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Household food waste behaviour in Sarawak, Malaysia: A hierarchical regression analysis

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Food and Agriculture Organization defines food waste as the reduction in the nutritional value or mass of any edible part of food intended for human consumption. Malaysia produces approximately 17 thousand tons of food waste daily, which can threaten the environment. Present study aims to apply the Theory of Planned Behaviour to identify the factors associated with food waste behaviour in Sarawak.

METHODS: A study was conducted between October 2020 and August 2022 using cross-sectional study design. Households across Sarawak state were chosen using multistage random sampling technique. 2,059 respondents' data were collected via face-to-face interviews. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 27.0 with a p-value of < 0.05 being considered statistically significant.

RESULTS: Hierarchical linear regression analysis revealed that personal attitude ($p < 0.001$), subjective norms ($p < 0.01$), age ($p < 0.05$), gender ($p < 0.05$) and wealth ($p < 0.01$) positively and age inversely related with intentions not to waste food, while personal attitude ($p < 0.001$), subjective norms ($p < 0.001$), inversely related and perceived behavioural control ($p < 0.001$), and intentions ($p < 0.05$), age ($p < 0.01$) and gender ($p < 0.01$) positively related with food waste behaviour.

CONCLUSION: Results from the present study can strengthen the understanding of food waste behaviour among the Sarawak population. Long-term programs focusing on reducing food waste behaviour would be more effective in tackling this issue, as changing attitudes and norms in the community usually require a long time.

Keywords: Food waste, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Sarawak

INTRODUCTION

The food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defined food waste as the reduction in the nutritional value or mass of any edible part of food intended for human consumption [1]. It is result from the actions and decisions of consumers and food service providers. Although such foods are usually in good condition and safe for consumption, they are not consumed and instead discarded either due to spoilage or expiration [2]. Food waste is often associated with retailers' or