Bachelor and Master projects 2020/ 2021

Bachelor or Master thesis projects are usually empirical (quantitative and/ or qualitative). They thus require students to be involved in study planning and data collection as well as to analyse the collected data semi-autonomously. Although previous experience in conducting behavioural studies is desirable, it is not a prerequisite. However, students should be willing to acquire the necessary skills. They will be supported in the necessary steps by the supervisor and the group. The thesis can be written in English or German.

If you are interested in one of the following topics, please contact Jun.-Prof. Dr. Laura M. König and provide the following information:

- Your name and degree programme
- Will you write a Bachelor or Master thesis?
- Topic(s) of interest
- Why are you interested in this topic? (approx. 250 words)
- Earliest possible start date

Please note that topics will be assigned on a "first come – first served" basis.

Topic A: Knowledge about the sugar content of foods/ Accuracy of sugar content estimation

Description: According to the World Health Organization, adults should not consume more than 50 grams of sugar per day. However, the majority of the population exceeds this recommendation and thus is at risk of becoming overweight and subsequently develop chronic conditions. To reduce sugar consumption, a better understand of consumers' knowledge about sugar consumption and their accuracy in estimating the sugar content of foods is needed. This thesis will address this gap by replicating and extending previous studies on sugar content estimation.

Methods: online study, mainly quantitative with qualitative aspects

We are looking for: 1 student to join forces with another Master student who has already begun working on their thesis. Together, the two students will assist in planning the study and collecting the data. Data will be analysed individually.

Projected start date: as soon as possible

Suggested readings:

König, L. M., Ziesemer, K., & Renner, B. (2019). Quantifying actual and perceived inaccuracy when estimating the sugar, energy content and portion size of foods. *Nutrients, 11*(10), 2425. doi: 10.3390/nu11102425

Topic B: Usability and feasibility of smartphone-based dietary Ecological Momentary Assessment

Description: In recent years, smartphone apps have become increasingly popular for assessing eating behaviour in real-life and real-time. This provides researchers with rich data that can be used to gain a better understanding of eating behaviour and develop more effective eating behaviour interventions. However, this is only possible if the assessment is actually feasible and usable because only then the app will be used to collect sufficiently valid data.

~~This thesis will explore usability and feasibility of different protocols that are commonly used for dietary Ecological Momentary Assessment. It will build on an ongoing systematic review of smartphone-based dietary Ecological Momentary Assessment and will provide important insights for the choice of dietary Ecological Momentary Assessment tools in future research.~~

~~Methods: online study, quantitative~~

~~We are looking for: 1 student to assist with study planning, data collection, and data analysis.~~

~~Projected start date: as soon as possible~~

~~Suggested readings:~~

~~König, L. M., Nurmi, J., Kassavou, K., Van Emmenis, M., Sutton, S. (2020). Characteristics of mobile dietary assessment tools: A systematic review [Protocol].~~ https://osf.io/xg8s6/

~~König, L. M., & Renner, B. (2018). Colourful = healthy? Exploring meal colour variety and its relation to food consumption.~~ *~~Food Quality and Preference, 64,~~* ~~66-71. doi:~~ 10.1016/j.foodqual.2017.10.011

Topic C: Exploring the role of health literacy in deliberate and intuitive eating decision-making

Description: A prominent line in health promotion research focuses on deliberate regulation of health behaviours including eating to promote a healthier lifestyle. Another separate line of research promotes intuitive eating for health promotion. The two lines of research have recently been brought together, showing that neither deliberate regulation of food intake nor intuitive eating is detrimental for diet and health per se. This thesis will build up on this work to explore health literacy as a potential moderator of the relationship between preferred decision-making style and eating behaviour.

Methods: online study, quantitative

We are looking for: 1 student to assist with study planning, data collection, and data analysis.

Projected start date: November or later

Suggested readings:

König, L. M., Sproesser, G., Schupp, H. T., & Renner, B. (2020). Preference for Intuition and Deliberation in Eating Decision-making: Scale validation and associations with eating behavior and health. *British Journal of Health Psychology*. doi: 10.1111/bjhp.12460

Topic D: Implementation of dietary interventions in restaurant settings

Description: Choice architecture interventions (often also called nudging) have recently become popular as they may facilitate healthy eating on a population level with low effort for consumers. However, little is known about the effectiveness of these interventions as well as potential facilitators and barriers for their implementation in public settings such as restaurants. We will collaborate with a restaurant (1) to implement choice architecture interventions (labelling; tableware properties) to study their effectiveness for behaviour change as well as (2) to explore potential barriers and facilitators to implementing these interventions.

Methods: D.1: study in restaurant setting, quantitative; D.2: qualitative study with restaurant owners and personnel, extensive literature research required to prepare interview questions

We are looking for: 2-3 students to assist with study planning, data collection, and data analysis. Ideally, students have a driver's license and own a car to be able to visit the restaurant during the data collection period.

Projected start date: as soon as possible

Suggested readings:

Kerins, C., McHugh, S., McSharry, J., Reardon, C. M., Hayes, C., Perry, I. J., ... & Kelly, C. (2020). Barriers and facilitators to implementation of menu labelling interventions from a food service industry perspective: a mixed methods systematic review. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity, 17*, 1-15.

König, L. M., & Renner, B. (2019). Boosting healthy food choices by meal colour variety: Results from two experiments and a just-in-time Ecological Momentary Intervention. *BMC Public Health, 19*, 975. doi: 10.1186/s12889-019-7306-z

Kosite, D., König, L. M., de-Loyde, K., Lee, I., Pechey, E., Clarke, N., Maynard, O., Morris, R. W., Munafó, M. R., Marteau, T. M., & Hollands, G. J. (2019). Plate size and food consumption: a pre-registered experimental study in a general population sample. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity, 16*, 75. doi: doi.org/10.1186/s12966-019-0826-1

Contact:

Jun.-Prof. Dr. Laura M. König
Junior Professor of Public Health Nutrition
Campus Kulmbach
laura.koenig@uni-bayreuth.de
https://phn.uni-bayreuth.de