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Making vegetables cool: Improving the eating habits of wales younger generation

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Statement of the Problem: The eating habits of Wales' younger generation has resulted in an increase of overweight and obese Welsh adolescents over the last two decades, more so than the rest of the United Kingdom. The purpose of the research project is to improve the eating habits of Wales' younger generation through making vegetables cool.

Methodology: An extensive literature and contextual review has been carried out. It is important to study adolescents' attitudes, current routines, behavior and food consumption (particularly around vegetables) and contrast these against the governmental dietary recommendations. In addition, the definition and elusiveness of cool was discussed using theoretical concepts. To clarify, the focus of the research will be to develop a detailed insight into 11-13 year olds eating habits and behaviors concerning vegetables. The research project is taking a triangulated, mixed research methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Data mining from school card purchases was completed, analyzed and contrasted between three secondary schools, direct ethnographic observation in homes, schools and leisure facilities, peer focus groups with adolescents, focus groups with parents, focus groups with catering staff, semi-structured interviews with parents and semi-structured interviews with Welsh adolescents.

Conclusion & Significance: The insights derived from these studies will be used to work in collaboration with Puffin produce to design and develop innovative branding and merchandising practices. The ultimate aim of the PhD project is to develop a new vegetable-based product that will be targeted towards the younger generation in Wales, or perhaps 'cross the border' into the English market.

Biography

Alice Gilmour is currently pursuing her PhD at Cardiff Metropolitan University and her particular research interests include psychology, adolescence, the obesity epidemic, healthy eating and food marketing. She has enjoyed being at the university and has competed on the Cardiff Metropolitan Equestrian Team at BUCs competitions. She has completed her undergraduate degree in BA (Hons) in Product Design at the University of Creative Arts, Rochester.

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