

Mind the Gap: Intention to Behaviour, the Challenge in Confectionary 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

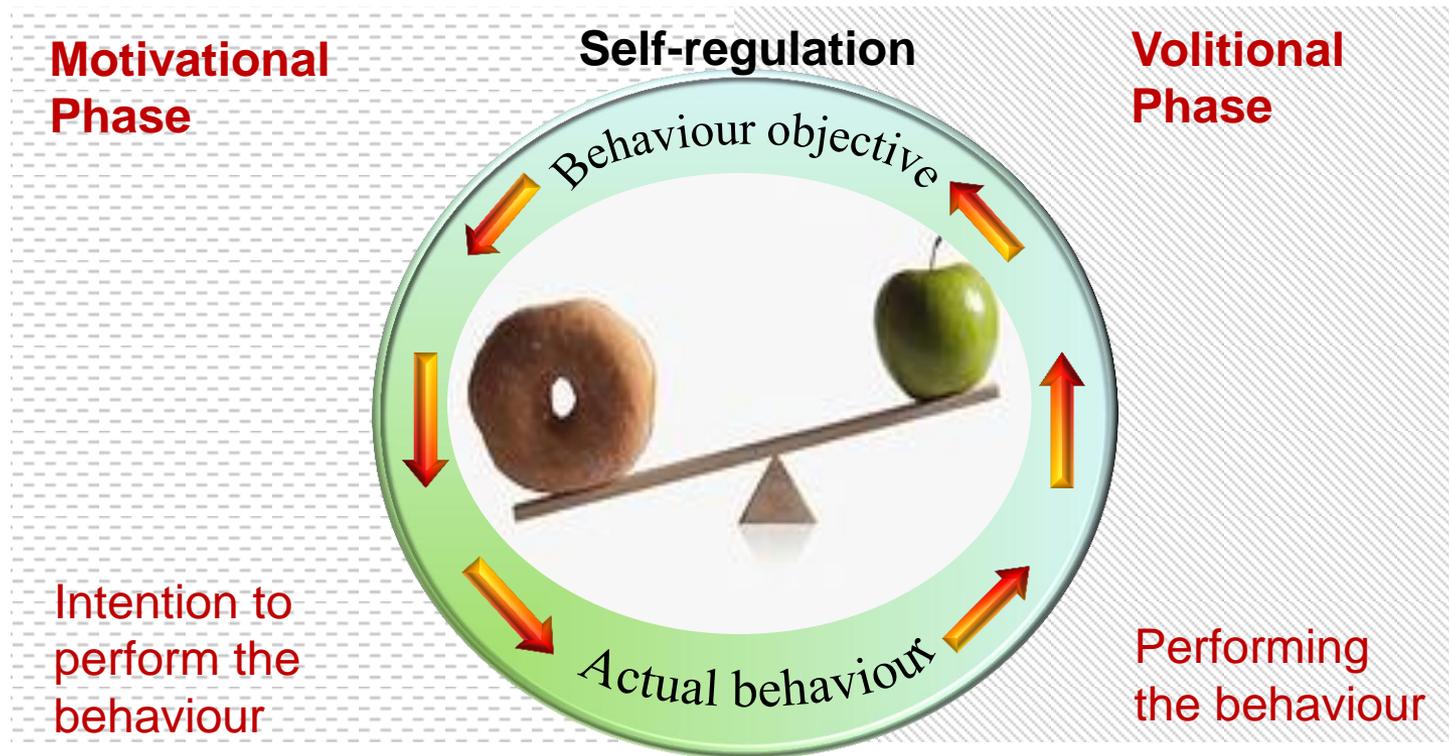
Background

- Context
- 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** (Krauss *et al.*, 2000; USDA, 2009; Food Standards Agency, 2009).



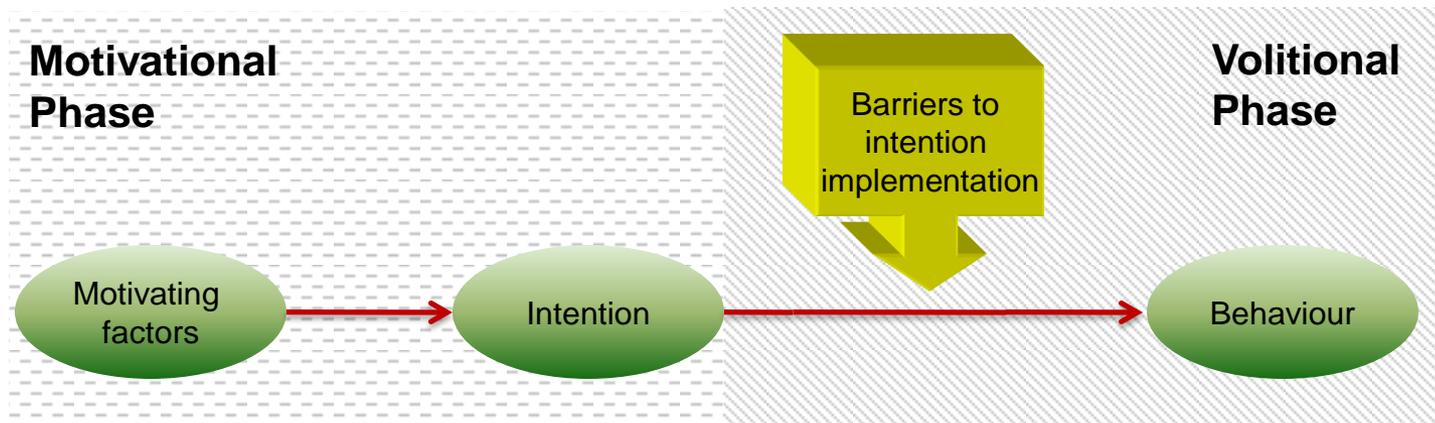
Background

- **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

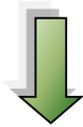
- The motivational phase of health behaviour has received considerable attention in the social cognition literature (Armitage and Conner, 2000; Schwarzer, 2001).
- Intention–behaviour gap
 - Strong behavioural intentions do not always lead to corresponding behaviour (Armitage and Conner, 2001)



Research Approach

- This study employed a mixed method research design

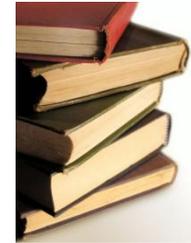
- Literature review



- Qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews with Irish adults



- A quantitative investigation using a self-completion questionnaire

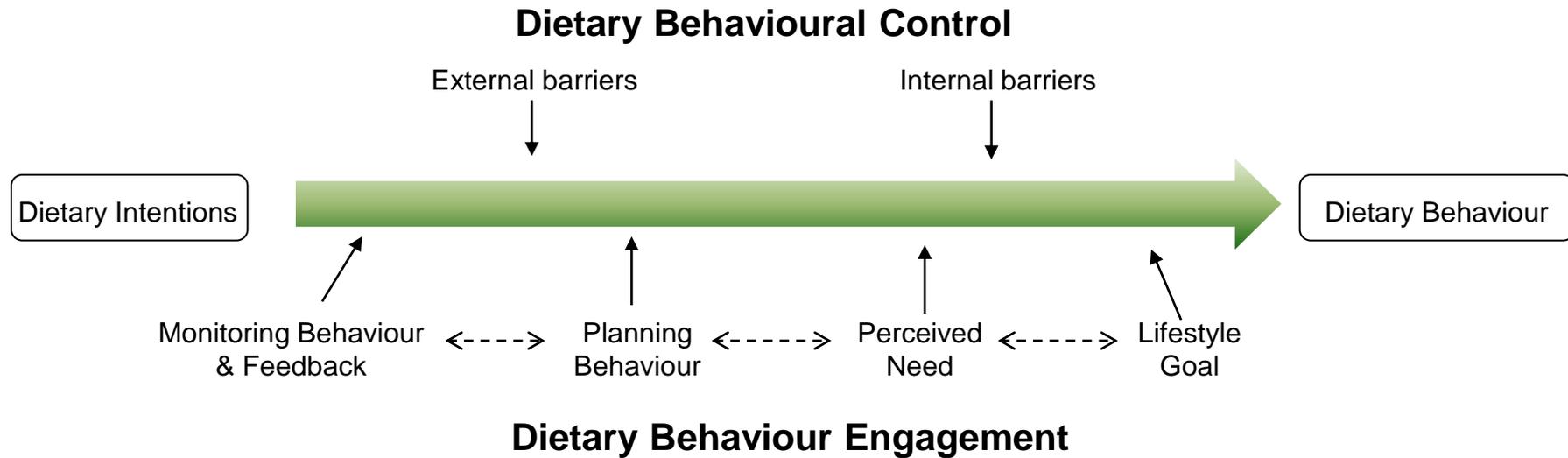


Filling in the gap: what are the issues?

- 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 509 Irish adults
- Target behaviour: Sugar consumption
 - Avoidance behaviour



Exploring the importance of these issues

Behavioural variables	Mean (SD)
Sugar consumption in grams per day	52.45 (40.52)
Sugar snacking	4.24 (1.42)
Sugar consumption change	3.47 (1.20)
Confectionery habit	3.91 (1.49)
	%
Intention to reduce sugar consumption	54
Lifestyle goal	42

Exploring the importance of these issues

- Objective: to investigate relationship between the post-intentional factors, identified from the semi-structured interviews, and healthy dietary change (successful avoidance).

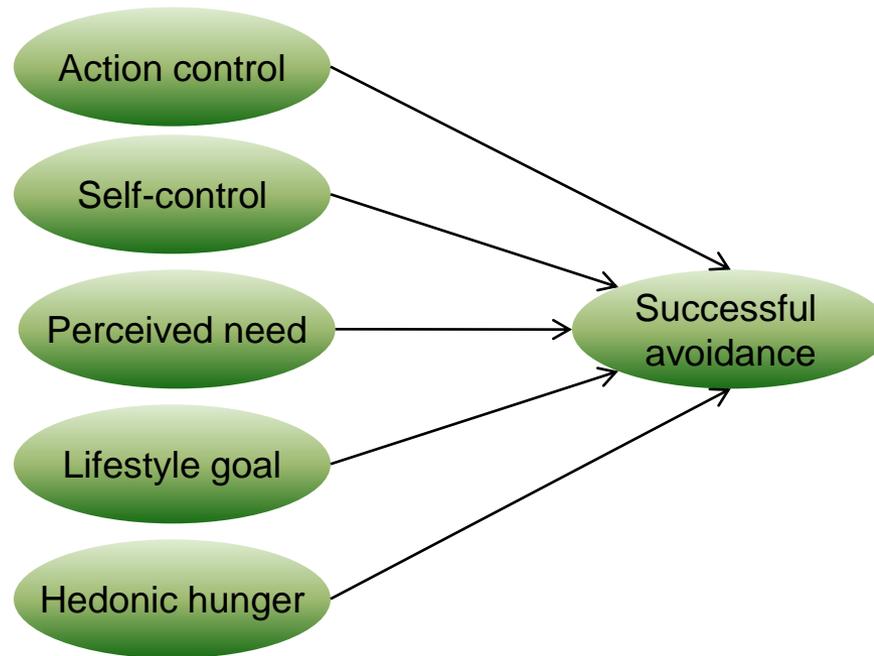


Figure 3 The hypothesised determinants of successful avoidance for individuals motivated to reduce sugar consumption

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 = 89) 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

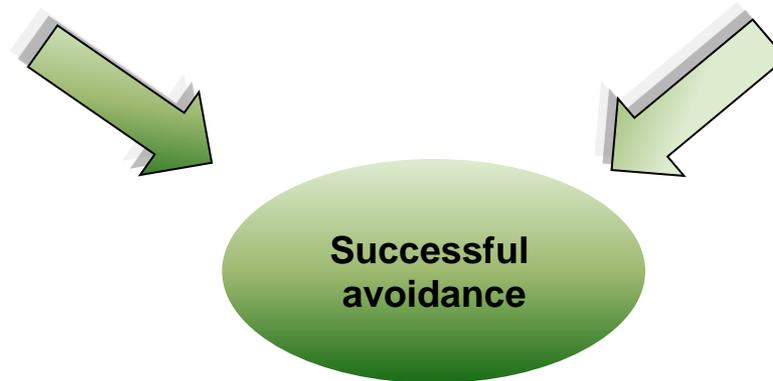
Exploring the importance of these issues

3. Unsuccessful-actors (n = 95)

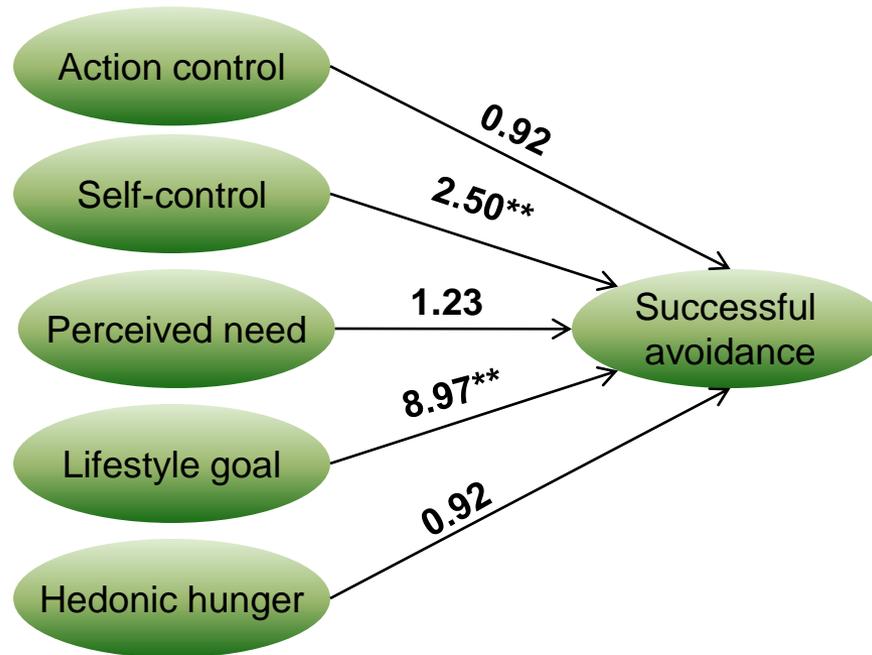
- Are people who **tried** to reduce their sugar consumption over the previous six months but did not succeed
- Consuming **> 60 grams** of sugar per day

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



R ²	X ² (df)
0.27 (Cox & Snell)	83.697 (5)**
0.37 (Nagelkerke)	

Figure 4 The odds ratios of the hypothesised determinants of successful sugar avoidance for individuals motivated to reduce sugar consumption

Discussion

- There is considerable theoretical support for the proposition that behavioural based programmes are more successful in achieving dietary change than educational/knowledge based programmes (Cullen *et al.* 2001; Steptoe *et al.*, 2004; Riet *et al.*, 2011)
- Self-efficacy/self-control has been found to be 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 absent goals (Berg-Smith, 1999; Schnoll and Zimmerman, 2001).

Conclusion

- Encourage people to set lifestyle goals related to dietary behaviour change
 - Make it easier for people to monitor and assess their goal progress
 - It is important set realistic goals
 - It may be useful to develop sub-goals that are related to behaviour rather than a physiological target
- Facilitate people in their efforts to enhance dietary self-control
 - Identify common barriers to healthy dietary change and suggest ways to overcome them
 - E.g. Planning dietary behaviour may overcome barriers
 - E.g. Social support from family, friends and others
 - Mastery experiences: having a person set a goal that is reasonable and proximal

Thank you for your attention