

The Interactions of Attentional Bias for Food, Trait Self-Control, and Motivation: A Model Testing Study

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Abstract : Self-control and related psychological constructs have been shown to have a large role in the improvement and maintenance of healthful dietary behaviour. However, self-control for diet, and related constructs such as motivation, level of conflict between tempting desires and dietary goals, and attentional bias for tempting food, have not been studied together to establish their relationships, to the author's best knowledge. Therefore the aim of this paper was to conduct model testing on these constructs and evaluate how they relate to affect dietary outcomes. 400 Australian adult participants will be recruited via the Qualtrics platform and will be representative across age and gender. They will complete survey and reaction timing surveys to gather data on the five target constructs: Trait Self-control, Attentional Bias for Food, Dietary Goal-Desire Incongruence, Motivation for Dietary Self-control, and Satisfaction with Dietary Behaviour. A model of moderated mediation is predicted, whereby the initial predictor (Dietary Goal-Desire Incongruence) predicts the level of the outcome variable, Satisfaction with Dietary Behaviour. We hypothesise that the relationship between these two variables will be mediated by Trait Self-Control and that the extent that Trait Self-control is allowed to mediate dietary outcome is moderated by both Attentional Bias for Food and Motivation for Dietary Self-control. The analysis will be conducted using the PROCESS module in SPSS 23. The results of model testing in this current study will be valuable to direct future research and inform which constructs could be important targets for intervention to improve dietary outcomes.

Keywords : self-control, diet, model testing, attentional bias, motivation

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