

Mind the Gap: Intention to Behaviour, the Challenge in Confectionery Consumption

Paul Naughton, UCC, TFRC Ashtown
Dr Mary McCarthy, UCC
Dr Sinéad McCarthy, TFRC Ashtown



Presentation Outline

- Background
- Research approach
- Filling in the gap: what people say
- Filling in the gap: the impact of barriers and facilitators of BC
- Discussion and Conclusion



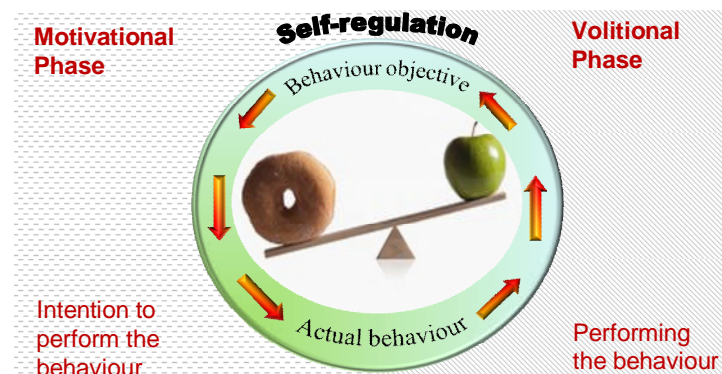
Background

- Obesity is a major public health concern in Ireland (National Task Force on Obesity, 2005; Department of Health, 2012)
- The relationship between diet and wellbeing
 - The general consensus among social health institutions and the majority of physicians is that people should pursue a balanced diet with a particular emphasis placed on foods high in fibre and they should limit their intake of saturated fat, refined grains, salt and sugar (FSAI, 2011).
- Dietary recommendations and actual consumption do not concede on a general population level (National Adult Nutrition Survey, 2011)



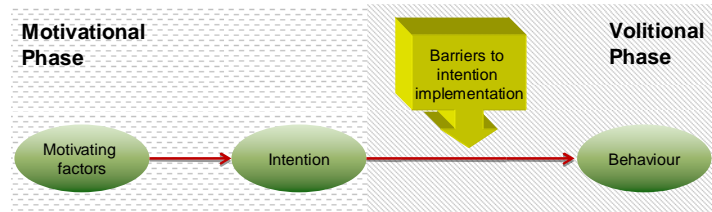
Background

- **Definition of health behaviours** (Conner and Norman, 2005)
 - "... any action undertaken by an individual for the purpose of detecting and preventing disease or for improving or maintaining good health and well-being."



Background

- The motivational phase of health behaviour has received considerable attention in the social cognition literature (Armitage and Conner, 2000; Schwarzer, 2001).
- Intention-behaviour gap
 - Strong behavioural intentions do not always lead to corresponding behaviour (Armitage and Conner, 2001)



Research Approach

- This study employed a mixed method research design

- Literature review



- 12 qualitative in-depth interviews carried out with Irish adults



- A quantitative investigation using a self-completion questionnaire administered to a representative sample of 500 adults

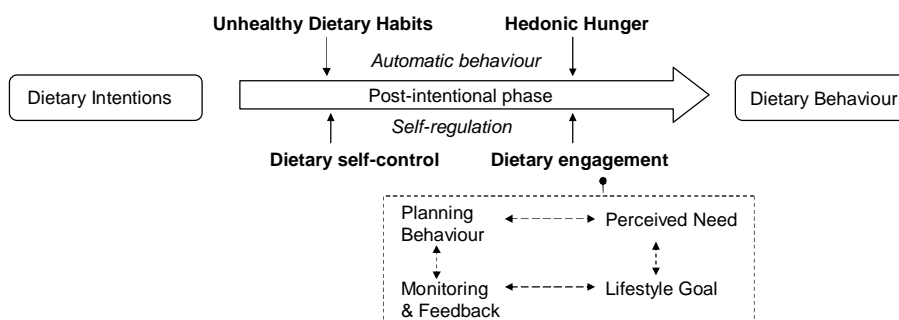


Filling in the gap: what are the issues?

- To identify the social cognitive factors which underlie the transition from healthy eating motivations to corresponding behaviour
- During the interviews participants gave accounts of their food choice strategies/goals and successful/failed attempts to make changes
- This entailed purposively mining all the discourse around intention to action



Filling in the gap – what are the issues?



Filling in the gap – what are the issues?

- These observations fit with the thinking of others:
 - Self-efficacy/PBC (Bandura, 1977; Ajzen & Madden, 1986)
 - Lifestyle goal (Bagozzi, 1992; Bagozzi & Edwards, 1998; Abraham & Sheeran, 2003)
 - Implementation intentions (Gollwitzer, 1993, 1999)
 - Action planning and coping planning (Schwarzer, 2008, 2010)
 - Self-monitoring (Sniehotta *et al.*, 2005; Scholz *et al.*, 2009)
 - Behavioural Feedback (Fries *et al.*, 2005; Elmer, 2006; Baldwin *et al.*, 2006)
 - Perceived need (Povey *et al.*, 2000; Payne *et al.*, 2004)
- How important are these issues?

Exploring the importance of these issues

- Self-completion questionnaire
 - A representative sample of 500 Irish adults
- Target behaviour: Sugar consumption
 - Avoidance behaviour



Exploring the importance of these issues

- Sugar consumption, snacking and dietary change

Behavioural variables	Mean (SD)
Sugar consumption in grams per day	<u>52.45 (40.52)</u>
Sugar snacking	<u>4.24 (1.42)</u>
Sugar consumption change	<u>3.47 (1.20)</u>
	%
Intention to reduce sugar consumption	54
Lifestyle goal	42

Exploring the importance of these issues

- The hypothesised determinants of successful avoidance for individuals motivated to reduce sugar consumption

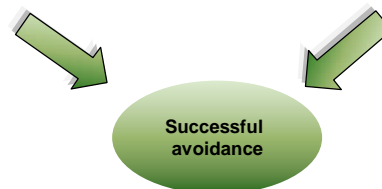


Exploring the importance of these issues

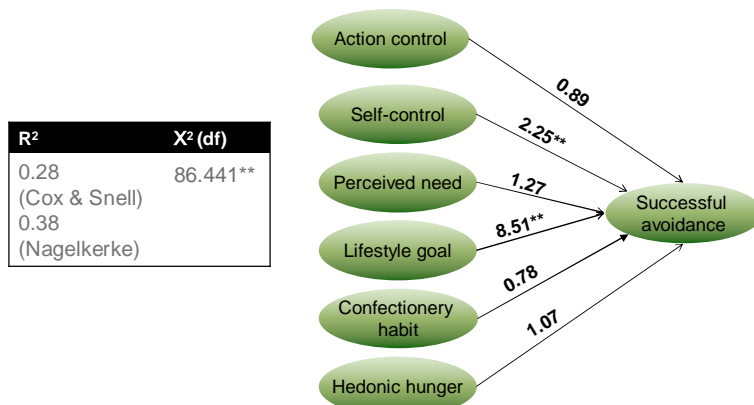
- Stage of behaviour change was calculated using a measure of sugar consumption change in conjunction with retrospective measures of behavioural intention to change or maintain behaviour
- 1. True pre-contemplators (n = 93) included people...
 - who have never reduced their sugar intake
 - who had **no intention** in reducing sugar consumption
 - who had **no intention** in maintaining behaviour
 - who stayed the same or increased confectionery food consumption
 - consuming **> 60 grams** of sugar per day
- 2. True-maintainers (n = 60) included people...
 - who had been trying to maintain their levels of sugar consumption and succeeded in doing so
 - consuming **< 60 grams** of sugar per day

Exploring the importance of these issues

- 3. Unsuccessful-actors (n = 95)
 - Are people who **tried** to reduce their sugar consumption over the previous six months but did not succeed
 - Consuming **> 60 grams** of sugar per day
- 4. True-reducers (n = 170)
 - Are people who **tried** to reduce their sugar consumption over the previous six months and succeeded in making the change
 - Consuming **< 60 grams** of sugar per day



Exploring the importance of these issues



The odds ratios of the hypothesised determinants of successful sugar avoidance for individuals motivated to reduce sugar consumption

Discussion

- People are motivated to make healthy dietary changes (FSAI & Safefood, 2007; FSA UK, 2010)
- In the literature, there is considerable theoretical support for the proposition that enhancing self-regulation skills is one of the most important ways of achieving a healthier diet (Cullen *et al.* 2001; Steptoe *et al.*, 2004; Riet *et al.*, 2011)
- Self-efficacy/self-control has been found to be a significant predictor of dietary change and has been incorporated into dietary change interventions that have yielded favourable outcomes (Howard-Pitney *et al.*, 1997; Schwarzer and Renner, 2000; Steptoe *et al.*, 2004; Linde *et al.*, 2006).
 - Self-control is an inhibiting factor for people when in the presence of foods that tend to elicit primitive hedonic reactions e.g. sweet and fatty snacks (Haufmann *et al.*, 2007).
- In the food domain it is well documented that setting goals at the outset of a behaviour change initiative is important in achieving the desired behavioural change (Bagozzi, 1992; Cullen *et al.* 2001; Artinan *et al.*, 2010).
 - Past research shows that individuals who target specific behavioural change goals are likely to be more successful in making a dietary change compared with individuals who have vague or no goals (Berg-Smith, 1999; Schnoll and Zimmerman, 2001).

Conclusion

- Encourage people to set lifestyle goals related to dietary behaviour change
 - It is important set realistic goals
 - It may be useful to develop sub-goals that are related to behaviour rather than a physiological target
 - Make it easier for people to monitor and assess their goal progress
 - Packaging, internet and phone application dietary planners
- Facilitate people in their efforts to enhance dietary self-control
 - NPD and reformulations of existing products
 - Identify common barriers to healthy dietary change and suggest ways to overcome them
 - E.g. Planning dietary behaviour may overcome barriers
 - It may be necessary to alter the food environments that people are regularly exposed to

Thank you for your attention