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The Effects of Lifestyle Choices and Political Ideology on Eating Habits

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Studies have shown that there are many factors that influence what people decide to buy and eat. These studies have shown that political ideology can affect things like the type of diet someone follows, the perceived health risks of food, and the amount of alcohol intake. However, studies have not yet explored how daily life activities (e.g., consumption of fast food, intake of vegetables, physical activity) are affected by political ideology and lifestyle choices. This study will help serve as a link between prior research to determine the relationship between lifestyle choices (healthy versus unhealthy), political ideology (conservative versus liberal), and eating habits (food preferences). Participants will answer a questionnaire to determine how healthy their food choices are. This measure uses a 10-item healthy eating assessment scale and will also be presented with 12 demographic questions based on their lifestyle choices (e.g., how many hours a week do you spend walking?). Participant’s scores will be analyzed and separated into the positive lifestyle choices or negative lifestyle choice group after completing a 27-item food-related lifestyle scale (e.g., "I am very conscious of how much fat is in the food I eat"). Participants will also complete a 14-item scale on social and economic conservatism (e.g., "How positive or negative do you feel about abortion") to help determine if having conservative or liberal traits influence a person’s food preference. A Pearson correlational analysis will be used to test whether participants who score high on the food-related lifestyle scale also score high on the social and conservatism scale. An independent sample \( t \)-test will be used to measure the role of political ideology (conservative versus liberal) on eating habits. This research may help us determine the relationship between political ideology, lifestyle choices, and food preferences. This research can provide a better understanding of how our lifestyle choices and levels of conservatism and liberalism influence our eating habits.