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State and trait influences on attentional bias to food-cues: The role of hunger, expectancy, and self-perceived food addiction

H.K. Ruddock, M. Field, A. Jones, C.A. Hardman



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1 State and trait influences on attentional bias to food-cues: The role of 2 hunger, expectancy, and self-perceived food addiction

3 H.K. Ruddock^{a,*}, M. Field^{b,c,†}, A. Jones^{b,c}, C.A. Hardman^b

4 ^aSchool of Psychology, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, B15 2TT, UK.

5 ^bPsychological Sciences, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, L69 7ZA, UK.

6 ^cUK Centre for Tobacco and Alcohol Studies, UK.

7 *Corresponding author. *E-mail address*: ruddochk@bham.ac.uk

8 [†]Current affiliation: Department of Psychology, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, S1 2LT, UK.

9 Abstract

10 Food-related attentional bias (AB) varies both between individuals (i.e. trait differences)
11 and within individuals (i.e. state differences), as a function of a food's momentary incentive
12 value. People with self-perceived food addiction (SPFA) find food particularly rewarding and
13 may therefore demonstrate increased AB to food-related cues, relative to those who do not
14 perceive themselves as food addicts. However, these trait differences may interact with *state*
15 factors, such as hunger and the perceived availability of food, to differentially affect AB to
16 food-cues. In the current study, female participants (N=120) completed an eye-tracking task
17 to assess AB to chocolate pictures in which the expectancy of receiving chocolate was
18 manipulated on a trial-by-trial basis (0%, 50%, 100%). Participants were randomly allocated
19 such that half completed the task when hungry (hungry condition), and half completed the
20 task following a lunch meal (satiated condition). Participants also indicated the extent to
21 which they perceived themselves to be 'food addicts' (SPFAs: $n=37$; Non-addicts: $n=53$;
22 Undecided: $n=28$). Consistent with previous findings, there was a significant main effect of
23 chocolate expectancy; food-related AB was greater on 100% and 50% trials, compared to 0%
24 trials. However, there was no effect of hunger condition (hungry vs. satiated) on AB.
25 Contrary to our hypotheses, SPFAs did not show increased AB to food-cues, and this was not
26 moderated by hunger condition or the expectancy information. Exploratory analyses revealed
27 that higher desire-to-eat (DtE) chocolate was associated with increased AB to chocolate
28 pictures. These findings partially support contemporary theoretical models of AB by
29 indicating a key role for state factors (reward expectancy, DtE) in determining AB to food-
30 cues, while a trait factor (SPFA) was not a significant determinant of food AB.

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