



INTENTION OF ADULTS WITH A LOW SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS TO PARTICIPATE IN A PROSPECTIVE WEB-BASED NUTRITION PROJECT

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Introduction: Populations with low socioeconomic status (SES) are underrepresented in health studies, although being at greatest risk of developing chronic diseases across lifespan. Recruitment and retention strategies must be adapted to encourage participation among these populations particularly for studies using the Web.

Objective: The aims of this study were to identify the determinants of intention towards participation in a prospective Web-based nutrition project (NutriQuébec) among adults with low SES and to compare these determinants between low and high SES participants.

Methodology: This cross-sectional survey was conducted in the Province of Québec. Participants were recruited through a Web panel of a polling firm and the mailing list of the Institute of Nutrition and Functional Foods. A questionnaire based on the Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) was used to assess intention, attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (PBC) towards participation in the NutriQuébec project. A linear regression analysis was conducted to identify the determinants of intention, while adjusting for sex, age, and perceived Internet competencies. Analyses were stratified according to SES (low SES: high school or less and annual gross household income < \$55,000 CAN; n=332, high SES: college/university and annual gross household income ≥ \$55,000 CAN; n=87). Psychometric qualities of the TPB variables were adequate in both groups, ranging from $\alpha=0.54$ to $\alpha=0.89$.



Results: Mean age of low SES participants (191 women, 141 men) was 57.5 y (SD=13.7). Attitude ($\beta=0.55$, $p<0.0001$) and PBC ($\beta=0.50$, $p<0.0001$) were significantly associated with intention; subjective norm was not ($\beta=0.05$, $p=0.3361$). Mean age of high SES participants (64 women, 23 men) was 56.3 y (SD=13.6). Attitude ($\beta=0.34$, $p=0.0071$), PBC ($\beta=0.42$, $p=0.0004$) and subjective norm ($\beta=0.24$, $p=0.0094$) were significantly associated with intention.

Conclusion: Intention to participate in the project was similar among adults with low and high SES. To help recruitment of low SES participants in a Web-based study such as NutriQuébec, developing a positive attitude and a high PBC towards participation will be essential. Data also suggests that emphasizing the opinion of significant others might help encourage adults with a high SES but not those with a low SES to participate in the NutriQuébec project.