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Participant Information Statement for the Research Project: Food marketing on social media

We would like to invite you to participate in a research project about food advertisements on social media, which is being conducted by a team of researchers from the University of Newcastle and Wageningen University & Research in the Netherlands. The research is part of Daphne van der Bend's studies. She is supervised by Dr. Tamara Bucher, Dr. Vanessa Shrewsbury and Dr. Ellen van Kleef.

Why is the research being done?

The main goal of this research is to explore what food advertisements you are seeing when you are looking at your social media feeds.

Researchers have only limited understanding of how food is advertised on social media and how this affects the eating behaviours of teenagers. This project will provide the researchers with better insights into the food advertisements targeted to teenagers on their favourite social media platforms. The results will enable the researchers to develop strategies to help teenagers identify food advertisements on social media, resist food advertising pressure, and make them capable of choosing healthy foods.

Who can participate in the research?

We are inviting 13 to 16 year olds who are active on social media (for example YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat or TikTok) at least once a week to participate in this study.

What would you be asked to do?

Before the study

If you are interested in participating in this study and your parent(s)/guardian(s) agree on you participating, you and your parent(s)/guardian(s) will first be directed to online consent forms. Once these online consent forms have been completed by both you and your parent/guardian, you will be directed to an online survey with questions about your age, gender, postcode, and your social media use. Completing this questionnaire will take no longer than 10 minutes. Based on your answers to the online survey we will determine whether you can participate in the study. After the survey has been filled out, you will get the opportunity to book a date and time for the Zoom meeting (an online video conferencing program), which will be accessible through a link sent by the researcher.

During the study

For the Zoom meeting, we ask you to open the Zoom link on the device you usually use to access your social media (e.g. mobile phone). The session on Zoom will take no longer than 45 minutes in total, and will be screen recorded. At the beginning of the Zoom session, you'll be asked to share your screen with the researcher. Screen sharing is a function in Zoom which enables the researcher to look at the screen of the device on which your Zoom meeting is active. Next, the researcher will ask you to (consecutively) open your favourite social media platform(s) and scroll through your feeds for 10 minutes per platform. During the scrolling activity, the researcher will look with you through your shared screen, and point out a few examples of food advertisements. After the scrolling activity, you will be asked to stop sharing your screen, and the researcher will ask you a few questions about your awareness and appreciation of social media advertisements. During this last part, which takes about 10 minutes, you can choose to either turn your video off or leave it on.

After the session

In the two weeks following the Zoom session, two researchers from our research team will look at the Zoom screen recordings of your social media feeds and independently select all food advertisement content as screenshots or screen recordings to use in the data analysis. Non-food advertisement and other private data will be securely deleted.

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

As mentioned above, only food advertising from your social media will be used for research, and no private data. More specifically, two researchers from the research team will select all posts containing food advertisements and de-identify these in the two weeks after the scrolling session. At the end of this Information Sheet you'll find some examples of social media food ads, and how they will be de-identified. Once we have all de-identified food advertisement posts, we will delete all original screen recordings from the University server within a maximum of 14 days after the scrolling session. Still, we are aware that your personal social media feeds may contain sensitive information about you or others. Therefore, the researcher will handle all private information on your personal social media account confidentially. This means that the researcher will not discuss any of the viewed information with your parent(s)/guardian(s) or others, including other members of the research team, unless you appear to be at risk of serious and immediate harm. In case you are at risk of serious and immediate harm, the researcher will first talk about it with you and provide you help with help lines or websites that can support you. However, if necessary, the researcher will need to discuss it with the research team and/or contact your parents about it.

Participating in this research has a few benefits. After participation in the study you will receive a \$60 Kmart Gift Card. Also, during the session you will learn more about and become aware of different food advertisement strategies on social media. Besides this, you are contributing to important research that will lead to a better understanding of how food is advertised on social media, which will be used in future studies. In this way we hope to make teenagers eat and become healthier.

What choice do you have?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Only those who give their consent will be included in the project. If you do consent to participate in the research, you may withdraw from the project at any moment up to the point of publication of the results without giving a reason. This includes the option of halting and withdrawing the recording of your social media feeds during the social media scrolling session on Zoom, but also after this session. Once we have viewed all original screen recording(s) after the Zoom session, we will make screen shots or keep recordings of food marketing and securely delete the rest of the recording. We will send you a notification by email to confirm this has occurred, and you will receive a link to all selected de-identified screen shots and recordings of your social media feeds that we plan to use in the data analysis. If at this moment you would want us to delete certain screen shots and recordings, you will be able to do so by contacting us via phone or email (see contact details of main researcher Daphne van der Bend below). Ending participation or withdrawing from the project will not negatively affect your relationship with the researchers or the University of Newcastle.

How will your privacy be protected?

The Zoom recordings will be stored on the secure cloud environment of the University of Newcastle, which means that they are password protected and only accessible by the main researcher. For more information about the security of the Zoom platform see <https://zoom.us/security>. Moreover, we are only interested in collecting the food advertisements and will not use any private data such as names or faces of friends. Also, once we have selected all food advertisements from the screen recordings, we will de-identify all private information and delete the original screen recordings within a maximum of 14 days after the scrolling session. Moreover, the final recordings are not linked to you specifically, as only your gender, age and postcode are being collected.

Besides this, as mentioned above, the researcher who is sitting next to you during the session and the researcher who will be extracting the food advertisements from the recordings after the session will not tell your parent(s)/guardian(s) or others private things that may come up when scrolling through your social media feeds. This includes activities and behaviours that your parent(s)/guardian(s) would not approve of or would be upset by, but that do not put you at risk of serious and immediate harm. The researcher will only share general information with your parent(s)/guardian(s) about the advertising content encountered, in case they would ask for this.

How will the information collected be used?

The food advertisements that we collect from the Zoom screen recordings will be categorised based on their different features. All information about the advertisements will be put into one large file, which will be used to analyse what type of foods are being advertised on social media, how they are advertised and what format is used.

The selected food advertisements will not only provide a better understanding of social media food advertising content among the research team, but also provide input for another study within Daphne van der Bend's PhD studies. In this study, a selection of the de-identified recorded food advertisements will be shown to experts from different research fields. These experts will help us to develop future strategies that make teenagers more capable of identifying food advertising on social media and resisting food advertising pressure.

If you would like to get a summary of the general findings of this study, you can contact the main researcher Daphne van der Bend by email (daphne.vanderbend@uon.edu.au) 6 months after participating in this study.

What do you need to do to participate?

Please read this Information Statement and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, discuss with your parent(s)/guardian(s) to contact the main researcher Daphne van der Bend. If preferred by you or your parent(s)/guardian(s), Daphne can schedule a Zoom meeting to answer any questions you may have about the study.

If you would like to participate, we ask you and your parent(s)/guardian(s) to first complete the attached consent forms and return them to daphne.vanderbend@uon.edu.au. The consent forms will not be shared with others except for the research team. After obtaining the consent forms, the principal researcher will send you a questionnaire by email. Once you have filled in the questionnaire and you are eligible to participate, the principal researcher will contact you to schedule an appointment.



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Project Supervisor

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Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Reference No: H-2019-0309. Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Services, NIER Precinct, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone (02) 4921 6333, email Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au.

Examples of social media food marketing content, including de-identification of private content

