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Changing Food-Related Behavior: Insights from Behavioral Science

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Handouts of the slides are posted at: www.villanova.edu/COPE

Changing Food-Related Behavior: Insights from Behavioral Science

Objectives:
1. Drawing from the behavioral science literature, review the drivers of food-related decisions, particularly those that occur outside of the consumers’ awareness.
2. Identify strategies from behavioral science aimed at assisting clients in making better food-related decisions.
CE Credits

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CE Credits

Credits:
• This webinar awards 1 contact hour for nurses and 1 CPEU for dietitians
• Suggested CDR Learning Need Codes: 4000, 6000, 6010, 8120, Level 2

Changing Food-Related Behavior: Insights from Behavioral Science

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DISCLOSURE

Neither the planners or presenter have any conflicts of interest to disclose.

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WHAT IS BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE?

- Includes fields like psychology—and more specifically behavioral economics and behavioral decision making—sociology, and anthropology
- Focus is on irrational decision outcomes – we exercise too little and eat too much
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE APPLICATIONS

Applications to myriad consumer-welfare-related issues
- Health and wellness
- Retirement savings
- Environmental conservation
- Food-related decision making

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE EXAMPLES


PUTTING BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE TO USE

September 2015: Executive order calls for government agencies to use insights from behavioral science to “better serve the American people,” with health and wellness highlighted as key areas for change.

In addition to their potential to inform change strategies at the policy level, insights from behavioral science can help us and those whom we try to help.

APPLYING INSIGHTS TO CHANGE FOOD RELATED BEHAVIORS

Model of consumer decision making:

- Acquisition
- Consumption
- Disposition

What to eat
How much to eat
BIASES IN PLANNING, SHOPPING, AND CHOOSING

- The planning fallacy
- The present bias
- The role of marketing stimuli (context)
- Choice architecture
- Communicating identities

THE PLANNING FALLACY

Consumers are notoriously poor planners
- Planning fallacy (Kahneman & Tversky 1977)
- Implementation intention help (Koole & van't Spijker 2000)
**PRESENT BIAS**

Consumers are focused on the now (not the later)
- Present bias (O’Donoghue & Rabin 1999)
- Thinking about goals and publicly stating intentions helps

**THE ROLE OF MARKETING STIMULI**

Consumers are heavily influenced by context.
Marketing stimuli play a role at acquisition.

**The Marketing Mix**

- **Product**
  - Name
  - Form
  - Size
  - Color
  - Packaging
  - Branding


(Photo via Macaroni Grill)
THE ROLE OF MARKETING STIMULI

Product
- Name
- Form
- Size
- Color
- Packaging
- Branding

Price
- Price over time (e.g., Finkelstein, Ruhm, & Kosa 2005)
- Promotional pricing (e.g., Mhurchu et al. 2010; Mishra & Mishra 2011)
- “Larger is a better value” heuristic (Haws & Winterich 2013)

Place (distribution)
- Accessibility
- Salience

THE ROLE OF MARKETING STIMULI

Promotion (communication)
- Advertising
- Packaging
- Product Placement
- Direct marketing
- Event sponsorship

ACQUISITION: CHOICE ARCHITECTURE

The ways in which options are presented, impacts choice.

- Compromise Effect is defined as the tendency to select intermediate or middle options in a choice set.

CHOICE ARCHITECTURE

- Attraction effect is defined as a preference for similar items that dominate the close alternative on some attribute.
**CHOICE ARCHITECTURE**

Vicarious goal fulfillment describes how the mere presence of option in a choice set can fulfill goals, licensing individuals to make goal-inconsistent choices.

**COMMUNICATING IDENTITIES**

Individuals signal “who they are” through the products they buy.

- Acquisitions can signal their values, wealth, or power to others (Ahuvia & Wong 2002; Belk 1985; Dobrogosz, Rockee, & Goldkisky 2012)
- Over-acquisition of food particularly related to “good provider” image (Rouse 2013; Graham-Rove, Jenapp, & Sparks 2016; Visschers, Wickli, & Siegrist 2016)

**WHY DOES THIS MATTER?**

We eat more when we have more to eat (Chandon & Wansink 2002; Wansink & Kim 2006)

- True for portions, packages, tableware, etc.

We eat more when we are choosing from more varied options (Kahn & Wansink 2004)
FACTORS THAT IMPACT EATING

- The food environment
- The eating environment
- Social influence
- Time
- How you are feeling
- Goals/Self-regulation

CONTEXTUAL BIASES

Consumers are still heavily influenced by context.
THE FOOD ENVIRONMENT

It can be factors related to the food (i.e., the food environment) … like the label information.


THE EATING ENVIRONMENT

… or more general atmospherics (i.e., the eating environment).


SOCIAL INFLUENCE

The presence of others also impacts consumption.

- Eating with others increases the length of meals and, in turn, quantity consumed (i.e., social facilitation; Klesges et al. 1984; see Herman 2015 for a review).
- Meals with others are 44% larger; 76% larger with 7 or more people (De Castro and Brewer 1992).
- Tendency to "match" others consumption (Herman, Roth, & Polivy 2003).
- May depend on the body type of the other person (e.g., McFerran et al. 2010).
- May depend on individual impression management motivations (e.g., Robinson et al. 2011).
- Family influence (Birch, Savage, & Ventura 2007).
TIME

Time impacts consumption
• Time of day
• Time of year

Emotions impact eating:
• Felt affect (Garg, Wansink, & Inman 2007)
• Mood management (Gardner et al. 2014)
• Affect regulation (Kline, Block, & Eisenstein 2014)
• Licensing (Kline & Dhar 2006; Ha, Kroll, & Fader 2009)

GOALS

Self-regulation involves controlling behavior in the face of temptations
• Necessary for goal achievement
• Self-control exemplified by the food domain (e.g., dieting)

The type of goal matters
• All or nothing goals lead to counter-regulatory eating (e.g., the what the hell effect; Polivy et al. 1986, 1996)
WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

The US aggregate food supply provided 3,800 calories per person per day in 2000 (USDA Agriculture Factbook 2002).

- 1,100 calories were attributed to spoilage, plate waste, and other losses
- 2,700 calories were attributed to dietary intake

We acquire too much.
We consume too much.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

At acquisition...
- Make a plan AND a strategy to implement the plan.
- Focus on the future when making a decision right now.
- Rely on objective information when making decisions (e.g., calories) instead of puffery.
- Create your sub-culture surrounding food.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

At consumption...
- Knowledge and motivation drive better food choices (Andrews, Netemeyer, & Burke 2009; Mozina 1998)
- Estimate nutritional content for parts of the meal (rather than the meal overall).
- Help to reduce estimation biases (Devenny & Guadagno 2011; Knuth, Indiana, & Feldman 2011)
- Seek positive role models (and invite them to dinner).
- Anticipate your emotions.
- Take actions to bolster self-control (and not just before your holiday dinner).
- Know your goals (and remind yourself).
- Define your splurge ... and move on.
WELL IF IT’S THAT EASY . . .

Many of these occur at a subconscious level.
There are many, many more effects to consider.
These do not impact individuals in isolation, but may interact with other effects.
We make many, many food-related decisions (and don’t always have the time to become hyper involved with each).
We balance health and taste.

Understanding is likely to lead to more mindful, positive choices.

THANK YOU!
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• Those completing the webinar will be emailed a link to the evaluation.
• The email will be sent to the email address that you used to register for the webinar.
• Complete the evaluation soon after you receive the email. The evaluation does expire after 3 weeks. Once expired, you cannot obtain a certificate.
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Low Calorie Sweeteners and a Healthy Lifestyle: Do they fit together?

Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2016
Time: 12:00PM - 1:00PM EST
CE Credit: 1.0 contact hour, 1.0 CPEU

To register: villanova.edu/cope

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Questions and Answers!

Moderator: Lisa K. Diewald MS, RD, LDN
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