

Understanding healthy eating and food-related activities during life events

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Introduction

Current technologies for supporting food-related activities

- Do not account for the evolving changes in everyday life
- Do not support individuals to adapt to the impact of these changes

This study

- Uses **food-related experiences** as a lens to understand how disruptions impact individual behavior and social relationships
- Provides **an understanding of how people respond** to these impacts

Research Questions

- How do life events impact individuals' food-related activities?
- How do individuals respond to the impacts of life events?

Method

An interview study with 18 participants

- 13 females and 5 males
- Age from 18 - 74 ($M = 38.9$, $SD = 17.2$)
- Whites or Caucasians ($n = 12$), Asian or Pacific Islander ($n = 4$), Black or African American ($n = 2$), and Hispanic or Latino ($n = 1$),
- Experiencing multiple life events, such as **career-related** ($n = 8$), **relocation-related** ($n = 6$), and **health-related** ($n = 4$) life events, and life events involving **other people** ($n = 11$)

Acknowledgement

This research is partially supported by Indiana University Luddy Faculty Fellowship



Individuals made food-related choices by ***prioritizing based on conflicting values*** during life events

Individuals adjusted food-related behaviors by ***collaborating with and considering others***

Result

When life events happened, participants

Adjusted food-related behaviors by prioritizing

potentially conflicting values

- Conflicts within an individual's interrelated values (e.g., convenience vs health)
- Conflicts between an individual's values (e.g., efficiency) vs others' values (e.g., variety)

Incorporated shared food-related experiences into food practices

- Reenacted shared food-related behaviors with others (e.g., eating ice cream that a participant used to eat with her dad)
- Reflected on others' experiences (e.g., paying more attention on a participant's health condition after her father's heart attack)

Shared and delegated food-related roles

- Shared roles to maintain individual food-related tasks (e.g., others helping chop ingredients as a part of food preparation)
- Delegated roles to others to support an individual's food practices (e.g., asking other people to do grocery shopping)

Discussion

Preliminary results indicate following potential technology design opportunities:

Integrating values into designing technology to support food-related decisions

- Making food-related decision among conflicting values are challenging during life events
- People associate different values with different contexts
- Designing technology for individuals to incorporate multiple values into food-related decisions

Supporting additional tasks for role transitions

- Individuals have different expectations of food-related roles
- Role transitions require additional efforts for collaborations and coordinations
- Designing technology for individuals to facilitate collaborations among food-related roles