



Exploring the Effectiveness of FIT Malaysia Campaign on Social Media from the Perspective of the Policy Makers

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Abstract

Malaysia is currently witnessing the surge of health issues among youth due to the increase of unhealthy lifestyles such as smoking, obesity, and lack of exercise. Launched in 2014, FIT Malaysia is a national movement aimed to change unhealthy lifestyles of its people and elevate Malaysia from a sports-loving nation to a sporting nation. It serves as a social intervention to prepare its people for a healthier society and it is especially significant to youth as they make up of 40% of Malaysia's population. This paper examined the effectiveness of social media by the FIT Malaysia campaign to engage its target group. Based on the social marketing theory, this paper focused on the initial part of the theory; the message was designed from the stakeholders that contribute to the social intervention which also underpinned the influence of voluntary behaviour as a result of exposure to the social media campaign. Through qualitative methodology, the policy makers from the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) were interviewed to investigate the decision-making aspects and its impact from using Facebook and Twitter as a mean to engage youth in FIT Malaysia. Through an in-depth interview, the processes involved in structuring the social media campaign and how youth could benefit from it. Using the social media characteristics to support the social marketing theory, the findings indicated that while the ministry acknowledged the significance of FIT Malaysia's social media presence, two vital elements namely human resources and financial support needed to be strengthened in order to achieve concentrated impacts if the campaign ought to be intensified for maximum exposure.

Keywords: *Health communication, FIT Malaysia, healthy lifestyle, youth, social media, campaign*
