



## RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS WITH LOW SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS IN AN E-COHORT STUDY ON NUTRITION: A PRELIMINARY THEORY-BASED STUDY TO EXPLORE MOTIVATION AND BELIEFS

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**Objective:** Populations with low socioeconomic status (SES) are more likely to develop diseases across lifespan and are frequently underrepresented in large cohort studies. The aim of this study was to examine motivation and beliefs towards participating in an e-cohort study on nutrition (NutriQuebec) among this population.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was conducted in the Province of Quebec, Canada among low SES adults (high school or less and gross annual household income < 55,000 CAN\$). The questionnaire was based on the theory of planned behaviour and assessed intention to participate in NutriQuebec ( $\alpha=0.80$ ), attitude ( $\alpha=0.89$ ), subjective norm ( $\alpha=0.65$ ), and perceived behavioural control (PBC;  $\alpha=0.82$ ). Behavioural and control beliefs (identified from a preliminary elicitation study) were also assessed. A linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the determinants of intention. Logistic regression analyses were conducted to examine beliefs associated with high intention (scores  $\geq 4$  on a 5-point Likert scale). Analyses were controlled for sex, age, and perceived Internet competencies.

**Results:** Overall, 184 women and 141 men completed the questionnaire and the mean age was 57.9 y (SD=13.6). Attitude ( $B=0.54$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) and PBC ( $B=0.50$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) were significantly associated with intention, but not subjective norm ( $B=0.06$ ,  $p=0.30$ ). Participants who believed that participating in the study would contribute to an improvement in population health were more likely to express high intention (OR=1.9, 95%CI: 1.1-3.2). Believing that participation will be time-consuming was negatively associated with intention (OR=0.6, 95%CI: 0.4-0.7). Obtaining a health report (OR=1.6, 95%CI: 1.1-2.2) was a significant facilitating factor associated with intention. Those who believed that they would participate in the study even without financial compensation



(OR=1.4, 95%CI: 1.0-1.9) and even if the total duration for completing the questionnaires would be two hours (OR=1.8, 95%CI: 1.3-2.4) were more likely to have high intention.

**Conclusions:** Developing a positive attitude and a high PBC toward participating in the NutriQuebec study will be crucial to ensure the representativeness of low SES populations. Although motivation seems to have an altruistic basis (improvement of population health), control beliefs and disadvantages will need to be addressed and overcome to favour an optimal recruitment of low SES participants.