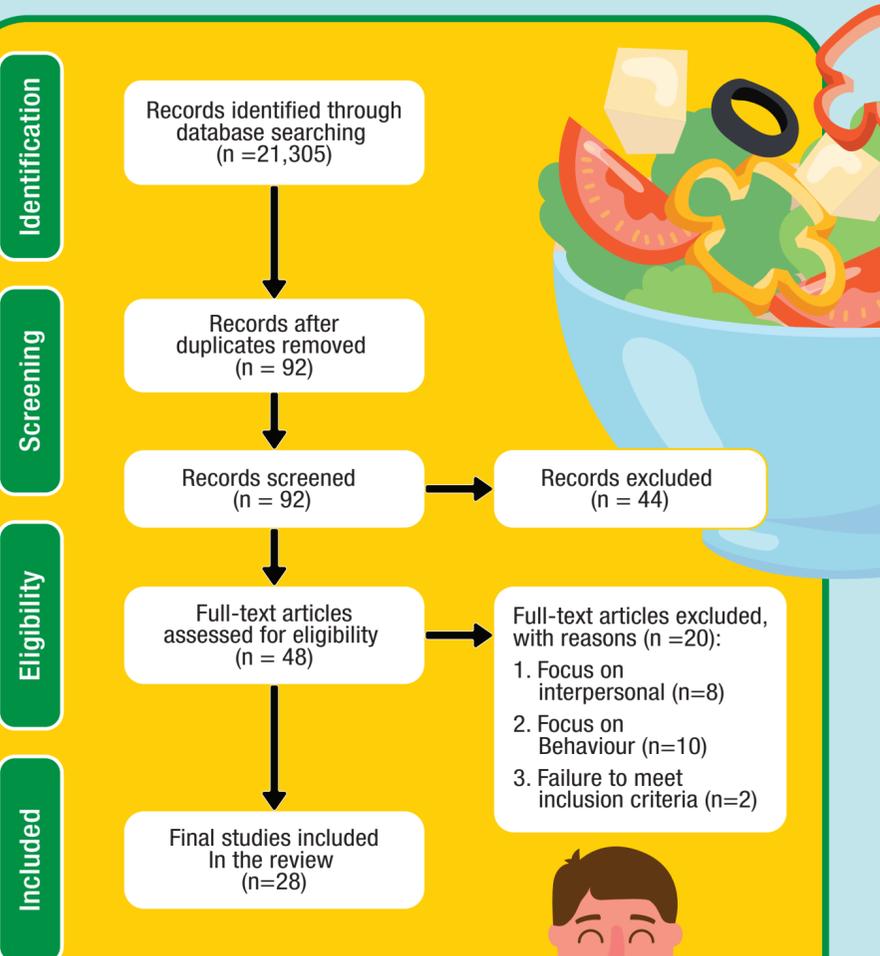


Figure 1: PRISMA-ScR flow diagram on study selection process

The relevance of beliefs and culture was also found in the study. These studies found that the experience during childhood was a factor that affected FV consumption. Childhood experiences such as availability of various FV in their environment growing up, experiences preparing FV, and pleasant memories of the taste of fruits and vegetables.

Media was also part of the factors influencing the consumption of FV. Studies showed that the media plays a vital role in the public in promoting healthy eating. Promotions via media may influence respondents who are financially capable, to purchase FV products and consume them. Alternatively, the media can also educate and encourage those who are less capable financially, to plant and grow their own FV.

Other characteristics such as texture, quality, smell and appearance played a major role in deciding the types of FV to be consumed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Existing data showed that FV intake were still inadequate in many countries. Extensive research into environmental, personal and behaviour factors influences may result in new explanations for variations in FV consumption and offer a new avenue to promote behaviour change towards recommended FV consumption.

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