Effects of Optimism, Message Framing and Self-Relevance on Intention to change Vegetable Consumption

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Abstract

Only 7% of Australians met the guidelines for recommended daily serves of vegetables in 2014 -15, suggested a trend of under-consumption of vegetables which is associated with greater risk of various health problems. It is necessary to improve our nutrition education in order to improve our health. Framing effect has been widely studied in various health contexts and it has been shown that gain-framed messages are more effective than loss-framed messages to promote preventive behaviors. However, a subsequent systematic review has found that framing effect can be moderated by different dispositional factors. On the other hand, dispositional optimism has also been studied in various health contexts and found to be associated with better physical and psychological outcomes. The selective information processing enables optimists to pick up the most relevant and important information, suggested that self-relevance leads to better information processing on health messages. To study how to promote vegetable consumption and to investigate the underlying mechanism between optimism and health outcomes, the current study explored the effect of Optimism, Self-relevance and Message Framing, as well as the interaction of the levels of optimism, self-relevance and message framing. One-hundred and nineteen six participants completed an online survey including one of four manipulated message. Persuasiveness of the message was assessed and compared across different manipulated messages. Overall results indicated no significant effect or interaction of the effect of optimism, self-relevance and message framing on promoting vegetable consumption. The limitations of the current study and considerations for future research are discussed.

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no materials previously published except where due reference is made.

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