**The effect of social norm messages on dietary intentions: the moderating effect of social identification: Study 7**

*Aim*

This online questionnaire study aimed to Investigate the moderating effect of social identity on responses to social norm messages about junk food consumption in a student sample. It was hypothesised that Individuals who strongly identified as students at University of Birmingham would have stronger intentions to limit junk food intake after a social norm message about junk food consumption than those who less strongly identify as a University of Birmingham student.

*Participants*

Participants were students at the University of Birmingham. Participants were recruited through campus advertising and social media such as Facebook and the online university portal.

*Design*

The study used between-subjects design, with 2 factors: message type (descriptive norm message vs. a control message) and norm referent group (high identifiers vs. low identifiers with student status). Participants were randomly allocated to one of conditions.

*Messages*

One of three messages were automatically and randomly presented to each participant though Qualtrics online survey system, and were displayed ostensibly to gather feedback on the posters. These messages were:

* Social norm message: “Students eat less junk food than you might realise. Most students at University of Birmingham limit how much junk food they are eating to 1 or less than 1 serving a day. (based on a 2012 study) (Robinson et al., 2013)”
* Control message: “Students spend less money on accommodation than you might realise. Most students in Birmingham spend less than £100 in rent per week with the cheapest rent at £62 per week (Survey from NUS, 2012)”

*Measures*

The questionnaire collected the following information:

* Demographic information (e.g. age, gender, smoker status, ethnicity, year of study) – variables 1-8
* Habitual junk food consumption through a question asking how many items of junk food have been eaten today [JunkItemsEaten], and generally [Usual\_junk]
* International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ) which provides a comparison measurement on health-related physical activity and was parallel to the measurement of habitual eating behaviour. A total MET-minute score was calculated to indicate the volume of activity (multiples of the resting metabolic rate).
* Personality Inventory (TIPI) to measure Big Five personality traits, answerable on a 7-point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree [Personality1-10]
* Visual Analogue Mood Scales (100mm) to rate their mood status (including alert, anxious, happy and hungry) from not at all to very much, which was given before [VAS1 Alert-VAS1Hunger] and after the poster was displayed [VAS2Alert-VAS2Hunger].
* A poster evaluation scale, presented after exposure to the messages (displayed as posters needing feedback). This contained 5 items to measure participants’ understanding and experiencing of posters (e.g. clear level, profession, believability, understandable and relatedness). [Poster1-Poster5]. Participants were then asked to recall the poster message [Poster\_Recall]
* Student identity was measured by:
  + A 2-item identification with the norm scale [Identity\_1, identity\_2]
  + A 14-item Norm Referent Group scale (derived from Stok et al, 2014) to measure identification and connection to a certain group on a 5-point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. [Iden1 – Iden14]
* Self-identification as a person who eats less junk food [Self\_iden1 and Self\_iden2]
* Attitudes towards eating junk food [Attitudes1-Attitudes4]
* Self-efficacy for eating less junk food was measured using two items that were assessed on a 5-point scale ranging from not at all like me to just like me (de Bruijn et al., 2012; Stok et al., 2014). [Selfefficacy1 and Selfefficacy2]
* Intention for eating junk food, measured by four items questions asking participants’ predictions of future junk food consumption [eating\_intend, eating\_plan, eating\_want, eating\_expect] and the number of portions participants intend to eat [Intention\_junk]
* To distract from the true nature of the study, physical activity intentions were assessed on a 5-point scale (e.g. ‘I intend to be more physically active in the next two months’) [Intention\_PA]
* Self-reported measurement of BMI, through questions asking for participants’ height and weight. [Weight] [Height] [BMI]

## Procedure

Participants took part in the study through the website link, and were randomly allocated to a condition. Participants were asked to complete the basic demographic questions, before being asked to rate the posters which contained the experimental messages. They then completed the remaining measures.