

Consumers' acceptance and preferences for functional dairy products in Iran

Marjan Bazhan, Nastaran Keshavarz-Mohammadi, Naser Kalantari, Hedayat Hosseini and Hamid Alavi-Majd
Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Iran

In the last decades, consumer demand for health-enhancing food products, such as functional foods, has rapidly grown due to rising costs of health care, increase in life expectancy and desire for improved quality of life. Given the novelty of functional dairy products in Iranian market, and considering the fact that consumers' acceptance play an important role in the success of marketing a product, this study was conducted to fill the knowledge gap in this regard. Four hundred consumers aged between 25 to 65 years were selected from ten major chain stores in different geographical areas in Tehran, the capital of Iran, through multistage sampling method. The data were collected by a researcher-made questionnaire that its validity and reliability had been measured. In general, 95% of the subjects consumed at least one of the functional dairy products. Low-fat dairy products (91%) and vitamin D or omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids fortified dairy products (20%) had the highest and lowest percentage of intake among the consumers, respectively. Women

($p=0.042$), those with higher education ($p=0.012$) and higher average attitude score ($p=0.007$), and households with children under 18 ($p=0.041$) showed high acceptance and preferences for functional dairy products. Familiarity with functional dairy products and their health properties; interest in maintaining and improving health and disease prevention; sensory and non-sensory features of the product such as taste, quality, price, having safety and health sign, and being

Healthy; and the product availability were also found to be related to the acceptance for functional dairy products. To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first in this regard in Iran. The factors listed above should be considered both in productions of dairy foods and in their promotion plans. This understanding can contribute to success of interventions to increase consumption of these products among consumers.

Biography

Marjan Bazhan is working at the Faculty of Nutrition Sciences and Food Technology, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Iran. She received her PhD in Nutrition Sciences from Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Iran. She has expertise in the field of Community Nutrition, Behavior Change, and Health Promotion.

marjanbazhan@sbmu.ac.ir

 Notes: