

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT PROJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT



Project Title:

What's Really Eating You? Providing some Food for Thought

Investigators:

Primary investigator:
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Secondary Project Supervisor:
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Secondary Project Supervisor:
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Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research project being jointly conducted by RMIT University and La Trobe University. This information sheet describes the project in straightforward language, or 'plain English'. Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the project, please ask one of the investigators.

Who is involved in this research project? Why is it being conducted?

The current research is being conducted by Adrian Schembri as partial fulfilment of the Doctor of Psychology degree at RMIT University, under the supervision of Associate Professor David Smith, Professor Susan Paxton, and Ms Trish Altieri. This research has been approved by the RMIT University Human Research Ethics Committee and the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering Faculty Human Ethics Committee at La Trobe University. This study is being conducted collaboratively with the Division of Psychology at RMIT University and the School of Psychological Science at La Trobe University.

Why have you been approached?

We are interested in investigating the eating behaviours and psychological health of females aged 18 years and above. Individuals who meet these criteria have been approached and invited to participate.

What is the project about? What are the questions being addressed?

The present study aims to examine relationships that are associated with stress, eating, and anxiety, and identify various aspects of an individual's lifestyle that are associated with eating behaviours, dietary restraint, and exercise. In particular, the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that are associated with perceptions of body shape and weight will be investigated as well as the personality characteristics that relate to different coping styles.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to fill in an online questionnaire that will require approximately 20 minutes to complete. The questionnaire contains several demographic questions regarding your age, living arrangements, and level of education. The questions also address eating and exercise behaviours, and thoughts about shape and weight. Finally, the survey enquires about

your individual way of coping with stress and worry and some of the thoughts you may have in relation to this.

You are encouraged to examine or browse through the questionnaire as it may aide in your decision to participate in the study. If you agree to participate, you may complete the questionnaire by clicking on the link below.

What are the risks associated with participation?

Whilst there are no direct risks or disadvantages involved in your participation in the present study, if you feel concerned about your responses to any of the questionnaire items or if you find participating in the project distressing in any way, you should contact Dr David Smith as soon as convenient on 9925 7523. Dr Smith will discuss your concerns with you confidentially and suggest appropriate follow-up, if necessary. Alternatively, you can contact the RMIT University Psychology Clinic on 9925 7603 or 9925 7376.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

Whilst there are no direct benefits for participating in this study, your input will provide vital information regarding the relationships between our thoughts and feelings, and how these are associated with behaviour, particularly eating and dietary behaviours.

What will happen to the information I provide?

Security of the website

Users should be aware that the World Wide Web is an insecure public network that gives rise to the potential risk that a user's transactions are being viewed, intercepted or modified by third parties or that data which the user downloads may contain computer viruses or other defects.

Security of the data

This project will use an external site to create, collect and analyse data collected in a survey format. The site we are using is SurveyMonkey. If you agree to participate in this survey, the responses you provide to the survey will be stored on a host server that is used by SurveyMonkey. No personal information will be collected in the survey so none will be stored as data. Once we have completed our data collection and analysis, we will import the data we collect to the RMIT University server where it will be stored securely for a period of five (5) years. The data on the SurveyMonkey host server will then be deleted and expunged.

All information will remain strictly confidential. Only the project investigators will have access to the data. Any information that you provide can be disclosed only if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) there is a legal requirement to do so, or (3) you provide the researchers with written permission. The results obtained from within the questionnaire booklets will be used in the compilation of a research report and may appear in a journal publication in the future. However, only group data will be included and under no circumstances will individual scores be reported.

What are my rights as a participant?

As a participant in this research, you have the right to have any questions answered at any time. You also have the right to withdraw from the study prior to completion of the questionnaire, without prejudice. You are welcome to read through this information sheet and have a browse through the questionnaire prior to deciding whether you would like to participate. Since this research is completely anonymous, there will not be any identifying information located on your submitted questionnaire. As such, it will not be possible to withdraw your data from the study once your questionnaire has been submitted.

Who should I contact if I have any questions?

If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact Adrian Schembri via email at adrian.schembri@student.rmit.edu.au. Alternatively, you are welcome to contact Dr David Smith on 9925 7523 or via email at david.smith@rmit.edu.au.

If you have any complaints or queries that the researcher has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, you may contact the Ethics Liaison Officer, Faculty Human Ethics Committee,

Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering, La Trobe University, Victoria, 3086, (Ph: 9479 3698,
e-mail: k.collins@latrobe.edu.au).

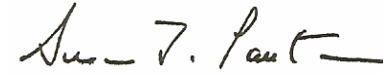
Yours sincerely,



Adrian Schembri
B.App.Sci (Psych)(Hons)



David Smith
B.B.Sc (Hons), MPsych., PhD



Susan Paxton
BA (Hons), MPsych., PhD



Trish Altieri
BA (Hons), MPsych.

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 1745.
Details of the complaints procedure are available from the above address.