

The Mediterranean Diet: From Intention to Behavior—The Role of Multidimensional Perceived Social Support (MPSS)

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Abstract

The Mediterranean diet embodies a holistic lifestyle that emphasizes locality, seasonality, healthy cooking techniques, and a strong cultural foundation. Situated among Mediterranean countries, Türkiye provides a pertinent context for examining this lifestyle. The present study aims to determine the role of Multidimensional Perceived Social Support (MPSS) in translating intention into actual behavior regarding adherence to the Mediterranean diet. This aim was informed by evidence in the local literature indicating that Türkiye lags in compliance with the Mediterranean diet. To reach a wider population, a survey method was employed, and data were collected from residents of the most densely populated provinces—Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Bursa, Antalya, Muğla, and Aydın (n = 391). The questionnaire was adapted, with expert input, from the MPSS scale developed by Zhang et al. (2021) and from scales used by Bélanger et al. (2023) within the Theory of Planned Behavior framework. The Shapiro–Wilk test was applied to examine distributional properties, indicating non-normality. Consequently, Spearman’s rho was used for correlation analyses and the Mann–Whitney U test for group differences. The findings reveal weak yet positive and statistically significant associations between MPSS and behavioral intention, perceived behavioral control, and attitude. In comparing individuals who report following the Mediterranean diet with those who do not, adherents exhibited higher subjective norm and attitude scores, whereas no significant differences emerged for MPSS or perceived behavioral control. In conclusion, MPSS, attitude, and perceived control appear to exert a modest but reinforcing effect on the conversion of intention into behavior in the context of Mediterranean diet adherence.