

Coventry University student perceptions of factors influencing them to make healthy or unhealthy dietary choices

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Aim: The study aimed at exploring Coventry University students' perceptions of factors that influenced them to make healthy or unhealthy dietary choices. A qualitative approach was used to explore perceptions of factors that influenced their dietary choices.

Methods and analysis: Five participants all Coventry University students were recruited for this study using the purposive sampling method. One-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore students' perceptions of factors influencing their dietary choices. Students were interviewed using open-ended questions to capture a broader perspective of the phenomena of interest.

Interviews were manually transcribed and an inductive thematic analytical method was used to analyze data which led to the identification of three major themes.

Results: The results indicated that three major themes emerged which included concepts and perspectives of health and unhealthy dietary choices, perceptions of factors influencing students' perceptions of their dietary choices and solutions to healthier choices.

Concepts and perspectives indicated that students understood the meaning of healthy and unhealthy dietary choices as well as expressed how they understood the concepts. The students also expressed their perceptions of factors that influenced them to make dietary choices which included socio-economic, lifestyle factors, social and community networks and environmental factors. These include cost, time, knowledge, health, availability, location and weather changes. However, the most influential factors were cost, time, family and health.

Possible recommendations were suggested to promote healthier choices including proper planning, advertisement of healthier foods, eating when necessary and personal responsibility.

Biography

Mayanja Shafique has expertise in the field of Human Nutrition especially in Public health Nutrition as a lecturer and mentor. He started to develop his career in research especially in Public health and specifically in the line of Nutrition.

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