

# (Not so) simple preferences

## Study name as it appears to the participant on prolific.com

Measuring evaluations of chocolate vs. poop

## Informed consent prior to participation

### Are there any risks involved?

You will be shown an image of human poop in a toilet bowl during the study. You may find this image to be disgusting. You will also be shown an image of chocolates. Participation involves no other known risks.

### Aim of the study

In this online study (approximately **x minutes**), you will complete a survey in which you are asked to evaluate two stimuli: chocolate and feces (poop). For example, how positive, pleasant, interesting, and attention capturing each is. These questions will be multiple choice with no right or wrong answers.

After the survey you will receive a short explanation of what this study is about. There is no deception involved in the study. Information about the study's aims is only presented after your participation in order to not bias your responses.

### Payment

If you choose to participate, you will be paid **XX** through the prolific platform for your participation. This study uses one or more 'attention check' questions. Your payment is not contingent on your responses to these items, they are only used in the data analysis.

### Your data

Your data will be saved anonymously with a personal code that links you to your data. This code will allow us to pay you after you've completed the survey and to delete your data if you request it. You may request the deletion of your data without any further explanation and without any penalties.

Your data will be irrevocably anonymised by the leader of this study one week after data collection, when the leader of the study will delete the personal code that links you to your data. You have until this time to request the deletion of your data. The leader of this study is the only person who has access to this personal code.

Your irrevocably anonymised data will be shared publicly on two websites for sharing scientific data: Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io>) and GitHub (<https://github.com>). It will not be possible to link any of this data back to you.

## **Consent**

By clicking “I consent” below, I affirm the following:

I am at least 18 years of age.

I was informed about the goal, the procedure, the possible advantages and disadvantages and the possible risks of this study.

I’ve read and understood the written information about the study.

I have had sufficient time to decide whether or not to participate in this study. I understand that participating in this study involves me being shown an image of (a) chocolate and (b) feces (poop).

I understand that my personal data will only be stored anonymously. I have been informed about the conditions under which I can request the deletion of my data.

I understand that I will have the right to demand my data to be deleted for one week after my participation. To do this, I can contact the study leader ([ian.hussey@unibe.ch](mailto:ian.hussey@unibe.ch)). I understand that after this time the personal code which links my data to me will be irreversibly deleted, after which the identification of my data for deletion is not possible.

I understand that my irrevocably anonymised data will be shared publicly on two websites for sharing scientific data: Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io>) and GitHub (<https://github.com>).

I agree that members of the ethics committee overseeing this study may inspect my original data.

I am participating in this study voluntarily. I understand that I can withdraw my consent to participate at any time and without providing reasons, without any disadvantages to me.

To be paid, you must complete all questions. The final page of the survey includes a question where you can indicate that you want your data to be excluded from the analysis. This will not affect your payment.

- ☐ I consent
- ☐ I do NOT consent

# Debrief after participation

## Study aim and hypotheses

This study attempts to demonstrate that even apparently simple psychological questions can be surprisingly difficult to answer scientifically, and that there may be substantial variations in the answer provided by different choices in the method and analysis, even when these choices seem equally reasonable. This is done by trying to estimate what should be an extremely simple preference: the self-reported preference for chocolate over feces (poop).

This study is based on a previously published one by Balcetis & Dunning (2010, Study 3b) that, perhaps unsurprisingly, established this preference for chocolate over feces. This study builds on that previous work by varying the way in which the questions are asked, the way in which the data is scored, and the way in which the analyses are run, to determine whether the precise answers to this question can vary. These variations represent plausible different choices in data analysis

We hypothesize that these plausible variations in method and analysis will produce larger differences in the precise statistical answer to this apparently simple question. Results will be used to educate other psychology researchers, including students, on the difficulties involved in answering even simple questions. The effect sizes we produce here can also be used as benchmarks for future studies, to help other researchers improve their intuitions for judging the real-world magnitude of statistical effect sizes.