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Centre for Food Policy
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Proposal of a Social Marketing Framework to Influence Greek Undergraduates to Adopt Healthy Eating Habits

An Overview…

- ✓ Objective
- ✓ Methodology
- ✓ What we have learned
- ✓ What we suggest
- ✓ What we can do in the future

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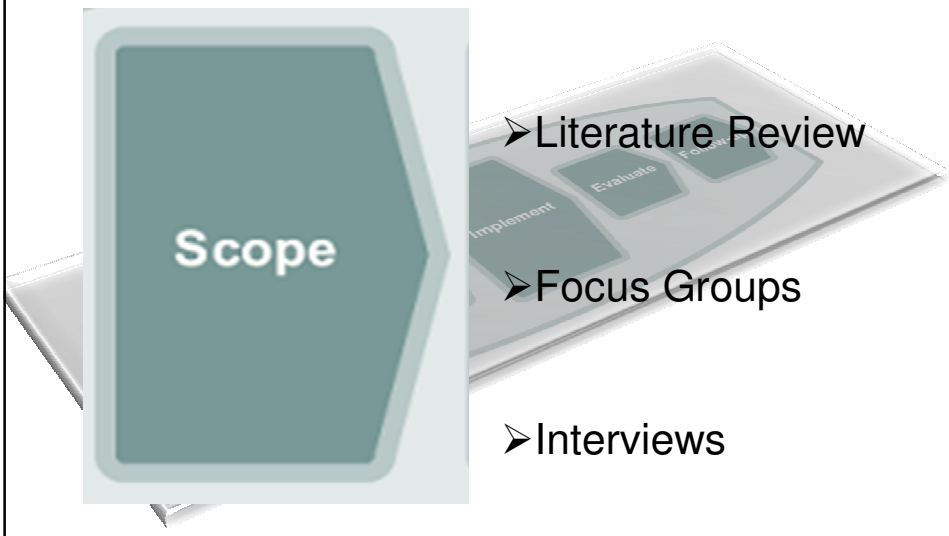

- Literature Review
- Focus Groups
- Interviews

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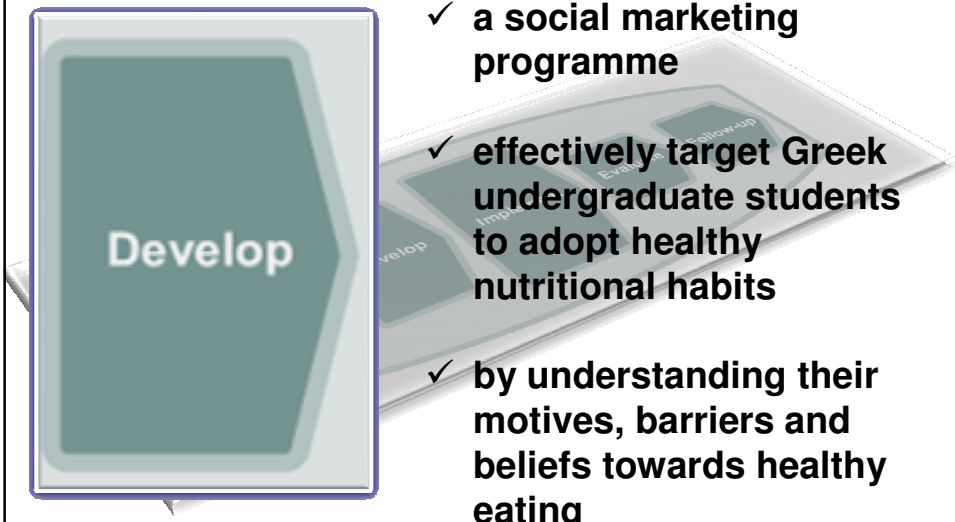

- ✓ **a social marketing programme**
- ✓ **effectively target Greek undergraduate students to adopt healthy nutritional habits**
- ✓ **by understanding their motives, barriers and beliefs towards healthy eating**

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Methodology

STAGE 1 :

Review of academic and grey literature

- Reveal the problem
- Design the research
- Select target audience

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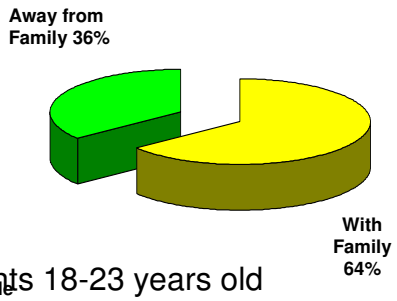
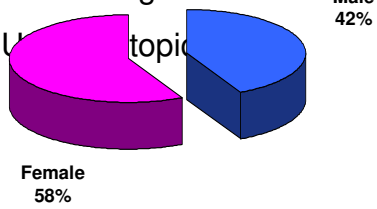
Methodology

STAGE 2 :



- 9 mixed focus groups
- 5-8 undergraduate students 18-23 years old
- U topi



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Methodology

STAGE 3 :

- Semi-structured Interviews with 33 key stakeholders:
  - State: 8
  - Education Institutes: 6
  - Food Supply Chain: 10
  - Civil Society: 8

➢ Use of social marketing in Greece

➢ Way that food services in Education Institutes operates

➢ Formation of the Situation Analysis (SWOT Analysis)

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Methodology

WHERE

- **Athens, Greece**

WHEN

- **September-November 2009 (focus groups)**
- **March-October 2010 (interviews)**

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What we have learned…

- Views about healthy eating.
- Reported eating habits.
- Sources of information about food and nutritional issues.
- Motives, barriers & influences.
- Impact of the external environment.
- Views about current initiatives towards healthy eating.
- Views about the role of the key sectors towards nutrition.

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What we have learned…

Change of their nutritional habits since entering higher education

•High fat food consumption

•Low fruit consumption

Need of Immediate Action

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Findings	Suggestions
1. Spend a lot of time inside the Institutes & the environment there is not supportive	Initiatives inside the Education Institutes
2. They trust information from	
• The internet	Design of healthy eating website
• Scientists	Advising from scientists
• Only TV shows from State channels were there is a scientist	No advertisements on TV & radio

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Findings	Suggestions
3. Important others:	
• Friends	included in the messages
• Scientists	present the messages
4. Believe that the environment in Greece and at the Education Institutes they attend is not supportive of healthy eating.	"upstream" social marketing to ➢ support initiatives ➢ create supportive environments
5. They expect the State to take measures.	

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Altering false beliefs
Repositioning healthy eating

Undergraduates' False Beliefs about Healthy Eating	Positive Messages
"Healthy food is not tasty and reduces the pleasure from a meal."	Healthy food is tasty and can include all types of food categories.
"I am still very young and healthy to care about healthy eating."	Refocus the current negative consequences to include short term consequences.
"Following a healthy diet can stress me."	It is easy to prepare a healthy meal- tips to prepare "fast" and tasty healthy meals.
"It is boring to prepare a meal."	It can be easy and funny if you do it with friends and people you love.
"It is hard to adopt a healthy diet."	There are easy tips to prepare healthy snacks and meals for you, your family and your friends.

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Increase the benefits…

Reported Benefits (motives)	Strategies to Increase Benefits
Healthy diet is strongly linked to good health.	Show evidences that a healthy diet can help avoid cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and obesity (in the short and in the long term).
Better performance on everyday activities.	Messages that show people who eat healthy meals, to perform well in sports, studies, partying and other everyday activities.
Appearance improvement.	Messages that show people who eat healthy, to have better socialisation, be fit and look good.

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Reduce the costs…

Reported Costs (barriers)	Strategies to Reduce Costs
Lot of time to prepare a healthy meal and lack of knowledge.	Provide tips to prepare healthy and tasty foods fast and easy.
Unstable module hours- no time for a proper meal.	Upstream social marketing to create proper conditions.
It is not easy to find healthy alternatives.	Upstream social marketing to provide healthy alternatives inside the Education Institute and close to them.
Psychological factors like stress and mood make undergraduates eat without limits.	Psychologists and nutritionists inside the Education Institutes.
If I don't eat fast-food I will be against company's habits (I don't want to be unfitted).	Show pictures where friends eat together healthy foodstuffs, enjoy fruits and cooked food and they feel 'cool'

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Ways forward…

- Develop specific actions
- Pre-test the messages
- Create upstream social marketing initiatives
- Implement in the environment of the "financial crisis".

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!!!

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The Context of the Research

- Nutrition transition in Greece
- Main causes of mortality are chronic diseases like cancer and cardiovascular diseases (OECD e-database)
- High rates of overweight and obese children and adults
  - 13-17 years old → 22% overweight and obese (OECD 2003)
  - Adults → 59% overweight, 18% obese (OECD 2008)

Data Analysis

- Content analysis
- Data coded based on the questionaire and the research questions.
- Triangulation for validity
- Use of two coders for reliability
- Estimation of inter-coder reliability with the use of Cohen's Kappa coefficient (SPSS)
  - 0,92 (focus groups)
  - 0,78 (interviews)

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Target audience

- Lack of studies and interventions for the undergraduates
- Adoption of a new student lifestyle
  - Start being independent
  - Lack of knowledge to prepare their own food
  - Eat out of home more often
- Peer-pressure that could promote unhealthy eating habits
- Start taking care of their appearence